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"Rethinking Built Environment: Towards a Sustainable Future"

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The Challenges of Facilities Management for Pondok Institution in Malaysia

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Abstract

The pondok educational system is the earliest in the Malay Archipelago that focused on Islamic studies. Most pondok institutions in Malaysia depend on waqaf educational institutions. Since then, the development of the pondok required more attention in many aspects. There are limited studies on the issues due to lack of awareness on the need of strategic facilities management (FM) in order to avoid buildings being dilapidated and deteriorated. The aim of this paper is to identify the challenges of managing the pondok facilities. Content analysis was used in this paper by critically reviewing previous literature. Finding shows these three challenges are widely discussed in the articles among six challenges found. They are; (i) lack in fund allocation (ii) building age (iii) lack in expertise and staff. Thus, it can be concluded that the development of pondok institutions required sufficient financial support by the authority in order to ensure the sustainability of these institutions.

Keywords: Facilities Management, Challenges, Pondok Institution

1.0 Introduction

Pondok originated from an Arabic wordal-funduq which means a hostel, a temporary home or dormitories (Luqman Abdullah, 2011; Sufian dan Muhammad, 2013). In Indonesia, a pondok is known as pesantren and dayah (Wazir & Nasir, 2015; Tan, 2014). The fourth edition of Kamus Dewan (2005) characterizes pondok as madrasah (school), hostels, or conventional Islamic learning institutions for the educating and reciting of Al-Quran. The instituting of pondok institutions in Malaysia has been exponential particularly in the states of Kedah, Kelantan and Terengganu when a great deal of strict researchers from Pattani migrated to Malaya.

The pondok education system is among the oldest Islamic education systems in the world and most of them are waqaf education institutions. Most pondok institutions in Malaysia depend on waqaf yet due to certain issues, these waqafs are not created and developed by pondok institutions the most ideal way they could (Fazial and Bahari, 2018). Due to this reason, some of the pondok are facing problems in managing the facilities in this institutions. The objective of this paper is to identify the challenges of managing the pondok facilities.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Facilities Management for Pondok Institution in Malaysia

2.1.1   Definition of Facilities Management

In Malaysia, the facility management (FM) industry has shown up as one of the fastest developing sectors throughout the years. Notwithstanding, the scope and identity of FM are yet obscured as evidenced by the definitions and issues that endeavour to depict its extension. According to Mohd Isa et. al (2016), FM is the multi-disciplinary sort of work that covers a wide scope of various activities, responsibilities, and knowledge. What is more interesting, every aspect of an organisation seems to be drawn into FM.

2.1.2 Facilities Management in Malaysia

The FM required to expand the provision of FM to ensure the structure or building is clean, safe and in a healthy environment which has been practiced in local uniervisities for instance the Facilities Management Division (FMD) is one of the fundamental division, who's responsible for the overall maintenance of the building and the area around the campus. There are four units in FMD, they are the Public Unit, the Assembly Unit (UAKM), Unit of Mechanical, and Electrical and Telecommunications Unit (UMET) (Mohd Isa et. al, 2016).

One of the examples of FM practices in Malaysia is in the office buildings. Kamaruzzaman and Ahmad Zawawi (2010), in their research, referenced that this sort of building regularly would have their own supervisory crew to screen the conditions of buildings. This management team is usually led by maintenance or building managers. Maintenance, cleaning, landscaping, lighting, heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC), lift or escalators, mechanical and electrical, sanitary and plumbing, access, signage, parking and others are among the services provided by building managers (Nik Mat, 2011).

FM planning looks into business performance to achieve business objectives. Therefore, FM operation has to understand how the buildings perform (Abdul Talib, 2013)

2.1.3 Definition of Pondok Institution

The word pondok is derived from the Arabic word fuduqun which means tent, hotel, lodging or temporary stopover for travelers (Dhofier, 1982). The term pondok is more appropriate to describe the residence of those who seek knowledge. The pondok is just a temporary home and not a permanent home. Therefore, the building materials for a pondok are just poles, small stairs, sloping roofs made of palm tree leaves and bare floors (Ziemek, Siregar and Sunjoyo, 1986).

2.1.4 Types of Pondok Institutions in Malaysia

Pondok Institutions (PI) are divided into two categories namely pondok school and pondok house. The ***Pondok*** **School** is a school that practices a system of learning that is more focused on Islamic studies. In addition, students attending the school will stay in the hostel provided. The educational system taught in the *pondok* school is based on the system set by the school itself and their lessons are more focused on Islamic religious education (*Yayasan Pembangunan Pondok*, 2016). However, *pondok* school nowadays are quite similar with other school buildings equipped with more than just regular daily school and the students also occupy the hostel provided.

Pondok **house** is one of the concepts of housing that has been practiced since pre-independence, it is usually run by responsible parties such as the owner of the *pondok* houses themselves or any organization involved. *Pondok* house concepts are commonly featured as traditional Malay houses. However, the concept of a *pondok* house nowadays is developed with a more modern concept and also provides with the facilities needed for its residents to carry out their daily activities and learning. But most of *pondok* house are occupied by senior citizens who want to study Islam. The construction and existence of *pondok* houses including facilities provided are mainly used for religious

activity. Some of them are required monthly fees as they will use it as a charge for utility fees and management fees.

2.2 Facilities Management Establishment for Pondok Institution

2.2.1 Guidelines for General Facilities Should be Provided in School

In Malaysia, the PI is one of the government-recognized institutions and the existence of the *Yayasan Pembanguan Pondok Malaysia* (YPPM) was established on August 1, 2012 and registered as a government body. The aim of the YPPM is to recognize the PI and the teaching staff at the institute which has produced many religious scholars and contributed greatly to the development of Islamic religious education in Malaysia. Improvements were made by allocating a relatively large area for student placement as well as a comfortable learning space. The area where the study was located is usually owned by the founders of the *pondok*. In addition, the area may also be a *waqaf* land either for educational purposes or for the general purpose of Islamic community development. Table below shows the guidelines on general facilities should be provided for secondary schools in Perak and Selangor which also can be applied in pondok institutions as these are the basic amenities for a school.

Table 1. Guidelines For Secondary School Facilities in Selangor and Perak

JPBD Selangor Guideline For Secondary School And Islamic Secondary School Facilities	JPBD Perak Guideline For Secondary School Facilities
Facilities Components Fence surround the school Signage of school and address in jawi and roman Toilet Field Canteen and hall Flag poles (min 3 units) Court Library Surau Electric substation Shaded pathway 1 entrance 1 post guard Lay-by (min width 3.5m) for school bus and car Fields can be used by the community	Principal and management office Teacher room/ staff room Library Laboratory and workshop Canteen Hall Field/ football field/ netball court Court Toilet and bathroom Post guard Dumpsite Car, motorcycle and bicycle parking Lay-by for bus Pathway Surau/ prayer room Water tank and electric substation if necessary
The school layout was divided into 4 main zone according to its function which is: a. Management Zone b. Academic Zone c. Residential Zone d. Recreation Zone	

Source : JPBD, 2019

2.2.2   School Facilities and Infrastructure

Sustainable future can be achieved through education, training and public awareness and school is the important medium to deliver education. There are three major components of the school buildings that are believed to affect the students' learning ability are the thermal quality, acoustic quality and also the school building age (Earthman, Cash and Van, 1996) . According to Dewees (1999), Educators' major challenge is to create or renovate the building design with suitable infrastructure which is in line with the technology and new learning approaches and methodology. Public schools are concerned with the quality, health and safety of the school building and this contributes to the country's economic development by providing better quality education. Filardo (2008) stated there is a relationship between the school facilities and the effect on learning to the student. In addition to that, the school

facilities are vital as it helps to deliver the education and also for knowledge creation and inspiration. Teachers are able to deliver and apply their skill much better with assistance of good facilities (Amin and Jasmi, 2011). Amin and Jasmin (2011) mentioned children's learning ability is influenced by the surrounding atmosphere which consists of school buildings and the teaching facilities. School facilities and infrastructure are provided for specific purposes and also to satisfy the needs and demands of the students and teachers.

Table 2. Needs for facilities

Facilities that facilitate teaching and learning	Indirect or teaching support facilities
1) To illustrate concepts (2) Provide opportunity for firsthand experience (3) For experimentation and demonstration (4) For scientific investigation and discovery (5) To provide diversity of thoughts (6) For observation and inquiry (7) For development of scientific attitudes and skills (8) To protect the individual and also provide comfort	(1) To increase instructional effectiveness (2) To improve the cleanness, orderliness and safety of facilities (3) To reduce the operational cost and life cycle cost of a building (4) To extend the useful life of a building (5) To increase efficiency and effectiveness of the staff and students (6) To improve building appearance (7) To use data collection and analyses for decision making

Souce: Osman, Bachok & Thani (2015)

2.3 Challenges Implementing Sustainable Facilities Management in Pondok Institutions

2.3.1 Lack in Fund Allocation

Most PI in Malaysia are confronting financial issues. The main financial resources for these institutions are still dependent on the contributions made by the society, in particular for unregistered pondoks, such as zakat, waqaf, infaq and donations. Waqaf is seen as a tool that can allow organisations to finance their own growth by comparing all four financial tools. However, not all pondok institutions have the capability to develop, generate and sustain their finances through waqaf as they confront various difficulties (Fazial & Bahari, 2018).

According to the study carried out by Ramli and Bakar (2013), PI in Malaysia depend on permanent resources like land and waqaf buildings for the sustainability of the pondok education. This statement is strengthened by Hashim, Rufai dan Nor (2011) who performed a comparative study between pondok institutions in Malaysia and pondok pesantren in Indonesia. PI in Malaysia have deteriorated because they only get financial resources through the contributions of the Islamic community like donations, infaq, zakat and waqf and they do not have a systematic education.

Due to the uncertain sources of financial, PI are facing difficulties in providing complete and comfortable facilities to the students as such facilities provided by the government's schools. Therefore this factor contributes to the barriers in implementing strategic facilities management in the pondok institutions.

2.3.2   Lack in Expertise and Staff

Lack of fund allocation leads to the lack of expertise and staff. As the PI are mostly developed by individual or private organisations, contributions of ideas of development also come from the person who owned the institution without practising the regulations required by the authorities. This is because fees to be paid to the expertise to plan the proper planning and arrangement of the pondok facilities might be a limitation due to the fund generated basically is for the development and daily expenses to the PI itself.

On the other hand, the number of staff hired in the PI basically focused on the teaching team and lessen in the management's team due to the limitation of the fund. Most of the teachers are remunerated with low salary as compared to the normal school as they are paid under government agency. Despite the salary offered to the teachers being generally lower, the teachers are willing to work and contribute their thoughts and knowledge to the students. Thus, lack of expertise and staff leads to the constraints

in implementing strategic FM due to their thoughts and productivity contributing in achieving the best mission and vision of an organisation (Sylvia, Sarajul and Saidin, 2019).

2.3.3   Insufficient Space

Most of the PI are developed in the waqf land contributed by personal individuals or other private organisations. According to Ramli and Bakar (2013), PI in Malaysia depend on permanent resources like land and waqaf buildings for the sustainability of the pondok education. Due to this reason, most of the PI has limited space to extend their buildings or facilities. In certain cases of unregistered pondok, there is only one or two blocks provided for learning and teaching activities. These blocks are used as a madrasah or surau where the place for teaching and learning as well as a hostel for their students. Since the block provided is limited, thus the other facilities will be combined in one place inside the buildings such as canteen, library, hostel and classroom. The messy arrangement of the facilities due to insufficient space lead to the unconducive and uncomfortable place to study.

2.3.4   Inconsistent Policies

Every organization has their own policies in order to ensure the organization is well operated. Despite the fact that each local authority has different objectives and standards, the owners of PI are obligated to provide the facilities and services to build and support the sustainable facilities for their residents (Sylvia, Sarajul and Saidin, 2019). Inconsistent and unstandardized policies of every PI have caused uneven strategies in managing the facilities in those institutions.

2.3.5   Building Age

Historically, the pondok type of education began in Malaya at the beginning of the 19th century in the northern Malay states of Kelantan, Terengganu, Kedah and Perlis. It originated from Patani or Sumatera. Pondok education in Kedah is said to have originated from Sumatera while pondoks in Kelantan and Terengganu came from Patani (Mydin, Mahadi and Sufiza, 2014). Consequently the building of pondok institutions in Malaysia can mostly be categorised as old buildings although some of them have been partially or fully renovated. For example, some of the pondok institutions in Kelantan still maintain the original design which is constructed by wood elements. Thus, the building age itself contributes to the barrier in implementing effectiveness of facility management especially when the building itself is maintained with the original structure.

2.3.6   Undefined Maintenance Goals

Appropriate identification of defects and the implementation of remedial measures based on the technical knowledge can contribute to effective building maintenance (Sylvia, Sarajul and Saidin, 2019). Seeley (1987) has categorized the maintenance as predictable and avoidable; predictable maintenance is the regular periodical maintenance that carries out to retain the performance of the building and repair and replace the components while preventive maintenance is the maintenance required to rectify failures due to incorrect design and installation or faulty materials. Moreover, some researchers also have classified the maintenance management into planned and unplanned maintenance, which consists of many approaches (Sylvia, Sarajul and Saidin, 2019).

Due to the PI being developed by a personel or private organization, the maintenance planning is not being taken as a major need by taking into consideration of the financial status. Normally when the minor defects occur, they will try to hold out the issue as long as the defects do not attack the users. So that the fund will be used for other things which are more important than repairing the minor defect identified. The concept is as long as the materials or facilities can be used, it will be used till the facilities are destroyed. Thus, this barrier is identified as one of the obstacles in managing the strategic facilities planning in *pondok* institutions.

3.0 Methodology

This paper adopted content analysis, where 20 papers are critically reviewed. This paper focuses on challenges of facilities provided by elderly/*pondok* institutions by critically reviewing previous literature. The inclusion criteria of this paper is in regards to elderly housing only. All reviewed papers are then categorised into six themes. The thematic analysis is used as data analysis. The theme then will be ranked and analysed on the most discussed to be most challenging.

4.0 Results and Discussion

Table 3. Thematic analysis of challenges of FM in *pondok*

Theme	Author(s)
Lack of fund allocation	Fazial and Bahari (2018)
	Ramli and Bakar (2013)
	Hashim, Rufai and Nor (2011)
Building age	Mydin, Mahadi and Sufiza (2014)
	Abdul Talib (2013)
Lack in expertise and staff	Slyvia, Sarajul and Saidin (2019)
Undefined maintenance goals	Slyvia, Sarajul and Saidin (2019)
	Seeley (1987)
Inconsistent policy	Slyvia, Sarajul and Saidin (2019)
Insufficient space	Ramli and Bakar (2013)

Source: Author

The table above shows the result of the main challenges of facilities management in pondok institutions. The themes are shown accordingly based on the frequency of citation in articles. It can be said that the first rank is lack of fund allocation. As explained before, the pondok itself was built based on the waqaf and donation, therefore fund allocation was identified as top rank compared to others. Other than that, building age was ranked at second place as most of the pondok institutions existed a long time ago and some of them existed before independence. Lack in expertise and staff ranked third as this theme is related to the fund allocation that has been explained above. Meanwhile, undefined maintenance goals ranked fourth. Last but not least, inconsistent policy was ranked fifth as the policy always changes depending on the situation. Lastly insufficient space was rank at last rank since most of the pondok developed in the remote area and the waqaf the land normally in larger space.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

It can be concluded that the main challenges of facilities management in pondok institutions is lack of fund allocation. With all the themes as discussed before, this point has been discussed most in the paper reviewed. Thus, pondok institutions need to be taken into consideration in terms of budget allocation by the government in order to sustain this institution as the country always needs religious scholars in future.

Some recommendations for future studies include a study to identify the specific guideline for pondok development. Other than that, a study to examine the status of facilities provided in the pondok institution whether meet the requirement of authority and are conducive to be occupied in good manner.

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