Journal of Nusantara Studies 2026, Vol 11(1) 214-231 ISSN 0127-9386 (Online)
http://dx.doi.org/10.24200/jonus.vol11iss1pp214-231

TOWARDS DEVELOPING AN ISLAMIC AFFAIRS MANAGEMENT INDEX IN MALAYSIA: A FRAMEWORK BASED ON THE ANALYTIC HIERARCHY PROCESS

*[1]Mohd Ikhwan Izzat Zulkefli, [2]Mohd Nuri Al-Amin Endut, [2]Muhammad Ridhuan Tony Lim Abdullah, [3]Farrah Ilyani Che Jamaludin & [1]Syaaibah Zulkipli

[1] Department of Management, Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS,
32610 Seri Iskandar, Perak, Malaysia.
[2] Faculty of Science, Management & Computing, Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS,
32610 Seri Iskandar, Perak, Malaysia.
[3] Faculty of Bioeconomic, Food and Health Sciences, Universiti Geomatika Malaysia,
Wisma Prima Peninsula, Taman Setiawangsa, 54200 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
*Corresponding author: ikhwanmuslimin92@gmail.com

Received: 20.09.2025 Accepted: 04.02.2026

ABSTRACT

Background and Purpose: In Malaysia, Islamic affairs significantly influence various aspects of governance, social policy, and community life. Despite their importance, there is currently a lack of an index to evaluate the efforts and policies implemented in this domain. As a result, policymakers face challenges in monitoring and guiding the progress of these initiatives. Therefore, this study aims to develop a framework for the Islamic Affairs Management Index (IAMI) to assess the performance of Islamic affairs management in Malaysia.

Methodology: The study employed the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) to determine and prioritise indicators and sub-indicators of Islamic affairs. The index framework was constructed based on input from twelve (12) experts, including policymakers, policy executors, academicians, and representatives from non-governmental organisations.

Findings: The study found that Islamic Religious Education (LW = 0.160) is the top priority in evaluating Islamic affairs management, followed by Islamic Family Management (LW = 0.152) and Performance of Islamic Affairs Management (LW = 0.128). At the sub-indicator level, the 'Quality of Religious Schools' (GW = 0.068) was identified as the most critical, followed by 'Performance of Religious School Students' (GW = 0.055) and 'Children Management' (GW = 0.052). These results highlight the key role of educational quality and family management in evaluating Islamic affairs.

Contributions: This study provides a practical tool for Islamic institutions to evaluate and enhance the management of Islamic affairs, supporting informed policy decisions and strategic improvements.

Keywords: Islamic affairs management, index framework, performance assessment, Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), Malaysia.

Cite as: Zulkefli, M. I. I., Endut, M. N. A., Abdullah, M. R. T. L., Che Jamaludin, F. I., & Zulkipli, S. (2026). Towards developing an Islamic affairs management index in Malaysia: A framework based on the analytic hierarchy process. *Journal of Nusantara Studies, 11*(1), 214-231. http://dx.doi.org/10.24200/jonus.vol11iss1pp214-231

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is a predominantly Muslim country, with Islam constitutionally recognized as the official religion of the Federation (Zulkefli et al., 2024). Matters pertaining to Islam are accorded priority in national governance (Jamil, 2022), thereby positioning Islam as the dominant religion within the country's legal framework (Salleh et al., 2021). Consequently, Islamic principles and institutions play a central role in shaping the daily lives and socio-religious practices of Malaysian Muslims (Musa, 2022). In 2020, the Muslim population was estimated at approximately 20.6 million, representing 63.5% of the total population (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2022). Given this demographic significance, the effective management of Islamic affairs is essential for safeguarding the religious interests, well-being, and development of the Muslim community. Nevertheless, persistent concerns have been raised regarding the capacity of Islamic institutions to protect and promote the welfare and interests of Muslims (Yazid et al., 2020).

In response to these challenges, several national plans and strategic initiatives have been introduced to strengthen the administration of Islamic affairs. These include the JAKIM Human Capital Development Strategic Action Plan (JAKIM, 2021), the Strategic Plan for Religious Affairs 2022-2026 (JAKIM, 2023a), the Transformation Plan for Religious Affairs Towards a Civilizational Malaysia (Al-Falah) 2023-2027 (JAKIM, 2023b), and the Islamic Social Action Plan (PTSI) (JAKIM, 2024). While these policy documents provide important strategic direction and developmental guidance, they primarily emphasize planning and implementation rather than performance evaluation. Consequently, the performance of Islamic affairs management remains insufficiently understood, as it has yet to be assessed in a comprehensive and holistic manner (Zulkefli et al., 2023). Although the Malaysian Shariah Index (MSI), introduced by JAKIM (2015), represents a significant effort to assess government policies based on the Maqasid Shariah across multiple sectors, it does not specifically evaluate the performance of Islamic affairs management. The absence of a standardized performance measurement tool may therefore hinder effective planning, strategic direction, and institutional improvement due to limited performance monitoring and evaluative capacity (Zulkefli et al., 2023).

Against this backdrop, the development of an Islamic Affairs Management Index (IAMI) is both timely and necessary. An index is widely recognised as an analytical instrument that integrates multiple indicators to provide a comprehensive assessment of complex phenomena (Chen et al., 2021). The proposed IAMI seeks to address existing gaps by offering a mechanism for evaluating Islamic affairs policies and programmes, thereby supporting policy formulation and evaluation (Tram et al., 2023), improving resource allocation, enhancing strategic planning, and enabling targeted interventions (Awang et al., 2019; Kurniawan et al., 2025). Its periodic application would facilitate long-term policy evaluation, strengthen transparency and accountability, support progress monitoring, and promote evidence-based decision-making (Hamra et al., 2020; Terzi et al., 2021). Therefore, the proposed IAMI framework has the potential to serve as an integrated assessment tool, enabling policymakers and relevant stakeholders to make informed and strategic decisions to enhance the management of Islamic affairs in Malaysia.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Islamic Affairs Management and Performance Measurement

Islamic affairs in Malaysia encompass a broad range of responsibilities, including mosque management, enforcement, halal management, Islamic education, Islamic family law, da'wah,

and the administration of zakat, waqf, and Baitulmal (Ghani et al., 2023; Ibrahim et al., 2024; Shuaib, 2008). These responsibilities are regulated under Article 74(2) of the Federal Constitution and the State List in the Ninth Schedule, which grants authority to the State Islamic Religious Councils and Departments (Salleh et al., 2021; Yazid et al., 2020). Islamic affairs management reflects the holistic nature of Islam as a way of life, integrating spiritual, social, legal, and administrative dimensions (Ali Mohamed & Ahmad, 2021; Uyuni & Adnan, 2020). Despite its importance, research on the performance measurement of Islamic affairs management remains limited. Most existing studies focus on human development, economic outcomes, or individual religiosity, leaving the management of Islamic affairs largely unexplored.

The multidimensional nature of Islamic affairs makes conventional single-indicator performance measurement insufficient. Multi-indicator indices, widely applied in the social sciences, provide a useful model for assessing complex phenomena by combining multiple indicators into a single framework for benchmarking, policy evaluation, and institutional comparison (Greco et al., 2019; Lauro et al., 2018; Nardo et al., 2005; UNECE, 2019; Zhou et al., 2012). However, constructing such indices involves critical methodological choices, including indicator selection, weighting, and aggregation, which directly affect the validity and reliability of the measurement (Güdemann & Münnich, 2023). These methodological considerations are particularly crucial when developing an Islamic Affairs Management Index (IAMI) to ensure a robust framework for evaluating performance.

2.2 Previous Studies on Islamic Indices

As shown in Table 1, a growing number of studies have developed Islamic-based indices to measure Islamization, religiosity, socio-economic development, governance, and well-being. At the local level, the Islamization Index (Omar et al., 2014), the Malaysian Ummah Development Index (MUDI) (Nor, 2014), the Malaysian Shariah Index (MSI) (JAKIM, 2015), and the Islamic Index for Pangkor Island (Fauzi et al., 2016) provide insights into Islamization trends, policy compliance, and religiosity levels. While these studies are valuable for understanding macro-level development and religious engagement, they primarily evaluate outcomes rather than the performance of Islamic affairs management. For instance, the MSI assesses policy alignment with Maqasid Shariah but does not measure the performance of Islamic affairs management.

At the international level, indices such as the Islamic Human Development Index (Aydin, 2017; Rama & Yusuf, 2019), the Islamic Development Index (Kanbir & Dikkaya, 2021), and the Islamic Well-Being Index (Batchelor, 2021) integrate material, spiritual, moral, and governance dimensions, demonstrating the feasibility of multi-dimensional measurement. However, these indices focus on macro- or provincial-level outcomes and are not designed to evaluate the performance of Islamic affairs management. These studies highlight a clear research gap, as there is currently no comprehensive framework in Malaysia to assess Islamic affairs management, which is an essential tool for evidence-based policy and operational improvements. This study aims to fill this gap by developing an Islamic Affairs Management Index (IAMI) framework tailored to the Malaysian context.

Table 1: Previous studies on Islamic indices

Author & Index	Purpose	Domain	Research Gap
Omar et al. (2014) Islamization Index	To examine the extent and trend of Islamization in Malaysia (1969–2011).	• Islamic Faith: ratio of mosques and suraus to population, zakat payers, Tabung Haji depositors. • Islamic Education: adult literacy, enrolment in Islamic schools.	Focuses on Islamization trends, not Islamic affairs performance.

		• Islamic Capital: Islamic banking/takaful share, Islamic capital & PNB contribution to GDP.	
Nor (2014) Malaysian Ummah Development Index (MUDI)	To assess the level of development achieved by Muslims in Malaysia.	• Economic Development. • Social Development. • Spiritual Development. • 21 sub-indicators across these domains.	Focuses on macro socio-economic and spiritual development, not Islamic affairs performance.
JAKIM (2015) Malaysian Shariah Index (MSI)	To measure the compliance of government policies and programmes with Maqasid al-Shariah.	• Eight sectors: Legislation, Politics, Economy, Education, Health, Culture, Infrastructure & Environment, Social Affairs. • Assessed through five Maqasid objectives: Hifz al-Din, Nafs, 'Aql, Nasl, Mal.	Measures national policy alignment, whereas this study focuses on Islamic affairs.
Fauzi et al. (2016) Islamic Index for Pangkor Island	To measure Islamic adherence and understanding among Muslims on Pangkor Island.	• Three principles: Iman, Islam, Ihsan. • 19 indicators including prayer, Qur'an reading, mosque attendance, religious classes, Tabung Haji, community involvement, moral conduct.	Focuses on individual religiosity, not institutional Islamic affairs.
Aydin (2017) Islamic Human Development Index (iHDI)	To provide a conceptual and empirical model of iHDI using data from ten Muslim countries.	• Eight dimensions: physical, reasoning, spiritual, ethical, animal, social, deciding, oppressive selves. • Nine indices: education, health, income, spirituality, corruption, morality, social, freedom, safety.	Measures macro-level human development, not Malaysian institutional Islamic affairs.
Rama and Yusuf (2019) Islamic Human Development Index (I-HDI)	To evaluate human development across 33 Indonesian provinces.	• Five Maqasid dimensions: Religion, Life, Intellect, Family, Wealth. • Five indicators and 13 sub-indicators.	Focuses on human development, not Islamic affairs.
Kanbir and Dikkaya (2021) Islamic Development Index (IDI)	To construct an Islamic development index to measure the economic development of 148 countries.	• Material development (9 indicators): income, health, education, unemployment, poverty, Islamic finance, inflation, taxes, competitiveness. • Spiritual development (10 indicators): peace, happiness, social aid, international aid, democracy, corruption, crime, environment.	Measures the global macro-level of economic development, not national Islamic affairs at the institutional level.
Batchelor (2021) Islamic Well-Being Index (IWI 2.0)	To measure well-being levels in Muslim-majority countries.	• Five Maqasid dimensions: - Din: mosque attendance, prayer, religiosity. - Nafs: peace, poverty, homicide, life expectancy, environment. - 'Aql: literacy, human capital, female education, press freedom. - Nasl: mortality, marriage/divorce, fertility. - Mal: Gini, unemployment, corruption, ecological footprint, Islamic finance.	Measures national well-being, while this study focuses on Islamic affairs in Malaysia.

3.0 RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Analytic Hierarchy Process

This study employed the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) to develop the framework for the Islamic Affairs Management Index (IAMI). AHP, introduced by Saaty (1980), is a widely used method for capturing and quantifying expert judgments in multi-criteria decision-making

(MCDM) (Tavana et al., 2023), particularly in addressing complex decision problems (Lestari et al., 2023). It is an approach in which experts apply their knowledge to generate rankings and weights through pairwise comparisons, resulting in a comparison matrix derived from eigenvalue calculations (Saranya & Saravanan, 2020). Through this process, priority weights are produced and subsequently aggregated to support decision-making. In this study, weighting was implemented by asking experts to compare indicators and sub-indicators based on their relative importance (Sutadian et al., 2016), with the aim of assigning and prioritising weights to assess the performance of Islamic affairs management in Malaysia.

3.2 Study Sample

This study involved twelve (12) experts selected using a purposive sampling technique. Unlike conventional quantitative approaches, the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) does not impose strict requirements on minimum sample size (Darko et al., 2018; Zaidi et al., 2022). Previous studies have successfully employed small expert panels, such as ten experts (Tu et al., 2020), seven experts (Ilham et al., 2022), and nine experts (Merhi, 2021). Moreover, involving a larger number of experts may increase response inconsistency, which can negatively affect the reliability of pairwise comparisons (Waris et al., 2019).

The experts in this study were selected through a rigorous process that considered their knowledge, academic qualifications, research contributions, and practical experience in Islamic affairs management. Based on established guidelines, five criteria were used for expert selection (Zulkefli et al., 2024, 2025):

1. The experts must have extensive knowledge of Islamic affairs management.
2. The experts must have at least five years of work experience in their respective fields.
3. The experts must have at least a bachelor's degree, and with a doctorate required for academics.
4. The experts who agree to participate must fully commit to the duration of the study.
5. The experts must have excellent communication skills.

In addition, the experts were selected from diverse professional backgrounds to ensure balanced perspectives, including policymakers, policy executors, academics, and representatives from non-governmental organisations (NGOs). This diversity was intended to ensure that the indicators and sub-indicators for the development of the IAMI framework were evaluated by a well-rounded group of expert (Zulkefli et al., 2024). The list of experts involved in this study is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: List of experts

Stakeholders	Working Experiences (Years)	No. of Experts
Policy Makers	10 years and above	2
Policy Executors		5
Academics		3
Non-Governmental Organisations		2

3.3 Instrument

This study used a survey questionnaire to collect data from the experts. The questionnaire was constructed based on a review of previous literature and small group discussions using the nominal group technique (NGT). It consists of three main sections. The first section gathers demographic information from the experts. The second section focuses on indicators of Islamic affairs and comprises 45 items. The third section focuses on sub-indicators of Islamic affairs and consists of 53 items. All items were rated using a nine-point scale, ranging from 1 = equal importance to 9 = extreme importance (Saaty, 2008), as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: The nine-point scale

Intensity of Importance	Definition
1	Equal importance
2	Weak or slight
3	Moderate importance
4	Moderate plus
5	Strong importance
6	Strong plus
7	Very strong or demonstrated importance
8	Very, very strong
9	Extreme importance

3.4 Data Analysis

In this study, the AHP was used to determine the weights and prioritise the indicators and sub-indicators of Islamic affairs. The analysis was carried out using the AHP Expert Choice 11.0 software package, developed by Expert Choice Inc. (Herdhiansyah et al., 2022; Zulkefli, 2021). The procedure followed these steps:

Step 1: Defining the Goal of the Study
The first step was to define the main goal of the study, which aimed to develop a framework for the Islamic Affairs Management Index (IAMI) in Malaysia.

Step 2: Establishing Hierarchical Structure
After defining the goal, a hierarchical structure was created in a top-down manner, consisting of multiple levels (Waris et al., 2019). The first level represents the goal of study, the second level represents the indicators, and the third level represents the sub-indicators required to achieve the goal.

Step 3: Establishing Pairwise Comparison Matrix
The relative importance of each indicator and sub-indicator was determined by comparing them in pairs. At each level of the hierarchy, indicators and sub-indicators were compared with members of the same group (Waris et al., 2019) using a nine-point scale ranging from 1 = equal importance to 9 = extreme importance (Saaty, 2008).

Step 4: Determining Relative Weights

The relative weights for each indicator and sub-indicator were estimated using the eigenvector method (Waris et al., 2019) because of its mathematical soundness and ability to ensure consistency in expert judgments (Lukinskiy et al., 2025). This method involves computing the principal eigenvector of the pairwise comparison matrix, which represents the priority weights (Ghimire & Kim, 2018). The eigenvector is then normalised so that the sum of all weights equals one. These weights are later used to calculate the weighted scores for the IAMI framework.

Step 5: Determining Consistency Ratio
The final step was to calculate the level of consistency, where the acceptable consistency ratio (CR) should be less than or equal to 0.10 (Waris et al., 2019). The CR is determined by analysing the consistency index (CI) and the random index (RI) (Awad & Jung, 2022). The CI is calculated based on the maximum eigenvalue of the comparison matrix, while the RI is derived from a table of random consistency values. The CR is then computed as the ratio of CI to RI.

The formulas are:

$$CI = (\lambda max - n)/ (n-1)$$

where λmax is the maximum eigenvalue and n is the size of the matrix.

Then,

$$CR = CI/RI$$

The RI values used in this study are taken from Ishizaka and Labib (2009) based on the original values proposed by Saaty (1977). Table 4 shows the RI values for different numbers of elements (Londoño-Pineda et al., 2021).

Table 4: Random index

n	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
RI	0	0	0.58	0.90	1.12	1.24	1.32	1.41	1.45	1.49

4.0 RESULTS

This study developed a framework for the IAMI based on experts' views. The results are categorised into (i) local weights of indicators, (ii) local weights of sub-indicators, and (iii) global weights of sub-indicators. As shown in Table 5, the results of the relative importance of indicators of Islamic affairs show that the Consistency Ratio (CR) for each group was less than 0.10, indicating that the comparisons are consistent (Jamaludin et al., 2025).

The findings show that Islamic Religious Education ranks first, with the highest priority (LW = 0.160). This is followed by Islamic Family Management (LW = 0.152) and Performance of Islamic Affairs Management (LW = 0.128). On the other hand, other indicators such as Societal Well-Being (LW = 0.071) and Halal Management (LW = 0.042) were given lower priority. These findings indicate that aspects related to Islamic education and family development are important and should be prioritised when assessing the performance of Islamic affairs management. The consistency ratio (CR) of 0.02 further supports the reliability of the findings, as a CR ≤ 0.10 is considered acceptable (Waris et al., 2019).

In addition, the results indicate that 'Performance of Religious School Students' (LW = 0.426) within Islamic Religious Education is the most significant sub-indicator, followed by 'Quality of Religious Schools' (LW = 0.345) and 'Tendency to Choose Religious Schools'

(LW = 0.229). For Islamic Family Management, 'Children Management' emerged as the most important sub-indicator (LW = 0.342), followed by 'Management of Families with Special Needs' (LW = 0.199) and 'Intervention for Troubled Families' (LW = 0.187). The analysis also highlights the importance of 'Professional Skills' (LW = 0.373) within Performance of Islamic Affairs Management, followed by 'Delivery System' (LW = 0.248) and 'Utilisation of Current Technology' (LW = 0.207).

Furthermore, the global weight of the sub-indicators was calculated by multiplying the local weight of each indicator by the local weight of its corresponding sub-indicator. The results show that 'Quality of Religious Schools' (GW = 0.068) was the most important sub-indicator and ranked first overall. This is followed by 'Performance of Religious School Students' (GW = 0.055), 'Children Management' (GW = 0.052), 'Professional Skills' (GW = 0.048), and 'Adherence to Ahl Sunnah Wal Jamaʿah' (GW = 0.045). In contrast, 'Shariah Criminal Offense Rate' (GW = 0.008) and 'Infrastructure Facilities' (GW = 0.007) were ranked thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh, respectively, indicating that these sub-indicators were given lower priority compared to the others in assessing Islamic affairs management.

The IAMI framework was arranged based on the AHP analysis using the priority weights obtained from expert judgement. The framework encompasses indicators and sub-indicators that are organised according to their weightage values to allow comparative evaluation among the indicators. By presenting the indicators and sub-indicators in an ordered manner, the framework helps to highlight the aspects that require greater attention and priority in Islamic affairs management. This framework serves as a guideline for the assessment of Islamic affairs management in the Malaysian context. Figure 1 presents the framework for the Islamic Affairs Management Index (IAMI).

 ISSN 0127-9386 (Online)

Table 5: Priority weights and rankings of indicators and sub-indicators for the Islamic affairs management index framework

Indicators	**Local Weights (LW)**	**Rank**	**Sub-Indicators**	**Local Weights (LW)**	**Rank**	**Global Weights (GW)**	**Rank**
Mosque management and enlivenment	0.076	6	Professional management	0.309	1	0.023	21
			Mosque activities and services	0.177	3	0.013	32
			Infrastructure facilities	0.095	5	0.007	37
			Financial management	0.282	2	0.021	25
			Support from *qaryah* members	0.137	4	0.010	35
			Consistency Ratio = 0.02				
Islamic family management	0.152	2	Marriage rate according to regulations	0.155	4	0.024	20
			Increase in the marriage rate	0.117	5	0.018	28
			Children management	0.342	1	0.052	3
			Management of families with special needs	0.199	2	0.030	12
			Intervention for troubled families	0.187	3	0.028	13
			Consistency Ratio = 0.03				
Performance of Islamic affairs management	0.128	3	Professional skills	0.373	1	0.048	4
			Delivery system	0.248	2	0.032	11
			Program effectiveness	0.172	4	0.022	22
			Utilisation of current technology	0.207	3	0.026	17
			Consistency Ratio = 0.01				
Baitulmal management	0.075	7	Collection and acquisition of baitulmal revenue	0.287	3	0.022	23
			Distribution of revenue	0.367	1	0.028	14
			Development and utilisation of revenue	0.345	2	0.026	16
			Consistency Ratio = 0.00002				
Enforcement and compliance of law	0.074	8	Shariah criminal offences rate	0.113	4	0.008	36
			Regulatory compliance and monitoring	0.261	3	0.019	27
			Case handling and resolution	0.335	1	0.025	19
			Enactment of law	0.291	2	0.022	24
			Consistency Ratio = 0.00857				
Understanding and appreciation of Islam	0.118	4	Lifelong learning	0.295	3	0.035	10
			Adherence to *Ahl Sunnah Wal Jamaʿah*	0.381	1	0.045	5
			Living according to Shariah	0.324	2	0.038	8
			Consistency Ratio = 0.00202				
Societal well-being	0.071	9	Trustworthiness and integrity	0.548	1	0.039	6
			Diversity management	0.177	3	0.013	33
			Individual well-being	0.274	2	0.019	26

ISSN 0127-9386 (Online)

			Consistency Ratio = 0.00327				
Islamic religious education	0.160	1	Tendency to choose religious schools	0.229	3	0.037	9
			Performance of religious school students	0.426	1	0.055	2
			Quality of religious schools	0.345	2	0.068	1
			Consistency Ratio = 0.00038				
Halal management	0.042	10	Halal certification	0.239	3	0.010	34
			Community awareness of halal certification	0.376	2	0.016	29
			Enforcement and monitoring of halal certificates	0.385	1	0.016	30
			Consistency Ratio = 0.00807				
Da'wah and tarbiyah	0.106	5	Number of new converts	0.129	4	0.014	31
			Methods of conveying da'wah	0.361	1	0.038	7
			Content of da'wah	0.244	3	0.026	18
			Assessment and monitoring of da'wah	0.265	2	0.028	15
Consistency Ratio = 0.02			*Consistency Ratio = 0.02*				

Journal of Nusantara Studies 2026, Vol 11(1) 214-231
http://dx.doi.org/10.24200/jonus.vol11iss1pp214-231
ISSN 0127-9386 (Online)

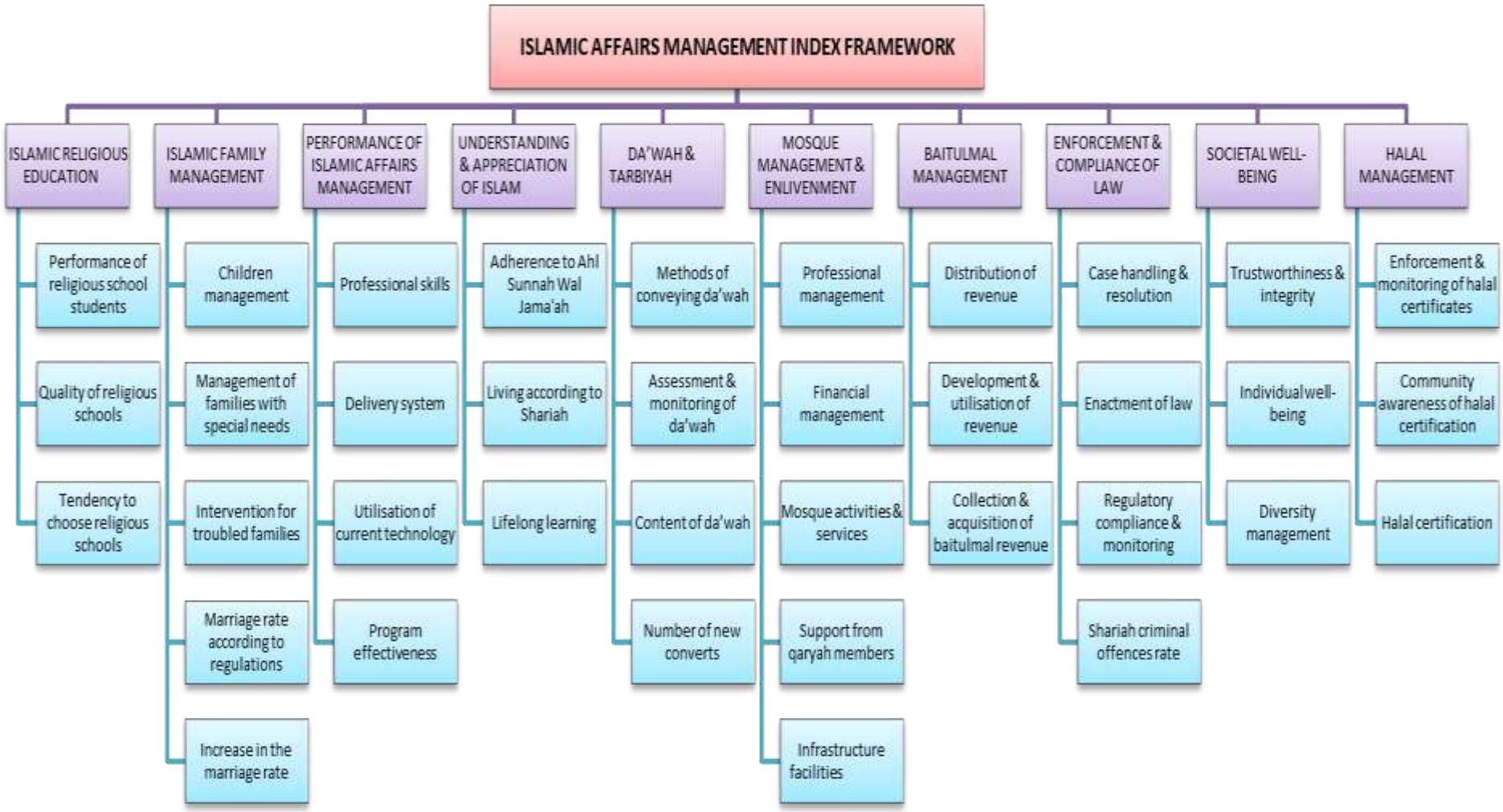

Figure 1: Islamic affairs management index framework

5.0 DISCUSSION

In summarizing the analysis results, the three most important indicators of the Islamic Affairs Management Index (IAMI) are Islamic Religious Education, Islamic Family Management, and Performance of Islamic Affairs Management. These indicators are critical for assessing the performance of Islamic affairs management in Malaysia. Islamic Religious Education was ranked first because it plays a crucial role in shaping the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours of the Muslim community. This finding aligns with Harahap (2023), who argues that Islamic education should be integrated into early childhood education as it provides a foundation for physical, cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and socio-emotional development, while also shaping attitudes and morals. Islamic education not only imparts theoretical knowledge but also suggests practical guidance for daily life, covering aspects such as worship, family, and law (Zulkefli et al., 2024). Emphasizing religious education ensures that Muslims, particularly students, have a strong foundation in both Fardhu Ain and Fardhu Kifayah, including practices such as prayer, fasting, and other Islamic teachings. Highlighting this indicator in the index framework underscores the importance of producing a knowledgeable and virtuous Muslim society that adheres firmly to Islamic principles.

Islamic Family Management also received considerable attention from the experts, emphasizing the importance of assessing family management within the index. The family is widely recognized as a fundamental social institution in all societies (Zulkefli et al., 2024), and in Islam, each member is expected to maintain piety, fulfil Allah's commandments, avoid prohibitions, and nurture good relationships with one another (Samsudi, 2022). This focus is particularly relevant in the current social context, which faces challenges such as rising divorce rates, domestic violence, and child abuse, making the strengthening of family management crucial for promoting family cohesion and preventing conflicts. Closely related, Performance of Islamic Affairs Management was ranked third in the index framework, highlighting the significance of governance and administrative functions within Islamic institutions in Malaysia. This indicator evaluates how effectively institutions such as the State Islamic Religious Councils (MAIN), State Islamic Religious Affairs Departments (JAIN), and the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) carry out their responsibilities. According to Basir and Mohamed (2019), JAKIM implemented five human capital programs, including training, human resource management, education and knowledge initiatives, quality programs, and work experience programs, designed to develop human capital and enhance the soft skills of its officers. The effective management within these institutions ensures that initiatives are successfully executed to meet the needs of the Muslim community.

Interestingly, Halal Management was assigned the lowest weight in the index framework. This does not indicate that it is unimportant; rather, experts may have prioritized other indicators with more significant impact on Islamic affairs management. Malaysia is globally recognized for halal certification, standards, auditing practices, research, and training, positioning it as a pioneer in halal governance (Mohamed et al., 2020). Halal management is well-regulated by JAKIM and other Islamic institutions, ensuring products meet Shariah requirements (Asa & Azmi, 2018; Yustianingsih et al., 2024). The robust administration of halal standards reduces the need for additional emphasis in the index framework.

The ranking of sub-indicators within each indicator also revealed key areas for consideration. For Islamic Religious Education, the highest-ranked sub-indicator was 'Performance of Religious School Students,' followed by 'Quality of Religious Schools,' while 'Tendency to Choose Religious Schools' ranked lowest. In terms of global weight, 'Quality of Religious Schools' ranked first, followed by 'Performance of Religious School Students.' These results highlight the importance of assessing student performance, which serves as a benchmark for learning outcomes such as mastery of the Quran and understanding of religious

teachings. Assessment provides teachers with critical information to make informed decisions, improve learning, and provide feedback (Zafari et al., 2021). Moreover, the quality of religious schools is fundamental to producing students who excel academically, religiously, and in soft skills. Ensuring adequate facilities, qualified staff, learning materials, and resources is vital for developing human capital and promoting national growth and prosperity (Ahmad, 2012; Mahanani et al., 2022; Priyambodo & Hasanah, 2021).

Within Islamic Family Management, 'Children Management' emerged as the most important sub-indicator and ranked third in terms of global weight. This was followed by 'Management of Families with Special Needs,' while 'Increase in the Marriage Rate' was considered least significant. These findings suggest that experts prioritize fundamental family responsibilities over merely increasing marriage rates. Children management is central to family responsibility, with parents playing a crucial role in their physical, educational, and social development until independence (Okello, 2023). Addressing families with special needs highlights the importance of supporting vulnerable members, such as those with disabilities or chronic health conditions, requiring continuous care and educational assistance. Focusing on these aspects draws attention from policymakers and encourages thoughtful strategies to promote social well-being.

Conversely, sub-indicators such as 'Shariah Criminal Offense Rate' under Enforcement and Compliance of Law and 'Infrastructure Facilities' under Mosque Management and Enlivenment received lower priority. Although important, their impact is indirect and depends on other factors. In Malaysia, Shariah law governs family law, marriage, divorce, inheritance, and certain criminal offences, maintaining social order and protecting individual rights (Alotaibi, 2021; Sirait et al., 2024). However, assessing criminal offense rates is less critical than evaluating education and family sub-indicators. Similarly, mosque infrastructure, while essential for physical and spiritual needs, including prayer halls, ablution areas, women's spaces, and multipurpose rooms (Bakri et al., 2018; Mohd Khalli & Mohd Sharif, 2024), is considered a supporting resource rather than a primary determinant of institutional effectiveness.

Hence, the developed IAMI framework is contextually grounded, reflecting the constitutional and administrative governance of Islamic affairs under state jurisdiction (Ghani et al., 2023). This grounding ensures that the index captures characteristics of Islamic affairs specific to Malaysia. Consequently, the IAMI serves not only as a performance assessment tool but also as a guide for resource allocation, strategic planning, and targeted interventions (Kurniawan et al., 2025). It also functions as a mechanism for policymaking and long-term monitoring (Nardo et al., 2005), addressing a significant gap in Malaysia, where Islam is understood both as a personal belief system and as a framework that shapes societal organization, governance, and public life (Abdul Rahim, 2025). As a comprehensive religion, Islam regulates multiple dimensions of life, including politics, economics, ethics, and social well-being (Musa, 2022), thereby justifying the need for a multidimensional index specifically for Islamic affairs. Accordingly, it is imperative for Islamic institutions to conduct regular assessments of their performance to enhance the quality of their services (Zulkefli et al., 2023).

6.0 CONCLUSION

This study successfully developed a framework for the Islamic Affairs Management Index (IAMI) in Malaysia using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP). The study analysed and prioritised the indicators and sub-indicators required to construct the index, and expert evaluations showed a high level of agreement, supporting the framework's reliability. In the Malaysian context, this IAMI framework represents a significant contribution to the management of Islamic affairs. The results revealed that Islamic religious education, Islamic family management, and performance of Islamic affairs management ranked among the top

components, suggesting that these aspects should be prioritised when evaluating Islamic affairs management in Malaysia. These findings have important implications for policymakers and stakeholders, who can apply the IAMI framework to support assessment, decision-making, and strategic planning.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, this study primarily focused on developing the IAMI framework rather than conducting an empirical evaluation. Therefore, future studies should undertake large-scale empirical assessments of the performance of Islamic affairs management, including public surveys involving officers and staff from Islamic affairs institutions. Second, the IAMI framework was designed for the national Malaysian context. Consequently, a standardised national framework may not fully capture contextual differences arising from the diversity of Islamic affairs administration across states, which may limit its relevance at the state level. Thus, careful adaptation of the IAMI framework may be necessary to ensure it is appropriately tailored to local contexts. Lastly, the IAMI framework covers multiple aspects of Islamic affairs, each with its own complexity. This broad scope may limit the depth of understanding within individual domains. Therefore, further research may be required to develop more specific indices.

REFERENCES

Abdul Rahim, A. (2025). The concept of Islamic governance according to HAMKA's thought. *Journal of Contemporary Islamic Studies, 11*(1), 1-11.

Ahmad, H. (2012). *Mission of public education in Malaysia: The challenge of transformation*: Universiti Malaya Press.

Ali Mohamed, A. A., & Ahmad, M. H. (2021). British administration of Malay Peninsula and its impact on the status of Islamic law. In A. Trakic & H. A. T. Haydar (Eds.), *Islamic law in Malaysia: The challenges of implementation* (pp. 9-18). Springer Nature.

Alotaibi, H. A. (2021). The challenges of execution of Islamic criminal law in developing Muslim countries: An analysis based on Islamic principles and existing legal system. *Cogent Social Sciences, 7*(1), Article 1925413.

Asa, R. S., & Azmi, I. M. A. G. (2018). The concept of halal and halal food certification process in Malaysia: Issues and concerns. *Malaysian Journal of Consumer and Family Economics, 20*, 38-50.

Awad, J., & Jung, C. (2022). Extracting the planning elements for sustainable urban regeneration in Dubai with AHP (Analytic Hierarchy Process). *Sustainable Cities and Society, 76*, 1-12.

Awang, S. A., Basir, S. A., & Mohamed, H. A.-B. (2019). Cabaran dalam pelaksanaan program Pembangunan Modal Insan (PMI) di Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM). *Jurnal Hadhari, 11*(1), 87-105.

Aydin, N. (2017). Islamic vs conventional human development index: Empirical evidence from ten Muslim countries. *International Journal of Social Economics, 44*(12), 1562-1583.

Bakri, A., Zakaria, I. H., Kassim, R., & Ahmad, A. N. A. (2018). Adoption of the systematic facilities management approach to the sustainable performance of mosques. *International Journal of Technology, 8*, 1542-1550.

Basir, S. A., & Mohamed, H. A.-B. (2019). Pelaksanaan program Pembangunan Modal Insan (PMI) di institusi Pengurusan Hal Ehwal Islam (PHEI): Kajian kes di Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM). *UMRAN-International Journal of Islamic and Civilizational Studies, 6*(3), 9-31.

Batchelor, D. A.-F. (2021). An enhanced Islamic Well-Being Index (IWI 2.0- 2021) for Muslim countries. *Islam & Civilisational Renewal, 12*(2), 195-234.

Chen, R., Ji, Y., Jiang, G., Xiao, H., Xie, R., & Zhu, P. (2021). Composite index construction with expert opinion. *Journal of Business & Economic Statistics, 00*(0), 1-13.

Darko, A., Chan, A. P. C., Ameyaw, E. E., Owusu, E. K., Pärn, E., & Edwards, D. J. (2018). Review of application of Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) in construction. *International Journal of Construction Management, 19*(5), 436-452.

Department of Statistics Malaysia (2022). *Population and housing census of Malaysia 2020.* DOSM. https://www.dosm.gov.my/portal-main/landingv2

Fauzi, R., Jani, R., Arof, Z. M., & Shah, S. N. A. R. (2016). Indeks keIslaman bagi Pulau Pangkor, Malaysia. *GEOGRAFIA: Malaysian Journal of Society and Space, 12*(10), 127-144.

Ghani, Z. A., Mahyuddin, M. K., Hamdani, S. M., Noor, K. M., Shaharudin, A., & Aziz, W. M. S. A. (2023). *Pengurusan hal ehwal Islam di Malaysia*. USIM Press.

Ghimire, L. P., & Kim, Y. (2018). An analysis on barriers to renewable energy development in the context of Nepal using AHP. *Renewable Energy, 129*, 446-456.

Greco, S., Ishizaka, A., Tasiou, M., & Torrisi, G. (2019). On the methodological framework of composite indices: A review of the issues of weighting, aggregation, and robustness. *Social Indicators Research, 141*(1), 61-94.

Güdemann, L., & Münnich, R. (2023). Quality and sensitivity of composite indicators for sustainable development. *Austrian Journal of Statistics, 52*(5), 82-100.

Hamra, R., Siddiqi, S., Carmel, E., & Ammar, W. (2020). Assessing the governance of the health policy-making process using a new governance tool: The case of Lebanon. *Health Research Policy and Systems, 18*, 66.

Harahap, A. (2023). Analysis of the role of parents in early childhood Islamic religious education in the family environment. *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam, 12*(03), 2807-2822.

Herdhiansyah, D., Sudarmi, Sakir, Asriani, & Midi, L. O. (2022). Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) in expert choice for determining superior plantation commodities: A case in East Kolaka Regency, Indonesia. *Songklanakarin Journal of Science & Technology, 44*(4), 923-928.

Ibrahim, A. Q. B., Abdullah, B. B., Yusof, Z. B., Latif, M. N. H. B. A., & Ibrahim, R. A. B. (2024). Implementation of hisbah in the management of Islamic affairs (PHEI) in Malaysia. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 14*(12), 3317-3329.

Ilham, Z., Subramaniam, I., Jamaludin, A. A., Wan, W. A. A. Q. I., Halim-Lim, S. A., Ohgaki, H., . . . Mansor, M. R. A. (2022). Analysing dimensions and indicators to design energy education framework in Malaysia using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP). *Energy Reports, 8*, 1013-1024.

Ishizaka, A., & Labib, A. (2009). Analytic hierarchy process and expert choice: Benefits and limitations. *OR Insight, 22*(4), 201-220.

JAKIM. (2015). *Indeks syariah Malaysia: Model tadbir urus berteraskan Maqasid Syariah*. Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia.

JAKIM. (2021). *Pelan tindakan strategik pembangunan modal insan JAKIM 2021-2025*. Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia.

JAKIM. (2023a). *Pelan strategik hal ehwal agama 2022-2026*. Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia.

JAKIM. (2023b). *Pelan transformasi hal ehwal agama menuju Malaysia Madani (Al Falah) 2023-2027*. Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia.

JAKIM. (2024). *Pelan Tindakan Sosial Islam (PTSI) 2019-2025*. Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia.

Jamaludin, F. I. C., Abdullah, M. R. T. L., Endut, M. N. A.-A., Zulkefli, M. I. I., & Zulkipli, S. (2025). Development of impact assessment instruments for renewable energy investments in Orang Asli communities. *Journal of Nusantara Studies, 10*(1), 443-465.

Jamil, A. I. B. (2022). Country report: Religious education in Malaysia. *British Journal of Religious Education, 44*(2), 200-208.

Kanbir, Ö., & Dikkaya, M. (2021). Islamic development index. *Sosyoekonomi, 29*(49), 151-180.

Kurniawan, R. D., Riza, H., Wardhani, S. S. W., Ba'Abdullah, F., & Kusumaningrum, D. (2025). Advancing country-level research benchmarking: A bibliometric multistage principal component analysis-based composite index approach. *Journal of Scientometric Research, 14*(1), 16-31.

Lauro, N. C., Grassia, M. G., & Cataldo, R. (2018). Model based composite indicators: New developments in partial least squares-path modeling for the building of different types of composite indicators. *Social Indicators Research, 135*(2), 421-455.

Lestari, Y. D., Sukmana, R., Beik, I. S., & Sholihin, M. (2023). The development of national Waqf index in Indonesia: A fuzzy AHP approach. *Heliyon, 9*, e15783.

Londoño-Pineda, A., Cano, J. A., & Gómez-Montoya, R. (2021). Application of AHP for the weighting of sustainable development indicators at the subnational level. *Economies, 9*(4), 1-17.

Lukinskiy, V., Lukinskiy, V., & Bazhina, D. (2025). Refining the analytic hierarchy process: A statistical and methodological exploration of expert judgments. *Alexandria Engineering Journal, 125*, 526-536.

Mahanani, P., Akbar, S. D., Kamaruddin, A. Y. B., & Hussin, Z. B. (2022). Educational analysis to develop character in Malaysia and Indonesia. *International Journal of Instruction, 15*(3), 377-392.

Merhi, M. I. (2021). Evaluating the critical success factors of data intelligence implementation in the public sector using analytical hierarchy process. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change, 173*, Article 121180.

Mohamed, Y. H., Abdul Rahim, A. R., & Ma'aram, A. (2020). The effect of halal supply chain management on halal integrity assurance for the food industry in Malaysia. *Journal of Islamic Marketing, 12*(9), 1734-1750.

Mohd Khalli, M. N., & Mohd Sharif, M. F. (2024). Masjid-based disaster management: How masjids in Malaysia support the needy. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities, 32*(S4), 29-46.

Musa, M. F. (2022). *Freedom of religion in Malaysia: The situation and attitudes of "Deviant" Muslim groups*. ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute.

Nardo, M., Saisana, M., Andrea Saltelli, Tarantola, S., Hoffman, A., & Giovannini, E. (2005). *Handbook on constructing composite indicators: Methodology and user guide*. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Nor, F. B. M. (2014). *Pelaksanaan indeks pembangunan ummah (MUDI): Keperluan dalam konteks Maqasid Syariah.* Paper presented at the International Conference on Masjid, Zakat and Waqf (IMAF 2014), Kuala Lumpur (pp. 135-141). Kolej Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Selangor.

Okello, M. (2023). The role of parents in their children's education. *African Journal of Education and Practice, 9*(1), 28-38.

Omar, W. A. W., Hussin, F., & H., A. A. G. (2014). The trend analysis of Islamization in Malaysia using Islamization index as indicator. *Asian Economic and Financial Review, 4*(10), 1298-1313.

Priyambodo, P., & Hasanah, E. (2021). Strategic planning in increasing quality of education. *Nidhomul Haq: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam, 6*(1), 109-126.

Rama, A., & Yusuf, B. (2019). Construction of Islamic human development index. *Journal of King Abdulaziz University: Islamic Economics, 32*(1), 43-64.

Saaty, T. L. (1977). A scaling method for priorities in hierarchical structures. *Journal of Mathematical Psychology, 15*(3), 234-281.

Saaty, T. L. (1980). *The analytic hierarchy process, planning, priority setting, resource allocation*. McGraw-Hill.

Saaty, T. L. (2008). Decision making with the analytic hierarchy process. *International Journal of Services Sciences, 1*(1), 83-98.

Salleh, M. K. M., Bahor, A., & Yahya, M. A. (2021). Position of fatwa in the constitution: A legal analysis. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities, 29*(4), 2171 - 2188.

Samsudi, S. M. (2022). Family well-being index based on Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah. *TAFHIM: IKIM Journal of Islam and the Contemporary World, 15*(2), 63–87.

Saranya, T., & Saravanan, S. (2020). Groundwater potential zone mapping using Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) and GIS for Kancheepuram District, Tamilnadu, India. *Modeling Earth Systems and Environment, 6*(2), 1105-1122.

Shuaib, F. S. (2008). Strengthening administrative institutions of Islamic law in Malaysia: An overview. *Jurnal Syariah, 16*(3), 443-464.

Sirait, A. S., Harahap, N., Hidayat, T., & Harahap, R. B. (2024). Assessing criminal penalties in marriage law: A comparative study of policy frameworks within Indonesian and Malaysian legislation. *Al-Manahij: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam, 18*(2), 255-270.

Sutadian, A. D., Muttil, N., Yilmaz, A. G., & Perera, B. (2016). Development of river water quality indices—A review. *Environmental Monitoring and Assessment, 188*(58), 1-29.

Tavana, M., Soltanifar, M., & Santos-Arteaga, F. J. (2023). Analytical hierarchy process: Revolution and evolution. *Annals of Operations Research, 326*(2), 879-907.

Terzi, S., Otoiu, A., Grimaccia, E., Mazziotta, M., & Pareto, A. (2021). *Open issues in composite indicators: A starting point and a reference on some state-of-the-art issues*. Roma TrE-Press.

Tram, T. X. H., Lai, T. D., & Nguyen, T. T. H. (2023). Constructing a composite financial inclusion index for developing economies. *The Quarterly Review of economics and finance, 87*, 257-265.

Tu, C. A., Rasoulinezhad, E., & Sarker, T. (2020). Investigating solutions for the development of a green bond market: Evidence from analytic hierarchy process. *Finance Research Letters, 34*, Article 101457.

UNECE. (2019). *Guidelines on producing leading, composite and sentiment indicators*. United Nations.

Uyuni, B., & Adnan, M. (2020). The challenge of Islamic education in 21st century. *SALAM: Jurnal Sosial dan Budaya Syar-i, 7*(12), 1079-1098.

Waris, M., Panigrahi, S., Mengal, A., Soomro, M. I., Mirjat, N. H., Ullah, M., . . . Khan, A. (2019). An application of Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) for sustainable procurement of construction equipment: Multicriteria-based decision framework for Malaysia. *Mathematical Problems in Engineering, 2019*(2), 1-20.

Yazid, N. S. M., Shuhari, M. H., & Wahid, N. A. (2020). Peranan Jabatan Agama Islam Selangor (JAIS) dalam menangani isu ekstremisme di Selangor. *Jurnal Islam dan Masyarakat Kontemporari, 21*(1), 214-226.

Yustianingsih, L., Mufid, A., Maifiah, M. H. M., & Gunawan, S. (2024). Comparison study of halal management system in Indonesia and Malaysia. *Halal Research Journal, 4*(1), 28-44.

Zafari, M., Sadeghi-Niaraki, A., Choi, S.-M., & Esmaeily, A. (2021). A practical model for the evaluation of high school student performance based on machine learning. *Applied Sciences, 11*(23), Article 11534.

Zaidi, M. F. A., Shafie, S. M., & Rahim, M. K. I. A. (2022). AHP analysis on the criteria and sub-criteria for the selection of fuel cell power generation in Malaysia. *Journal of Advanced Research in Fluid Mechanics and Thermal Sciences, 98*(2), 1-14.

Zhou, L., Tokos, H., Krajnc, D., & Yang, Y. (2012). Sustainability performance evaluation in industry by composite sustainability index. *Clean Technologies and Environmental Policy, 14*(5), 789-803.

Zulkefli, M. I., Endut, M. N. A.-A., & Abdullah, M. (2023). Exploring indicators for measuring the performance of Islamic affairs institutions in Malaysia. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 13*(9), 1651-1666.

Zulkefli, M. I. (2021). *Socio-religious harmony index in Perak.* Universiti Teknologi Petronas.

Zulkefli, M. I., Endut, M. N. A.-A., & Abdullah, M. R. T. L. (2024). Exploring factors affecting the sustainability of Islamic affairs in Malaysia: An Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM) approach. *International Journal of Sustainable Development & Planning, 19*(2), 703-713.

Zulkefli, M. I., Endut, M. N. A.-A., Abdullah, M. R. T. L., Jamaludin, F. I. C., & Zulkipli, S. (2025). Development and validation of indicators for the Islamic affairs management index in Malaysia: A Fuzzy Delphi method approach. *Geografia-Malaysian Journal of Society and Space, 21*(2), 187-198.