

## EVALUATION OF MAQASID SHARIAH PRINCIPLES IN INSTITUTIONAL WORK ENVIRONMENT

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to explore the link between a safe work environment and its Impact on employees' well-being, focusing on the principles of Maqasid Shariah. Utilizing insights from previous literature, the research objectives are to identify the current criteria of the work environment and assess how the criteria contribute to ensuring the safety and well-being of employees, to analyse how Maqasid Shariah principles are applied in work environment to enhance employees' privacy and well-being, considering factors such as Visual Comfort and Acoustic Sensory and to provide recommendations for creating a conducive work environment aligned with Maqasid Shariah's principles. This research evaluates employee perceptions of their current work environments and their impact on performance and well-being, aiming to improve work environments to encourage productivity while maintaining Islamic values of safety and privacy. The findings collected successfully provided input on the influence of Visual Comfort and Acoustic Sensory factors towards the overall experience of office space, particularly in addressing privacy concerns. Recommendations derived from the findings aim to create a conducive work environment aligned with Maqasid Shariah's principles.

**Keywords:** Maqasid Shariah, work environment, workspace, safety, privacy, wellbeing, protection of life

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Institutions are work environments where employees spend a significant portion of their day working. It is essential to create a conducive working environment that considers both functional and psychological factors to enhance employees' performance and well-being (Dandona, 2013; Cavanaugh, 2019; Ahmed, 2022). Among various factors influencing employees' performance and well-being, safety and security aspects of the work environment are particularly significant. Designing appropriate safe working environments has a significant impact on employees' mental and physical well-being (Colenberg, Jylhä, and Arkesteijn, 2021; Yadav et al., 2022). The challenge lies in creating work environments that balance collaborative interactions with individual privacy and security concerns. The lack of privacy especially in open-plan layout offices may not be conducive for departments handling confidential information (Oktra, 2020).

Maqasid Shariah, the higher objectives or goals of Islamic law, provides principles that cover many aspects of life, aiming to protect and enhance human interests like religion, life, intellect, progeny, and wealth (Mochamad Sandisi, 2020). These principles guide Muslims in

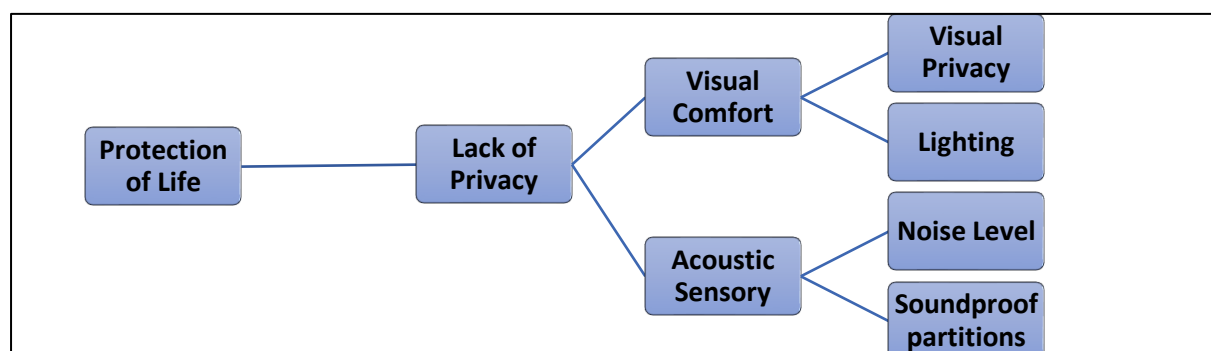
pursuing personal and societal well-being while staying true to Islam's core values. Therefore, Maqasid Shariah's principles of Protection of Life hold significant implications for designing and managing work environments that prioritize the well-being and productivity of employees as part of duties as Khalifah (Sarkawi, Md Dali, Abdullah and Mohd Khazani 2017; Mohamad, 2017). It encompasses the preservation and enhancement of human life, with the primary objective is emphasizing the protection and promotion of physical, mental, and spiritual welfare. Protection of Life, a principle of Maqasid Shariah, emphasizes the safety and well-being of employees in the work environment (Arsad et al., 2015; Mohamad, 2017). Ensuring adequate visual comfort and acoustic sensory factors align with this principle, promoting employees' security and efficiency (Kim & de Dear, 2013; Asadi and Hussein, 2014; Güler and Demirkan, 2021).

In studying the principles of Maqasid Shariah toward a secure and conducive work environment, the following research questions and research objectives are assessed: -

**Table 1:** Research Questions and Research Objectives

| Research Question   | Research Objectives  |
|---|--|
| What are the characteristics of Maqasid Shariah's Protection of Life in providing safety and well-being of office building occupants? | To examine the key characteristics of Maqasid Shariah's Protection of Life within office building design and how they contribute to ensuring the safety and well-being of occupants.                             |
| How do Maqasid Shariah principles address in the office design for human comfort?   | To analyse how Maqasid Shariah principles are applied in office design to enhance human comfort, considering factors such as spatial arrangement, lighting, and ergonomic considerations.                        |
| What are the recommendations for the good design of office buildings according to Maqasid Shariah's Protection of Life?               | To determine effective design of office buildings in alignment with Maqasid Shariah's Protection of Life, encompassing strategies to optimize safety, well-being, and user comfort within the built environment. |

Figure 1 below provides an overview of the conceptual framework established through synthesizing information from the literature review to explore how the work environment affects employee safety and productivity, with a special focus on privacy issues in open-plan offices. The review of existing studies points out several important factors contributing to privacy issues, such as Visual Comfort and Acoustic Sensory. Visual Comfort, including variables such as visual privacy and lighting, helps alleviate privacy concerns. Similarly, Acoustic Sensory, which includes variables like noise level and soundproof partitions, plays a vital role in addressing challenges related to privacy.



**Fig. 1:** Conceptual Framework

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section discusses the analysis of existing research and scholarly articles relevant to Maqasid Shariah and its principles, specifically the Protection of Life. Elements related to addressing the Lack of Privacy in the work environment are discussed to establish a linkage between the Protection of Life and factors that mitigate the lack of privacy, including Visual Comfort and Acoustic Sensory.

### 2.1 The Principles of Maqasid Shariah

Maqasid Shariah provides a comprehensive framework that encompasses various aspects of human life, including work environment. These principles are derived from the primary sources of Islamic law and aim to preserve and promote fundamental human interests. This includes the preservation of religion, life, intellect, descendants, and wealth (Md Dali, Abdullah, Sarkawi, 2016; Tarmizi, 2019). Often discussed interchangeably with *maslahah*, Maqasid Shariah in daily life has already been adopted by all people with its application covers various fields and industries, which includes construction, banking and finance, education, politics, medicine, and so on (Tarmizi, 2019). There are verses in the Al-Quran that cover certain provisions, aiming at accomplishing certain objectives (*maqasid*) made by Allah SWT for a purpose and value, and also to give a reminder to the men on the earth who is a vicegerent (*Khalifah*) to Allah SWT (Arsad, Ahmad, Mohamed Fisol, Said, Othman, 2015). It is understood that Maqasid Shariah requires human beings to be compliant with rules, policies, and guidelines to achieve specific goals. Principally, Maqasid Shariah functions as nurturing the quality of life which needs to be integrated with worldly concerns including built environment such as town planning, quantity surveying, and architecture. This is intended so that it can benefit the *ummah* and the entire human beings of the universe.

#### 2.1.2. Maqasid Shariah Objectives and Their Application to the Built Environment

From the context of construction and building, Maqasid Shariah principles guide making a building space functional (primary) while at the same time making it appealing and aesthetic (secondary) and then differentiate between necessity and luxury in the function of the space based on *darūrāt* (necessity), followed by *hājiyāt* (needs) and the *tahsīniyāt* (luxury) (Sulayman, 2014; Sarkawi, et. al. 2017). The five objectives in Maqasid Shariah, namely, protection of life, protection of wealth, protection of progeny, and protection of religion provide in-depth knowledge and a comprehensive framework for developing a well conducive space and environment (Vejzagic, and Smolo, 2011; Md Dali, Abdullah and Ahmad Sarkawi, 2016; Julia, Kassim, and Engku Ali, 2018; Tarmizi, 2019).

#### 2.1.3 Protection of Life (*hifz an-nafs*)

*Hifz an-nafs* focuses on preserving the safety and well-being of individuals, ensuring a dignified life and a return to Allah SWT in a state similar to our birth condition. In designing work environments that uphold the principle of *hifz an-nafs*, it is crucial to prioritize factors such as accessibility and sustainable design. This includes using sustainable materials, implementing indoor air quality management measures, and integrating safety features to promote a healthy lifestyle (Zein, 2018; Avion Tech, 2021). Employing safety for privacy while doing work such as room partitions and noise controlling mechanisms are paramount

considerations during the design and construction phases. Furthermore, using safe organic building materials like straw bale walls with added silica content and structural concrete insulated panels (SCIP) offers exceptional fire resistance and resilience against natural disasters such as earthquakes and strong winds (Heath, Farrell, and Mashal, 2014). Therefore, the principle of Protection of Life becomes the central idea of this research taking into the aspect of Visual Comfort and Acoustic Sensory as its elements. This principle and its elements aim to mitigate issues related to the lack of privacy and promote a secure and private work environment that aligns with Islamic values.

## **2.2 Protection of Life: Lack of Privacy And Safety**

Open office layouts are increasingly adopted by organizations to foster collaboration and productivity. Furthermore, office layouts are often determined by organizational hierarchy, with lower-grade employees in shared or open floor layouts and middle/top managers in cubicles or private rooms (Hassain, 2020). The lack of privacy in such settings can negatively affect employees' well-being and job satisfaction, with open-plan layouts presenting challenges in creating a conducive work environment. Study shows that open-plan office layouts may pose several health problems such as airborne diseases in fostering conducive work environment (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1991; Nawi, Baharum, Ibrahim, and Riazi 2017). Furthermore, it lacks physical barriers, and compromises privacy, resulting in increased stress levels, reduced focus, and decreased productivity compared to enclosed office layouts (Muzaffar, Noor, and Mahmud, 2020). Employees need to have a designated working space that they perceive as safe and does not distract them from performing their work efficiently (Wütschert, Pereira, and Egli, 2022).

To address the lack of privacy in office space, two key factors are identified that significantly impact the quality of privacy in the office, which are Visual Comfort and Acoustic Sensory. Visual Comfort encompasses the aesthetic and ergonomic aspects of the physical environment that enhance well-being, while acoustic sensory relates to the sound environment that affects concentration, effective communication, and privacy maintenance.

### **2.2.1 Visual Comfort**

Visual Comfort refers to optimal visual conditions that reduce eye strain and promote overall well-being (Asadi and Hussein, 2014; Xue et al., 2022). It includes factors like lighting, glare reduction, colour, and contrast. The research underscores the importance of visual comfort in office environments. De Giuli and Valeria (2008) found that adequate lighting and colour temperature positively impact visual comfort and productivity. Boyce, Hunter, and Howlett (2003) highlighted the importance of glare reduction strategies such as shading devices and screen positioning to mitigate discomfort caused by excessive brightness or contrast.

**Visual Privacy** involves controlling the visibility of personal or confidential information within office spaces. It plays a vital role in maintaining confidentiality, reducing distractions, and fostering a sense of security among occupants. Various aspects contribute to visual privacy, including office layout, furniture arrangement, and the use of visual barriers. Strategically positioning workstations, partitions, or screens can enhance privacy levels (Yildirim, Akalin, and Celebi, 2007). Moreover, the influence of visual privacy on occupants' satisfaction and productivity, highlights the need for appropriate visual barriers and individual control over privacy settings (Güler and Demirkan, 2021).

**Lighting** is essential for achieving visual comfort and enhancing the visual environment, covering natural and artificial sources, color temperature, and controls. Proper lighting design can improve mood, concentration, and visual performance. Mayhoub and Rabboh (2022) found that customers prefer daylighting in shopping malls, while other research highlights the importance of lighting conditions for employee well-being and productivity (Boyce et al., 2003). Asadi and Hussein (2014) note that optimal daylighting positively impacts productivity and reduces energy consumption.

### 2.2.2 Acoustic Sensory

Acoustic Sensory factors play a crucial role in addressing the lack of privacy concerns by considering variables such as noise level and sound absorption. The sound environment of an office space significantly impacts the ability to concentrate, communicate effectively, and maintain privacy.

**Noise Level and Sound Absorption.** High noise levels in office environments can negatively impact privacy, as distracting background noise hinders effective communication and increases the risk of unintentional disclosure of sensitive information (Asadi and Hussein, 2014; CareerBuilder, 2015; Güler and Demirkan, 2021). Incorporating sound-absorbing materials and treatments in office design, such as acoustic panels and ceiling baffles, can minimize sound reflections and prevent the spread of private conversations (Reinten, Braat-Eggen, Hornikx, Kort and Kohlrausch, 2017; Macchie, Secchi and Cellai, 2018). Therefore, noise level control and sound absorption are crucial elements to consider for indoor environment design to enhance privacy, concentration, and communication (Cucharero et al., 2019).

## 3.0 METHODOLOGY

This section elaborates on the process of obtaining the data for the research which includes research design, sampling technique, questionnaire design, and collection of the data. The research design is generated to help in determining questions to be asked to respondents to achieve the research objectives. UNITEN and IIUM are selected for this research to assess the extent to which the Maqasid Shariah principle of protection of Life is incorporated in the selected buildings of each institution. It will offer valuable insights into how these institutions prioritize the well-being and safety of their occupants. The respondents selected are employees who are occupants of the office building whereby their opinion is based on the research questions given. This research uses a probability sampling technique, where employees from each university were identified based on their divisions and then selected through a simple random format. They were contacted via email or approached in person at their offices to confirm their availability to answer the provided questionnaire.

The organizational structure of both universities was examined, and questionnaires were distributed to the following divisions: -

**Table 2:** Division Selected for the survey

| Universities | Division Selected                                 |
|--------------|---|
| UNITEN       | Administration Office                             |
|              | Research & Innovation/ Research Department        |
|              | Chancellery Offices                               |
|              | Finance Department                                |
|              | Marketing   |
|              | Other   |
| IIUM         | Kulliyah of Architecture and Environmental Design |
|              | Administrative Office                             |
|              | Academic Office                                   |
|              | International Office                              |
|              | Postgraduate Office                               |
|              | Finance Department                                |
|              | Marketing   |
|              | Other   |

To address the research questions at hand, questionnaires were divided into four parts as follows:-

**Table 3:** Questionnaire Design

| Part |                                       | Description   | Format  |
|------|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| A.   | Respondent's Background               | To provide demographic understanding, targeted and comparative analysis, gaining contextual insights, tailoring recommendations, avoiding bias, and ensuring the validity of this research. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple questions</li> <li>• Open questions</li> </ul>  |
| B.   | Office Space Environment              | To provide an overview perception of office worker relating to his/her current workspace. This serves as warm up to allow respondents understand the purpose of the research.               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple questions</li> <li>• Likert scale questions</li> <li>• Ranking questions</li> <li>• Open questions</li> </ul> |
| C.   | Opinion Concerning Protection of Life | To provide opinion of office worker relating to his/her current workspace specifically on visual comfort  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple questions</li> <li>• Likert scale questions</li> <li>• Open questions</li> </ul>                              |
|      |                                       | To provide opinion of office worker relating to his/her current workspace specifically on acoustic sensory.   |   |
| D.   | Office Design Improvement             | To provide recommendation to improve the office space relating to Protection of Life  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open questions</li> </ul>  |

The data collection process involved distributing physical and online questionnaires to employees in selected divisions of their institutions. Physical distribution was done by visiting offices and providing questionnaires directly, while online distribution involved sharing questionnaire links. Approximately 100 questionnaires were distributed to each institution, resulting in a 30% collection rate. Respondents had one week to complete the questionnaires,

spanning two months across both institutions. Data were reviewed, assessed, and recorded in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) after cleaning for spelling, grammar, and language consistency. Questions were systematically coded for organization and integration into SPSS for analysis. Frequency distribution analysis was used to examine demographic variables, such as age group, gender, and job role, while mean rating and standard deviation calculations provided insights into consensus and variability of responses on Likert scale questions. Regression analysis was conducted to explore relationships between variables, particularly examining the influence of Visual Comfort and Acoustic Sensory experiences on overall perceptions of the work environment.

## 4.0 RESULTS

### 4.1 Respondents' Overall Perception of Office Space

This section discusses the findings about how employees view their workplace environment. It focuses on the importance of visual comfort and its impact on employees' well-being. The results show that all respondents from UNITEN and IIUM are satisfied with their current office environment.

#### 4.1.1 Priority Ranking for Office Space

The following Table 4 shows the mean rank values provided by respondents from both universities to assess the overall importance rating of various aspects of office space according to the universities.

**Table 4:** Respondents' Priority for Office Space by Universities

| Universities | Aspects                   | Mean Rank | Rank |
|--------------|---------------------------|-----------|------|
| UNITEN       | Good ventilation          | 2.87      | 1    |
|              | Well Equipped             | 3.03      | 2    |
|              | Good thermal condition    | 3.63      | 3    |
|              | Ample Space               | 5.00      | 5    |
|              | Pleasant view             | 5.27      | 6    |
|              | Good Lighting/Daylighting | 4.23      | 4    |
|              | No excessive noise        | 6.73      | 7    |
|              | Pleasant smell            | 6.80      | 8    |
|              | Other                     | 7.43      | 9    |
| IIUM         | Good ventilation          | 3.07      | 2    |
|              | Well Equipped             | 2.48      | 1    |
|              | Good thermal condition    | 5.34      | 5    |
|              | Ample Space               | 4.68      | 4    |
|              | Pleasant view             | 5.43      | 6    |
|              | Good Lighting/Daylighting | 4.14      | 3    |
|              | No excessive noise        | 6.32      | 8    |
|              | Pleasant smell            | 6.18      | 7    |
|              | Other                     | 7.36      | 9    |

Based on the overall responses regarding factors to consider and prioritize in an office space from both universities, both universities highly prioritize good ventilation and having their workplace being well-equipped, indicating their crucial role in office space considerations. Other than the top two choices highlighted, UNITEN respondents consistently prioritize good thermal conditions whereas IIUM respondents prioritize more on having good lighting/daylighting in their workplace. Additionally, while both groups consider aspects like ample space and no excessive noise as important, there are variations in the rankings, with respondents from IIUM showing more emphasis on ample space compared to UNITEN respondents. However, pleasant views and pleasant smells does not emerge as top priorities for either group, with both universities rated second choice as their highest. Although the Other aspect is not prioritized highly by respondents from either university, most respondents perceive it as safety and security, emphasizing the need for an overall secure working environment to foster conduciveness.

#### 4.1.2 Overall Opinion of Office Space

Based on the findings for the overall perception of office space, it is suggested that both UNITEN and IIUM employees generally perceive a positive atmosphere in their office spaces. It demonstrates several aspects that can be related to the Maqasid Shariah principle of Protection of Life. This includes having to perceive a positive level of satisfaction with Visual Comfort and Acoustic Sensory through Visual Privacy, Lighting, Noise, and Sound. In terms of Visual Comfort, both respondent groups perceive the elements of Visual Privacy and Lighting positively in their work environments. Regarding Visual Privacy, respondents from both universities generally feel a sense of safety and security in their office space designs, although there are some inconsistencies in their responses. Additionally, both groups agree that office space design contributes to work productivity to some extent, with IIUM respondents rating it slightly higher. While both universities somewhat acknowledge the privacy of the workplace, some inconsistencies in responses were identified. Concerning Lighting, both groups agree that the lighting conditions in their respective offices meet employees' expectations. In terms of Acoustic Sensory, the findings suggest that both UNITEN and IIUM respondents generally perceive the noise control mechanisms in their office workspaces as effective, although there is more variability in opinions among UNITEN respondents. Additionally, both universities find that their audio-sensory features effectively promote comfort and well-being in their work environments, with UNITEN showing a slightly stronger perception of effectiveness. However, there are consistent but differing opinions among respondents regarding the effectiveness of these features. Both responses also show satisfaction with good ventilation and cleanliness in their workspace, which contribute to the physical and mental health of employees and emphasize the holistic approach to the Protection of Life principle.

## 4.2 Respondents' Opinion Concerning Protection Of Life

### 4.2.1 Visual Comfort

In essence, Visual Comfort can generally be seen in both universities, particularly focusing on Lighting and Visual Privacy. In terms of Lighting, both UNITEN and IIUM respondents highly appreciate the effectiveness of lighting conditions, including both daylight and artificial sources, in creating a comfortable and inviting atmosphere for work. This indicates a shared perception among employees from both universities that lighting plays a crucial role in



enhancing visual comfort in the workplace, with minimal variability in opinions within each institution. Concerning the presence of glare in office workspaces, both universities' respondents perceived a similar level of glare, with a neutral perception leaning slightly towards agreement. However, there was a considerable difference in the variability of responses among UNITEN and IIUM respondents, suggesting a more diverse range of opinions regarding the impact of glare on visual comfort. Therefore, there is a need to improve issues relating to glare in office space. Among approaches to consider which include implementing glare reduction mechanisms such as applying anti-glare coatings or films on windows and glass cover on the light, installing adjustable lighting, or opt for lighting fixtures that have diffusers or covers to reduce direct glare. Additionally, regarding visual privacy features in office spaces, both universities reported positive perceptions, with UNITEN respondents expressing slightly stronger agreement.

Similarly, when considering the quality of outdoor views from workstations, both universities' respondents generally rated the quality as neutral to satisfied, with IIUM respondents showing a slightly higher average rating compared to UNITEN respondents. This difference is attributed to IIUM having more outdoor views compared to UNITEN. These findings underscore the importance of considering various factors, including lighting and visual privacy features, to create visually comfortable and conducive work environments that cater to the needs and preferences of employees in different university settings. Therefore, one aspect that needs to be considered is addressing the diverse responses given by both groups regarding statements relating to privacy screens or cubicle features, glaring issues, and the adequacy of office daylight. Enhancing these areas both physically and visually, would improve the overall quality of visual comfort for both universities. This, in turn, would align with the Maqasid Shariah principle of Protection of Life by fostering spaces that enhance the physical and mental health of individuals in the workplace.

#### 4.2.2. Acoustic Sensory

The findings reveal variations in responses regarding factors contributing to Acoustic Sensory comfort in work environments, particularly concerning Noise and Sound. There is a disparity in perceptions between UNITEN and IIUM respondents regarding noise levels in the office. UNITEN employees agree that noise can be distracting during communication, while IIUM employees disagree with the statement. Additionally, while the presence of soundproof partitions and privacy screens is positively perceived by both universities which contributes to audio and visual comfort, IIUM respondents show a slightly lower level of agreement compared to UNITEN. Furthermore, UNITEN respondents express stronger agreement towards the availability of designated meeting rooms for confidential discussions compared to IIUM. Therefore, addressing audio-sensory concerns is crucial. This includes implementing noise reduction mechanisms, enhancing privacy features like soundproof partitions, and improving soft, ambient background music or outdoor natural sounds to help mask distracting noises. These improvements should be tailored according to each university's preferences. With IIUM showing less agreement towards the effectiveness of audio-sensory aspects compared to UNITEN, it is important to reassess and enhance auditory perception elements in IIUM offices. This will help employees feel a greater sense of privacy and comfort when performing their tasks. Some mitigation actions to consider include implementing noise reduction mechanisms, improving the effectiveness of privacy features, providing more soundproof rooms for discussions, enforcing stricter office policies and etiquette guidelines

to promote respectful and quiet behavior, and enhancing the ambient environment for a more comfortable and private acoustic experience for employees while they are at work.

### **4.3 Relationship Between Overall Office Design in Addressing Lack of Privacy**

Based on the overall findings, UNITEN generally received positive feedback from respondents on the overall perception of the office and its Visual Comfort and Acoustic Sensory features. Therefore, there is a moderate positive correlation between Visual Comfort and Acoustic Sensory factors towards the overall experience of the office space, suggesting that good visual comfort and acoustic sensory features in the office positively influence the overall office experience, effectively addressing employees' privacy concerns while performing their work. Contrastingly, the relationship between overall office experience and the perception of Visual Comfort and Acoustic Sensory at IIUM painted a different picture. The weaker positive relationship between Visual Comfort and Acoustic Sensory factors, as indicated by the regression analysis, suggests that IIUM's office design may not fully optimize these aspects to enhance the overall experience. This outcome suggests that, in the context of UNITEN, maintaining good visual comfort and acoustic elements or enhancing it further can effectively bring impact to improve privacy in a work environment for employees. However, for IIUM, the university should focus on improving acoustic elements and also consider other aspects not explored in this analysis which could be crucial in addressing the issue of privacy in their office spaces.

## **5.0 DISCUSSIONS**

### **5.1 Protection of Life Addresses Research Question And Research Objectives**

The research question and research objectives outlined are assessed to see the relationship between the Maqasid Shariah principle, Protection of Life, and Lack of Privacy in providing a conducive work environment through Visual Comfort and Acoustic Sensory. Each research objective is examined to determine if it has been addressed based on the findings provided above.

5.1.1 To examine the key characteristics of Maqasid Shariah's Protection of Life within office building design and how they contribute to ensuring the safety and well-being of occupants.

**Visual Comfort: Visual Privacy and Lighting.** Visual privacy features, such as partitions, and frosted screens contribute to creating a sense of safety and security within the work environment. By providing designated areas for work and meetings, visual privacy measures reduce the risk of unauthorized access to sensitive information and ensure confidentiality. Employees feel more secure knowing that their workspace is protected from prying eyes, promoting a conducive environment for focused work and collaboration. In addition, adequate lighting plays a crucial role in office design to enhance safety and well-being. Based on the responses provided, issues relating to glare need to be addressed thoroughly by implementing proper lighting levels to improve visibility, reduce eye strain, and create a comfortable visual environment for employees. Well-illuminated spaces contribute to a sense of security by ensuring that all areas are well-lit and free from dark corners or shadows where potential hazards may emerge. Furthermore, good lighting design supports productivity and alertness among employees, fostering a positive work environment that promotes well-being.

**Acoustic Sensory: Noise and Sound.** Effective noise and sound control mechanisms are essential for creating a peaceful and productive work environment. Excessive noise levels can be distracting and disruptive, leading to decreased concentration and increased stress among occupants. By implementing soundproof partitions, acoustic treatments, and sound-absorbing materials, office spaces can minimize noise disturbances and create a quieter atmosphere conducive to focused work and communication. This not only enhances productivity but also contributes to the overall well-being of employees by reducing stress levels and promoting a sense of calm and tranquillity.

5.1.2 To analyse how Maqasid Shariah principles are applied in office design to enhance human comfort, considering factors such as spatial arrangement, lighting, and ergonomic considerations.

**Spatial Arrangement** entails organizing the layout in a way that facilitates smooth movement and interaction among employees while also ensuring privacy for confidential tasks. The need for a well-designed office layout, as discussed in the findings, relates to better exits, easy access to workstations, and the availability of more private areas. This will involve creating designated areas for collaboration, quiet zones for focused work, and private spaces for meetings or personal tasks.

**Lighting.** Good lighting design is further emphasized in this section, focusing on providing sufficient illumination throughout the workspace while avoiding harsh glare or uneven lighting, which can cause eye strain and discomfort. This includes utilizing natural light where possible and incorporating adjustable artificial lighting to accommodate different tasks and preferences.

**Ergonomic Features.** Ergonomic considerations in office design involve selecting furniture and equipment that promote physical comfort and health. This includes ergonomic chairs that support proper posture, adjustable desks to accommodate different heights and preferences, and ergonomic accessories like keyboard trays and monitor stands to reduce strain on the body. By prioritizing ergonomic design, offices can create environments that reduce the risk of musculoskeletal disorders and promote overall well-being among employees.

5.1.3 To determine the effective design of office buildings in alignment with Maqasid Shariah's Protection of Life, encompassing strategies to optimize safety, well-being, and user comfort within the built environment.

**Safety Measures.** Implementing robust safety measures such as automated lock door systems, surveillance cameras, and access control measures to ensure the physical security of occupants and their belongings. Additionally, ensure proper lighting in parking areas and walkways to prevent accidents and enhance personal safety.

**Well-being Enhancements.** Creating a conducive environment for physical and mental well-being by providing ergonomic furniture, adequate natural lighting, and proper ventilation. Ergonomic chairs, adjustable desks, and comfortable breakout zones promote physical comfort, while access to natural light and fresh air improves mood and productivity.

**Privacy Considerations.** Addressing the need for privacy within the office space through the thoughtful layout and design of workstations, meeting rooms, and common areas. Incorporating soundproof partitions, privacy screens, and designated quiet zones can help minimize distractions and foster a sense of confidentiality.

**Accessibility Features.** Ensuring accessibility for all occupants, including individuals with disabilities, through the design of accessible pathways, ramps, and restrooms. This promotes inclusivity and ensures that all employees can navigate the workspace safely and comfortably.

**Biophilic Design.** Integrating elements of nature into the built environment, such as indoor plants, green walls, and access to outdoor views, to enhance well-being and connection with the natural world. Biophilic design principles have been shown to reduce stress, improve cognitive function, and enhance overall satisfaction in the workplace.

## 5.2 Limitation to The Research

During the entire process of research from sampling data, collecting data, data processing, and assessment before analyzing them, some limitations necessitated careful considerations. In the context of studying office space experience and respondent profiling, some constraints may influence the validity and generalizability of the findings. Firstly, one of the primary limitations is the possibility of sampling bias. The research was conducted on selected units/functions, focusing on one campus for each institution, resulting in sampling bias. This approach does not accurately represent the entire population of interest and may limit the generalizability of the findings to the entire workforce. Secondly, resource and time constraints also impacted the accuracy of the data. One week was given for respondents to complete the questionnaires. However, achieving a 100% collection rate within this timeframe was not possible, leading to additional efforts to locate respondents and resulting in a 30% collection rate. This prolonged the data collection process for two months. Furthermore, the small number of responses collected also affects the robustness and generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the research only relies on literature to develop hypotheses and distributes questionnaires for data collection to support these hypotheses. Interviews, focus groups, case studies, and site visit analysis were not considered in this research, which may have missed out on valuable insights that could have been gained from this research. Finally, response bias poses another significant challenge to this research. Respondents may provide inaccurate or biased responses, consciously or unconsciously, leading to inaccuracies in the data collected. This could undermine the reliability of the findings, as the data collected may not authentically reflect the true sentiments and experiences of employees in general.

## 6.0 CONCLUSION

The research emphasized the importance of creating conducive work environments, particularly in educational institutions to improve employee well-being and performance. By prioritizing safety and security in office space design, organizations could significantly impact employee productivity and well-being. Based on the literature discussed the principles of Maqasid Shariah Protection of Life provided a comprehensive framework for designing work environments that prioritized employee well-being and productivity. It guided the creation of workspaces aligned with Islamic values while enhancing employee well-being and

productivity. Elements like Visual Comfort and Acoustic Sensory factors are integral in improving workplace efficiency and safety, reflecting Islamic principles of societal welfare. Through analysis of the opinions of respondents from Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN) and International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), the study highlighted variations in preferences and priorities regarding their current office space design. Findings revealed that both universities prioritized elements like good ventilation and being well-equipped, with UNITEN emphasizing good thermal condition and IIUM prioritizing ample space and good lighting/daylighting. Safety and security concerns were notably expressed by respondents from both universities, indicating a holistic approach to evaluating office space beyond physical comfort aspects.

## **6.1 Further Research**

### **6.1.1 Diverse Sampling Strategies**

Future research could employ more diverse sampling strategies to mitigate sampling bias. The sampling size should also look into faculties, other departments, and branch campuses so that the data recorded for analysis are more thorough. Instead of focusing solely on selected departments or units within institutions, a stratified sampling approach could be utilized to ensure representation from various segments of the workforce. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding of office space experiences across different departments and roles.

### **6.1.2 Mixed-Methods Approach**

Incorporating a mixed-methods approach by supplementing physical and online questionnaires with qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups can offer a more holistic understanding of office space experiences. Qualitative methods can capture nuanced insights, perceptions, and experiences that may not be fully captured through quantitative surveys alone, thereby enriching the depth of understanding of the issues being investigated.

### **6.1.3 Mitigating Response Bias**

To address response bias, future research could implement measures to mitigate potential inaccuracies in data collection. This may include ensuring confidentiality and anonymity of responses, providing clear instructions and explanations to respondents, and employing techniques such as randomized response techniques to encourage more honest and authentic responses. Additionally, conducting pre-tests or pilot studies can help identify and address any potential biases or ambiguities in survey questions.

### **6.1.4 Explore Maqasid Shariah Principles In Depth**

While this research focuses specifically on the Protection of Life principle, other principles are also worth exploring. Although Protection of Religion, Lineage, Wealth, and Intellect were briefly discussed in Chapter 2, this research should further investigate how a conducive work environment can be improved through these principles. Exploring these principles within the context of a conducive work environment or spatial development would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how Islamic principles can inform and guide workplace practices and policies beyond just the protection of life.

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