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The Level of Understanding on the Importance of Estate Management Among the Muslim Community in Selangor

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ABSTRACT

In Islam, property management is divided into two phases: management during life and after death. Estate management refers to handling property after a Muslim's death, with the division of inheritance explicitly outlined in Islam. However, many estates worth millions of ringgits have reportedly been abandoned or poorly maintained after the owner's death, leading to a wasted inheritance that could have supported family members or heirs. This paper aims to assess the level of awareness and knowledge among the Muslim community regarding estate management. The study focuses on Muslims in Selangor, using a quantitative research design. Data was collected from respondents across all nine districts in Selangor through a random sampling method. The findings reveal a need for increased awareness and understanding of inheritance management within the community. Additionally, it highlights the necessity for agencies responsible for estate management to improve their processes, making it easier and quicker for the deceased's family to apply for inheritance.

INTRODUCTION

The deceased's estate must be efficiently managed to ensure quick distribution to the rightful heirs. The division of inheritance, based on the order and portions outlined in the Quran, follows Islamic law principles, ensuring fairness for all. Estate management involves organizing and maintaining assets that can be controlled and provide benefits, ensuring the smooth handling of an individual's affairs. When family members are involved, estate management should consider not only the individual's needs but also the welfare of dependents and other family members.

Estate management also involves planning property-related matters to ensure they are systematic and fair, addressing specific needs while optimizing resources to prevent wastage. This ensures that management aligns with the goals of individuals and groups sharing rights and responsibilities. Proper planning results in decisions that consider all parties or family members, ensuring that those with needs are not excluded from distribution. When property management is viewed through the lens of an Islamic

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balance sheet, it adheres to Shariah principles and incorporates instruments such as *faraid* (Islamic inheritance law), *hibah* (gifts), wills, and waqf (endowments), all governed by Shariah law.

The act of managing an estate throughout life is known as planning, done for the benefit of the owner and the convenience of interested parties. Failure to plan property can lead to several consequences, especially when the owner dies without making any arrangements. Issues such as the inheritance rights of adopted or illegitimate children and heirs who are barred from inheriting can result in disputes and dissatisfaction among the beneficiaries. Additionally, the freezing of Muslim property assets, estimated to be worth billions of ringgits, and the high costs and complexities of the inheritance distribution process can arise. There is also the perception that the *faraid* system alone is sufficient to manage estate distribution after death (Muhamad et al., 2023).

According to Abubakar et al. (2019), the *faraid* system, as prescribed by the Quran, is the ideal method for Muslims to follow in the settlement of estate management. In Malaysia, the *faraid* legal division is commonly applied (Ab Rahman et al., 2023). However, due to the growing issue of unclaimed estates, especially immovable assets, heirs have increasingly turned to alternative methods of inheritance distribution, such as consensus and the waiver of rights (*takharruj*). These alternatives are often better suited to certain situations and types of inheritance, as the continued use of the *faraid* system alone can sometimes hinder the effective utilisation of assets (Md Yazid Ahmad, 2017; Mohammad Arif Sabtu & Siti Mashitoh Mahamood, 2017).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Estate Management in Malaysia

The administration of inheritance claims in Malaysia has been the focus of several studies and literature. The literature highlights the complexities of managing Muslim inheritance claims due to the shared jurisdiction between the federal and state governments, as outlined in the Federal Constitution. The Ninth Schedule, List 4(e), which applies to both Muslims and non-Muslims in Malaysia, contains procedural laws related to inheritance claims. However, as stated in the Ninth Schedule, List 2, Item 1, the state has authority over matters concerning the administration of property under Shariah law, including inheritance, bequeathing, and non-bequeathing of property (Jasni, 2011). Essentially, Muslims are also required to obtain probate and letters of administration to enforce the inheritance division (*Faraid Certificate*) ordered by the state's Shariah courts (Mohd Ridzuan, 2008).

As a result of this, there are many agencies or institutions involved in the management of Muslim estates. A book about Islamic Inheritance Management, Wills and Grants in Malaysia: Issues and Applications explores the history of estate administration in Malaysia, starting before independence and developing information up to the computer and information technology era. This book lists four specific agencies involved in the inheritance claim process, namely Amanah Raya Berhad (simple inheritance), the Inheritance Division Section (small inheritance), the High Court (large inheritance) and the Syariah Court (Wan Abdul Halim, 2009). Other writings that list the agencies involved in estate management, along with a detailed description of jurisdiction and the Acts involved include Jasni (2011), Mohd. Ridzuan (2008), Sulaiman (2008), Mohd Nasran and Ahmad Dahlan (2008).

The Importance of Inheritance Management in Islamic Societies

In the article titled The Importance of Administration of Estates in Malaysia from Legal and *Maqasid* Shariah Perspectives, the researchers explore the necessity of managing property and inheritance from the perspective of law and *maqasid* Syariah. This article reveals that the deceased's heirs have neglected and mismanaged various properties worth millions of ringgits. This has also led to abandoned property that is no longer valuable but could benefit family members or heirs. This mismanaged heritage is also thought to

be incapable of contributing to the country's economic progress. Furthermore, the author points out that issues of estate fraud are frequently discussed in the media, indicating a lack of understanding of the necessity of property management, especially estate management. Apart from a literature review, relevant academic writings, and a study of the experience of government and non-government agencies that manage estates, this paper outlines some practical estate management solutions and recommendations that align with the *maqasid* Shariah requirements for property preservation (Yaakob et al., 2020).

As a result, the author concludes in this article that estate planning should be done while one is still living to ensure the well-being and welfare of heirs, particularly the elderly, are not disregarded. For example, documents such as the *hibah*, will, and waqf must be maintained, while the property owner is still alive, so verification and registration can be completed, and no objection to the documents can be filed. According to the author, property and inheritance administration comprise seven distinct processes. Five are life planning measures the property owner takes, while the other two are estate management steps taken by the deceased's heirs through Mypusaka.info. As a result, based on the article by Yaakob et al. (2020), we must ensure that we make thorough arrangements in managing our estates, whether while living or after death, in order to facilitate our affairs and those of our heirs for the benefit of all.

Wan Rushdan et al. (2021) focus on estate inheritance, which refers to the rules governing the transfer of a deceased person's estate to their heirs. While the standard operating procedures (SOPs) and the Small Estate (Distribution) Act 1955 guide estate administration in each state's Small Estate Unit, the authors highlight that estate management in Negeri Sembilan is unique due to the influence of Adat Perpatih, a customary law still followed by the local community. Previous research shows that the people of Negeri Sembilan continue to adhere to Customary Land Law in property inheritance, hence posing significant challenges to the estate administrators in the state. Therefore, the study explores the practices and challenges related to inheritance division and the administration of Small Estate Units in Negeri Sembilan. The researchers employed a qualitative methodology, gathering data through document analysis and examining it descriptively and thematically. Their findings revealed several issues, including confusion within the community about the concepts and processes of estate administration, uncertainty about the role of customary practices in Shariah-compliant inheritance, and obstacles faced in managing inheritance divisions. These issues highlight the need for further research to improve community understanding and administrative practices, as well as offer solutions to the challenges identified.

The Management of Islamic Heritage in Islam

Another article focuses on the concept of *Maslahah* in the Muslim inheritance system (Saadan & Haron, 2018). The authors explain that Allah SWT's laws are meant to bring goodness and fairness to all aspects of life. However, due to the limitations of human understanding, the Islamic principle of achieving goodness (*maslahah*) differs from the concept as perceived by humans. Therefore, to achieve the intended outcomes of these laws, the definition of goodness must be interpreted based on divine revelation. The study aims to highlight the *maslahah* concept within the Muslim inheritance system. Using a qualitative research method, the authors analyzed data from books, journals, papers, and other relevant publications. The findings reveal that in inheritance division, *maslahah* is more closely connected to rights and obligations rather than gender and age differences. The authors believe that the study enhances the community's understanding of the Islamic inheritance system.

When a property owner dies, their property falls into the inheritance category. Property can consist of (a) Immovable property, which refers to property that cannot be moved or changed from its original location, such as land, buildings, gardens, farms, and houses; (b) Movable property, which is property that can be moved or transferred, such as currency, business goods, shares, bank savings accounts, savings in the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), insurance, home appliances, vehicles, firearms, jewellery, Amanah Saham Bumiputera (ASB), and so on. Additionally, (c) a combination of immovable and movable property may exist. For example, the deceased may have left two plots of land and savings in the Tabung Haji Board.

In Malaysia, inheritance consists of two categories: non-Islamic inheritance and Islamic inheritance. Islamic inheritance refers to the inheritance belonging to a Muslim spouse (Resali, 2016).

Therefore, a remedy must be sought and implemented in a manner that does not contradict *faraid* law or its rules, ensuring that no qualified heirs are denied their rightful share. If there are heirs who, out of love, wish to renounce and transfer their portion to other heirs, the same solution must be applied. This clearly shows that *faraid* law determines the eligible heirs and the share of the inheritance they should receive. However, it does not force the entitled heirs to claim their rights or compel them to accept the inheritance.

Inheritance-related problems have become increasingly complex and challenging to resolve. However, a deeper analysis reveals that a system for resolving inheritance disputes also existed during the time of early Islamic scholars. This system, known as *takharuj*, is considered a support mechanism in Islamic inheritance law. In Malaysia, the term *takharuj* is not used in the settlement of Muslim inheritance within the relevant state Division of Inheritance; instead, the term 'consensus' is used (Wan Najmiah & Md Yazid, 2013; Wan Najmiah, 2016). This practice is also evident in states like Terengganu (Norhafizah, 2016) and Selangor (Wan Najmiah, 2016). In resolving disputes over the division of inheritance among Malays, this consensus approach is often preferred over *faraid*. Therefore, it is essential to assess whether the Malays' consensus method of dividing inheritance aligns with the *takharuj* mechanism in Islamic inheritance law or if it differs significantly (Md Yazid Ahmad, 2017).

METHODOLOGY

The researchers employed quantitative methods to ensure that the study proceeded smoothly and yielded stable results. To achieve this, they identified the role of quantitative methods in data collection. This descriptive quantitative study aims to discover and empirically investigate the community's involvement in property management in Selangor. This study employs a survey design focused on pertinent aspects of the chosen area of interest. The survey aims to gather insights and data related to the key themes of the topic under investigation to gather accurate data and information.

The population for this study was selected from nine subdistricts in Selangor. In terms of sampling, the focus was solely on the Muslim community in Selangor, with a sample size of 325 respondents drawn from the nine districts. The sampling method employed was the simple random method. The Selangor communities covered in this study include:

1. Sabak Bernam
2. Kuala Selangor
3. Klang
4. Hulu Langat
5. Petaling
6. Kuala Langat
7. Hulu Selangor
8. Gombak
9. Sepang

This article presents a field investigation directly related to the chosen topic. To gather accurate data and insights, observations have been conducted in various study locations among the Muslim population in Selangor. The researchers employed multiple techniques to ensure the reliability and accuracy of the

information collected. Consequently, a questionnaire approach was utilised for this study. Respondents were required to complete a series of questions on a platform called Google Forms, facilitating the efficient collection of data aligned with the study's objectives. A total of 325 members from the Selangor Muslim community participated in the questionnaire, forming the sample for this research. The questionnaires feature simple analytical formats, with pre-structured questions allowing respondents to select from the provided options.

The questions in the questionnaire are clear and well-designed, taking into consideration the research objectives to ensure relevance. This approach prevents respondents from posing queries unrelated to the study's goals. Each question was carefully crafted for clarity, facilitating accurate responses. Once completed, the questionnaires were returned to the researchers for management and interpretation. This process allows for explanations to be provided if respondents do not fully understand any of the questions included in the disseminated questionnaire. The primary aim of this questionnaire is to gauge the perception of the Muslim community in Selangor regarding inheritance management and its significance in contemporary society. It was developed based on insights gained from previous studies, ensuring that the content is straightforward and accessible for respondents. The questionnaire is organised into four sections: 1) Respondent demographics; 2) Perception of the concept of estate management; 3) Perception of property management methods; and 4) Understanding of the research topic. In total, the questionnaire comprises 22 items, featuring both open-ended and closed-ended questions. Respondents were encouraged to answer all the questions presented.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In Section A, the researchers examine the respondents' backgrounds, including their gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, level of education, and community affiliation. Section B focuses on the first objective: to define the concept of heritage management among the Muslim community in Selangor. Following this, the researchers explore the practices of heritage management within the Muslim community and assess the level of understanding regarding the importance of heritage management in Selangor.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The five questions in this section are divided into categories of district, gender, age, marital status, and education level to identify the respondents for the questionnaire. The purpose of this section is to establish the sample size and background of the study, ensuring that it accurately reflects the target community relevant to this research.

Table 1. The Demographic Profile of Respondents

	Items	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	123	37.8
	Female	202	62.2
Age	18 - 27	235	72.3
	28 - 37	25	7.7
	38 - 47	19	5.8
	48 and above	46	14.2
Level of Education	SPM	16	4.9
	A-Level/ Foundation/ STPM/STAM/ Diploma	64	19.7
	Undergraduate (Degree)	192	59.1
	Postgraduate (Master/PhD)	53	16.3

Communities			
	Sabak Bernam	31	9.5
	Kuala Selangor	39	12.0
	Klang	38	11.7
	Hulu Langat	36	11.1
	Petaling	40	12.3
	Kuala Langat	37	11.4
	Hulu Selangor	33	10.2
	Gombak	39	12.0

Source: Authors

A total of 325 respondents were randomly selected for this study. Among them, 123 men (37.8%) and 202 women (62.2%) exhibited various marital statuses. The respondents' marital status was assessed and categorised into two groups: (i) married and (ii) single, as illustrated in Table 4.1. Despite women comprising a significant portion of the Muslim population in Selangor, the survey reflected a higher number of female respondents compared to males. According to the 2017 Higher Education Statistics Report from the Ministry of Higher Education, 205,067 male students (38%) and 333,488 female students (62%) were enrolled in Public Universities (UA). This trend is mirrored in the survey, where the highest proportion of respondents held an undergraduate degree, with a total of 192 respondents, accounting for 59.1%. This indicates that more women participated in the survey.

The survey targeted individuals aged 18 and above who are legally capable of managing property. The majority of respondents from Selangor were aged between 18 and 27 years, while those aged 38 to 47 represented a smaller segment. Selangor, known as the 'Golden State of Malaysia', recorded the highest population composition in 2020, accounting for 20.0% of the country's total population, followed by Sabah at 12.0% and Johor at 11.6%. As Malaysia's primary economic engine, Selangor boasts a highly developed infrastructure, making it an attractive destination for investment, bolstered by strong support from the state government and a thriving commercial ecosystem. According to statistics from the Malaysian Statistics Department, the Petaling district had the largest population in 2019, with 1.13 million males and 1.06 million females, while Sabak Bernam had the smallest population at 0.1 million. In this study, 40 respondents were from the Petaling district, while 31 were from the Sabak Bernam district, indicating that Petaling (12.3%) had the highest response rate, compared to Sabak Bernam (9.5%).

The Concept of Estate Management in The Muslim Community in Selangor

This analytical procedure will encompass the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation scores. Table 4.2 illustrates the mean score for each question. The standard deviation serves as a measure of variability in statistics, providing insight into how much individual scores deviate from the mean. Meanwhile, the mean score represents the average score of the group, offering a summary of the central tendency of the data.

Table 2. Interpretation of Mean Score

Mean Score	Interpretation
1.00 – 1.80	Very Low
1.81 – 2.60	Low
2.61 – 3.20	Medium
3.21 – 4.20	High
4.21 – 5.00	Very High

Source: Authors

Table 3. Descriptive concept of Estate Management in the Muslim Community in Selangor, Malaysia.

Questions	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. Inheritance is everything that belonged to the deceased during his or her lifetime and was subsequently given to the deceased's heirs, including any property, rights, and possessions.	4.69	0.567
2. Estate management planning in Islam is divided into two parts: property planning during life and property division after the property owner's death.	4.48	0.705
3. Among the forms of estate planning during life are hibah, wills, waqf, alms, and nazar.	4.59	0.625
4. Estate management after death is the division of inheritance subject to faraid law.	4.58	0.674
5. Estate Management involves immovable property (property that cannot be moved or altered from its place of origin, such as land, buildings, gardens, farms, or houses).	4.37	0.864

Source: Authors, 2022

In this section, the researchers explain how the Selangor Muslim community understands the concept of estate management. The potential for identifying respondents who grasp the concept of estate management is explored through six related questions. The first statement posits, '*Inheritance is everything that belonged to the deceased during his or her lifetime and was subsequently given to the deceased's heirs, including any property, rights, and possessions*'. The mean score of this statement is 4.69, with a standard deviation of 0.567, indicating a very high level of agreement among respondents as shown in Table 2, which details mean values from lowest to highest. This result signifies that respondents comprehend and concur that inheritance encompasses all assets owned by a deceased individual, including any property, rights, or items in their possession at the time of death. This finding indicates that the respondents possess a solid understanding of what constitutes an inheritance.

The following statement asserts that '*Estate management planning in Islam is divided into two categories: property planning during life and the division of property after the death of the property owner.*' This statement received a mean score of 4.48, with a standard deviation of 0.705. Such a mean score indicates a very high level of agreement, suggesting that most respondents recognize and understand that estate management can be planned both during one's lifetime and after death. This finding demonstrates that respondents are aware that every individual must make essential arrangements for managing their property while they are alive, rather than postponing these decisions until after their death. By establishing a fund for their heirs during their lifetime, property owners facilitate a smoother transition for their heirs, who then avoid the complexities of the inheritance claim process.

The phrase '*Among the forms of estate planning during life are hibah, wills, waqf, alms, and nazar*' emphasizes that both the standard deviation (0.625) and mean score (4.69) are remarkably high. This suggests that respondents are aware of the various types of preparations that can be made to manage an estate before death. Islamic family estate management aims to prevent property from being abandoned or frozen, to ensure proper management, to distribute it to eligible recipients in a chosen manner regardless of whether they are family members and to uphold property rights effectively.

Table 3 presents the statement '*Estate management after death is the division of inheritance which is subject to faraid law*' which has a mean value of 4.58 and a standard deviation of 0.674. This high mean score indicates that respondents have a strong understanding of the concept of estate management, particularly regarding the application of *faraid* law after death. To address issues related to inheritance or any valuable property left by the deceased, Islam has mandated the study of *faraid* law. Knowledge of *faraid* thoroughly explains the groups classified as heirs to the deceased, detailing their eligibility to receive

an inheritance at a set and equitable share rate. It also establishes a system for computing or distributing the deceased's possessions among the legitimate successors.

Additionally, the assertion '*Estate Management involves immovable property (property that cannot be moved/altered from its place of origin such as land, buildings, gardens, farms, houses)*' shows a mean of 4.37 with a standard deviation of 0.864, indicating a very high level of understanding among respondents. This summarised result demonstrates that those who answered this statement are aware of the definition of immovable property. The concept of immovable property has been discussed by Hanafi and Maliki scholars, who offer different interpretations. According to Hanafi scholars, immovable property (*aqar*) refers to property that remains in its original location and cannot be moved or transferred elsewhere, such as a house or land. However, the Hanafi perspective also holds that buildings or plants on a plot of land are not considered immovable property if they are not sold together with the land. In cases where the land is sold separately, the buildings and plants are deemed immovable property only if they are included in the sale. On the other hand, if only buildings or plants are sold, they are not classified as immovable property. According to Hanafi scholars, immovable property consists solely of land, while movable property encompasses all other types of property. In contrast, the Maliki school defines immovable property as anything that cannot be moved or altered at all, such as land. However, they also consider property that can be moved but undergoes a change in form during the process—such as buildings and trees—as immovable property.

Additionally, the statement in Table 3, '*Estate management also involves movable property (property that can be moved or changed from its place, such as money, business items, shares, bank savings accounts, EPF, insurance, takaful, vehicles, jewellery, and ASB)*' indicates that most respondents recognize the importance of movable assets in estate management. The mean score for this statement is 4.48, with a standard deviation of 0.687, reflecting a very high level of awareness. Hanafi scholars define a movable property (*al-manqul*) as belongings that can be transferred and changed from one location to another, regardless of whether their shape and structure remain constant or are altered during the transfer. Examples of movable property include money, commercial commodities, animals, and measuring equipment. In contrast, Maliki scholars define movable property as anything that can be moved and relocated from one place to another, often involving a change in its shape and structure, such as clothing, books, and vehicles.

Based on the analysis of Tables 2 and 3, it can be concluded that respondents from the Muslim community in Selangor possess a solid understanding of the fundamental concepts of estate management that the public should be aware of. This conclusion is supported by the mean values from each question in Part B, indicating that they comprehend the principles of effective estate management, with most inquiries receiving positive responses. Property is one of a person's essential needs, and Allah SWT grants wealth primarily to safeguard human interests and facilitate a fulfilling life. Properties are generally classified into two main categories: movable and immovable. Movable property includes items that can be physically relocated, such as vehicles, motorcycles, bicycles, appliances, and clothing. In contrast, immovable property refers to fixed assets like real estate and buildings that cannot be moved. Understanding the concept of estate management is crucial for ensuring that property can be utilized effectively by the heirs following the owner's passing.

Estate Management Practices for the Muslim Community in Selangor

In this section, the researchers have chosen to utilise pie charts to visually represent and analyse the collected data. The confirmation data will be processed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel. This analysis focuses on assessing the level of competence in estate management among the Muslim community in Selangor, as illustrated in Table 4 below.

Table 3. Descriptive Ways of Estate Management to the Muslim Community in Selangor.

Questions	No		Yes		Not Sure	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1. In your opinion, is estate management important?	3	1%	316	97.2%	6	1.8%
2. Did you know that estate management can be done while you are still alive?	25	7.7%	267	82.2%	33	10.2%
3. Can heirs manage their estate?	21	6.5%	209	64.3%	95	29.2%
4. Can we give our inheritance to someone other than the family?	79	24.3%	146	44.9%	100	30.8%
5. Among the bodies responsible for managing the estate are the High Court, Land Office and Amanah Raya Berhad.	6	1.8%	230	70.8%	89	27.4%

Source: Authors, 2022

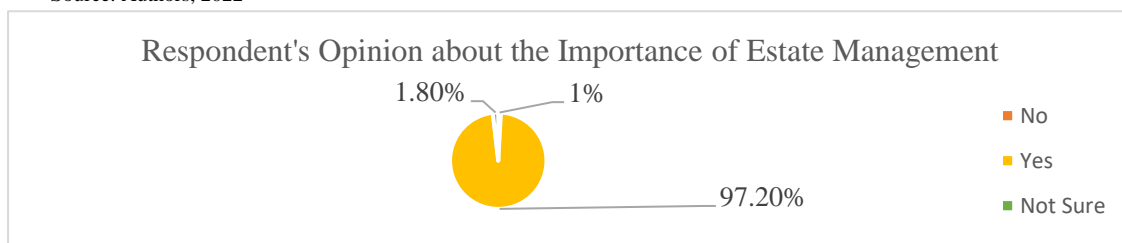


Figure 1: Frequencies of Respondent’s Opinion about the Importance of Estate Management.

The question, ‘*In your opinion, is estate management important?*’ assesses the frequency and percentage of respondents’ views on the significance of estate management. The results indicate that a majority of respondents believe it is important, with 316 individuals (97.20%) agreeing, while a small number of respondents expressed disagreement or uncertainty, comprising 3 (1%) and 6 (1.8%) individuals. Estate management refers to the efforts and preparations made in advance to divide and distribute a person's property to their heirs or other prospective beneficiaries upon their death. This planning is typically undertaken while the property owner is still alive and holds significant importance for both national and family economic stability. The respondents in this study acknowledge the critical role of effective estate management in the state.

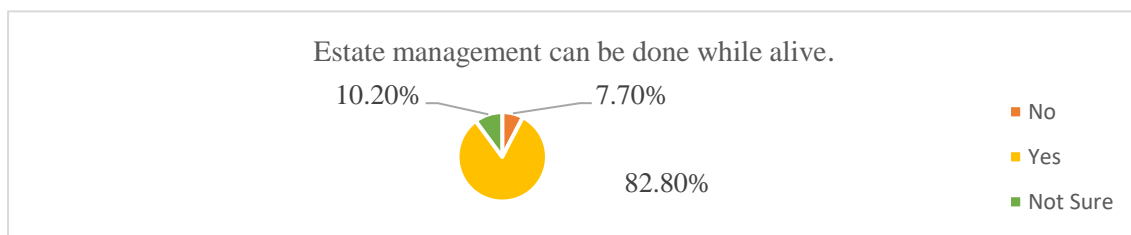


Figure 2: Frequencies of Estate Management can be done while alive.

One of the questions included in the questionnaire was, ‘*Did you know that estate management can be done while you are still alive?*’. The majority of respondents affirmed that estate management can indeed be carried out during one’s lifetime. As illustrated in Figure 2 and Table 4, 267 out of 325 respondents answered ‘yes,’ representing 82.80% of the total. Conversely, 25 respondents (7.70%) indicated that they were unaware of this, while 33 respondents (10.20%) expressed uncertainty regarding the matter.

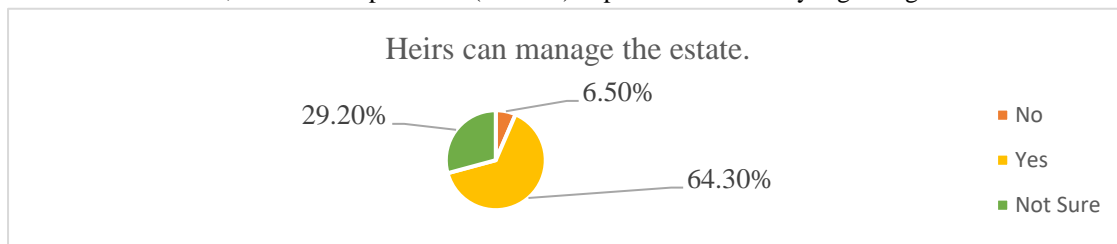


Figure 3: Frequencies of Heirs can manage the estate.

Figure 3 and Table 4 present the results of the question, ‘*Can heirs manage their estate?*’. The majority of respondents affirmed that heirs can indeed manage their estate. This is evidenced by the fact that 209 respondents (64.30%) answered ‘yes’ to the question. However, 95 respondents (29.20%) indicated that they were not sure, suggesting that a significant number of people remain uncertain about whether heirs can manage an estate after the property owner’s death. Additionally, 21 respondents (6.50%) answered ‘no’.

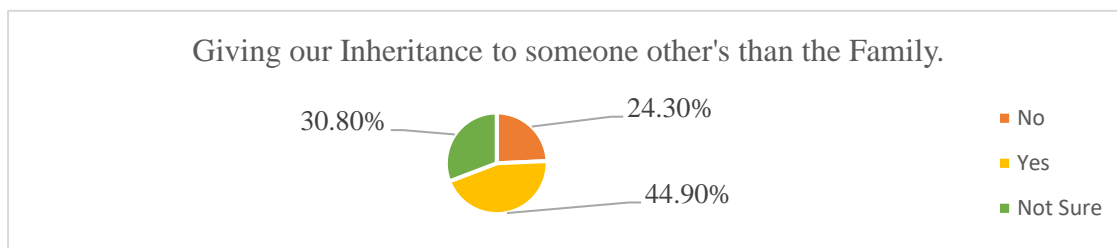


Figure 4: Frequencies of Giving our Inheritance to someone other than the family.

Figure 4 and Table 4 present the results of the question, ‘*Can we give our inheritance to someone other than the family?*’. The majority of respondents do not agree or are unsure about the permissibility of giving inheritance to individuals outside the family. This is evident from the data, which shows that 146 respondents (44.90%) answered ‘yes’, while 100 respondents (30.80%) indicated that they were not sure. Furthermore, 79 respondents (24.30%) answered ‘no’, suggesting that many individuals still lack information or awareness regarding the possibility of bequeathing inheritance to non-family members.

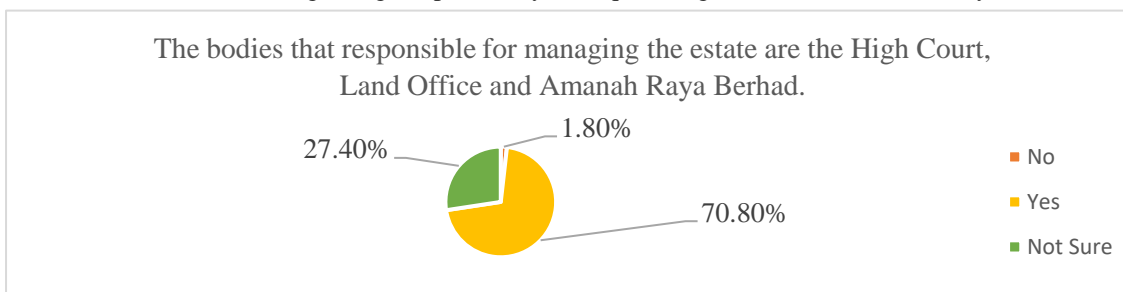


Figure 5: Frequencies of the bodies responsible for managing the estate are the High Court, Land Office and Amanah Raya Berhad.

One of the statements included in the questionnaire was, ‘Among the bodies responsible for managing the estate are the High Court, Land Office, and Amanah Raya Berhad.’ Most respondents recognize and agree that these three key bodies oversee estate management in Malaysia. As shown in Figure 5 and Table 4, 230 out of 325 respondents (70.80%) answered ‘yes’ to the statement. Conversely, 6 respondents (1.80%) answered ‘no’, while 89 respondents (27.40%) were unsure.

To summarise, the management of inheritance relates specifically to the estate of the deceased, which clarifies the components that make up an inheritance. The remaining heirs are required to administer the estate according to established procedures or in the correct order. The first step in managing a Muslim inheritance involves organising the assets that the deceased owned or managed during their lifetime. It is important to note that not all assets handled by the deceased necessarily belonged solely to them. There may also be properties that were not exclusively owned by the deceased, including assets held in trust, properties that were sold, bequests, gifts, and any property that the deceased may have left during their lifetime.

Repaying the debts left by the deceased is the next step in administering a Muslim estate. It is essential for the next of kin to identify and settle the obligations incurred by the deceased during their lifetime. These debts can be categorized into two types: worldly debts and obligations owed to the afterlife. Worldly debts refer to obligations to individuals, businesses, or government entities that must be repaid. In contrast, obligations owed in the hereafter may include actions such as performing the Hajj, which the deceased should have completed while being alive. The estate of the deceased can be utilized to cover these debts, ensuring that all obligations are fulfilled before any distribution of the inheritance occurs.

The distribution of marital property is the third phase of estate management. Conjugal property refers to assets jointly owned and controlled by the deceased and their spouse throughout the marriage. In cases where the deceased spouse (whether husband or wife) was not employed or lacked a regular source of income, the surviving spouse retains the right to claim their share of the conjugal property. For instance, a wife who is a full-time homemaker or does not have an independent source of income is entitled to claim any marital assets left by her deceased husband. This entitlement arises from the critical role the wife plays in supporting her husband by managing household responsibilities, thereby allowing him to focus on providing halal sustenance. Consequently, the surviving wife has a rightful claim to the marital property accumulated by the husband during their marriage.

Implementing the deceased's last will is the fourth stage in Islamic estate administration. A will serves as a directive or request made by the deceased during their lifetime, and it can only be executed upon the testator's (deceased's) death. The will may govern the distribution of the deceased's assets as long as it does not exceed one-third of the remaining estate. Furthermore, a non-heir who is entitled to inherit can be a beneficiary of the will. Wills must be formally drafted in writing through recognized will agencies and service providers, such as Amanah Raya Berhad, which operate under legal approval. Throughout their lifetime, the testator has the right to make as many amendments to the will as they wish. It is important to note that Islam strongly encourages the practice of writing a will, as it helps clarify the deceased's intentions and facilitates the equitable distribution of their estate.

Executing *faraid* on the bequest allocated by the deceased to the legitimate heirs is the fifth and final step in administering Islamic inheritance. The Shariah-mandated portion of the heir is referred to as *faraid*. Heirs can be classified into several categories, including primary heirs, backup heirs, first-side heirs, and second-side heirs. In this discussion, it is essential to first understand the concept of the primary heir. The primary heirs are the deceased's closest relatives, such as the father, mother, spouse (husband or wife), son, and daughter, who are entitled to the distribution of *faraid* property. Should a primary heir pass away, the rights of other heirs may subsequently come into play.

These primary heirs will receive their designated share of the *faraid* property according to the rights and proportions set by Islamic law. A simple example is that the father is entitled to 1/6 of the *faraid*

property. The mother is entitled to 1/3 if the deceased has no offspring, or 1/6 if the deceased had children. Meanwhile, the spouse, the deceased's partner, is entitled to 1/2 if there were no children, or one-quarter if there were. Similarly, a wife's entitlement is half (if the couple had no children) and 1/8 if they had children. Daughters' rights differ according to the number of offspring. If there is only one daughter, she is entitled to 1/2 of the estate. If there is more than one daughter, they share 2/3 equally. The *Bil Ghari Asobah* category applies to female offspring, meaning if a daughter has male siblings, the inheritance is divided into two portions for the male siblings and one for the female siblings. On the other hand, if there is no *fardu* heir, the male son is entitled to the entire estate as the designated heir.

It should be noted that Islamic inheritance management is not always conducted systematically, instead focuses on the application of judgments established in the Quran and hadith. Understanding the method of property distribution in Islam is of great importance. The objectives of *maqasid* Shariah (protecting religion, life, intellect, property, and the rights of living heirs) are safeguarded through increased awareness and knowledge of the Islamic inheritance process. This also fosters harmony within the family, community, and nation, ensuring justice and balance in estate distribution.

The Level of Understanding on the Importance of Estate Management Among the Muslim Community in Selangor

Table 4. Descriptive for Level of Understanding on the Importance of Estate Management Among the Muslim Community in Selangor.

Questions	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. Knowledge of estate management is essential so that the distribution of these properties can be planned carefully during life and managed efficiently without any disputes and conflicts between future heirs.	4.82	0.434
2. Estate management planning during life is essential in ensuring that the rights of the heirs left behind and stakeholders can be protected and not neglected.	4.78	0.468
3. Proper planning can also ensure the welfare of heirs, especially heirs with disabilities and minors, during their lives are not neglected.	4.80	0.467
4. Estate Management Planning can avoid misunderstandings between family members, and property will be inherited by the heirs perfectly.	4.75	0.506
5. Property Management Planning can expand the scope of wealth distribution so that it can also be enjoyed by various sections of society.	4.29	0.948
6. Planning in managing assets can also ensure that existing assets move vigorously and grow in various sectors of the economy.	4.43	0.812

Source: Authors

In this section, the researchers explain and analyse the mean and standard deviation, as calculated using the SPSS system and Microsoft Excel, as shown in Table 5 above. The respondents' understanding of the importance of estate management among the Muslim community in Selangor is assessed through six related questions.

The first statement, '*Knowledge of estate management is important so that the distribution of property can be carefully planned during one's lifetime, ensuring that it is managed smoothly without disputes or conflicts among future heirs*', received a mean score of 4.82, with a standard deviation of 0.434. This indicates a very high level of agreement, as reflected in Table 2, which outlines the mean values from lowest

to highest. These findings demonstrate that respondents understand and strongly agree that knowledge of estate management is essential for preventing future conflicts and ensuring effective property management.

The next statement, *'Estate management planning during life is important in ensuring that the rights of heirs and stakeholders are protected and not neglected'*, received a mean score of 4.78 with a standard deviation of 0.468. This high mean score indicates that the majority of respondents strongly agree with the importance of estate planning. It also highlights that most respondents understand the necessity of safeguarding heirs' rights. This result demonstrates a clear awareness among the respondents that inheritance management is crucial and that every individual in society should recognise its importance for the protection of their families' future.

The statement *'Proper planning can also ensure the welfare of heirs, especially heirs with disabilities and minors, during their lives are not neglected'*, has a high mean score of 4.80 with a standard deviation of 0.467. These figures indicate a strong consensus among respondents, reflecting their awareness and understanding that proper estate planning is crucial for safeguarding the welfare of vulnerable heirs, such as those with disabilities and minors. The high scores suggest that respondents recognise the significant benefits that thoughtful planning can bring to both their families and society.

Table 5 presents the statement *'Estate Management Planning can avoid misunderstandings between family members, and property will be inherited by the heirs perfectly'*, with a mean value of 4.75 and a standard deviation of 0.506, which is interpreted as very high. This indicates that respondents strongly understand the role of estate management in preventing family disputes and ensuring smooth inheritance processes. Additionally, the statement *'Property Management Planning can expand the scope of wealth distribution so that it can also be enjoyed by various sections of society'*, has a mean of 4.29 and a standard deviation of 0.948. Although slightly lower than the previous score, this still reflects a high level of agreement, showing that respondents recognise the broader social benefits of effective estate planning, extending beyond immediate family members. Moreover, the statement *'Planning in managing assets can also ensure that existing assets move vigorously and grow in various sectors of the economy'* recorded a mean of 4.43 and a standard deviation of 0.812. This reflects that respondents are not only aware but also agree that proper estate management planning can have a positive impact on the economy by enabling assets to grow and contribute to various sectors. Overall, these high mean values highlight a strong understanding among respondents regarding the importance and broader implications of estate management.

After reviewing Tables 2 and 5, it can be concluded that respondents from the Muslim community in Selangor, Malaysia, possess a solid understanding and awareness of the importance of estate management. This conclusion is based on the consistently high mean values in each question within part D of the study, indicating that the respondents generally acknowledge the need for proper estate management and its critical role in ensuring smooth transitions. The results demonstrate that respondents recognize the importance of managing both movable and immovable property after a person's death. They understand that assets such as real estate or residences must be transferred to the surviving heirs and that vehicles, savings, and stocks must be handled accordingly. Heirs are responsible for renaming gifted vehicles and obtaining savings or stock distributions, with a power of attorney and a distribution order required to replace names on grants or liquidate frozen accounts. This awareness highlights the necessity for individuals who own property to be equipped with this fundamental knowledge. Proper estate planning ensures that the property is distributed efficiently during one's lifetime and avoids future conflicts and disagreements among heirs. It is essential that the distribution aligns with Shariah law to ensure the process is both lawful and harmonious.

Estate management in the Muslim world is a crucial process that requires greater awareness, especially within the Muslim community itself. Although it is a commandment in Islam, many individuals still neglect their responsibility to properly manage their property. One of the primary goals of estate management is to ensure that all matters related to the property are handled with precision and efficiency. It is essential for

the surviving heirs to take prompt action in managing the estate, which will facilitate the process for claimants, heirs, and the relevant authorities. Despite living in a modern world with advanced technology, some individuals still fail to make necessary arrangements following the death of a family member. A significant portion of the Muslim population remains unaware of the proper procedures for inheritance management, creating considerable challenges if the matter is not addressed in a timely manner. This issue was exemplified in a report from the Land Department, which highlighted cases where inheritance disputes remained unresolved for over ten years following the death of grandparents or parents. As a result, such delays make settling inheritance disputes a lengthy and complicated process. This underscores the need for better education and awareness regarding Islamic estate management to prevent prolonged disputes and ensure the smooth transition of assets according to Shariah principles.

Additionally, effective estate management can ensure that property flows swiftly and freely across various aspects of life. Properties should be managed efficiently to facilitate their development. When the use of property aligns with Shariah principles and does not contravene its regulations, it can be utilised broadly and extensively. This adherence not only promotes a higher standard of living among Muslims but also enhances the overall well-being of the country. Promoting the growth of property transactions is another crucial step. Every property should continually seek ways to maximise its circulation within the economy. The income generated from these assets must be distributed appropriately and equitably among all segments of society. I frequently explore solutions to challenges that could hinder economic activity, indirectly protecting assets from insolvency or loss.

Thus, it is vital to ensure that properties are managed correctly. Newly developed assets should serve as tools for enhancing quality of life; neither the owner nor others should exploit them for selfish gain. Such actions are contrary to the principles established by Islamic law. The Quran explicitly denounces poverty, hardship, greed, and the unjust accumulation of wealth, including the failure to pay zakat. Muslims are encouraged to seek and accumulate wealth throughout their lives to provide comfort and convenience for their heirs. However, if we neglect to plan for our inheritance while we are alive, our heirs may face significant hardships in the future.

CONCLUSION

This article has successfully identified the concept of estate management within the Muslim community of Selangor, evaluated the methods of estate management prevalent in the region, and examined the degree to which the importance of estate management is understood among the community members. Furthermore, this study has highlighted the significance of estate management, benefiting other research in the same field by addressing various issues that previous literature has overlooked. By illuminating several aspects related to inheritance, this study aims to ensure that individuals are well-informed about managing estate matters. It has become apparent that the necessary measures for managing a deceased person's property after death are not widely known, thereby filling this critical gap. While several studies in Malaysia have explored inherited knowledge and management, none have specifically focused on this topic in Selangor.

The findings of this study also indicate that the presence of multiple institutions involved in estate management provides various options for those responsible for managing estates, which should be further increased. This diversity will help address community issues surrounding inheritance claims and bring these concerns to the authorities' attention. It is recommended that more one-stop facilities for estate management be established across different districts in Selangor to better serve the local population. Alternatively, authorities could enhance online estate management through advanced technology to simplify processes for users.

To improve efficiency and effectiveness in estate management in Malaysia, the creation of multimedia instructional materials is recommended. Simple guidelines for inheritance claim procedures after death should be developed to enhance community understanding. The goal is to make the claims process straightforward, swift, and accessible for everyone, thereby ensuring that all heirs receive their fair share of the deceased's property rights. Consequently, this article lays the groundwork for future research opportunities. The new perspectives explored here still have much to offer, and many aspects will require further investigation. This study contributes to the discourse on justifying better estate management, incorporating both supporting and opposing viewpoints. The ongoing operation of this component is essential, not only for the community but also for the nation. Implementing effective estate management will assist the community in maximising benefits, provided the plan is designed to avoid negatively impacting any stakeholders.

Therefore, this research can be expanded for future studies. New avenues still await exploration, such as assessing the effectiveness of social media promotions in raising awareness about inheritance management among Muslims, along with the challenges and obstacles faced in our technologically advanced era. Additionally, a comparative study could be conducted on Muslims' preferences between various estate management products, particularly in relation to *hibah* (gifts), which have garnered increasing interest among Muslims for ensuring property distribution according to their desired shares. Such research will illuminate Muslims' attitudes toward justice in inheritance management and identify issues that lead them to favour *hibah* products in contemporary contexts.

The main limitation of this study is its focus on respondents aged 18 and above, who are exclusively Muslim and reside in Selangor. Future studies could benefit from a broader demographic that includes a diverse range of ages and educational backgrounds. Each respondent's unique experiences and opinions about estate management knowledge could yield varied insights. Positive outcomes may arise if respondents are motivated to align with and learn from this study. Conversely, negative perspectives may persist among those who believe that thorough knowledge of estate management is unnecessary.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors agree that this research was conducted without any self-benefits or commercial or financial conflicts and declare the absence of conflicting interests with the funders.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Jannatul Aliesya Mohd Yusof carried out the research and wrote the research. Muhamad Zuhaili Saiman supervised the research, converted it into an article, and revised it. Muhamad Zuhaili Saiman also conducted the technical review and revision.

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