

Analysis of Management System Standards for Sharia Compliant Hospitals in Malaysia

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Abstract

Sharia-Based Quality Management System was designed to ensure compliance with organizational management systems. MS 1900 was developed within the context of quality management systems within Sharia compliant organizations in Malaysia. Its implementation regards as an effort towards ensuring that a hospital's management aligns to Islamic values. However, there are still obstacles in putting this into practice specifically in the areas of coverage compliance, relevance to hospital activities, and relationship with other standards in the healthcare system. This study intends to assess the application of MS 1900 in managing Sharia compliant hospitals in Malaysia focusing on its strength and weaknesses, the effectiveness of meeting the Sharia requirements, and the overall comprehensive nature of the hospital management system. The document analysis method was utilized in this research by analyzing the guidelines of MS 19000, policies of Sharia compliant hospitals, and previous works on the quality management systems in Islamic healthcare services. The documentation reveals that MS 1900 has a gap in coverage with regards to governance within the hospital setting, work ethics, and institutional integrity when addressing Sharia principles. The most important limitation identified is that treatment, clinical services, and pharmaceuticals by and large could not be attained under MS 1900 provisions, hence, additional standards are required.

Keywords: Islamic Quality Management System, MS 1900, Sharia Compliant Hospital

Introduction

Since there is a vast number of Muslims in Malaysia, the healthcare sector is expected to be rich in infrastructure. This is even more true since, according to predictions made by the Malaysian Department of Statistics, Muslims will comprise 63.5% of the population by the year 2050. With an overwhelming majority of Muslims, it has become imperative to formulate and implement healthcare programs which carefully observe and respect the prevailing religious

beliefs. In order to fulfil these expectations, the idea of Sharia compliant hospitals has emerged which perceptibly makes certain that everything from surgical procedures, nurturing of patients and even the administration of the hospital itself is done in accordance with Islamic dictates. Implementation of Sharia law in the healthcare revolves around a number of considerations such as segregation of facilities for male and female patients, the use of halal certified medication, Islamic morals and ethics in medicine and surgery, and even medical jurisprudence (Dargahi, 2011) (Zawawi & Khadijah, 2018). There is also an increasing awareness of the religious prescriptions among the Muslim population in their approach to healthcare which has necessitated further construction of hospitals that facilitates good quality medical treatment along with meeting Islamic standards.

In recent years, the development of Sharia-compliant hospitals in Malaysia has gained momentum, with several institutions striving to integrate Islamic values into their healthcare services. This initiative has been supported by various regulatory bodies, including the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM), which has introduced standards related to halal pharmaceuticals and medical practices. Additionally, the Malaysian Society for Quality in Health (MSQH) has worked towards incorporating Islamic principles into healthcare accreditation systems. Hospitals such as Annur Specialist Hospital and the International Islamic Sultan Ahmad Medical Centre (SASMEC), International Islamic University of Malaysia have adopted Sharia-compliant frameworks, setting a benchmark for other institutions (Abdul Rahman, 2024; Asma, 2024; Samirah, 2024). However, the degree of compliance varies across hospitals due to the absence of a standardized and universally accepted guideline, leading to inconsistencies in implementation.

Despite the growing interest in Sharia-compliant healthcare, several challenges remain in standardizing its implementation. Various frameworks have been introduced, including the Halal Healthcare Standard by JAKIM and hospital-specific guidelines, but there is no single, comprehensive standard applicable to all healthcare institutions. The lack of a unified framework raises concerns regarding consistency, regulatory enforcement, and service quality. Therefore, this study aims to analyse the usage of existing standards in Sharia-compliant hospital management in Malaysia, assessing their effectiveness and identifying key areas for improvement. By addressing these gaps, the study seeks to provide recommendations for a more structured and comprehensive approach in ensuring Sharia compliance in healthcare institutions across the country.

The emergence of standards from the governmental bodies has introduced a new landscape in the management of Sharia-compliant hospitals to meet the demands of global medical tourism. However, the question remains: to what extent are these standards suitable for application in the healthcare sector? Do the contents of these standards comprehensively align with hospital management as a whole? These are among the key questions that this article seeks to address.

Methodology

This study uses a fully qualitative approach. The selection of this approach is because this method is more suitable for explaining the research questions that arise by providing a detailed justification of the Sharia-compliant hospital (SCH) management standards available in Malaysia based on the print and electronic media materials obtained. Interviews with the

hospital's Sharia panel were also conducted to obtain an overview of the operations of a Sharia-compliant hospital.

To analyse the collected data, content analysis and SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat) methods are used to explain the suitability of applying the standard for Sharia-compliant hospital management, namely MS 1900. The SWOT method was introduced by Albert Humphrey with the aim of identifying the failures faced by the organization's management system and subsequently formulating success strategies by optimizing strengths and opportunities while minimizing existing weaknesses (Richard et. al, 2025).

The Scenario of Sharia-Compliant Hospitals in Malaysia

Malaysia, as a Muslim-majority country, has witnessed significant progress in integrating Islamic principles into healthcare services. The emergence of Sharia-compliant hospitals (SCH) reflects the growing demand for medical facilities that align with Islamic values. These hospitals emphasize ethical medical practices, gender-sensitive patient care, halal medication, and spiritual well-being. The Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) and the Malaysian Society for Quality in Health (MSQH) have played instrumental roles in developing guidelines to support the implementation of Sharia-compliant healthcare. However, there is still no single, comprehensive standard governing SCH, leading to inconsistencies in implementation across different institutions.

The development of SCH in Malaysia has been driven by both government and private healthcare institutions. Several hospitals, including Al ISLAM Specialist Hospital, PUSRAWI Hospital, Ar-Ridzuan Medical Center, Annur Specialist Hospital and the International Islamic Sultan Ahmad Medical Centre (SASMEC) have adopted Sharia-compliant policies to align with Islamic healthcare standards (Zawawi & Khadijah, 2018) (Farrah et al., 2023). Various frameworks, such as the Malaysian Halal Standard (MS 1900:2014) and the Halal Pharmaceutical Standard (MS 2424:2019), provide basic guidelines for integrating Islamic principles into healthcare management. These standards emphasize key aspects, including halal pharmaceuticals, Islamic ethical medical practices, and administrative policies that uphold Islamic jurisprudence. However, since SCH is still a developing concept, variations in compliance and implementation exist (Hamzah M. H., 2020).

Several core features define Sharia-compliant hospitals (Farrah et al., 2023). Firstly, Sharia governance and administration are crucial, with hospitals establishing Sharia Advisory Boards to oversee policies and ensure compliance with Islamic teachings. Secondly, the use of halal-certified medication and treatments ensures that patients receive medical care aligned with Islamic dietary and ethical laws. Thirdly, hospitals must adhere to ethical patient care principles, such as gender segregation in treatment where necessary, and ensuring medical procedures are conducted in line with Islamic guidelines. Additionally, spiritual well-being is emphasized through Islamic chaplaincy services, prayer facilities, and Quranic healing to provide holistic healthcare for Muslim patients (Harold, G. Koenig & Saad, 2014) (Keshavarzi, Ali, B.2019) (Rassool GH. 2000).

Despite its growing popularity, the implementation of SCH in Malaysia faces several challenges. One of the key issues is the lack of a unified and nationally recognized standard, causing discrepancies in the level of compliance across hospitals (Rozich JD et al., 2004). While

some hospitals follow JAKIM's Halal Healthcare Standard, others rely on their own internal guidelines, leading to variations in practice. Another major challenge is the integration of SCH principles with existing healthcare accreditation systems (Al-Worafi, 2024), such as the Joint Commission International (JCI), which focuses primarily on clinical quality rather than religious considerations. Additionally, staff training and awareness remain a concern, as healthcare professionals require proper education on Sharia-compliant medical ethics and procedures to ensure proper implementation (Frank, J.R., et al., 2020).

Standards for Sharia Compliant Hospital Management

Sharia-compliant hospital (SCH) management in Malaysia is governed by several standards that ensure adherence to Islamic principles while maintaining high-quality healthcare services. MS 1900:2014, issued by the Department of Standards Malaysia (DSM), provides a framework for Sharia-based quality management (Mohamad, M. H., 2024; Mohamad, 2018), ensuring that hospital administration, governance, and ethical practices align with Islamic values. This standard emphasizes transparency, fairness, and compliance with Sharia business ethics in hospital operations.

Another important standard is MS 2424:2019, which focuses on halal pharmaceuticals used in SCH. It sets guidelines for the production, handling, and certification of medications, ensuring that pharmaceutical products are free from non-halal ingredients such as alcohol and porcine derivatives (Nur Azira et al., 2023) (Johari et al., 2023). This standard is essential for ensuring that medical treatments comply with Islamic law and meet the needs of Muslim patients. The Hospital Mesra Ibadah (HMI) or well-known as Worship-friendly Hospital Guidelines, developed by JAKIM and the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH), emphasize Sharia-compliant patient care by integrating religious practices into hospital services (Kadir N. H., 2019). These guidelines ensure the availability of prayer spaces, gender-sensitive medical treatment, and appropriate patient attire, while also addressing ethical concerns such as end-of-life care and Islamic medical jurisprudence.

While MSQH Accreditation Standard is not specifically designed for SCH, many hospitals use it alongside Islamic principles to maintain high healthcare quality and patient safety. This standard focuses on infection control, governance, and operational efficiency, allowing SCH to maintain professional healthcare standards while integrating Sharia compliance where applicable (N Md Nasir & K Marikar, 2018). In the other hand, The Islamic Medical Ethics and Service Standards (IMESS) by the Islamic Medical Association of Malaysia (IMAM) provides an ethical framework for SCH (Farrah et al., 2025). It outlines Sharia-compliant medical ethics related to issues such as euthanasia, abortion, organ donation, and medical intervention. The standard also emphasizes spiritual care in patient treatment and professional training for healthcare workers on Islamic medical jurisprudence. Additionally, some hospitals apply for halal certification from JAKIM to ensure their food catering services and pharmaceutical products comply with Islamic dietary laws (Jais, 2010). This certification guarantees that hospital kitchens adhere to halal guidelines (Norazlina et al., 2022) and that medications and medical products come from halal-certified suppliers.

Despite the existence of these multiple standards, no single comprehensive framework currently governs SCH management in Malaysia, leading to inconsistencies in implementation.

Moving forward, there is a need for a unified accreditation system that integrates Sharia principles with modern healthcare regulations, ensuring uniformity, regulatory clarity, and global recognition of Malaysia's role in Sharia-compliant healthcare. Although several standards related to Sharia-compliant hospitals exist in Malaysia, there is currently no specific standard that comprehensively regulates the entire operation of Sharia-based hospitals. Most hospitals adopt a combination of existing standards, such as MS 1900, MS 2424, HMI, and MSQH, adapting them to suit the needs of Islamic hospitals. Therefore, there is a need to develop a more comprehensive framework to ensure uniformity in the management of Sharia-compliant hospitals in Malaysia.

Scope of Accreditation for Sharia-Compliant Hospital under MS 1900:2014

In 2005, the Department of Standards Malaysia, in collaboration with various institutions and relevant agencies, introduced MS 1900:2005, a Sharia-Based Quality Management System (Mohamed, H. A. B. et. al, 2021) (Mokhtar M.S. (2023)). Developed using the ISO 9001 framework as its foundation, this standard serves as an international benchmark for quality management systems. However, MS 1900 integrates Sharia compliance as a core requirement, ensuring that all aspects of management, operations, and organizational output adhere to Islamic principles. Furthermore, the standard is designed to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and overall management quality, while also building trust and confidence among Muslims and stakeholders in organizations that implement it.

MS 1900 generally corresponds to ISO 9001 in terms of quality management, systematic, complete, and organized processes of high quality (Hasliza et. al, 2016) and not only recognized at the national level but also at the international level. However, the uniqueness of MS 1900 lies in the elements of Sharia requirements and Islamic values in its implementation. The appreciation of these pure values not only improves the quality of work but also leads to success in this world and hereafter. MS 1900:2005, known as the Quality Management System from an Islamic Perspective, underwent an improvement process in 2014 and was reintroduced as MS 1900:2014 Sharia-Based Quality Management System. This update brings several significant changes to ensure that the quality management system is more in line with Sharia principles.

Among the main improvements are the recognition of critical sharia issues in organizational activities and processes, along with detailed explanations of the noble values within the organization, including their implementation methods and more systematic monitoring mechanisms. Additionally, the scope of the MS 1900 usage guidelines has been expanded to include Sharia principles in work practices, the determination of halal and haram compliance, as well as the commitment and responsibility of management in ensuring Sharia compliance. This standard also provides guidelines on the management of organizational resources, including workforce, infrastructure, equipment, and financial capital, to ensure that the organization's operations run comprehensively in accordance with Sharia principles.

The MS 1900:2005 Sharia-Based Quality Management System outlines five fundamental principles to ensure that organizations operate in accordance with Islamic teachings (Mohamad, M. H.,2024; Amal, & Muhamad, 2019; Ahmad Bustamam, U.S.et. al, 2023). The first principle emphasizes that an organization must function based on Sharia principles and Islamic legal guidelines. This ensures that all policies, procedures, and decision-making

processes align with Islamic ethics and do not contradict religious teachings. The second principle focuses on the identification of halal and haram compliance. Organizations must be able to distinguish between permissible (halal) and prohibited (haram) elements in their operations, whether in business transactions, financial dealings, or service delivery. This is particularly crucial in sectors such as healthcare, food production, and finance, where adherence to Islamic rulings directly impacts stakeholders.

The third principle highlights the responsibility of management in ensuring Sharia compliance. Leadership plays a crucial role in implementing policies that promote ethical business conduct, fair treatment of employees, and transparency in operations. Without strong commitment from the management, achieving full compliance with Sharia standards becomes challenging. The fourth principle relates to operational management based on Islamic ethical values. This means that business processes should not only focus on efficiency and profitability but also uphold integrity, justice, and social responsibility. Organizations are expected to foster a work culture that prioritizes honesty, accountability, and fairness in all aspects of their operations. Finally, the fifth principle focuses on resource management in accordance with Sharia principles. This includes the ethical handling of human resources, financial capital, infrastructure, and technology to ensure that all assets are utilized in a way that aligns with Islamic teachings. Organizations must avoid engaging in *riba* (usury), *gharar* (uncertainty), and unethical labor practices, ensuring that their financial and human resource management is both morally and religiously sound.

Analysis of the Suitability of MS 1900:2014 in Sharia-Compliant Hospitals

MS 1900:2014 emphasizes Sharia-based management principles, ensuring that hospital administration aligns with Islamic teachings. In the context of Sharia-compliant hospitals, this aspect is crucial in guaranteeing a management system free from elements that contradict Islamic principles, including in areas such as financial resources, staff governance, and compliance with Islamic medical ethics. Additionally, this standard outlines halal and haram compliance in hospital management, particularly through the Sharia Critical Control Points (SCCP), which ensure that medications, patient nutrition, medical treatments, and procurement of equipment are halal and adhere to Sharia guidelines.

To ensure a more systematic implementation of Sharia-compliant hospitals, management responsibilities in ensuring Sharia compliance are also emphasized in MS 1900. This includes the appointment of Sharia compliance officers and Sharia advisory panels to oversee hospital operations and ensure they do not conflict with Islamic principles. Beyond governance aspects, operational management based on Islamic ethical values is also a key element in this standard. Sharia-compliant hospitals must ensure that the work environment, interactions between patients and staff, and treatment procedures are based on Islamic values such as compassion (*ihsan*), justice (*adl*), and trustworthiness (*amanah*) to enhance ethical healthcare services.

In terms of resource management based on Sharia, MS 1900 highlights the importance of hospital environments that meet Islamic requirements, including the provision of prayer spaces, adherence to Islamic dress codes, and special facilities for Muslim patients and staff. Additionally, hospitals must ensure that financial resources, procurement contracts for medical equipment, and services are free from elements of *riba* (usury) and *gharar*

(uncertainty), in accordance with Islamic business ethics. Therefore, MS 1900:2014 is highly suitable to be implemented in Sharia-compliant hospitals, particularly in aspects of Sharia governance, halal-haram monitoring, Islamic work ethics, and compliance with Islamic principles in hospital operations. However, to ensure a more comprehensive implementation, MS 1900 needs to be integrated with other standards such as MS 2424:2019 (Halal Pharmaceuticals), MSQH Accreditation, and the Sharia-Compliant Hospital Worship-Friendly Guidelines (HMI) to achieve a more holistic Sharia-compliant hospital framework.

This analysis highlights that no single standard comprehensively covers all aspects of Sharia-compliant hospital management. MS 1900:2014 provides a foundation for quality governance, but it does not address clinical treatments. MS 2424:2019 and JAKIM's Halal Certification play a vital role in ensuring halal food and pharmaceuticals, yet they do not regulate overall healthcare management. MSQH focuses on healthcare quality and patient safety, but lacks explicit Sharia-compliant elements. On the other hand, HMI Guidelines and IMESS are valuable in implementing Islamic medical ethics and worship-friendly hospital environments, though they lack enforcement power. Thus, integrating multiple standards is crucial in establishing a comprehensive Sharia-compliant hospital management framework. This framework should not only ensure halal pharmaceuticals and food but also encompass hospital governance, clinical operations, medical ethics, and Muslim patient experiences. Moving forward, strengthening regulatory frameworks and official recognition will be essential for ensuring the consistent implementation of Sharia-compliant hospitals across Malaysia.

Conclusion

This study emphasizes that MS 1900 plays a crucial role in shaping hospital management based on Sharia principles; however, its application remains limited as it does not specifically cover treatment and medical aspects. Therefore, MS 1900 needs to be integrated with other relevant standards to ensure that hospitals are fully complied with Sharia in all operational aspects, including management, medical services, pharmaceuticals, and patient care. If the proposed enhancement measures are implemented, MS 1900 has the potential to become a key pillar in the development of a more systematic and comprehensive Sharia-compliant hospital framework in Malaysia.

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