

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN IN MALAYSIA FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF MAQASID AL-SHARIAH

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Abstract

Every child deserves a quality education. In Malaysia, the decline in morals among teenagers is very worrying nowadays. For example, the appearance of social problems. In addition, there is also a problem of a lack of manners toward parents, teachers, and educators. To solve this problem, this issue needs to be looked at from the root, which is through the aspect of Islamic education for children. Therefore, this paper aims to examine the implementation of Islamic education for children in Malaysia according to the perspective of *Maqasid al-Shariah (Objectives of Islamic Law)*. This is a qualitative study in which the researcher adapted data collection methods involving a literature review. Data sources in this study are documents consisting academic writing. In addition, the researcher also obtains data from sources from official virtual websites that are recognised in academic studies. The researcher used content analysis to see the implementation of Islamic education for children in Malaysia. The results of the study found that the implementation of Islamic education for children in Malaysia has a significant relationship with *Maqasid al-Shariah*, especially in term of preserving the purity of Islam and preserving the mind through *fardu ain* studies in preschool and elementary school.

Keywords: *Maqasid al-Shariah*, Implementation, Islamic education of children

1. Introduction

Children are the nation's most valuable asset, as they will become future leaders. To ensure capable and competent leadership, the foundation of national education must be strong and sustainable, with proper attention given to the development of children, adolescents, and youth. However, the rise of moral decay among Malaysian teenagers is alarming, with cases of vandalism, verbal abuse of teachers, bullying leading to death, and emotional abuse causing depression (Shahnon, 2021). According to former Inspector-General of Police Mohamad Fuzi Harun (2019), youths are also increasingly involved in truancy, smoking, drug

abuse, and even serious crimes such as trafficking, gangsterism, and militancy. Addressing this decline is critical, as unchecked it poses great harm (mafsadah) to the nation. Quality education that emphasizes morals, ethics, and Islamic values is essential to protect children from destructive influences, ensuring both their individual future and the country's peace, security, and sovereignty.

2. Literature Review

The Concept of *Maqasid al-Shariah*

Islamic The education of Islamic children in Malaysia achieves *Maqasid Syariah* objective *ḥifẓ al-'aql* (protection of the mind) through cultivating sound reasoning and intellectual maturity, promoting a sense of knowledge and moral clearness (Auda, 2008). This includes how children are arrested into Qur'an literacy to instil adab and ethical code reasoning under the KAFA, PAFA, tahfiz system through *talaqqi* (face-to-face) learning, methods for writing by sound or dictation school called as *Tasmik*. efforts to include inquiry-based learning (KPM, 2015) combine modern pedagogy with classical traditions.

They also serve to strengthen *ḥifẓ al-dīn* (preservation of religion) through the reification of aqidah and fiqh (Sukatin et al., 2023). Islamic education's holistic aspect which integrates intelligence, spiritual-emotional and social responsibility (Irfan & Larsari, 2024). It nurtures good behaviours, compassion, and equilibrium on the pathway of the Prophet's *tazkiyah* (Ghazali, 2017). Institutions such as TASKA KEMAS, PASTI, TASKI and Little Caliph epitomized the state, non-state role in nurturing Islamic identity in face of thriving patronage for superior programmes (Malaysia Book of Records, 2017/2025).

Islamic education has, since the pondok and madrasah traditions, become officially institutionalized in national policy (Mughal & Ibrahim, 2021) as illustrated by Article 3 of the Federal Constitution and the Malaysia Education Blueprint (KPM, 2019). But problems still exist, such as lack of teacher training and resources, examination culture and access inequality (Hashim, 2006). Private institutions such as the Little Caliph and Genius Aulad ease this disparity, but these places are funded by fees whereas PASTI offers affordable options with links to PAS politics (Adibah Sulaiman et al., 2019). Problems notwithstanding, 'screening Islam' is at the heart of Malaysia's personality and it ensures that children retain their intellect as well as their faith in playing its part in nation-building.

Islamic Education for Children

Islamic education for children in Malaysia realizes the *Maqasid Syariah* purpose of *ḥifẓ al-'aql* (preservation of mind) by cultivating reasoning, intellectual development and moral clarity (Auda, 2008). In KAFA, PAFA, tahfiz and the KSSR curriculum, children are taught Qur'anic literacy, adab, and ethical reasoning, while *talaqqi*, *tasmik* and inquiry-based learning (KPM, 2015) translate time-honoured traditions into contemporary pedagogy. They establish the preservation of *ḥifẓ al-dīn* (preservation of religion) equally thereby ratifying aqidah and fiqh as they are (Sukatin et al., 2023). The comprehensive Islamic education inculcates cognitive, spiritual emotional and social aspects (Irfan & Larsari, 2024). It fosters good behaviours, empathy and balance as per the character-building model of the Prophet (Ghazali, 2017).

Children are inherently viewed as vulnerable on account of their developmental status that is more volatile and delicate than those of adults, therefore justifying a specific orbit for them in the sphere of human rights (Rahman, N.H.binti.A., & Yasin,R.bin. (2022)). That is why we can get many stories in the Qur'an about prophet childhood for example Prophet Ismail A.S., Prophet Yusuf A.S., Prophet Musa A.S, and our last prophets (Jum'ah, 2001). As the first World Conference on Muslim Education (Jeddah-Makkah, 1393 A.H./1977 A.D.) summarizes it, the aim of education in Islam is to create people who are balanced with respect to their physical development and cultivation of noble character. Such qualities can be achieved through the training of the soul, intellect, rational self, emotions, and the human senses. The

integration of all these elements is essential to strengthen faith and human submission to the power of Allah SWT (First World Conference on Muslim Education, 1977).

According to al-Ghazali, Islamic education for children also has its own unique principles and characteristics. These encompass aspects such as respect, affection, gentleness in nurturing, fairness, and gradual instruction. He further linked the purpose of education with the very purpose of life itself. Namely, to attain happiness by drawing closer to God. Thus, the philosophy of education is to instil within human beings, starting from childhood, obedience to religious teachings, thereby ensuring well-being and eternal happiness in the Hereafter (al-Ghazzali, 1999). All of these aspects are highly aligned with the natural disposition and instinct of children, who are likened to a white cloth that must be coloured with beneficial knowledge and nurturing education (Almuddin et al., 2016).

Maqasid al-Shariah in Children's Education

Based on the guidelines issued by the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) regarding the services of Taman Asuhan Kanak-Kanak (TASKA – Childcare Centres), TASKA has laid an important foundation in shaping children's character in terms of religion, life, intellect, dignity, and property. This is reflected in the TASKA curriculum, which covers modules centred on *fard al-'ain* (individual religious obligations), administration, human capital development, leadership, and management. According to Mohamed (2021) mentioned that great leadership will lead to the build-up of a society and an organization that is shining, radiant, and well respected. Hence, if a company wants to remain in the business for further years, then it is inevitable for it to have management and leadership. Leadership Leaders are more than just managers, because they are responsible not only for an organization's operational functions but also its living functions as it prepares individuals to live in its world.

All these aspects are crucial in nurturing children's character and, at the same time, serve as a means of preserving religion (إيمان al-dīn) within the framework of *Maqasid al-Shariah* (JAKIM, 2021). The attainment of the right to life is a pre-condition for the realization of all other SDGS 2030 targets. High-quality education, good health and overall well-being would not be possible unless every young person was resilient, nourished and active. (Yasin, R et. al, 2024) As for the first kind of *ṣarūriyyāt*—preservation of religion (إيمان al-dīn)—focus is put on giving faith a solid foundation in education of children. For example, in *Maqasid al-Shariah ṣif al-dīn* emphasizes the necessity to preserve Islam from the threat of its detractors. Meanwhile, love towards the country is said to be another added value that could bring a positive patriotic culture for individuals and society (Asmadi, 2003).

However, love for one's country that aligns with Islamic education must be directed towards upholding Islam and defending the symbols of Islam championed by the state. Protecting the nation from threats that could endanger Islam, and the country is a duty that should be instilled in the hearts and minds of every citizen, particularly from early childhood education. Conversely, if love for the country leads to excessive fanaticism or extremist behaviour, then it is strictly prohibited in Islam (Ahmad Sanusi, 2019).

According to Fatimah (2020), sexual education based on Islamic principles is extremely important to instil in children the awareness that preserving lineage is vital to ensuring well-being in both this world and the Hereafter. This can be observed through the manners taught to children, such as seeking permission before entering their parents' room, understanding modesty (*aurat*), protecting children from sexual influences, educating them about the rulings concerning puberty (*akil baligh*), marriage, and gender relations according to Islam, as well as the importance of self-restraint if they are not yet ready for marriage (Ulwan, 1988). In essence, survival rights encompass the right to life and other essential human necessities, including healthy food, shelter, medical care, health services, and security. Development rights encompass

all human rights, including education, knowledge, thought, conscience, and theology. (Rahman, N. H. binti A., & Yasin, R. bin. (2022).

3. Data and Methods

To achieve the objectives of this study, a qualitative approach was adopted through a literature review that included books, articles, journals, newspapers, official government websites, as well as relevant policies or circulars. The researcher reviewed the literature on Maqasid al-Shariah, child education and religious education. The researcher then further quantified religious schooling for children through Internet newspapers and government sites. Extracted data derived of these sources were then analysed, screened, interpreted and categorized based on three themes; *Maqasid al-Shariah* concept, Islamic education among children and its implementation at school in Muslim society (Othman Lebar, 2018).

4. Qualitative Research Methods

A qualitative research approach was used to collect data and extract insights from the analysis of both published literature and qualitative data collected from study participants. Initially, the study has employed the three-step search method suggested by Kraus et al., (2020) in carrying out a systematic review, including planning and conducting and reporting of the outcomes.

A stratified random sampling strategy was used to recruit preschool stakeholders from different types of sectors and areas for a representative group of participants providing qualitative data. According to Arksey and O'Malley's (2007), method for advancing research findings, provided a template for the PRISMA criteria used in data collection and summary of findings during qualitative review stage of the process. The study sample were semi-structured interviewees to gather up qualitative data, and the researcher developed a structure for extracting major ideas from those interviews. The thematic analyses were guided by Braun and Clarke's (2021) inductive theoretical commonality, which involves identifying, analyzing, and synthesizing patterns of themes in the data.

In order to meet the purposes of this study, a qualitative research design was used and literature-oriented approach has been adopted greatly. The reason for the use of this approach is because it is powerful in studying concepts, theories and practices about which depth of understanding rather than quantifying seems to be required (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The qualitative design allowed the researcher to analyse, interpret and synthesize the existing knowledge on *Maqasid al-Shariah*; child rearing and Islamic education for children especially at preschool levels respectively. The information was obtained from secondary sources in a systematic way via a review of books, peer-reviewed journal articles, academic dissertations, policy papers and circulars issued by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE), as well as reports provided by the Islamic bodies involved. Official governmental websites (Ministry of Education Malaysia, Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) and web-based newspapers were also scrutinized for ongoing discussions concerning child education and religious indoctrination in the country.

5. Results

It is the latest state of Islamic education for children in Malaysia which held strongly by government and non-government organizations. History of the development of Islamic education in the country is much dynamics, developed from pondok system into current Islamic preschool system. Traditional Islamic Pondok system make an evolving school training were match to modern educational demand. Islamic education has recently been incorporated into the state-curriculum, and consequently made more relevant and accessible (Hashim, 2006). This can be seen from the fact that several major boxes of preschool education have been created in the country, for example Taman Asuhan Kanak-Kanak (TASKA KEMAS), Taman Bimbingan Kanak-kanak, Jabatan Kemajuan Masyarakat (TABIKA KEMAS), Pusat Asuhan Tunas Islam (PASTI), and Taman Asuhan Kanak-Kanak Islam (TASKI). Despite the varying approach taken by

these preschools, they all aim to produce a well-rounded generation as aligned by Malaysia's National Philosophy of Education that focuses on achieving excellence in body, soul and spirit (KPM, 2019).

By this, it serves as a means for the achievement of preservation of intellect (ʿaql), that is, by providing an intentional fostering to human capital in terms of higher intellectual quality or quantity and balance individual with strong high quality and balanced intellect to address both physical and spiritual worlds (Mat Saad et al, 2021). As per the Malaysian Education Blueprint (PPPM) 2013–2025, which is a government mandate, fair and equal education for preschool to upper secondary level students is available. It is through such endeavour, that every child can have access to quality education in order for a generation that is balanced between duniawi and Ukhrawi or world and hereafter. Islamic education for children in Malaysia is organized under a holistic framework that includes spiritual, intellectual and moral values according to the Malaysian Education Blueprint (PPPM) 2013–2025.

According to Yasin, R. et. al (2025) mentioned that from Islamic perspective, success (*falah*) includes both material and spiritual success in the life. From a religious point of view, the God's word structure can be interpreted as part of God's discussing the importance of success. Another meaning of the concept of *Falah* is a success that is attained through obedience, virtuous deeds, and the pure faith with no association with polytheism. Muslim theologians stress that the all-encompassing wisdom of the Qur'an assumes that every facet of human life must lead to welfare in both worlds. This is a must that has been ordered from the Qur'an.

The plan underscores the role of the good education, as means to generate balanced generation based on Maqasid al-Shariah objectives that focus on protecting religion (*ʿif al-dīn*) and mind (*ʿaql*). It is demonstrated by the introduction of KAFA curriculum and Islamic Education subjects in secondary schools (Transformation of Islamic Education for Values-Driven Malaysians, 2022). Through this policy, the government is committed to ensuring full enrolment from preschool to secondary levels (PPPM, 2013). This is consistent with the National Education Policy, which seeks to produce a generation with high intellectual capacity, instilled with noble values, while keeping pace with the development of science and technology (Dasar Pendidikan Kebangsaan, 2012). The researcher views such commitments as part of the means (*wasilah*) to realise Maqasid al-Shariah. As al-Raysuni states, every effort to preserve religion (*ʿif al-dīn*) and mind (*ʿif al-ʿaql*) constitutes a means to fulfilling the objectives of Maqasid al-Shariah (al-Raysuni, 1995).

Furthermore, according to the provisions of the National Education Policy, the implementation of Islamic Education emphasises that Islamic education and *dakwah* (propagation) programmes to uphold the dignity of Islam must be carried out in every educational institution that has Muslim students. Muslim students are also given the opportunity to learn quality Islamic Education and Arabic. This is evidenced by the implementation of the Basic *Fardu Ain* Curriculum (PAFA) (Sukatin et al., 2023). Through PAFA, pupils are required to learn the foundations of faith (*aqidah*), including the pillars of faith, as well as *fiqh*, which encompasses the pillars of Islam. This strategy also ensures that Islamic education, *dakwah* programmes, and the symbols of Islam are implemented in all institutions with Muslim pupils (KPM, 2012). The researcher views this effort as a means (*wasilah*) to preserve the sanctity of Islam by exposing children to Islamic education. This is because every effort to strengthen the faith of Muslims through the agenda of Islamic education aligns with the objective of preserving religion (*ʿif al-dīn*) (al-Ghazzali, 2008).

In addition, under the National Education Policy, the implementation of Islamic Education for children is also prioritised by the government. This is reflected in JAKIM's efforts to implement the *Kelas al-Quran dan Fardu Ain* (KAFA). The objective of KAFA is to establish a structured, standardised, and integrated system of Qur'an and *fardu ain* learning across Malaysia, ensuring that Muslim children aged seven to twelve can learn and master Qur'anic recitation effectively, practise the essentials of *fardu ain*, and

strengthen the foundations of Islamic religious education through KAFA (JAKIM, 2021). The implementation of KAFA also acts as a dakwah toward the strengthening of aqidah dan personality (akhlak) of Muslim's kiddies in Malaysia. Hence, the researcher sees that KAFA's role in dakwah is synonymous to defending religion and safeguarding it from decay, as the task of dakwah does not simply rest on the shoulders of individuals but collectively (al-Bakri, 2019). Furthermore, the KSSR being enforced in Islamic Education subject is also parallel with the philosophy of Islamic Education whereby knowledge based on the Qur'an and Sunnah is taught to nurture students who are morally sound and integrated in terms of spiritual world) (KPM, 2015). This is extremely crucial for Islamic education in Malaysia because children have been exposed to the Islamic curriculum since Year One up to 10 until Year Six. This can be seen with the implementation of various methods such as *talaqqi musyafahah* (face-to-face recitation), *tasmik*, PBL (problem-based learning), and inquiry-based learning. The subjects are based on seven main fields; Al-Qur'an, Al-Hadith, belief (*Aqidah*), Worship (Ibadah), History (Sirah), Manners (Adab) and Jawi script itself. However, it is undeniable that amidst these progressive changes, there are still some problems to be grappled such as lack of teacher's training and exam-oriented pressure which may have profound effects on the effectiveness of Islamic education (Hashim, 2006). Commitments to children's rights and education in line with international standards also reinforce the need for continuous improvement in the education framework (Zaleha Kamaruddin et al., 2007). While the current framework of Islamic education in Malaysia shows potential in producing a balanced generation, persistent challenges demand further reforms to ensure that the education system is truly capable of shaping holistic individuals who can withstand the increasing challenges of life in the future (Hamidin, 2017).

Therefore, the existence of privately-owned or independent Islamic kindergartens and primary schools such as Little Caliph, TASKI, PASTI, SRITI, Tadika Sri Fursan Soleh, Genius Aulad, and others should be encouraged and financially supported by the Government. This is because such private institutions help fill the gaps in existing Islamic education provided by the State Islamic Religious Departments (JAIN) and People's Religious Schools (*Sekolah Agama Rakyat*) registered under the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) (Adibah Sulaiman et al., 2020). The curricula used in these private or independent Islamic educational institutions also provide an integrated approach, combining syllabi from JAIS and JAKIM. Some of these private institutions, such as Little Caliph, have received recognition from the Malaysia Book of Records (2017 & 2025), *The Best & Creative Islamic Kindergarten in Quality Education Programme* (2019), *Trusted Brand Gold* (2018, 2019), *Superbrand Malaysia Choice* (2019), and the *Malaysia Top Business Excellence Award* (2016). This is an attestation on the commitment of the owners and effectiveness of privately run Islamic schools in offering a turning into high quality Islamic education for young Muslims in Malaysia. The application has holistic modules that highlights academics and focuses on character building, leadership, social skills, emotional intelligence, physical abilities, spiritual I.Q., intellectual Q-G and many more! Research has shown that these entered institutions also focus moral life and character formation of children (Mughal & Ibrahim, 2021).

The religious education in these schools, called Islamic education is not partial to the religious aspect but includes teaching and nurturing moral, spiritual and ethical dimensions of an individual. "The Islamic education modules are designed to develop children's moral reasoning, empathy and self-concept which are vital to their character development" (Irfan & Larsari 2024). This encourages a deep spiritual connection which may help children to tackle life's problems with honour and meaning (Ghazali, 2017). The prepared Islamic Education Curriculum Modules for early childhood also elaborate the physical, emotional and spiritual aspect of growth that helps children to understand and practice Islamic teachings (Ghazali, 2017). Activities are designed based on child-centred approaches to support holistic development, including cognitive and social aspects (Ghazali, 2017). The parenting model of the Prophet Muhammad, such as leading by example and instilling motivation, is also important in nurturing children to become

responsible and God-conscious individuals (Ghazali, 2017). This clearly aligns with the principles of Maqasid al-Shariah, namely the preservation of religion (حفظ الدين) and intellect (حفظ العقل), which are greatly emphasised in Islam.

Table 1 below presents the various Islamic educational institutions for children in Malaysia, the methods of implementing Islamic education in these institutions, and the analysis findings of Maqasid al-Shariah elements derived from these methods:

Table 1: Implementation of Islamic Education for Children in Malaysia

Level of Education	Children's Educational Institution	Implementation of Islamic Education	Elements of Maqasid al-Shariah
Pre-school	TASTI (3-4 years old)	National Curriculum (MOE) integrated with Islamic education fundamentals such as prayer, daily supplications, morals (<i>akhlak</i>), and prophetic stories (<i>sirah al-anbiya</i>). Includes exposure to Qur'an memorisation (beginning with Juz' 30), basic Jawi, Arabic, and English. Activities are play-based, with approaches such as Montessori or the Khalifah Method applied depending on the suitability of the centre.	Preservation of Religion (حفظ الدين) and Preservation of Intellect (حفظ العقل)
	Junior Playschool Little Caliphs (2-3 years old)	Educational programme that emphasises fine motor development, early socialisation, and exposure to basic Islamic values within a safe and cheerful environment.	Preservation of Religion (حفظ الدين) and Preservation of Intellect (حفظ العقل)
	GENIUS AULAD	The Islamic kindergarten curriculum adopts a Genius-Balanced approach, which encompasses auditory, kinaesthetic, and visual learning styles. It integrates book-based and activity-based learning, as well as early	Preservation of Religion (حفظ الدين) and Preservation of Intellect (حفظ العقل)

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		reading techniques and technology.	
	Little Caliphs (4-6 years old)	The Little Caliphs Education Module complies with the MOE Preschool Curriculum and offers 13 integrated modules covering: Islamic practices in daily life (prayer, supplications, morals) Islamic studies (tauhid, fiqh, aqidah), <i>Iqra'</i> (Little Qari), Qur'an memorisation (Huffaz system), Islamic science, basic construction & creativity, physical development, Islamic mathematics strategies, and fast-track literacy in reading & writing (Malay & English) Arts and crafts, thematic vocabulary, children's Islamic leadership Integrated and hands-on approaches Early exposure to Islam to instil the understanding that Allah is the Creator, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the role model (<i>qudwah</i>), and Islam is a way of life	Preservation of Religion (<i>ḥifẓ al-dīn</i>) and Preservation of Intellect (<i>ḥifẓ al-'aql</i>)
	Tadika Khalifah Intelek (3-6 years old)	Holistic (Islamic) learning approach. Fun, play-based learning environment. A curriculum that makes children enjoy learning.	Preservation of Religion (<i>ḥifẓ al-dīn</i>) and Preservation of Intellect (<i>ḥifẓ al-'aql</i>)
	TABIKA	Modules of the Islamic Appreciation Programme – <i>fardu ain</i> , <i>fardu kifayah</i> , and memorisation of selected	Preservation of Religion (<i>ḥifẓ al-dīn</i>) and Preservation of Intellect (<i>ḥifẓ al-'aql</i>)

		surahs. Mind Development Activity Module.	
	PASTI	Modules on Islam, Faith (Iman), and Excellence (Ihsan). Supporting curriculum on rational sciences ('Ilm al-'Aqli) and Fardu Kifayah. Pre-Tahfiz Module. Mind Development Activity Module.	Preservation of Religion (﴿if﴾ al-dīn) and Preservation of Intellect (﴿if﴾ al-'aql)
	TASKI	Islamic Education Module (Sirah, Morality/Akhlak, Creed/Aqidah, and Worship/Ibadah). Arabic language and memorisation of selected surahs. Tahfiz Programme. Mind Development Activity Module.	Preservation of Religion (﴿if﴾ al-dīn) and Preservation of Intellect (﴿if﴾ al-'aql)
	TASKA	Basic <i>Fardu Ain</i> Module. Creativity activities for mind development.	Preservation of Religion (﴿if﴾ al-dīn) and Preservation of Intellect (﴿if﴾ al-'aql)
Primary School	National Primary School	Islamic Education Module, KSSR. Problem-Based Learning (PBL)	Preservation of Religion (﴿if﴾ al-dīn) and Preservation of Intellect (﴿if﴾ al-'aql)
	State Integrated Islamic Religious Primary School	Islamic Education Module of the State of Selangor, KSSR. Problem-Based Learning (PBL).	Preservation of Religion (﴿if﴾ al-dīn) and Preservation of Intellect (﴿if﴾ al-'aql)
	Integrated Islamic Core Primary School (SRITI)	Qur'an and Sunnah Tahfiz, KSSR, <i>Diniyah</i> Curriculum (KAFA), <i>Fardu Ain</i> and <i>Fardu Kifayah</i> Curriculum (KAFFAH). Problem-Based Learning (PBL).	Preservation of Religion (﴿if﴾ al-dīn) and Preservation of Intellect (﴿if﴾ al-'aql)

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	Integrated Islamic School (SRI/Islamic Primary School) & Islamic Secondary School (SMI)	Balanced Islamic and academic education, with emphasis on Qur'an memorisation, manners (<i>adab</i>), and <i>dakwah</i> (Islamic propagation).	Preservation of Religion (﴿if﴾ <i>al-dīn</i>) and Preservation of Intellect (﴿if﴾ <i>al-'aql</i>)
	Hira' Islamic Primary School / Hira' Islamic Secondary School	KSSR Curriculum + Islamic Education, optional Tahfiz, with students taught the basics of <i>fiqh</i> , <i>sirah</i> , and Arabic.	Preservation of Religion (﴿if﴾ <i>al-dīn</i>) and Preservation of Intellect (﴿if﴾ <i>al-'aql</i>)
	Darul Huda Islamic Primary School & Darul Huda Islamic Secondary School	Combination of Tahfiz and academic education	Preservation of Religion (﴿if﴾ <i>al-dīn</i>) and Preservation of Intellect (﴿if﴾ <i>al-'aql</i>)
	KAFA Sri Fursan Soleh	An integrated education system combining syllabi from JAIS and JAKIM, covering subjects such as Arabic, Fiqh, Jawi, Sirah, Aqidah, Morality (<i>Akhlak</i>), Tajwid, Qur'an & Memorisation, <i>Fardu Ain</i>, and Tawhid. There are also additional modules such as the Al-Fateh Leadership Module, designed to train students to become leaders of integrity based on Islamic values, inspired by the leadership of Sultan Muhammad Al-Fateh. Another is the QINGO Module, an interactive approach that combines Bingo with Qur'an learning to make it more enjoyable and easier to understand. Other modules include Fun Learning (a creative and engaging learning method) and Show & Tell (developing self-	Preservation of Religion (﴿if﴾ <i>al-dīn</i>) and Preservation of Intellect (﴿if﴾ <i>al-'aql</i>)

		confidence through presentations and interactive idea sharing).	
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Based on the table above, it is shown that the implementation of Islamic religious education at the preschool and primary school levels is dominant in Malaysia. The inculcation of Islamic education values can be observed as early as preschool through the integrated curriculum approach, tahfiz integration, and activities that contribute to children's cognitive development. At the primary school level, children are exposed to a more comprehensive stage of Islamic education, which includes extended *fardu ain* and *fardu kifayah* modules, as well as problem-based learning (PBL). In state Islamic primary schools and Integrated Islamic Core Primary Schools (SRITI), combined modules integrating tahfiz and KSSR are applied. All of these forms of Islamic education at preschool and primary levels align with the elements of *Maqasid al-Shariah*, namely the preservation of religion (◉if◉ al-dīn) and intellect (◉if◉ al-'aql).

6. Discussion

In Malaysia, Islamic education for children is not only religious instruction but also an opportunity to realise the Maqasid Syariah of ◉if◉ al-'aql (protection of the mind) (Auda, 2008). It instills the power of intellect, moral clarity and spiritual maturity in Islamic values, while preserving them from destructive ideologies in the social media era (Al-Attas, 1993). Children, through exposure to KAFA, PAFA, tahfiz and the KSSR curriculum, acquired Qur'anic literacy and adab as well as developed ethical reasoning employing classical methods of *talaqqi* (or pegging words), *tasmik* (hearing Holy Book read by teacher) infused within modern pedagogy in Inquiry based learning process (KPM 2015). These structures further promote ◉if◉ al-dīn (preservation of religion) through enhancing the understanding of aqidah and fiqh (Sukatin et al., 2023).

Islamic education in Malaysia subscribes to the holistic view of education which somehow, values the intellectual, spiritual, emotional and social development (Irfan & Larsari, 2024). It inculcates good manners, empathy and social responsibility consistent with the model of education for character development practiced by the Prophet (Ghazali 2017). Entities such as TASKA KEMAS, PASTI, TASKI and Little Caliph are a testament of state as well as non-state initiatives to enhance Islamic identity due to the increasing demand for quality Islamic education (Malaysia Book of Records, 2017, 2025). But barriers still exist: restricted training for teachers, lack of resources, exam-centric practices, unevenness in rural versus urban facilities along with access (Hashim 2006). Private kindergartens like Little Caliph and Genius Aulad help to bridge the education divide, but they rely on fees. On the other hand, PASTI (initiated by the country's opposition, that is, the Islamic Party of Malaysia/PAS) creates a viable alternative. (Adibah Sulaiman et al., 2020). In general, Islamic education continues to be central to Malaysia's identity and by aligning it with Maqasid Syariah can ensure that such Islamic knowledge serves not only as a religious guidance but also an instrument for nation-building. Fields for the state and private institutions to ensure satisfactory maqasid-oriented achievement of children need further investigation.

7. Conclusion

Islamic education for children in Malaysia plays a role not only in religious teaching, but also to achieve the Maqasid Syariah especially ◉if◉ al-'aql (preservation of mind) (Auda, 2008). It enhances reason, moral clarity and intellectual maturity within Islamic values whilst shielding children in a digital age from dangerous ideologies (Al-Attas, 1993). Via KAFA, PAFA, tahfiz, and the KSSR curriculum students are nurtured with qur'anic literacy, adab and moral reasoning; classical methods of *talaqqi*, *tasmik*, and inquiry-based learning are incorporated into contemporary pedagogic approach (KPM, 2015). This scaffold also

supports *ḥifẓ al-dīn* (preservation of religion) by strengthening the understanding of belief (*aqidah*) and law (*fiqh*) (Sukatin et al., 2023).

The teachings of Islam in Malaysia is based on holistic development, where the educational model values intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and social skills (Irfan & Larsari, 2024). It induces good manners (*akhlak*), empathy and social responsibility through the Prophetic approach of character building (Ghazali, 2017). Establishments like TASKA KEMAS, PASTI, TASKI, and Little Caliph are also examples of state and non-state attempts to reinforce Islamic aPriori identity in response to greater demand for high-quality Islamic education (MalaysiaBook of Records, 2017 p. h18) and citizenry (Malaysia Book of Records, 2025).

In summary, the provision of Islamic education for children in Malaysia starts at preschool level and exposes them to basic knowledge of fardu ain which includes belief (*aqidah*), law (*fiqh*) and morals (*akhlak*). Children are also exposed to intellectual and cognitive-enriching activities such as play and problem-based learning (PBL). They are also exposed to information about healthy and nutritious diet through preschool and primary school curricula. As such, the facilitation of an Islamic education for children in Malaysia serves to inculcate Islamic perspective into their cognitive system. This obliquely confirms and is in concurrence with the means (*wasilah*) of Maqasid al-Shariah, particularly *ḥifẓ al-dīn*, *ḥifẓ al-a'ql* as related to preserving religion and intellect.

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