

An Empirical Analysis of Awareness and Community Involvement in Shariah Compliant for Quranic Material Disposal Management Within Batu Pahat Johor

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ABSTRACT

Managing worn-out or damaged Quranic materials is not just a technical necessity but a profound duty to uphold Shariah principles and the sanctity of divine revelation. This study explores the real-world dynamics of community awareness and involvement in Shariah-compliant disposal services specifically within Batu Pahat, Johor. This location serves as a critical case study given its high density of mosques and its susceptibility to frequent flooding, which often leads to the accumulation of damaged sacred texts. Using a quantitative cross-sectional survey of 108 Muslim residents, the research unearths a startling "awareness-practice gap". Despite a sample largely consisting of well-educated individuals, 63% were completely unaware that official disposal mechanisms even existed in their district. While general knowledge was found to be moderate (69.4%), it failed to translate into actual procedural competence. Participation levels remain disappointingly low (mean = 2.12), with most residents acting as passive observers rather than active participants. Interestingly, the community relies heavily on informal internet sources and social media rather than verified institutional platforms. These findings point toward a strategic opportunity to further integrate existing policy frameworks with local community initiatives. To strengthen this system, the study advocates for a "religious waste governance" model that empowers mosques as frontline collection hubs and utilizes localized, incentive-based engagement. Ultimately, transforming Quranic disposal from a passive service into a community-driven movement is essential for long-term Shariah compliance.

Keywords: Quran disposal; Shariah compliance; community participation; religious waste governance; sacred text management.

INTRODUCTION

The disposal of sacred religious materials is not merely a technical matter of waste management, but also a question of spiritual dignity, legal responsibility, and communal ethics (Abd Ghani & Ahmad, 2019). In Islam, the Quran occupies the highest position as the revealed word of God and must be treated with honour throughout its lifecycle, including when copies become worn, damaged, unreadable, or physically unusable. Accordingly, the disposal of damaged Qurans requires procedures that preserve sanctity and comply with Shariah principles (Zabidi & Kusnin, 2019).

In Malaysia, state religious authorities and relevant agencies have established guidelines for the disposal of damaged Qurans and Quranic materials (Zabidi & Kusnin, 2019). Common methods include controlled burning,

burial, and other supervised procedures designed to prevent disrespectful handling of sacred text (JAKIM, 2019; Rahman et al., 2021; Hassan & Ismail, 2022). However, the existence of formal mechanisms does not necessarily guarantee effective public awareness, accessibility, or community participation. In many local contexts, members of the public remain uncertain regarding where, when, and how damaged Qurans should be submitted for proper disposal.

This issue has become increasingly relevant due to several contemporary developments. First, the growing number of mosques, religious schools, and households possessing multiple Quran copies has increased the volume of worn or damaged texts requiring disposal. Consequently, serious attention should be given to the issue of managing the disposal of old and damaged Quran as well as the religious materials as the volume of damaged documents are increasing. For instance, the state of Johor is having 1.2 tonnes of Quran ashes which were submerged in the waters of Tanjung Piai, Pontian on 10 September 2019 (Nor Azura Md Amin, 2020). This trend is further intensified by a reported 125% increase in Qur'anic material waste, signalling a growing pressure on existing disposal systems and the need for more sustainable and scalable management approaches.

Second, recurring flood events in several Malaysian states have caused significant damage to religious materials, creating urgent disposal needs. Unfortunately, with the geographical position, Batu Pahat has 186 high-risk flood areas (Bernama, 2024) and this may lead to the damage of the Quran and religious books due to natural disasters.

Third, expanding digital communication has changed the way communities' access religious information, often favouring informal sources over official channels. Despite these developments, scholarly literature remains limited. Existing studies largely emphasise jurisprudential rulings, procedural methods, and technological innovations in disposal processes. Comparatively less attention has been given to the social dimension of Quran disposal, particularly the role of community awareness, participation behaviour, and institutional communication effectiveness Tosun (2000), Mamokhere & Meyer (2022), and Collins et al. (2022). Notably, prior community participation studies have predominantly focused on sectors such as tourism and local economic development, with limited application to the management of sacred religious materials. This study is among the earliest to integrate community participation theory, particularly the framework advanced by Mowforth and Munt, into the context of Qur'an disposal governance, thereby addressing a critical gap in the literature (1998). This creates an important governance gap, as the successful management of sacred materials depends not only on policy frameworks but also on public cooperation.

Batu Pahat, Johor, provides a suitable case study due to its high concentration of mosques and musollas, active Muslim population, and exposure to flood-related risks that may damage religious materials. Unfortunately, with the geographical position, Batu Pahat has 186 high-risk flood areas (Bernama, 2024) and this may lead to the damage of the Quran and religious books due to natural disasters.

Understanding community behaviour in this district may generate wider insights relevant to other Muslim-majority localities (Johor State Islamic Religious Department, 2021). The selection of Batu Pahat is therefore not arbitrary but grounded in strong empirical justification: the district records one of the highest concentrations of mosques and musollas in Peninsular Malaysia (2,745 units), while simultaneously encompassing 186 high-risk flood areas. These conditions directly increase both the volume and vulnerability of Qur'anic materials, making Batu Pahat a strategically significant site for examining disposal governance and community participation.

Accordingly, this study aims to: (1) examine the level of community awareness and knowledge regarding Quran disposal services; (2) assess the level and forms of community participation in disposal management; and (3) identify practical strategies to strengthen Shariah-compliant Quran disposal systems. The study contributes to the growing discourse on religious waste governance, sacred text management, and participatory Islamic community administration.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on Quran disposal may be broadly divided into three streams. The first focuses on jurisprudential and procedural matters. These studies discuss the permissibility and methods of disposing damaged Qurans,

including burning, burial, and supervised destruction, based on Islamic legal principles and state fatwas (Zabidi & Kusnin (2019); Majid et al. (2022); Ibrahim & Ahmad (2020); Ab Ghani & Ahmad (2019). Their central concern is preserving reverence for the sacred text while ensuring practical implementation.

The second stream addresses technological and administrative innovation. Several studies have explored specialised incineration systems, collection centres, and institutional management mechanisms that allow large-scale disposal in a more efficient and environmentally controlled manner Susantini & Susilo (2019) and Hassan & Ismail (2022). Such developments are increasingly relevant in urban settings and disaster-affected areas.

The third-stream concerns public awareness and religious literacy. Research indicates that many members of the public remain uncertain about proper disposal procedures, particularly where official guidance is not actively communicated Rahman et al. (2021). Misunderstanding may lead to neglect, improper storage, or disposal methods inconsistent with religious norms.

However, one significant gap remains underexplored: community participation. While participation models are widely discussed in tourism, environmental governance, and local development as in Tosun (2000), Mamokhere & Meyer (2022), and Collins et al. (2022)., they have rarely been applied to sacred material management. This is a notable omission because effective Quran disposal requires community cooperation in reporting, submitting, collecting, monitoring, and supporting disposal programmes.

This study adopts a participation perspective informed by community engagement literature, particularly distinctions between passive, functional, consultative, interactive, incentive-based, and self-initiated participation. Applying these categories enables a more nuanced understanding of how Muslim communities respond to religious administrative programmes.

By integrating Islamic governance concerns with participation theory, the present study extends existing scholarship beyond legal procedure toward community-based sacred text management.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey design to examine community awareness, knowledge, and participation in the management of old and damaged Quran disposal in Batu Pahat, Johor, Malaysia. A survey approach was considered appropriate because it enables the systematic collection of standardised responses from a relatively broad sample and allows the identification of behavioural patterns, perceptions, and participation tendencies within the target population.

The cross-sectional design was selected as the study sought to capture respondents' views and experiences at a specific point in time rather than over multiple periods. This design is widely used in community-based social research where the objective is to assess current conditions, awareness levels, and behavioural tendencies.

Study Area

Batu Pahat district, located in the state of Johor, Malaysia, was selected as the study site for several reasons. First, the district has a relatively high concentration of mosques and musollas, indicating active religious engagement and widespread use of Quranic materials. Second, Batu Pahat has experienced recurring flood-related incidents, which may contribute to the damage of religious texts and increase the need for proper disposal systems. Third, the district provides a suitable semi-urban and community-based context for examining institutional outreach and public participation in sacred text management.

Population and Sampling

The target population comprised Muslim residents in Batu Pahat district who were adults and potentially exposed to Quran ownership, mosque activities, or awareness of religious administrative services. A total of 108 respondents participated in the study.

The study employed a non-probability convenience sampling strategy with community access elements, whereby respondents were approached through mosques, musollas, local networks, and online dissemination channels. This approach was considered practical due to time, access, and resource considerations, while enabling participation from respondents of diverse demographic backgrounds.

Although the sample does not claim full statistical representation of the entire district population, it is adequate for exploratory community-level analysis and descriptive interpretation.

Research Instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed based on the study objectives and relevant literature on community participation, awareness behaviour, and Quran disposal management.

The questionnaire consisted of three sections:

Section A: Demographic Information

This section collected respondents' background information, including gender, age, education level, place of residence, and community role.

Section B: Awareness and Knowledge
This section measured respondents' awareness of official Quran disposal services, familiarity with disposal procedures, and sources of information.

Section C: Community Participation

This section assessed the level and preferred forms of participation in Quran disposal activities based on six participation categories: passive, functional, incentive-based, consultative, interactive, and self-participation.

Most attitudinal items were measured using a Likert-type scale to assess agreement, frequency, or perceived relevance.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure content validity, questionnaire items were reviewed and aligned with the research objectives and concepts identified in prior literature. The wording of items was refined to ensure clarity, contextual suitability, and respondent comprehension.

A pilot review process was undertaken prior to wider distribution to identify ambiguous wording and improve response flow. Internal consistency reliability may be assessed using Cronbach's alpha for multi-item constructs where applicable.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted over a one-month period using both physical and online distribution methods. Printed questionnaires were distributed through selected mosques, musollas, and Quran disposal centres within Batu Pahat district. In parallel, a digital version of the questionnaire was disseminated through Google Forms using social media and community messaging networks.

The mixed-mode distribution strategy was adopted to increase accessibility and response diversity, particularly among respondents with differing communication preferences and levels of digital engagement.

Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed of the purpose of the study prior to completion.

Data Analysis

Completed responses were coded and analysed using SPSS and Microsoft Excel. Descriptive statistical techniques were employed, including frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations, to summarise demographic characteristics, awareness levels, and participation patterns.

Mean score interpretation was used to categorise levels of participation and knowledge. Comparative interpretation across participation dimensions enabled the identification of dominant and weaker engagement forms.

Where relevant, future studies may extend the present analysis through inferential statistics such as chi-square tests, correlation analysis, regression modelling, or structural equation modelling.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to accepted principles of research ethics. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed of the purpose of the study before completing the questionnaire. No personally identifying information was disclosed in the reporting process.

All responses were treated confidentially and used solely for academic research purposes. Respondents retained the right to decline participation or withdraw at any stage prior to submission.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Respondent Profile

Below is the table that explains the demographic information of the respondents (n= 108)

Table 1: Demographic of the Respondents

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	42	38.9
Female	66	61.1
Age		
<20 years old	10	9.3
21 - 30 years old	27	25.0
31 - 40 years old	24	22.2
41 - 50 years old	29	26.9
>50 years old	18	16.7
Education		
SPM / SPMV / equivalent	8	7.4
STPM / Cert / equivalent	6	5.6
Diploma / equivalent	14	13.0
Bachelor Degree	49	45.4
Master Degree	16	14.8
PhD	14	13.0
Others	1	0.9
Place of Residence		
Chaah Baru	1	0.9
Sri Medan	-	-
Simpang Kiri	1	0.9
Lubok	1	0.9

Bagan	1	0.9
Peserai	7	6.5
Linau	3	2.8
Tanjung Sembrong	5	4.6
Sri Gading	60	55.6
Simpang Kanan	16	14.8
Minyak Beku	3	2.8
Kampung Baharu	7	6.5
Sungai Punggur	1	0.9
Sungai Kluang	2	1.9
Position		
Chairman	1	0.9
Community committee members	4	3.7
Congregational member	90	83.4
Village head	-	-
Mosque Committee members (Imam, Muazzin etc.)	13	12.0

A total of 108 respondents participated in this study. Female respondents constituted the majority (61.1%), while males represented 38.9%. In terms of age distribution, the largest group was respondents aged 41–50 years (26.9%), followed by those aged 21–30 years (25.0%) and 31–40 years (22.2%). This indicates that the sample was largely composed of economically and socially active adults who are likely to be involved in household and community religious affairs.

The educational profile of respondents was relatively high. Nearly half held a bachelor's degree (45.4%), followed by master's degree holders (14.8%) and PhD holders (13.0%). This reflects a well-educated sample and provides an important context for interpreting awareness levels. In principle, higher educational attainment might be expected to correspond with stronger procedural awareness regarding religious management matters. However, the findings suggest otherwise.

Most respondents identified themselves as congregational members of local mosques and musollas (83.4%), followed by mosque committee members such as *imams* and *muazzins* (12.0%). This suggests that the respondents were not socially detached individuals, but persons already connected to local religious institutions. Such a profile makes the subsequent low awareness findings particularly significant.

Awareness of Official Quran Disposal Services

The Batu Pahat community involvement regarding the Quran disposal in Johor:

Table 2: Knowledge Regarding Quran Disposal Service

Respond	Frequency (%)
Yes	40 (37.0 %)
No	68 (63.0 %)

Table 2 shows the respondents' knowledge regarding the Quran disposal service in the Batu Pahat district. More than half of the respondents, in total of 68 people (63.0%), were unaware of the existence of the Quran disposal service in Batu Pahat.

This result demonstrates a significant awareness gap concerning the institutional mechanisms established for the proper and respectful disposal of the Qur'an. A critical observation emerging from this finding is the apparent paradox between educational attainment and awareness level. Despite the respondents being relatively educated

and socially integrated within mosque-related environments, their knowledge of Qur'an disposal services remains moderate to low. This suggests that higher educational background does not necessarily translate into increased awareness of specific religious environmental practices. In principle, an increase in educational level is expected to correlate positively with greater awareness and participation in community-based religious governance. However, the present findings indicate a weak or potentially negative relationship between these variables in this specific context, highlighting a disconnection between formal education and practical religious environmental awareness.

Sources of Information Regarding the Quran Disposal Service

Table 3: Sources of Information Regarding the Quran Disposal Service

Source	Percentage (%)
Internet	66
Brochure	5
Facebook	26
Official Website of the Johor State Islamic Religious department	22
Family and friends	49
Talk/ lecture	21
Others	3

Table 3 presents the distribution of respondents' sources of information regarding Qur'an disposal services. The findings indicate that the internet is the most dominant source of information, with 66% of respondents relying on it. This is followed by family and friends (49%), Facebook (26%), the official website of the Johor State Islamic Religious Department (22%), religious talks or lectures (21%), brochures (5%), and other sources (3%).

The pattern of responses demonstrates a clear reliance on informal and digitally mediated communication channels rather than formal institutional platforms. A notable observation from these findings is the relatively modest usage of the official website of the religious authority (22%), despite its institutional legitimacy as the primary source of verified information. This indicates a potential inefficiency in digital outreach strategies employed by the responsible religious authority. Such inefficiency may be attributed to limited visibility, suboptimal search engine optimisation, lack of user-friendly interface design, or insufficient promotion of the website across alternative communication platforms.

Level of Knowledge Regarding Quran Disposal Service

Table 4 Level of Knowledge Regarding Quran Disposal Service

Level	Frequency (%)
Low	5 (4.6 %)
Moderate	75 (69.4 %)
High	28 (25.9 %)

Table 4 illustrates the level of respondents' knowledge regarding Qur'an disposal services in Batu Pahat. The findings indicate that 69.4% of respondents possess a moderate level of knowledge, followed by 25.9% with a high level, and 4.6% with a low level.

Although the overall distribution appears moderately positive, this finding warrants careful interpretation. A moderate level of knowledge does not necessarily reflect procedural competence. Many respondents may understand the general need to handle the Qur'an respectfully, yet lack a deeper understanding of the correct disposal procedures in accordance with Shariah compliance. This limited depth of understanding reduces the

sense of obligation and may explain why the community is not strongly motivated to participate actively in Qur'an disposal practices.

Furthermore, despite the relatively high educational background of respondents, knowledge levels remain largely moderate. This suggests that formal education alone does not sufficiently translate into practical religious procedural literacy. Consequently, more targeted and practice-oriented awareness efforts are required to strengthen both understanding and community engagement in this area.

Community Participation in Quran Disposal Activities

Type of involvement with the Batu Pahat Community in increasing participation in the management of Quran disposal

Table 5: Community Involvement in the Quran Disposal Activity

Type of involvement	Mean	Level
Passive	2.16	Low
Functional	1.55	Low
Incentive	2.67	Moderate
Consulting	1.70	Low
Interactive	2.30	Low
Self Participation	2.13	Low
Overall	2.12	Low

In terms of community involvement in Quran disposal activities, the analysis found that the overall level of involvement is low, with an overall mean value of 2.12. The type of involvement with the lowest score is Functional involvement (1.55), while Incentive involvement recorded the highest mean value (2.67), though it still falls within the moderate category. This indicates that most of the community are only passively involved in disposal activities and are more likely to participate if certain incentives are provided.

The findings also show that the community is still less actively involved in the management of Quran disposal. Most of them are participating passively. This pattern indicates that community members are predominantly positioned as passive recipients of information or observers, with minimal involvement in decision-making processes or operational implementation. The particularly low scores for functional and consultative participation suggest that the community is not systematically integrated into structured roles such as programme management, planning, or feedback mechanisms. In essence, participation remains peripheral rather than institutionalised.

Conversely, the relatively higher mean for incentive-based participation implies that engagement is more likely when it is recognised or meaningfully acknowledged. Such incentives need not be financial; symbolic forms such as certificates, public recognition, or opportunities for religious learning may serve as effective motivators. Similarly, the moderate score for interactive participation suggests that the community responds more positively to practical, visible forms of engagement, including mosque-based activities or collective disposal initiatives.

Overall, the findings highlight a structural limitation in current engagement strategies, where the lack of deep involvement and clearly defined roles constrains active participation. This underscores the need for more inclusive, participatory frameworks that move beyond passive awareness towards meaningful community integration in Qur'an disposal management.

Interpreting Low Participation: A Governance Perspective

The low overall participation level should not be read as community indifference alone. Rather, it may reflect a governance design problem in which programmes are insufficiently visible, weakly localised, or not integrated into everyday community institutions.

Participation often depends on three conditions: awareness, accessibility, and motivation. If people do not know where services exist, cannot access them easily, or see no meaningful reason to engage, participation remains weak even when they personally value the Quran.

Thus, the challenge may lie less in religious commitment and more in programme architecture. Sacred text disposal systems require user-friendly access points, regular communication, trusted local intermediaries, and recurring opportunities for participation.

Policy and Practical Implications

Several practical implications emerge from the findings:

- A. First, mosques and musollas should be positioned as frontline collection and awareness centres because they already possess legitimacy and regular community contact.
- B. Second, religious authorities should prioritise digital outreach through searchable websites, social media, WhatsApp dissemination kits, and short educational videos explaining proper disposal procedures.
- C. Third, incentive-based civic models may be introduced through volunteer recognition schemes, annual appreciation programmes, or youth engagement initiatives linked to mosque institutions.
- D. Fourth, flood-prone districts should integrate Quran disposal protocols into disaster recovery frameworks, particularly where damaged religious materials accumulate after emergencies.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study extends the literature by repositioning Quran disposal as more than a jurisprudential matter. It demonstrates that sacred text disposal is simultaneously a governance issue, a communication issue, and a community participation issue.

The concept of religious waste governance may therefore provide a useful framework for future scholarship examining how Muslim societies manage sacred materials through institutions, public behaviour, and sustainable practices.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the level of awareness and community involvement in the management of Shariah-compliant Quranic material disposal in Batu Pahat remains low. The findings indicate that most respondents rely on informal information sources such as the internet and social media, while engagement with official institutional platforms remains limited. In addition, community participation is largely passive, with minimal involvement in consultative, functional, or self-initiated roles. These conditions have important implications for Shariah compliance, as insufficient awareness and limited participation may lead to improper handling or disposal practices that do not fully adhere to established religious guidelines. This highlights the need to strengthen both institutional communication and community engagement as integral components of effective Quranic material disposal management. To address these challenges, educational and awareness programmes should be systematically expanded through structured lectures, training sessions, and large-scale public campaigns led by relevant religious authorities. At the same time, the establishment of accessible and well-coordinated disposal centres is essential to facilitate public participation. Mosques and musollas should also be strategically mobilised as localised hubs for information dissemination and supervised disposal activities. Furthermore, incentive-based mechanisms emerge as a critical driver for enhancing active community participation. Such incentives should extend beyond financial rewards to include symbolic recognition, social appreciation, and opportunities for religious engagement. Strengthening collaborative governance between institutions and the community will ultimately contribute to a more systematic, participatory, and Shariah-compliant framework for Quranic material disposal management.

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Ethical considerations

Respondent information is kept confidential, and participation in the questionnaire is voluntary. Respondents were given an explanation of the study's purpose along with assurances that the data will only be used for academic purposes.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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