

DEFINING THE TYPES OF VERANDA USES IN A TROPICAL
URBAN CONTEXT OF KUALA LUMPUR

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To my dearest family and friends

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ABSTRACT

This thesis discussed a research in defining the types of veranda uses for social activities in tropical urban context of Kuala Lumpur. Jalan Ampang, Kuala Lumpur shows low continuity between sites due to the gaps area caused by the abandoned buildings that may give negative impact to the street life. In a relation, the existence of veranda is commonly known within the rural area where it is normally built in traditional Malay houses. However, the adaptation of veranda in urban context is less acknowledged although it is a very effective architectural element that plays many role in social and environmental aspects. Hence, a methodology of identify the veranda typology and relating it to the pedestrian movement pattern of density using scientific analysis of space syntax is carried out. To strengthen the findings, literature review and case studies are done in order to identify the specific veranda typology used in the urban context. The pedestrian movement data is analyzed in order to determine the workability of veranda typology used in tropical urban context. The findings suggest that although veranda is an extension of an architectural feature has much to offer and it able to play a big role in enhancing the social environment in the urban context.

ABSTRAK

Tesis ini membincangkan kajian dalam menentukan jenis serambi (veranda) yang boleh digunakan bagi aktiviti sosial dalam konteks bandar tropika Kuala Lumpur. Jalan Ampang, Kuala Lumpur menunjukkan kesinambungan yang rendah di antara tapak disebabkan oleh jurang kawasan berpunca daripada bangunan-bangunan terbengkalai yang boleh memberi kesan negatif kepada kehidupan jalan. Secara hubungannya, kewujudan serambi (veranda) diketahui umum dalam kawasan luar bandar di mana ia biasanya dibina di rumah Melayu tradisional. Walau bagaimanapun, adaptasi serambi (veranda) dalam konteks bandar mendapat kurang perhatian walaupun ia adalah elemen seni bina yang amat berkesan dalam memainkan banyak peranan dari aspek sosial dan alam sekitar. Oleh itu, kaedah mengenal pasti tipologi serambi (veranda) dan mengaitkannya dengan ketumpatan corak pergerakan pejalan kaki dengan menggunakan analisis saintifik ruang sintaks dijalankan. Dalam mengukuhkan dapatan kajian, kajian literatur dan kajian kes dilakukan untuk mengenal pasti tipologi serambi (veranda) tertentu yang digunakan dalam konteks bandar. Data pergerakan pejalan kaki dianalisa adalah untuk menentukan keboleherjaan tipologi serambi (veranda) digunakan dalam konteks bandar tropika. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa walaupun serambi (veranda) adalah tambahan daripada ciri-ciri seni bina yang banyak untuk ditawarkan dan ia memainkan peranan yang besar dalam meningkatkan persekitaran social dalam konteks bandar.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Study

Jalan Ampang is one the busiest road which is located in the urban city of Kuala Lumpur that surrounded with high density of suits and well-known skyscrapers such as KLCC and KL Tower. Lots of public transportation can be found along this road such as public buses (Rapid KL), Monorail station, LRT station and taxis. The facilities provided ease people journeys from one place to another along Jalan Ampang. However, this road portrays as the corporate street rather than a street for people where low number of public spaces provided. Gaps area due to the abandoned buildings can lead to low continuity between the sites and give negative impact to the street life of Jalan Ampang. For instance, Lanai is one of public space located at Jalan Ampang which is used for social activities since 2002 (MaTiC, 2013). Although Lanai is potential to be a good public space but it is not well utilized which could encourage public participation within its context. This is due to low number of people used Lanai as public space. However, it can be proven by using scientific analysis of space syntax in order to prove the pedestrian movement.

According to (Helper, 2013), Lānai or Lanai is originated from Hawaii word which defined as veranda, patio or porch with a type of roofed construction with open sides near a house. On the other hand, technical difference between a balcony and a veranda in the building regulation handbooks for Asian countries, defined that a balcony is a cantilevered platform located at upper level of a building and should exceed than six feet while a veranda should be covered space and roofed at ground level (Zin et al, 2012). In modern context, public space has been defined in various ways. (Kellett & Rofe, 2009) refer public space as hard surface spaces within the urban context or environment which exclude roads and open air parking areas while (Carr et al, 1992) focus on the emphasizes the accessibility of the space where define public space as open and publicly accessible places. Glass et al., (1999), stated that social activities are actual activities that involves with social participation that relate to social engagement or leisure activities such as volunteering, gardening, discussing and etc.

A city being livable because of the communities in a way they contribute into many aspects (PPS, 2000). Inactive communities will lead the city become dull and loss its importance. In Lerner's book titled "Urban Acupuncture: Celebrating Pinpricks of Change that Enrich City Life" 2014, he described that cities can be categorized as a unification function in bringing together variety of people to meet up which create interaction to each other. Lerner (2014) stated that designing public space is important in which public space create the sociable sense among the communities. Public space also known as a phase of community's life where it encourage the sense of community, sense of place and the connectivity of people that contribute to sense of belonging (Avila, 2001). By referring to (Butterworth, 2000), sense of place can define as an emotion of being connected to certain spaces with physical surrounding. However, not all public spaces can contribute into sociability sense of the communities, if there is no element to act as the catalyst.

Hence, Lanai should play its important role as a veranda. By referring to the context of veranda, the physical appearance of veranda is known as public space where it is socially used (Tran, 2016). Veranda mainly used in traditional Malay

house as social space where family members gather and talk with neighbors, relatives or friends. In Japan, veranda or so called engawa which is found in traditional Japanese houses is frequently used as gathering or socialize space that create it as a public space (Fujii, 2015). It can be said that veranda is not something new to the architectural history as it is already be part of the residential buildings long time ago. However, the question is that, how veranda is defined in order to increase the liveliness of public space in the tropical urban context of Kuala Lumpur?

1.2 Problem Statement

Veranda is one of the effective social spaces used traditionally for houses in rural area. Nowadays, the adaptation essence of veranda is actively present in urban context. However, the presence of veranda in tropical urban context is less explored and experiencing an unlively condition as public space. For instance, unlively Lanai area as a public space in Jalan Ampang, Kuala Lumpur may cause lacking in the continuity between sites along the road and also deterring the street life. This issue may also cause by the low density of users especially local and tourists that attracted to involve within its context as there are no social activities to encourage public participation.

1.3 Thesis Statement

Veranda is an effective architectural element that increases social interaction between people through everyday life activities while maintaining safety. In its physical context, veranda represents itself as public space that may attract public to participate which allows interaction to take place. However, Lanai area as a public

space in Jalan Ampang shows a vice versa results as it 'eliminates' public participation with its unlively environment. Hence, it is believed that by defining the types of veranda that can be used as the architectural platform for social activity, it may give opportunities for public to participate and at the same time revive Lanai area.

1.4 Research Aim

The research aim is to define the types of veranda uses for social activities by encourage public participation in order to increase the livability of public space in tropical urban context of Kuala Lumpur.

1.5 Research Objectives

The research objectives for this study are as follow:

1. To identify the types of veranda used in urban context for social activities.
2. To measure the frequency of pedestrian movement within the 500m radius of Lanai area as veranda.

1.6 Research Questions

Looking at the needs in searching for the types of veranda uses in tropical urban context of Kuala Lumpur, the research questions are as follow:

1. What are the types of veranda that can be used for social activities in urban context?
2. What are the relationship between integration value and pedestrian movement within the 500m radius of Lanai area as veranda?

1.7 Scope of Research

Veranda is widely used in rural area of housing which mostly found in traditional Malay house. However, this research on veranda only focuses on the types of veranda used in urban context for low storey public buildings and public space. Besides, the part where architectural identity expression is involved will be narrowed down into several veranda typologies only which are common to be found in tropical urban context. The experiment and study of this research will be focus only on 500m radius of Jalan Ampang, Kuala Lumpur where Lanai area as a public space is the centralized point.

1.8 Significance of Research

The significance of study is to express the types of veranda uses for social activities in tropical urban context. The veranda essence is used to encourage public participation in order to increase the livability of public space in urban context.

Moreover, its essence is adapted in order to produce a guideline in producing spaces that are suitable for public participation in completing design thesis of Batik Art Pavilion (refer to Appendix B). A methodology of translating essence of veranda through urban context and architecture will be produced from the research. As part of the collaboration between the Design Dissertation and Design Thesis, the result and outcome of the research will be utilized in Design Thesis.

1.9 Research Methodology

The method used for this research is aim to search answers and information regarding the use of veranda as the physical entity that can be adapted in urban context by encouraging public participation in order to increase the livability of public space. Therefore, the method used is based on mixed method. This will be further discussed in Chapter 3. The primary data will be collected from the scientific analysis of space syntax software, structured interviews, observation and site analysis. Case studies and literature review were to be studied in order to understand more about the types of veranda in urban context. On the other hand, the secondary data were to be collected from books, magazines, journals, publications and even internet. All the data from the field visit will be further analyzed. After that, the principles development of Batik Art Pavilion is formulated from the adaptation of veranda by referring to appendix.

1.10 Expected Findings

From this research, it is expected that various types of veranda can be found within the tropical urban context of Kuala Lumpur by using a methodology or

formula generated. The function of veranda typologies used within the tropical urban context is study in order to extract and translated it into one proper building for design thesis. Hence, design approaches and strategies of veranda contributing to public participation and livability of public space in tropical urban context will be formulated.

1.11 Structure of Thesis

The structure of thesis is divided into six main chapters. Chapter 1 will discuss on an overview of the research. This contains of the background study, problem statement, thesis statement, research aim, research objectives, research questions, scope of research, research methodology and expected findings.

Chapter 2 delivers a broad background of veranda from traditional used to modern adaptation in urban context. Firstly, in generally the discussion will focus on veranda towards the social and environmental aspect. Later, the adaptation of veranda in rural area to urban context is explained. Some samples of veranda in urban and its complexity are further discussed. Precedent studies are carried out in order to identify several samples of veranda used in urban context that is adapted in buildings.

Chapter 3 discuss on the methodology chosen in conducting this research. This chapter provides procedures in collecting data, samples, setting of study, research instruments and analysis procedures.

Chapter 4 will explained on the findings collected from the method used for this research. In this research, data were gathered for analysis purposes. Data from

the observation will be compared with space syntax data while interview data will be discussed. Case studies that been carried out in Malaysia is used to identifying veranda typology used for social activities. The analyzed data will be used in order to determine the relevant design approaches or strategies by achieving research objectives.

Last but not least, Chapter 5 summarizes the research and significant of this dissertation. Moreover, it will also elaborate the limitations and plan the potential further study regarding this subject matter.

1.12 Conclusion

This research helps in exploring the relevant approaches and strategies in order to defining various types of veranda used in tropical urban context. Hence, this will be focus on veranda as the physical entity that can be adapted and formed as a proper building in the end. Besides that, a study on social activities and public space itself as the element in supporting veranda will also be further discussed. At the end, the solutions would contribute to resolve the livability of Lanai area in Jalan Ampang, Kuala Lumpur as public space by implementing suitable veranda typologies in tropical urban context.

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