

Storage for Women's Prayer Needs in Mosque

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30880/rmtb.2026.07.01.027>

Article Info

Received: 31 March 2026

Accepted: 31 May 2026

Available online: 30 June 2026

Keywords

Indoor air quality, storage solution, mosque furniture

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify the design criteria of a storage for women's prayer needs in mosques and to develop a prototype to based on selected design. Maintaining indoor air quality in mosques is essential for overall environmental quality, encompassing thermal comfort and air purity. Utilizing a quantitative method, the study highlights significant issues such as inadequate airflow in storage systems, leading to moisture buildup, mold growth, and the deterioration of stored items, which compromise their quality and longevity. Current storage solutions are often insufficient, lacking space and efficient organization. This study recommends innovative approaches to spatial optimization and ergonomic design, drawing on various expert insights to create storage solutions that maximize capacity without sacrificing accessibility or visual appeal. Implementing well-ventilated and well-designed storage solutions can enhance environmental quality, preserve valuable items, and improve the user experience within mosques. By addressing these aspects, the study aims to offer a comprehensive solution to the challenges of indoor air quality and storage in mosques.

1. Introduction

Greater Kuala Lumpur. Furniture helps to show how a person lives in a certain place. Furniture also reflects the qualities of interior spaces as well as cultural icons from different eras and locations. Most furniture is specially designed for a specific purpose. For example, they must provide enough storage or shelves to store volumes of contextual books (Mokhtar, 2009). Storage plays a vital role in the functionality and organization of mosque interiors, serving as an indispensable element in facilitating religious practices, maintaining order, and preserving the purity of the space. Integrating traditional and vernacular architectural elements into modern building designs not only promotes environmental sustainability but also plays a crucial role in preserving cultural identity and heritage (Sayigh, 2019). Within the sacred confines of mosques, storage solutions are carefully integrated to accommodate the diverse needs of worshippers, religious leaders, and community members. From prayer rugs and Qurans to prayer clothes and cleaning supplies, mosques house a myriad of religious items and materials essential for daily prayers, religious ceremonies, and community events. Women's needs during their prayers in a mosque encompass several considerations to ensure comfort, privacy, and a conducive environment for worship. A dedicated and well-designed prayer space is essential, often featuring partitions or separate rooms to provide privacy and prevent distractions. Proper flooring, typically with comfortable carpeting or individual prayer mats, is necessary for the various physical postures involved in Islamic prayer. Adequate lighting and ventilation further enhance the ambiance, creating a serene and inviting atmosphere.

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Accessibility to clean and private ablution (wudu) facilities is crucial, allowing women to perform the required ritual washing before prayers without inconvenience. Additionally, practical elements such as shelves for shoes and personal belongings, hooks for hanging coats and scarves, and storage for prayer mats and religious texts are important to maintain an organized and respectful space. These provisions collectively ensure that women can engage in their spiritual practices with dignity and ease, reflecting the mosque's role as a welcoming and inclusive environment for all worshippers. In mosques, indoor air quality needs to be evaluated in line with the broader context of indoor environmental quality, as an element of technical performance (Al-ajmi et al., 2017). An understanding of indoor thermal comfort is essential to assist building designers in providing environments that are acceptable to users and do not impair their health or performance (Al-Ajmi, 2020). However, recent studies in the Middle East have pointed out that air-conditioned buildings are often over-cooled or overheated, leading to significant occupant discomfort (Indraganti, 2023). Furthermore, tightly enclosed and poorly ventilated spaces can exacerbate indoor air quality (IAQ) problems, which negatively impacts occupants' thermal comfort sensations and overall health (Al-Ajmi, 2018). Therefore, framing the design around controlled air movement and proper environmental controls is necessary to mitigate these issues (Indraganti, 2023). In the context of mosques, this lack of adequate airflow within storage systems poses a significant issue, as it can lead to moisture buildup, mold growth, and the deterioration of stored items, compromising their quality and longevity.

This research project focused on Muslim women's in Batu Pahat, Johor. According to the latest update from Utusan Malaysia's official portal in April 2024, Johor remains the first state with the most mosques, with 822 mosques in Peninsular Malaysia. This research will focus on storage for women's prayer needs in mosques. The target user of this furniture is focused on all individuals who are Muslim women's who live in Batu Pahat, Johor. The criteria and characteristics of women's prayer needs in mosque will be analyzed and observed through articles and journals. Articles and journals will be analyzed and studied for types, shapes and design features to be used. The significance of this research lies in improving the storage solutions for Muslim women's prayer needs in Batu Pahat, Johor's mosques. By focusing on the specific requirements of these women, the study aims to enhance their prayer experience by providing better-organized, accessible, and protected storage for their belongings. Improved storage solutions can prevent issues like moisture buildup and mold, which can damage stored items. Additionally, by addressing the current inadequacies in space and design, the research can lead to innovations that maximize storage capacity while maintaining accessibility and aesthetic appeal. Ultimately, this will contribute to creating a more comfortable and clutter-free environment in mosques, enhancing the overall worship experience. This study aims to identify the design criteria for a women's prayer needs in mosque, to design a women's prayer needs in mosque, and to develop a prototype for a women's prayer needs in mosque.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Mosque Furniture

In mosques, furniture plays a vital role in supporting both religious practices and community activities. Historically, mosques have been internally furnished to serve functional needs; however, poor furnishing selection can lead to user discomfort (Hassanain, Kajak, Hamida, & Ibrahim, 2021). To accommodate the community efficiently, mosques must provide a sufficient number of cabinets or shelves for storage and be equipped with suitable seating to ensure inclusiveness for all users, including the elderly and those with disabilities (Zawawi, Hazim, Haron, & Ayob, 2021). Modern mosque furnishings emphasize both usability and aesthetics. For instance, the design of sustainable prayer chairs for individuals with disabilities must integrate functionality, proper proportions, and ergonomic principles to ensure the user can perform their prayers without disrupting the congregation (Zawawi *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, specialized ablution furniture has been developed with ergonomic and hygienic considerations to assist elderly and disabled users effectively (Abdul Rahman, Kamaruddin, & Mohd Khairi, 2019).

Furthermore, a major element of contemporary mosque design is the protection of cultural identity through the use of specific styles and construction materials (Hassanain, Kajak, Hamida, & Ibrahim, 2021). To meet present-day demands, these traditional materials must be installed in a manner that is highly compatible with modern textures, colors, proportions, and forms, successfully aligning cultural-architectural aspects with modern treatment elements (Hassanain *et al.*, 2021).

2.2 Storage

Storage furniture, essential in mosque organization, includes a variety of items designed to efficiently store and manage religious and communal belongings. These pieces, such as shelves, cabinets, chests, and wardrobes, play a crucial role in maximizing space while maintaining a tidy and aesthetically pleasing environment. Built-in storage is a foundational element, seamlessly integrated into the structure of buildings. A prime example of this in traditional Islamic and Omani architecture is the *Al-Roznah*, an interior wall feature consisting of cavities or

built-in shelves constructed from mud, stone, or wood (Hadifi & Awang, 2024). This type of built-in storage maximizes spatial efficiency by utilizing the substantial thickness of traditional walls, providing a multifunctional space that serves as both a practical storage solution for everyday items and an aesthetic display for cultural and religious artifacts (Hadifi & Awang, 2024).

2.3 Types of Storage

Multifunctional and modular storage furniture provides innovative solutions for maximizing space in dynamic environments. Traditional Islamic architecture inherently embraces functional and spatiotemporal versatility, designing spaces that can serve multiple purposes depending on the time of day or social occasion (Kashef, 2025). To support this versatility, rooms are often equipped with movable, modular furniture that can be easily rearranged to fulfill different functions—such as seating, reading, or socializing—and then conveniently stowed away in attached storage rooms when not in use (Kashef, 2025).



Fig. 1 Built-in storage

Freestanding storage units offer flexibility and adaptability, catering to changing spatial configurations. In the context of prayer needs, adjustable wooden Quran stands serve as excellent freestanding and space-saving furniture (Levantiques, 2024). These stands can be collapsed, folded, or adjusted in height when not in use, they offer a highly practical storage solution that maximizes limited space while maintaining a respectful and elegant environment for the holy text (Levantiques, 2024). Common examples include bookcases, wardrobes, and storage ottomans, which provide storage solutions while also serving as decorative elements. The mobility and adaptability of freestanding storage make it particularly suitable for dynamic environments where spatial configurations may change over time.



Fig. 2 Freestanding storage

Modular storage systems (refer Fig. 3) represent a customizable approach to organization, allowing users to create personalized storage solutions according to their specific requirements. These systems consist of individual units or modules that can be combined and configured in various ways to optimize space utilization and organization. By offering flexibility and adaptability, modular storage enables users to adjust their storage setup to accommodate evolving needs and spatial constraints. This versatility makes modular storage systems ideal for both residential and commercial settings, where efficient organization and space management are important.



Fig. 3 *Modular storage*

Multifunctional storage furniture (refer Fig. 4) combines storage features with other functionalities, providing innovative solutions for maximizing space in small or multifunctional environments. These pieces of furniture serve dual purposes, offering storage space while also fulfilling other functions such as seating, sleeping, or dining. Examples include storage benches with built-in seating cushions, convertible sofas with storage drawers, and dining tables with under-table storage shelves. By integrating multiple functions into a single piece of furniture, multifunctional storage solutions help optimize space utilization while enhancing versatility and efficiency in interior design.



Fig. 4 *Multifunctional storage*

2.4 Standard Size of Storage

Table 1 presents the storage overview in terms of size, colour, market price and material.

Table 1 *The overview of existing storage*

Types	Size	Colour	Market Price	Material
	105 x 37 x 140 cm	White	RM 659	Particleboard
	165 x 55 x 216 cm	White	RM 2,220	Particleboard
	81 x 37 x 134 cm	Dark brown	RM 1,115	Solid pine

2.5 Prayer Needs

2.5.1 Prayer mats

In mosques, prayer mats are essential for creating a clean, comfortable, and defined personal space for worshippers during prayers. These mats are typically placed on the carpeted floor of the prayer hall and are often decorated with patterns that help align worshippers in the direction of the Qibla, the direction towards the Kaaba in Mecca that Muslims face during prayer. This alignment is crucial for maintaining uniformity and discipline in congregational prayers. Additionally, prayer mats can be individually provided to worshippers, especially in large mosques or during crowded prayer times, ensuring that everyone has a designated area to perform their prayers comfortably and hygienically. The use of prayer mats and carpets reflects respect for the sacred act of prayer, emphasizing cleanliness and personal devotion. Mosque floors are typically covered by carpets, which must be maintained at an appropriate level of cleanliness and purification to satisfy the needs of worshippers and their activities (Hassanain, Kajak, Hamida, & Ibrahim, 2021). To further maintain this hygiene, public prayer facilities often utilize specific lobby flooring materials and strategically placed shoe racks outside the defined "clean zone" to prevent the transfer of dirt and moisture into the prayer hall (Mokhtar, 2009).

2.5.2 Quran stands

Quran stands known as Rehal or Rihai are pivotal for facilitating the respectful reading and handling of the Quran. These stands are typically made of wood, intricately designed to hold the Quran at a comfortable angle for recitation, thereby preventing the sacred text from being placed directly on the floor. This practice underscores the reverence Muslims have for the Quran. The stands are often foldable, making them easy to store and transport, and are strategically placed around the mosque to ensure accessibility for all worshippers.

2.5.3 Hooks and Hangers

Hooks and hangers are essential for maintaining order and providing convenience for worshippers. These fixtures are typically installed near the entrances or within the women's prayer areas, offering a designated place for attendees to hang coats, headscarves, abayas, and other personal items. This ensures that clothing and belongings do not clutter the prayer space, maintaining its cleanliness and tranquility. Additionally, by having a specific area to hang their items, worshippers can focus more on their prayers without worrying about their possessions, contributing to a more serene and organized environment. The provision of hooks and hangers is a practical consideration that supports the mosque's function as a welcoming and respectful place of worship (Mokhtar, 2009).

3. Research Methodology

Visual research involves the systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of visual materials to gain insights into specific phenomena. In the context of designing storage solutions for prayer needs in mosques, visual research helps to understand how existing storage furniture is used, identify common design elements, and assess the aesthetic and functional requirements of such spaces. This approach allows designers to create storage solutions that are both practical and respectful of the mosque's cultural and spiritual environment. The survey is a means of collecting data from respondents to gather thoughts and perspectives on various issues. Data is collected using standardized sequences. This guarantees that each respondent may answer the questions based on their own ideas, without letting prior assumptions or beliefs influence the research outcomes. This study was carried out utilizing a design survey approach. It collects quantitative data through questionnaires. Three parts of questionnaires were administered: demographic, design criteria, idea design. Multiple-choice and closed-ended questions were included in the questionnaires that were created. The questionnaires are distributed online to any potential persons who received the URL link aged 18 years and above who are using the storage prayer needs in the mosque in Batu Pahat. The result collected from the questionnaires will work as a guideline for designing a storage for women's prayer needs in Mosque. The survey conducted online using Google Form platform yielded insightful results. A total of 87 respondents participated in the questionnaire, providing valuable information about their demographic, experience, and design criteria preferences related to storage. An online survey form was created using Google Forms to aid in the final design selection process. The survey received 64 responses and was designed to gather support for the three proposed designs as well as valuable feedback on the designs developed. Survey forms have been carefully designed to provide a thorough understanding of consumer preferences and opinions.

The process of producing ideas and solutions through sketching or graphic workshops is known as ideation in the furniture design industry. Ideation is also the most exciting stage of a design project since it requires the generation of a large number of ideas, which must then be filtered and reduced to the best, most realistic, or most creative in order to promote new and improved design solutions and products. In this study, an ideation is coming from the design criteria. It will result in the improvement of the original design. Next, the process of developing ideas involves creating and refining new concepts and all the elements that support and enhance them. When the ideas are clear and resonate, the message is easy to understand. This research will use idea development to explain the designs that emerged from the ideation stage. During idea development, drawings will be made in isometric view, top view, front view, and side view, with detailed information about the design. This will lead to producing a single final design after going through the stages of design development, including creating multiple concepts, gathering feedback, and refining the chosen idea. A mock-up is a scale model of an actual product that is used for product presentation or demonstration. Mock-up fidelity is often moderate to outstanding. A mock-up can be made out of any material as long as it pictured the design in proportionate performs well in the design. Technical drawings are often made using AutoCAD software. The drawings will include 2D wireframes and 3D shapes with rendering. They will feature line drawings, exploded views, top views, side views, front views, isometric views, and renderings. The design will show all fasteners, fittings, and joints. After the design has been validated, a prototype will be created. The manufacturing step, which involves material selection, is also included in the prototype process. Furniture manufacturing refers to the full process of developing a furniture prototype.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Demographic Statistics

Table 2 displays the demographic analysis that most respondents are young adults aged 19-29 years (67.8%), followed by those aged 30-39 years (20.7%), with smaller representations from individuals below 18 years old (2.3%), 40-49 years old (4.6%), and 50 years and above (2.3%). In terms of location, the highest number of respondents are from Sri Gading (20.7%), followed by Sri Medan and Kampung Baru, each contributing 10.3%. Other notable areas include Tanjung Sembrong (6.9%), Simpang Kiri and Lubok (both 4.6%), with smaller contributions from Sungai Puncong, Bagan, and Mawar Beku (2.3%-3.4%). Regarding employment status, the

majority are employed (64.4%), while students account for 27.6%, and smaller portions are unemployed (3.4%) or retired (4.6%). This data highlights a predominantly young, working population from diverse locations.

Table 2 *Demographic Analysis*

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	Below 18 years old	2	2.3
	19- 29 years old	59	67.8
	30- 39 years old	18	20.7
	40 - 49 years old	4	4.6
	50 years old and above	2	2.3
Location	Chaah Bahru	1	1.1
	Sri Medan	9	10.3
	Tanjung Sembrong	6	6.9
	Linau	4	4.6
	Simpang Kiri	7	8
	Lubok	4	4.6
	Simpang Kanan	1	5.7
	Peserai	5	5.7
	Bagan	6	6.9
	Sri Gading	18	20.7
	Minyak Beku	7	8
	Kampung Baru	9	10.3
	Sungai Kluang	4	4.6
	Sungai Punggor	2	2.3
Employment status	Student	24	27.6
	Employed	56	64.4
	Unemployed	3	3.4
	Retired	4	4.6

4.2 Design Criteria

The design criteria analysis reveals that the most preferred storage design for women's prayer needs in mosques is open shelves, favored by 41.4% of respondents, likely due to their accessibility and simplicity. Other preferences include storage with metal rails (23%), hinged doors (17.2%), drawers (9.2%), and wooden rails (6.9%). Regarding the types of items stored, prayer clothes are the most common (48.3%), followed by hijabs and headscarves (33.3%) and personal hygiene items (18.4%). In terms of visual appeal, dark colors are the most attractive (48.3%), followed by soft pastels (37.9%), with fewer respondents preferring neutral colors (11.5%). For materials, wood is the top choice (65.5%), likely for its durability and traditional appeal, while metal (18.4%), rattan (9.2%), and bamboo (5.7%) are less popular. Lastly, matte finishing is preferred by 39.1%, reflecting a preference for a non- reflective, understated look, followed by glossy finishes (26.4%), natural wood finishing (16.1%), and lacquered finishes (18.4%). Table 3 summarizes the results of the design criteria survey.

Table 3 *Design Criteria Analysis*

Question	Answer	Frequency	Percentage (%)
What design criteria do you prioritize when using storage for women's prayer needs in mosque?	With open shelfe	36	41.4
	With hinges doors	15	17.2
	With drawers	8	9.2
	With Wooden rail	8	9.2
	With metal rail	20	23
What types of personal items do you typically store in the storage for women's prayer needs in mosque while attending prayers?	Prayer clothes	42	48.3
	Hijab and headscarf	29	33.3
	Personal hygiene item	16	18.4

What color do you find most attractive in storage for women's prayer needs in mosque?	Dark colour	42	48.3
	Soft pastel	35	40.2
	Neutral colour	10	11.5
What material do you think are suitable for storage for women's prayer needs in mosque?	Wood	57	65.5
	Metal	16	18.4
	Rattan	9	10.3
	Bamboo	5	5.7
What type of finishing do you think to use on your storage for women's prayer needs in mosque?	Matte finishing	34	39.1
	Glossy finishing	23	26.4
	Natural wood finishing	14	16.1
	Lacquered	16	18.4

4.3 Designing of the Storage for Women's Prayer Needs in Mosque

The final design analysis provides critical insights into demographic trends, design preferences, and material finishing choices based on participant feedback. Table 4 summaries the total results of the final design survey. The majority of respondents (67.8%) were aged between 19 and 29 years, indicating that the survey primarily engaged a younger demographic. Additionally, 64.4% of participants identified as employees, reflecting practical needs and preferences from a professional perspective. Geographically, 20.7% of respondents were from the Cash Baru region, offering localized insights into regional preferences. When evaluating the design options, Design 1 emerged as the most popular choice, securing 54.7% of votes, which suggests it resonates most with the target audience's aesthetic and functional expectations. In contrast, Design 2 and Design 3 received 20.3% and 17.2% of votes, respectively, indicating a more limited appeal. Regarding the finishing for furniture storage rails, a significant portion of respondents (37.5%) preferred a powder-coated finish, likely due to its durability and aesthetic appeal. This analysis highlights that Design 1, coupled with a powder-coated finish, aligns strongly with user preferences, particularly among younger, employed individuals. Despite this, Design 3 stands out as the preferred choice overall among the survey participants.

Table 4 Design Criteria Analysis

Item	Percentage (%)	Description
Age	67.8	19- 29 years old
Location	20.7	Chaah Bahru
Employment status	64.4	Employee
How much do you like this design?	54.7	Design 1
	20.3	Design 2
	17.2	Design 3
What is the best finishing for furniture storage rails?	37.5	Powder-coated

4.4 Ideation

Ideation is the process of generating and developing creative ideas and concepts for designing furniture. This brainstorming process was conducted on A3 paper as shown in Fig. 5. This design process is centered on creating a Storage for Women's Prayer Needs in Mosque design. Initial thoughts created during the brainstorming process are refined into more thorough and precise design proposals in ideation through idea development. Idea development is used to study ideation in a more precise and detailed process that adds more value and information about furniture design.

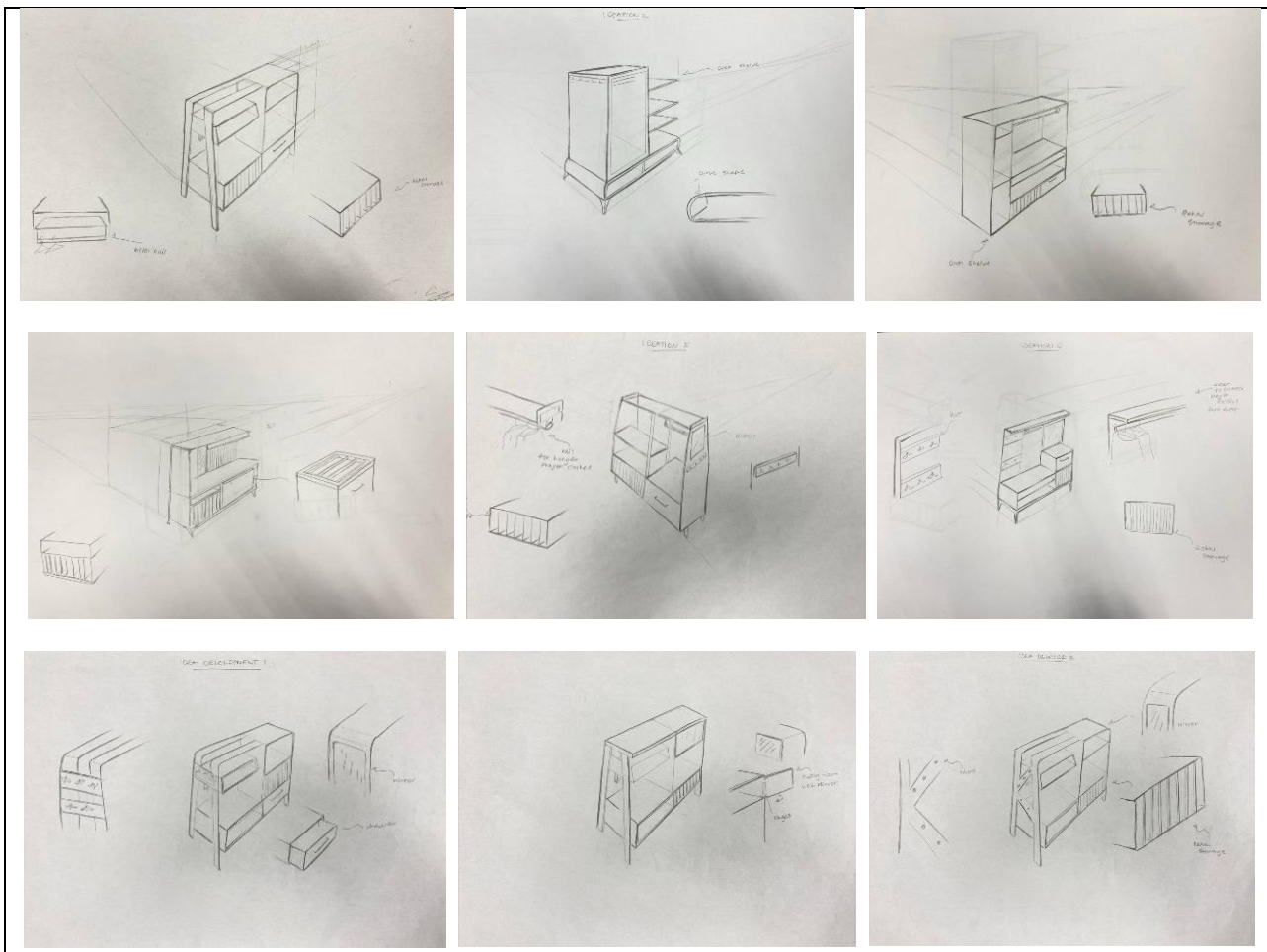


Fig. 5 Ideation sketches of Storage for Women's Prayer Needs in Mosque design

4.5 Design Development

The design development process included three main designs. The first design used a curved rail for storage, which added a unique look and easier access (refer Fig. 6). The second design built on this idea by adding another storage space above the rail for more organization. The third design changed the rail to a flat shape, making it simpler and easier to use. After receiving feedback from respondents, Design 1 was selected as the preferred option. This choice highlights how the idea evolved step by step to become more practical and functional, ultimately meeting the needs of the users.



Fig. 6 Design development sketches of Storage for Women's Prayer Needs in Mosque design

4.6 Final Design

The final design was chosen after considering safety, comfort, and maintaining the design. The final layout underwent three revisions.



Fig. 7 Final sketches of Storage for Women's Prayer Needs in Mosque design

4.7 Mock-Up Development

A mockup is a full-scale or scaled model of a design or device, used for demonstration, design evaluation, promotion, and other purposes. It was constructed in 1:1 and 1:8 from the actual size. The material used in this mock-up is plywood, with the size of 2.5mm.



Fig. 8 Mock-Up of Storage for Women's Prayer Needs in Mosque design

4.8 Technical Drawing

The technical drawing involves the front view, side view, top view, isometric view and rendering of the furniture product.

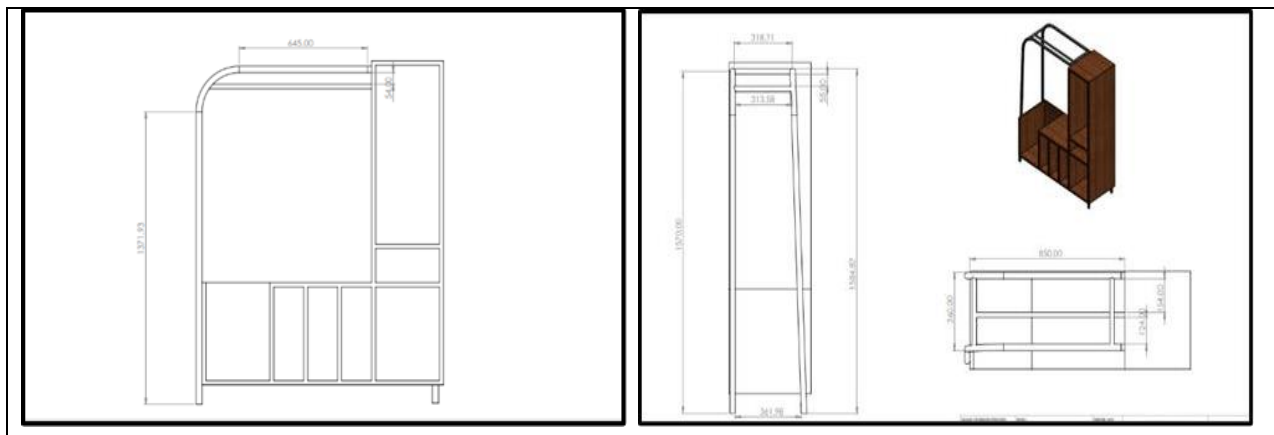


Fig. 9 A 2D technical drawing of Storage for Women's Prayer Needs in Mosque design

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this research highlights the significance of improving indoor air quality in mosques to create a better overall environment, with a focus on factors such as thermal comfort, air purity, and sound levels, specifically in the context of storage solutions for women's prayer needs. The design criteria were developed based on a questionnaire involving 87 respondents from Batu Pahat, Johor. Based on women's references, the study identified key features for the storage design, including open shelves for storing prayer clothes and the use of dark colors. Through research, design, and prototyping, this study aims to develop furniture that enhances environmental quality, protects valuable items, and improves the user experience in mosques.

Acknowledgement

The authors would like to thank the Faculty of Technology Management and Business, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia for its support.

Conflict of Interest

Authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of the paper.

Author Contribution

The authors confirm contribution to the paper as follows: **study conception and design:** Siti Izzati Marhakim and Abdullah Al Rashid Ab Hamid; **data collection:** Siti Izzati Marhakim; **analysis and interpretation of results:** Siti Izzati Marhakim; **draft manuscript preparation:** Siti Izzati Marhakim and Abdullah Al Rashid Ab Hamid. All authors reviewed the results and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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