

A PRELIMINARY STUDY OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY'S CONCERNS THE STATE OF PAHANG OLD MOSQUES

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Abstract: The mosque serves as a place of prayer for the Muslim population, and thus its construction one of the indications of the expanding power of Islam in the state of Pahang. The problem identified in this study is the dearth of knowledge or data regarding historical mosques in the state of Pahang. Additionally, there is less effort being made to recognise the old mosque as a valuable cultural resource that has to be preserved, and the community is less interested with its conservation efforts. As a result, this study has three goals in order to address the problem, starting with (1) compiling a list of all the old mosques in Pahang. Secondly is (2) To understand the impact of the typological design of the old mosques found in the state of Pahang; and (3) To understand the level of local concern for the preservation of the old mosques in the state of Pahang. Observation, interview, and document analysis were used in this qualitative study. According to the study's findings, four mosques have been located: the Kuala Lipis Old State Mosque, the Pulau Tawar Old Mosque, the Kampung Pantai Mosque, and the Kampung Bolok Hilir Old Mosque. In the other hand, with the architectural influence of two or three levels of meru roofs, the facade typology of old mosques exhibits the features of local woodwork. This mosque's plans are straightforward, square or rectangular, and the internal organisation is plain. Furthermore, the community around this mosque is aware of the necessity of conservation efforts for historic mosques, but they are unsure of the specific conservation measures that should be implemented. There are several things that should be done, like properly documenting the old mosques in the state of Pahang and presenting them as Pahang heritage mosques. In conclusion, it is important to protect and preserve this historic mosque as a valuable asset of national heritage.

Keywords: Old Mosque, Community, Influence, Design, Heritage, Preservation

INTRODUCTION

The construction of surau and mosque is very important to the community as these two buildings are the houses of worship for Muslims. In addition to functioning as a worship house, the construction of surau and mosque is a strong sign of Islam that has grown in the state of Pahang. The number of mosques that have been built as a place of worship in the country is 600 to 700 mosques. Part of the number of mosques is a mosque categorized as old mosques, a mosque building that has long been established and has been around for hundreds of years.

According to (Ahmad, A. G. 1994), there are two categories of old mosques: traditional and regionality categories. Both types of categories can be distinguished by the influence applied to the construction of the mosque and the type of dome used. The traditional mosque will have long -shaped roofs as well as screen. The traditional mosque also has a strong influence on the elements of architecture, the way of life and the environment of the Malay community. The mosque with the roof is included in the traditional mosque category because it has a roof that resembles the roof of the traditional houses of the Malay community. The roof is also available in two types, which has one layer or two layers of roofing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Malays in the state of Pahang began to establish a local mosque and did not follow any elements of the architecture of the outside mosque. The construction of the mosque has only a shape called 'tompang' or a small cone -shaped roof like a 'gelugor' (Garcinea cambogia) or meru shape. During the mid-19th century, a tompang roof mosque was demolished with the purpose of construction of an office while another mosque in Pekan was also demolished for the construction of the Sultan Abdullah Mosque. During the British occupation of Pahang, another shape of the mosque was introduced, the hip or pavilion roof (bumbung perabung lima) or the coffee fruit tower mosque. According to (Abdul Halim Nasir, H. haji wan teh., 1997), after Malaya achieved independence, the mosque with a piece of onion dome was increased and expanded to this day. One example of the oldest mosque with the element of onion dome is the Sultan Abdullah Mosque located in Pekan, Pahang.

According to Kaedah-Kaedah Masjid (1998), and Pahang State Islamic Law Administration Enactment (Enactment No. 3 1991), mosque is a building approved by the Islamic Religious Council and the Malay Customs for Friday prayers and other prayers as well as for other religious activities. There are three types of mosques recognized in Malaysia: state mosque, district mosque and kariah mosque. The National Heritage Act (2005) Act 645, Part I (Melayu, J., 2011), has defined heritage as a matter or

something of historical value that has been inherited from one generation to the next generation. This legacy includes customs, culture, areas, buildings, archives and prints such as books and papers.

According to (Siti Norlizaiha Harun, 2005) in her writing entitled *Amalan Kerja Pemuliharaan Bangunan Bersejarah Di Malaysia*. Pulau Pinang: Universiti Sains Malaysia, conservation is a field that involves the process of retaining and care on heritage buildings from being destroyed taking into account the importance of society and the country from the historical and aesthetic value of a heritage building. In addition, according to (Ahmad, A. G. 1994), this heritage building conservation activities have been an important practice for some countries and they are considered to be the same interests as the conservation of other natural resources.

According to Abdul Halim Nasir and Hashim Haji Wan Teh in the writing of a book entitled *Warisan Seni Bina Melayu* (Abdul Halim Nasir, H. haji wan teh., 1997), the environment is one of the important elements that influence the architecture of traditional mosques. This is said because the selection of mosque building materials is more important to resources that are constantly renewed and repaired at any time. The hot and humid weather factors in Malaysia also greatly influence the structure of the mosque building. The poles and walls of the mosque are erected by the design of the poles and the floor of the building to prevent animal disturbance and to avoid natural disasters such as floods.

Rasulullah S.A.W. reportedly remarked, "The sites that God favours the most are the mosques," in a hadith from Muslim history. As a result, the mosque has a significant impact on the Muslim community from many different directions. The field of education is one of the elements that contributes to the mosque's significance to the neighbourhood. In the article *The Function and Role of the Mosque in the Hadhari Society* by Adel M. Abdulaziz, Ahmad Kamel Mohamed, and Nidzamuddin Zakaria (Ahmad Sabri & Mohammad Noor, 2008), the mosque is described as a location that instructs and inspires Muslims to be good and kind. A centre for education and the spread of religious knowledge can be said to exist within the mosque.

Additionally, it was noted by (Ahmad Sabri & Mohammad Noor, 2008) that the mosque serves as a social institution. This is due to the mosque's potential usage as a hub for social gatherings. A facility that serves as a hub for community cooperation. According to the findings of a study by (Azizul Azli Ahmad, 2013), the main layout and construction of the mosque building serves as the foundation for the typology of traditional mosques in Malaysia. This investigation also discovered that the older mosques had a special feature that supported the structure of the mosque building with four main pillars in the prayer chamber. Based on a written study by Nangkula Utaberta and Mohamad Tajuddin Mohamad Rasdi titled *Typological Description, Classification and Analysis of Mosque Planning in Malaysia* (Utaberta et al., n.d.), the design type of old Malaysian mosques is frequently related with the

design type from Indonesia because of the similarities in mosque roof designs. The Kampung Laut and Kampung Tuan mosques are two examples of older mosques with Indonesian-inspired roof designs. Similar to mosques in Indonesia, such as the Papan Mosque and the Eternal Mosque, this mosque has two roofs that are three layers thick (Utaberta et al., n.d.).

Furthermore, any maintenance or conservation work made on historic structures are not as highly valued in today's society. Heritage buildings and historic structures are in danger of being destroyed because they have been neglected by the original owners and have been demolished as a result of the insistence on development as well as the lack of community concern for efforts to protect and conserve heritage buildings, according to a quote by Hamilton, B. & Zuraini Md Ali. (2002) in Problems in the Conservation of Heritage Buildings in Malaysia (Siti Nor Fatimah Zuraidi et al., 2011).

According to Ahmad, A. G. (1994), the community is less interested with preservation and conservation efforts since they are unaware of what heritage building conservation entails. They believe that maintaining this historic structure is similar to the way that people renovate their homes nowadays. Since every step and operation necessary for the conservation and conservation of heritage buildings must be carried out according to the correct protocols to prevent damaging the value of a heritage building's original construction, this topic is incorrect and erroneous.

The presence and number of old mosques in the state of Pahang cannot also be determined by data or a formal list, as they are not known to exist. Obtaining precise statistics and information about historic mosques that may be utilised as a reference for this study is challenging in the absence of this crucial information. Undoubtedly, the under-researched Islamic history in Pahang contributes to the lack of knowledge of Islamic history-related topics (Muhammad Ikhlas Rosele, Rahimin Affandi Abdul Rahim, 2015) and prevents adequate study of the state's historic mosques.

The inaction of the responsible parties in recognising the old mosques as a state heritage is the study's second issue. This is because there is just one historic mosque that has undergone the conservation procedure and is recognised as a National Heritage Building by the National Heritage Department. In 2016, a mosque museum was established in this 89-year-old building (Abdul Jalal et al., 2019). As a result, there are now doubts regarding the motives of the parties behind the designation of the Pahang state's historic mosque as a heritage structure. This is done in order to maintain the dissemination of Islamic teachings and to make them available to younger people and future generations as a useful example and lesson.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This is a qualitative study that uses the method of document analysis, observation, and interview. Among the objectives and design for this study are as in the table below.

Table 1: Research Method and Objectives

Num	Research Objectives	Research Method
1.	Figuring out the past of ancient mosques in the state of Pahang.	Observation and Document Analysis
2.	Recognising the impact of the typological design of the historic mosques located in Pahang.	Observation and Document Analysis
3.	Understanding the level of local community concern for the preservation of historic mosques in the state of Pahang.	Interview

Table 2: Respondents

Num	Respondents	Respondents Code
1	Mosque Visitor	R1
2	Admin Assistant N9 Lipis District Council	R2
3	Assistant Landscape Architect Lipis District Council	R3
4	Mosque Visitor	R4
5	AJK Masjid Kampung Pantai	R5
6	General Assistant Pejabat Penghulu Chenor Seberang	R6
7	Penghulu Kampung Chenor Seberang	R7
8	Mosque General Worker	R8

The scope of study is to giving constant attention to old mosques whose physical structures still remain and may be viewed clearly even today. This research also concentrated on the structures of former mosques that the locals in the mosque's vicinity no longer utilize as places of official worship. Kuala Lipis Old State Mosque, Pulau Tawar Old Mosque, Pantai Village Mosque, and Bolok Hilir Old Mosque are the four mosques that have been chosen.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

List of old mosques in the state of Pahang

The design of Malay heritage mosques or vernacular heritage mosques is divided into two main forms, namely meru or pyramid roof type mosques and long roof type mosques. (Surat et al., n.d.). Meru roof or pyramid is a type of roof that has a roof of two to seven floors or layers. The use of the word meru is taken from the translation of the architectural language of Buddhist temples or pagoda buildings (Surat et al., n.d.).

According to the Field Study Analysis of Defects in Old Mosque Buildings in Malaysia, the architecture of old mosques in the state of Pahang does not have the architectural characteristics of mosques in the Middle East that have a type of domed roof and a design that exhibits carvings or decorations with elements of Islamic architecture. (Johar et al., 2011). These mosques have the characteristics of local carpentry with the influence of roof architecture from Sumatra, Indonesia. The old mosques in the state of Pahang are regional mosques with influences from the Indonesian archipelago characterized by two or three layers of meru roofs.

The plans of this mosque are simple and square or rectangular with an uncomplicated internal layout (Johar et al., 2011). The main materials used in the construction process of this mosque are from natural materials that are easily available and suitable for the weather and climate in the state of Pahang. The mosque was built with a floor and pillars high above the ground surface to reduce ground surface moisture, comfort, and safety from animal disturbances (Johar et al., 2011). The height of this mosque also serves as the ventilation space of the mosque.

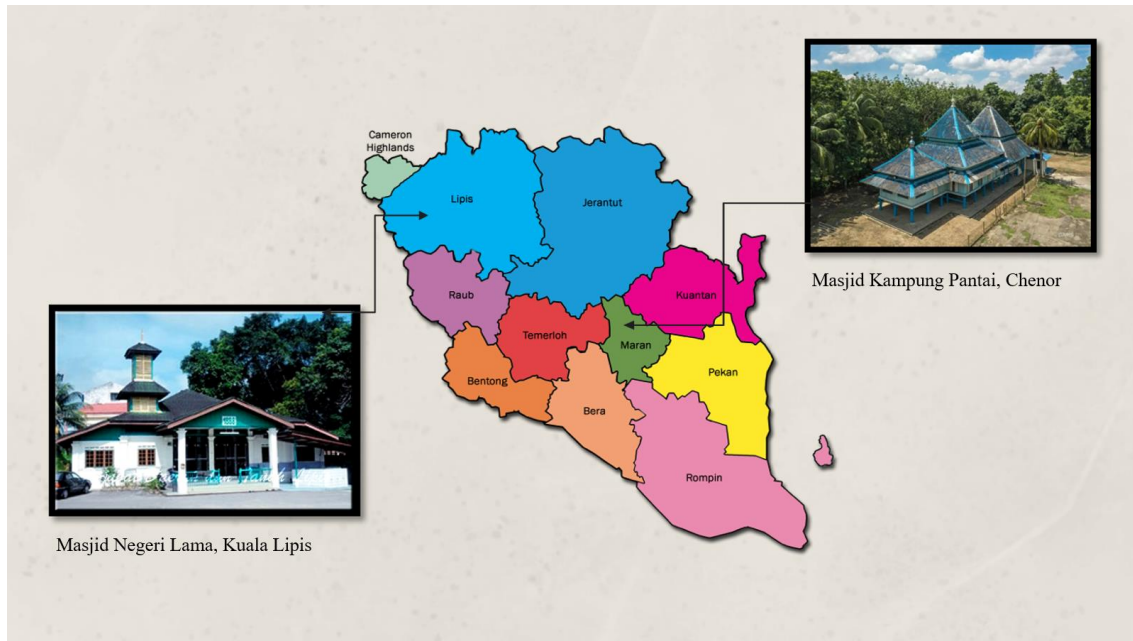
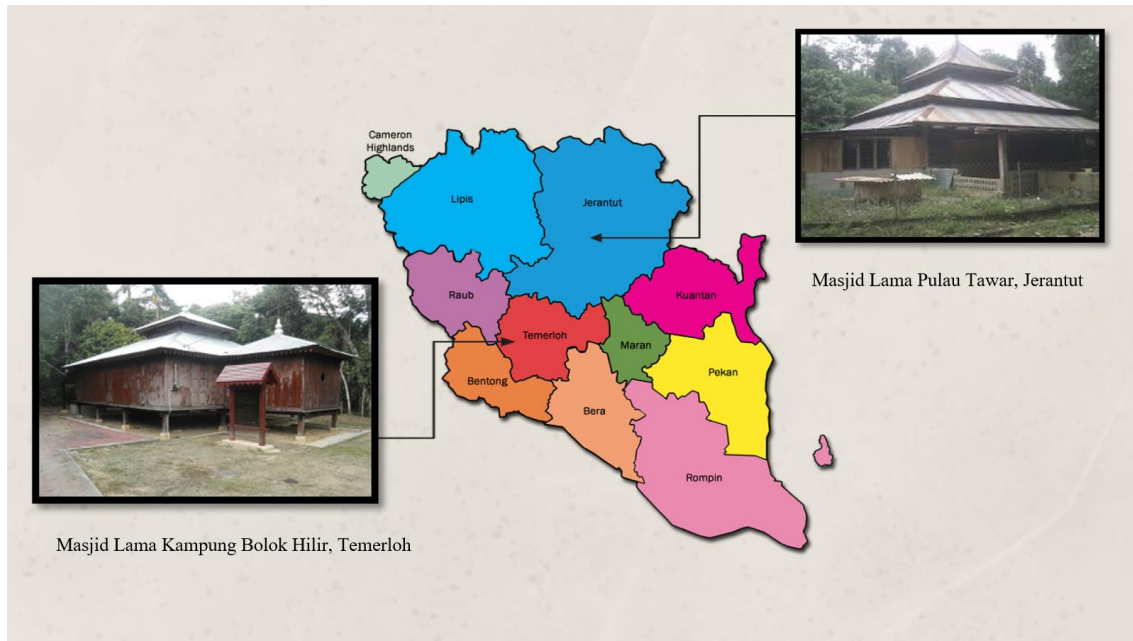


Figure 1: The Location of Masjid Negeri Lama Kuala Lipis And Masjid Kampung Pantai, Chenor

Masjid Negeri Lama Kuala Lipis

An entrepreneur by the name of Syeikh Habib Hasan constructed the Kuala Lipis Old State Mosque in 1888 and constructed on property that belongs to Sheikh Habib Hasan's waqf. In 1898, this mosque was designated as the state mosque and this mosque is 133 years old. The construction of this ancient mosque was influenced by Sumantera, Indonesia. The design of this single-story meru roof structure is similar to that of mosques found in Indonesia's Sumatra province. While the minaret of this mosque has two meru roofs, the mosque itself has a one-story meru roof. Masjid Kampung Pantai, Chenor with Kadi Ahmad's assistance, Engku Wan Mahmud created the Kampung Pantai Mosque and 102 years old. Approximately 235 people can be accommodated there. It built under the inspiration of umbun from Sumatra, Indonesia, this mosque has the features of a traditional Malay Mosque. The former mosque in the town that was demolished had an influence on the building's architecture.



Rajah 2: The Location of Masjid Lama Pulau Tawar, Jerantut and Masjid Kampung Bolok Hilir, Temerloh

Masjid Lama Pulau Tawar, Jerantut

The Malays of Pulau Tawar and Imam Perang Rasu, or Tok Gajah, who was 144 years old at the time, built this mosque on its original site in the early 1880s. Witness the joyous and tragic events that have shaped the history of the state of Pahang. A location where Hugh Clifford, Mat Kilau, and Tok Gajah met. It is very similar to mosques constructed in Indonesia's Sumatra province, this mosque has a three-story meru roof.

Masjid Kampung Bolok Hilir, Temerloh Located in Pahang's Temerloh district, Semantan subdistrict, Lanchang. It was created in the 1930s and is now about 91 years old. Run by six brothers (Tok Empat Haji Long, Khatib Bakar Bin Iman Yahya, Haji Jaludin Bin Imam Yahya, Khabib Awang Bin Imam Yahya, Nilal Tahar Bin Kasim And Bilal Ripin). A distinctive mosque with Indonesian island of Sumatra style influences. This mosque is made of cengal-type wood and has a zinc roof. Its distinctive five-story roof is installed with a variety of button or roof crown decorations.

Level of Public Concern for the Conservation Efforts of the Old Mosque in Pahang In the opinion of R1, it is stated that this mosque needs to be restored in order to maintain the privileges of this mosque. He thought that the mosque should be restored due to the evidence of the spread of Islam in Kuala Lipis district as well as reflecting the community's commitment to Islam as it was the main mosque in its heyday. Besides that, R1 also states that this mosque is one of the mosques that is loved to be visited by the community who live and work near the mosque.

R2 states that the old mosque needs to be restored due to the uniqueness and privileges of this mosque. R2 could not answer the question of what kind of conservation should be carried out on the old mosques. This is because, R2 does not have a clear knowledge of the steps and types of conservation of a heritage building. R2 also stated that he did not know the difference in the conservation process of the old mosque and the new mosque. R2 stated, he agreed that the old mosque is well restored as the speciality of the mosque can help boost the tourism sector of Kuala Lipis district. This will also help boost the economy and contribute to the income of traders near the old mosque.

R3 has stated that the conservation process of the old mosque is more complex and should be done with caution to reduce the risk of damage to the old mosque. This is because, the materials of the old mosque are very sensitive and easily damaged if not handled properly. R4 is a resident of Jerantut district, and he has known the old mosque in the district since childhood. R4 also stated that the mosque should be restored as it has been a testament to the spread of Islam in Jerantut and Pahang districts. He also did not mind providing services and financial contributions to assist in the conservation process of the mosque. R4 disagrees and will refuse if the mosque needs to be demolished for the construction of a modern new mosque.

R5 and R6 are aware of the importance of the conservation of the old mosque. Therefore, they are often involved with all activities related to this mosque. However, R5 and R6 do not know the types and differences of the old mosque conservation process. They agree that this heritage mosque needs to be restored properly. This is because the old mosque is the main identity and attraction of the village. R7 states that this mosque is important to restore, and it is a legacy that has been left by the ancestors of this village. He highly appreciated the remains of these ancestors who were considered important and special to the villagers.

R8 states that the old mosque needs to be restored due to the historical heritage value that is important to Kampung Bolok Hilir. However, R8 also did not know what kind and difference conservation was made to the old mosque and the new mosque. According to him, the old mosque should be restored as it can be used as a heritage mosque in Pahang.

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, study has found that the community live around the mosques has knowledge and awareness on the significant value of the mosques and the importance of its conservation. However, the community does not know the correct steps and procedure pertaining the implementation of best practice conservation works. There is also community member which thought that the process of conserving old mosques is similar to the process of modern mosques renovation.

The community also does not know the type of materials used in the construction of the old mosque and the best way to handle the intervention as to minimize damage to the original old mosque building components. Nevertheless, study has found that the villagers have expressed their enthusiasm and willingness to get involved in the conservation effort in any mean such as labour energy as well as service within their capacity.

The old mosques found in the state of Pahang are historically valuable and should be register as heritage site at state level and possibly at national level. The heritage values embedded in the mosques historical background and architecture style should be used as attraction in the Islamic tourism industry which later contribute to the economic development of the local community. Hence, there should be effort made to preserve the physical condition of the mosques as well as to upgrade the existing facilities to ensure the mosques available for heritage tourism in Pahang. In this regard there is several efforts and future research topics can be proposed for future studies as follow:

- a) Comprehensive Documentation of Old Mosques in Pahang State.
- b) The Study on Community Perspective of the Old Mosque
- c) The Inventory of Old Mosques in the State of Pahang
- d) Heralding the Land of the Old Mosque Site in Pahang State
- e) Heralding the Old Mosque as Pahang State Heritage Mosque

The architectural style of these mosques is important evidence to the early development era and spread of Islam in this country. Therefore, all steps and efforts must be made to ensure that these mosques are not forgotten and left abandoned without any conservation efforts being carried out. There is no doubt that conservation efforts involving heritage buildings with old architectural style requires high costs, but the result of these efforts will bring benefits to the country in economically as well as to empower the historical value of the nation.

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