

**EFFECT OF VENTILATION FAN ON THERMAL COMFORT IN A
MEDIUM SIZE MOSQUE**

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EFFECT OF VENTILATION FAN ON THERMAL COMFORT IN A MEDIUM
SIZE MOSQUE

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*To my beloved parents,
My amazing wife and our children
My kind sisters and brothers
And not forgetting to all my friends
For their
Sacrifice, Love, and Encouragement*

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ABSTRACT

A mosque is a place for the Muslims to perform their congregational prayers and other communal religious activities in Malaysia and other Islamic countries. Most of the mosques in Malaysia are not thermally comfortable. Thermal comfort inside a confined space is essential for health, well-being as well as productivity. A traditional method to provide thermal comfort inside the Malaysian mosque is by using natural ventilation and wall, ceiling and stand fans. However, this method is not capable of providing adequate thermal comfort due to low average wind velocity, and limitation of the fans to displace the warm air. The goal of this study is to identify ways to improve thermal comfort in a chosen mosque located in Johor Bahru. Field measurements were first carried out to determine the airflow velocity, temperature, humidity and mean radiant temperature inside the mosque. The measurements were performed from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., in the middle of each month, for a one-year duration. Thermal comfort inside the mosque was determined by evaluating the Predicted Mean Vote (PMV) and Predicted Percentage of Dissatisfied (PPD) indices. The findings showed that the PMV and PPD indices inside the mosque are outside the comfort range stipulated in the ASHRAE Standard-55. A computational fluid dynamics (CFD) method was employed to predict the distribution of airflow velocity, humidity, and air temperature inside the mosque. The CFD models were validated based on the measured airflow velocity, humidity, and air temperature. A grid independent test (GIT) was done to reduce the effects of meshing on the results while grid convergence index (GCI) was carried out to estimate the discretization error. A parametric analysis was carried out to identify a suitable number of exhaust fans and their placements that would give the greatest improvement on both the PMV and PPD values. The results showed that by placing ten exhaust fans with 1-meter diameter on the south-side wall of the prayer hall produces a more uniform airflow distribution, increases airflow velocity by 84% and decreases air temperature and humidity by 16% and 6.3%, respectively. In addition, the PMV and PPD improved by 78% and 90%, respectively. This study has shown that a proper selection of the number and placement of exhaust fans could improve thermal comfort in a large confined space.

ABSTRAK

Masjid adalah tempat bagi umat Islam melaksanakan solat jemaah dan aktiviti keagamaan di Malaysia dan negara Islam yang lain. Kebanyakan masjid di Malaysia adalah tidak selesa secara terma. Keselesaan terma di dalam sesebuah ruang tertutup penting untuk kesihatan, kesejahteraan juga produktiviti. Kaedah tradisional menyediakan keselesaan terma di dalam masjid di Malaysia adalah dengan menggunakan pengudaraan semula jadi dan pelbagai jenis kipas. Namun begitu, kaedah ini tidak mampu memberikan keselesaan terma yang mencukupi kerana purata halaju angin yang rendah, dan ketidakmampuan kipas untuk menyingkirkan udara panas. Matlamat kajian ini adalah untuk mengenal pasti kaedah bagi menambah baik keselesaan terma di dalam masjid yang terpilih di Johor Bahru. Pengukuran di lapangan bagi menentukan halaju udara, suhu udara, kelembapan udara dan suhu permukaan dinding dilakukan di dalam masjid. Pengukuran dijalankan dari pukul 11.00 pagi hingga 3.00 petang, pada pertengahan setiap bulan, untuk tempoh satu tahun. Keselesaan terma di dalam masjid ditentukan dengan menilai Ramalan Vot Min (PMV) dan Peratusan Ramalan Ketidakpuasan (PPD). Penemuan kajian menunjukkan bahawa indeks PMV dan PPD di dalam masjid berada di luar julat keselesaan yang ditetapkan oleh ASHRAE Standard-55. Kaedah dinamik bendalir pengkomputeran (CFD) digunakan untuk meramal taburan halaju udara, kelembapan udara, dan suhu udara di dalam masjid. Model CFD disahkan berdasarkan data halaju udara, kelembapan udara, dan suhu udara yang diukur. Ujian bebas grid (GIT) dilakukan untuk mengurangkan kesan grid ke atas keputusan manakala indeks penumpuan kekisi (GCI) dilakukan untuk menganggarkan ralat pengdiskretan. Analisis parametrik dilakukan untuk mengenal pasti bilangan kipas ekzos yang sesuai dan lokasinya yang akan memberi nilai PMV dan PPD yang lebih baik. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa dengan meletakkan sepuluh kipas ekzos dengan garis pusat 1-meter di dinding sebelah selatan dewan utama menghasilkan taburan halaju udara yang lebih seragam, meningkatkan kelajuan aliran udara sebanyak 84% dan masing-masing menurunkan suhu udara dan kelembapan udara sebanyak 16% dan 6.3%. Di samping itu, meningkatkan PMV dan PPD sebanyak 78% dan 90%. Kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa pemilihan bilangan dan lokasi kipas yang betul dapat meningkatkan keselesaan terma di dalam ruang tertutup yang besar.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASHRAE	-	American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers
PMV	-	Predicted mean vote
PPD	-	Predicted percentage of dissatisfied
CET	-	Corrected Effective Temperature
CFD	-	Computational fluid dynamics
ACH	-	Air change rate
IAQ	-	Indoor air quality
HVAC	-	Heating, ventilating and air-conditioning
AC	-	Air-conditioning
DV	-	Displacement ventilation
UFAD	-	Under floor air distribution
GCI	-	Grid convergence index
GIT	-	Grid independent test
RANS	-	Reynolds-averaged Navier Stokes
SST	-	Shear stress transport
SIMPLE	-	Semi-Implicit Method for Pressure-Linked Equations
3D	-	Three-dimensional
PDE	-	Partial differential equations
RNG	-	Renormalisation group
FVM	-	Finite volume method
MPH	-	Main prayer hall
CBE	-	Center built environment

LIST OF SYMBOLS

\dot{Q}	-	Mass Flow rate (m^3/h)
\dot{V}	-	Volume flow rate
T_a	-	Air temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$)
V_a	-	Air velocity (m/s)
RH_a	-	Air relative humidity (%)
$T_{mrt.}$	-	Mean radiant temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$)
M	-	Metabolic rate (W/m^2)
W	-	Active work (W/m^2)
L	-	Thermal load
T_{cl}	-	Cloth temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$)
h_c	-	Heat transfer coefficient ($\text{W}/\text{m}^2\text{K}$)
I_{cl}	-	Sensible heat transfer ($\text{m}^2\text{K}/\text{W}$).
t	-	Time (s)
D	-	Diameter (m)
D_H	-	Hydraulic diameter (m)
TI	-	Turbulent intensity
A	-	Area of the opening (m^2)
V	-	Volume (m^3)
f_j	-	Mass fraction of species
m_j	-	Mass concentration of species
m_t	-	Total mass concentration of the mixture
S_c	-	Generation rate of concentration.
c	-	Mixture concentration
D_e	-	Diffusion coefficient
P	-	Partial pressure of air (Pa)

P_a	-	Atmospheric pressure (gauge)
P_v	-	Partial pressure of water vapor (Pa)
R	-	Specific gas constant (J/kg.K)
Re	-	Reynolds number
y^+	-	Dimensionless wall distance
r	-	Refinement ratio
F_s	-	Safety factor
p	-	Order of convergence
ρ	-	Density (kg/m ³)
ν	-	Kinematic viscosity (m ² /s)
μ	-	Dynamic viscosity (m ² /s)
σ	-	Standard deviation
C_p	-	Specific heat (J/kg.K)
T_o	-	Total temperature (°c)
K	-	Thermal conductivity of air (W/m.K)
W^v	-	Viscous work
Q_v	-	Volumetric heat source
ϕ	-	Viscous heat generation
E_k	-	Kinetic energy
∂	-	Differential operator
X, Y, Z	-	Cartesian coordinate

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Thermal comfort is an essential requirement in most occupied spaces because it affects the productivity, health and thermal satisfaction of the occupants. Thermal comfort is defined as "that condition of mind which expresses satisfaction with the thermal environment" [1, 2]. Ventilation is the most conventional cooling method used in many buildings for providing thermal comfort. The ventilation is defined as the "process by which fresh air is introduced and the removal of ventilated air from an occupied space" [3]. The ventilation improves the thermal comfort of occupied areas by providing a heat transport mechanism and lowering the air temperature inside an occupied space [4].

Several types of ventilation can be used to control the air distribution and to provide a thermal comfort in buildings such as natural, mechanical, and hybrid ventilation [5]. Natural ventilation is used to supply outside air into a space through openings such as windows, doors, and ventilations by using natural forces [6]. Mechanical ventilation is the process of supplying and removing air using mechanical devices, such as fans and exhaust vents [7]. Hybrid ventilation provides thermal comfort by using a combination of both natural and mechanical ventilation systems [3, 8]. The typical system that is recommended in the hot and humid climate regions is the natural ventilation [9, 10]. However, it is not capable of providing sufficient level of thermal comfort in all areas, due to the inconsistent wind speed and different climate characteristic.

A mosque is considered as spiritually important buildings in Malaysia and other Islamic countries. It is a place for the Muslims to perform their congregational prayers and other communal religious activities. Thermal comfort inside the mosque is, therefore, a requirement to ensure tranquil comfort to the occupants when performing their activities [11]. However, there is a lack of in-depth study and analysis of thermal comfort inside mosque buildings [11-14].

Modern mosques may be broadly classified according to their sizes and locations [15, 16]. The mosques located in the cities serve as public landmarks. They are usually large in size and can accommodate very large number of peoples. Medium size mosques are located in urban and rural areas. They often have facilities such as libraries, schools, meeting rooms, clinics, etc. They are usually utilized for both daily congregational as well as Friday prayers. They are supplemented with a separate annex on the same floor level or in a mezzanine for the females. There are many smaller size mosques that are located in smaller neighborhoods.

The commonly used method to provide thermal comfort in many mosques building in Malaysia is natural ventilation and mechanical fans. Based on the data provided by the Malaysian Meteorological Service [17] for 10-years period, the daytime temperature is in the range of 23.7 °C to 31.3°C with the maximum temperature of 36.9°C. The relative humidity is in the range of 67% to 95%. A low wind velocity with an average of 1.5 m/s was recorded throughout the year. The mechanical fans only move the air inside the space but they do not promote exchange of fresh air [12, 18-24]. Hence, the presently used ventilation system is ineffective to provide a satisfactory level of thermal comfort [25]. Therefore, an alternative ventilation strategy is needed.

There are several tools and methods that can be used to study and analyse ventilation system in buildings. These include empirical models, analytical models, zonal models, multi-zone models, small-scale experimental models, full-scale experimental models, and computational fluid dynamics (CFD) [4]. The CFD method is convenient, accurate and widely used in predicting the ventilation performance. The rapid increase in computing capability has made this method even

more popular [4, 26, 27]. A combination of CFD analysis and field measurement has been used in many studies to assess the indoor thermal comfort in buildings [28-34]. In this study, a similar approach is employed to evaluate the performance of a proposed ventilation system for a mosque building.

1.2 Problem Statement

In Malaysia climatic conditions, a space-cooling method using natural ventilation and mechanical fans is commonly used to provide thermal comfort in many buildings, including mosques. However, this method may not be enough to provide the required thermal comfort in large buildings and open mosques. Such mosques may suffer from the improper air distribution. This irregular air distribution may lead to an increase in temperature. In some parts of the space the airflow velocity may not be enough to assure proper circulation of the air through the whole area. Deficiency of the ventilation system of the mosque especially during Friday prayers, where increase in the number of occupants leads to worsening the problem. Installing suitable exhaust fans is a reasonable approach for replacing and supporting the conventional fans to improve the thermal comfort. The main objective of this study is to improve the thermal comfort inside the Al-Jawahir Mosque that located in Johor Bahru, Malaysia by using exhaust fans. Two approaches were used in this study namely field measurement and CFD simulation. The field measurements were carried out to measure the airflow velocity, air relative humidity, air temperature and mean radiant temperature inside the mosque. A simplified CFD model of the mosque was developed and validated based on the measured airflow velocity, air temperature and air relative humidity. The CFD flow simulations were conducted to find the most suitable location and number of exhaust fans that would result in the greatest improvement in the thermal comfort inside the mosque.

1.3 Objectives

The goal of this study is to improve the thermal comfort inside the Al-Jawahir Mosque that located in Johor Bahru, Malaysia by using exhaust fans.

The research objectives are:

1. To evaluate the effectiveness of the current ventilation system in providing thermal comfort in the mosque.
2. To examine the effect of installing exhaust fans on the thermal comfort inside the mosque by using the CFD method.
3. To find the most suitable location and number of exhaust fans that would result in the greatest improvement in the thermal comfort inside the mosque by using the CFD method.

1.4 Scope of Study

The scopes of this study are as follows:

1. Due to the diversity of mosque types with respect to their size, it was found necessary to limit this study to the medium-size mosque building.
2. The case study is on the Al-Jawahir Mosque, which is located in Johor Bahru, Malaysia.
3. The thermal comfort parameters considered during the field measurement are air temperature, airflow velocity, air relative humidity, and mean radiant temperature.
4. The thermal comfort indices considered are Predicted Mean Vote (PMV) and Predicted Percentage of Dissatisfied (PPD).
5. The CFD analyses were carried out in steady-state conditions.
6. An exhaust fan with a diameter of 1.0 m was chosen. This diameter is mostly available in the market. It also fits well into the wall and roof sections of the prayer hall envelope.

1.5 Significance of Research

This study introduces new ventilation system to improve the thermal comfort inside the mosque by using exhaust fans. The thermal comfort inside the mosque will ensure tranquil comfort to the occupants when performing their activities. The study can also be used as a guideline for improving thermal comfort in mosques under construction in hot and humid climates.

1.6 Thesis Outline

This thesis contains five chapters including the present chapter, which covers the introduction, problem statement, objectives and scopes of this research.

Chapter 2 reviews and discusses the previous studies related to this research, to provide a basis for conducting this research. The report includes information on thermal comfort, factors affecting thermal comfort and the thermal comfort studies in hot and humid tropical countries. Also, this chapter discusses the different types of ventilation system used to improve thermal comfort in the building. Moreover, the concept of medium space buildings and mosques are discussed. Furthermore, this chapter discusses the different tools and method used to study and analyse the ventilation in buildings.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology applied to this research. It includes a field measurement and CFD simulation analysis. This section also describes the development of the numerical simulation of a three-dimensional mosque model by using CFD FLUENT software. Also, the validation and sensitivity analysis procedure of the CFD model are deeply discussed. Five cases of parametric analysis are presented in this chapter.

In Chapter 4, the results of field measurements and CFD simulation on thermal comfort are presented. This chapter also discusses the results of the baseline case and parametric study are presented concerning contours of air temperature,

airflow velocity and air relative humidity as well as air flow patterns at steady-state conditions. Also, this chapter discusses the effects of the exhaust fan number and location on the air temperature, airflow distribution, relative humidity and thermal comfort inside the mosque. This chapter concluded the significant findings of the study.

Finally, the conclusions and several recommendations for future work are presented in Chapter 5.

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