Prayer Room Design In Transit Area

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ABSTRACT
The prayer room in transit area such as shopping mall, an exhibition hall, an airport, or other public building is an intervention to its surrounding and a welcoming place to find shelter or stop briefly, as a place of transit in our routine life. The prayer room does not merely provide physical presence to public place users in terms of anchoring and strengthening religious beliefs, it also provides an opportunity for spiritual presence. It is a location for religious activity that is not included in the construction plan. Thus, the prayer room is often placed in a vacant space in a building and is not integrated with other facilities. The conventional prayer room is a basic facility with improper arrangement. This type of prayer room were designed and constructed just to fulfill the requirements of the buildings only without any proper planning. Basically, this type of prayer room is inconvenient and uncomfortable for the user. This study; the scope will cover on the function and design of prayer areas or “musolla” in transit area. The designs were discussed in using qualitative method to make sure that the right and suitable aspects of design of the prayer room can be designed and construct accordingly to the needs of the users. The effectiveness solutions for the prayer room will provide convenience and comfortable place as a transit area for the Muslim users to perform their prayer.

KEY WORDS: Praying area, Transit Area, Function & Design, Service quality.

INTRODUCTION

The population of Muslims people cover about 20 – 25% of the world population which is Islam is the majority almost in 40 countries. As one of the highest majority in the world population, Muslim should be able to practice the Islam religion without any difficulty. The Muslim communities need a space that they can perform prayer the space that is clean and able to pray. The requirements of the design space for prayer room need a strategic planning and suitable design that is following the right standard and the need of the Islam and the users.

Many aspects need to be reconsidered in designing the prayer room including the design, Qiblat direction, ablution design, sizes of prayer room and the location of prayer room. Muslims pray five times a day; in dawn, in midday, in the afternoon, sunset and at night. The requirement of performing prayer five times a day is taking into consideration when we are at transit area. Unfortunately, the architectural designs of prayer facilities are frequently deficient, which results the spaces being uncomfortable and unsafe.

According to Isin and Siemiatycki (Isin, E.F., M. Siemiatycki, 2002), the principal function of the prayer room is the performance of communal worship for both men and women. The designer would need to approach the composition of a plan for the prayer room such that it fulfils its primary function: social inclusion. A well-designed plan can enhance the harmony, scale, balance, and composition of the prayer room.

2. Objective And Methodology:
The objective of this research is to propose and review the design for prayer room at transit area. This research investigate on how the people use prayer room are capitalized on so as to study well-designed spaces, identify their strengths, and incorporate with the design standard and the criteria of prayer room facility and also to identify poorly-designed spaces, analysis the weaknesses and recommend their avoidance.

The creation of an environment conducive to religious activities through the integrated construction of prayer room in modern public places has the potential to balance the secular and religious realms. Modernization is often considered the cause of religious influences retreat, disengagement from society, and the...
erosion of faith and religious behaviour by secular circumstances. Hence, public facility developers ought to help to verify that the process of modernization for consumers is not intended to distance them from religion. By providing prayer room, public facility developers are not only helping the implementation of religion enforcement but also implementing their social responsibility for society (Antara, 2011).

**Case study:**
In this study, the case study had been identified for data collection and analysed and the design and environmental aspects in a prayer room had been reviewed. This study will cover on the design elements and environmental aspects of Chagi Airport in Singapore, Bangkok Thailand Airport and public buildings in the Singapore, Indonesia and southern part of Malaysia.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

![Fig. 1: Multi-faithroom, Manchester, Trafford Shopping Centre.](image)

![Fig. 2: Multi-faithroom Boston: Brigham Women's Hospital.](image)

Several other issues include the inappropriate location of a prayer area next to a toilet or in areas that are hidden, while some prayer spaces are too narrow and crowded (Yatim, N., 2013). Improper and unarranged space planning of praying area makes it uncomfortable for users and environmental aspects. Some of the facilities they provide like carpet, mattress, and ablution area are not well maintained and not so clean. In the capital city of Kuala Lumpur, prayer rooms, in most shopping centers or in commercial buildings, are built in or near parking spaces. This is highly inappropriate in terms of accessibility, safety, and the users’ comfort. Undeniably, these concerns do not omen rate with the highly upheld Islamic values and principles. According to Yatim (2013), prayer rooms vary in size and facilities because there are no standardized guidelines on the construction of a musolla. Most local authorities, state religious departments, and the Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM) need to take initiatives in implementing proper design standards and guidelines in designing and constructing the prayer rooms in the shopping centers.

5. **Conclusion:**
Effective design recommendations and solutions for the prayer room are most important in providing convenience and comfortable elements to the Muslim users. A comfortable and well-designed prayer room
based on proper design standards can provide more satisfaction to its users, especially in a transit area. The respective parties must assure that the planning of the prayer rooms meets the requirement of the users that use the facilities. Therefore, not only the satisfaction of the users but also the environmental aspect of the prayer rooms.

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