

# Does Green Building Index (GBI) Masjid Follows Islamic based Development (IBD)?

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## **Abstract**

Religious enthusiasm can be seen when the masjids in Malaysia have joined in for the recognition of green buildings. Up until now there are two masjids which have been recognized by the Green Building Index, which are Masjid Ara Damansara in Petaling Jaya and Masjid Cyberjaya in Cyberjaya (GBI Malaysia, 2016). Masjid Cyberjaya is the first masjid in the country to be recognized with a green building platinum status. Generally, a platinum status is the highest recognition and would meet all the criteria of the green building index in Malaysia. Therefore, this paper examined the characteristics of green buildings in Masjid Cyberjaya that meet the requirements of a *tasawur*, which is the first principle in Islamic based development (IBD). Two methods has been identified. First, library research. Second, interview the masjid management.

## **BACKGROUND OF MASJID CYBERJAYA**

Cyberjaya Masjid/masjid is also known as Masjid Raja Haji Fi Sabilillah. This masjid is the second largest masjid in Selangor after the Shah Alam masjid. This masjid was built on 18 March 2013 and completed in 19 January 2015. The masjid was officially opened on 22 June 2016 in conjunction with the Nuzul Quran celebrations on 17 Ramadan 1437 Hijra by the Sultan of Selangor, Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah. The Masjid Cyberjaya was erected on 17.5 acres land which is part of the development of Islamic University Malaysia in Cyberjaya (Aziz, 2016). Overall, the amount spent on the masjid was RM44.3 million (Nghah, 2016).

Masjid Cyberjaya was built to meet the needs of the people who live and work around Cyberjaya (Masjid Cyberjaya, 2015). The masjid can accommodate 8300 worshipers at a time. Masjid Cyberjaya is meant to serve as a community complex (ATSA, 2016). The masjid was built to meet the needs of society. The masjid is also equipped to manage the 'qurban' (sacrificial offerings) activities during Aidul Adha celebrations, offices space and bazaars every Friday. In addition, in the grounds of the complex are halls that can accommodate 800 people at any one time. Various sports activities and receptions could also be held in this hall.

For the convenience of the staff, there are six units of staff quarters complementing the masjid built within the masjid compound. The quarters were built based on a village setting (Masjid

Cyberjaya, 2016). The compound of the staff quarters consists of shared lawns and there are vegetables and fruits around.

**BASIC PRINCIPLES IN MASJID CYBERJAYA**

Overall, the masjid has applied the green concept from the water consumption up to its design (Aziz, 2016)<sup>1</sup>. There are also green technology equipment used to fulfill the green concept which will be discussed in the physical characteristics of the building. It is designed to save operating costs such as electricity and water. Through the green concept, this masjid provides energy savings of up to 30 per cent (Suhaimi, 2015). The masjid is conceived also in accordance with the Seven Principles of Islamic Architecture introduced by Nisreen Moustafa (Aziz, 2016). The seven principles are tawhid, obedience (*ihitiram*), sincerity, knowledge (*ilm*), balanced (*Iqtisad*), decency and remembrance of Allah SWT (Table 1).

Table 1 Seven Principles of Islamic Architecture

Principle	
1	Tawhid
2	Obedience ( <i>ihitiram</i> )
3	Sincerity
4	Knowledge ( <i>ilm</i> )
5	Balance ( <i>Iqtisad</i> )
6	Decency
7	Remembrance of Allah SWT

Among the highlights noted by Moustafa (2008) in the seven principles of the Islamic concept of monotheism is that, it is a building that was built to focus on strengthening ties between the people to comply with the will of God. The second is the principle of obedience. An Islamic building can lead Muslims to obey Allah SWT. The third principle, an architect who is also a Muslim should show sincerity, purity in design and build to comply with the will of God. The fourth principle concerns with, architecture celebrates science through the art of calligraphy and illumination. The fifth principle is that, the building should be balanced in terms of offering functionality and spiritual support. The sixth principle says that, Islamic buildings should be designed with care and to maintain the dignity of the owners. The seventh principle promotes, Islamic buildings should help in remembering Allah SWT. However, the papers produced by Aziz (2016) only lists seven principles and did not explain the relevance of the seven principles of Islamic architecture associated with the Masjid Cyberjaya.

To measure the characteristics of green buildings by the GBI, the six characteristics given focus (Zuo and Zhao, 2014). Six such features comprise energy efficiency, water efficiency, material efficiency, indoor air quality, planning and site management and innovation.

<sup>1</sup> Aziz (2016) is the architect of Masjid Cyberjaya.

**ISLAMIC BASED DEVELOPMENT (IBD)**

Islamic based development (IBD) is a new discipline that has emerged around the 1970s. According to Salleh (2008), IBD which refers to the process of the development of a comprehensive, integrated and balanced. It involves all aspects of human life as individuals, communities and countries. IBD also includes seven principles of Islamic Development, comprising the strengthening aspects of spiritual and physical.

In this case, tasawur serves as the basis in the IBD and it is the first principle. According to Salleh (2008), the Quran directly or indirectly reflect the three key areas which are called 'tasawur'. First, Allah SWT is the creator. Secondly, human is an invention. Third, the universe also as an invention.

Meanwhile, Hanafi (2012) argued that tasawur comprises three main aspects of the faith, worship and noble manners (akhlaq). Of the three main aspects, faith is paramount (Sinton, 2006). Even if it looks different than Salleh (2008) however, three main issues discussed actually touched on a similar discussion. For example, faith include belief in God as the creator of man and nature. Worship looks at humans as a servant of God and the universe always offer dhikr to Allah SWT. Noble manners human relationship with God, between man and man, and man and the universe (Table 2).

Table 2 Tasawur Elements

	Salleh (2008)	Hanafi (2012)
1	Allah SWT is the creator	} Faith } Worship } Noble manner (akhlaq)
2	Human is an invention	
3	Universe is an invention	

IBD is anchored to the epistemology of Islam and serves as the main source of al-Quran and hadith, as well as being a source of support and consensus drawn by scholars. The development is based on the grassroots of Islam. This means that IBD is formed from the philosophy and framework of Islam itself.

**ANALYSIS OF ISLAMIC BASED TASAWUR ON GBI**

Based on previous discussion, there are three matters to be discussed in this section. First, there is the recognition of research at masjid GBI physical properties. GBI building assessment used in masjids assess is unreasonable. Masjids should be measured by Islamic tasawur itself. This is because the masjid is the Islamic buildings. Therefore, the measures taken must also use measurement based on Islam. In addition, the green building goals different from the GBI aspects from Islamic tasawur. Characteristics of green building in Masjid Cyberjaya made it certified with platinum award consists of three aspects of modern technology, efficiency, passive technology and building materials. However, the characteristics of green building not including the role of man as a servant and a Caliphate as discussed in IBD. This is because the GBI measure green building features based on the physical properties of the Masjid Cyberjaya

and only involves operating activities. If there are any, the characteristics of efficiency in Masjid Cyberjaya that can reflect the characteristics of green in Islam, it lies the nature of compassion in dealing with excellence and has no wastage which is in line with Islam. The goal of green building is reducing the impact of human activities on nature and human. While, the goal in IBD is marḍat Allah. This has shown the GBI was built outside the guidelines of Islam, it will cause confusion in development activities based on the Islam (Salleh, 2003).

Second, it is about the philosophy behind the construction of the masjid of Cyberjaya. According Aziz (2016), Masjid Cyberjaya built on the seven principles of Islamic architecture, but have no found that these principles are not specified in any written explanation, of how seven principles associated with the Masjid Cyberjaya. However, based on my brief review of the seven principles of Islamic architecture as introduced by Nisreen Mustafa, the seven principles are lacking on relationship of human and other creator which is one of the important elements in the tasawur of IBD.

Third, additional efficiency features in green building. There are four more features that can be seen from the Masjid Cyberjaya, namely the characteristics of faith, the spiritual and aesthetic values which can be used as an element of green building from the perspective of IBD. A masjid is a place of worship. It is where worship such as prayer and devotional activities offered (Rahman and Ahmad, 1996). Masjid Cyberjaya is a building intended for religious activities to bring man closer to God. Other forms of indirect relationship with God, human and human and human and other creator may also be established in other ways as discussed before. Therefore, the masjid is a building that can nurture faith and draw people closer to God.

In addition to the masjid symbolizes the oneness of Allah. Symbols related to acts or attempts to communicate and introduce the important thing in Islam. Basically, the physical properties including masjids have minarets to call for prayers (azan), the 'mihrab, the prayer hall, the pulpit and the dome. In this context, Masjid Cyberjaya been further enhanced with the teachings of Islam through physical and functional way. Indirectly, it will show evidence of man's obedience to God as Creator and man as servant and vicegerent on earth.

From the point of spiritual development, Masjid Cyberjaya has also given emphasis to the welfare of the congregation, to provide facilities such as wheelchair access for service people disabled, escalators to the top floor, the dining room provided near the top, which can make it easier for women in the masjid when the feast. Charity congregation emphasized the upholding of human interaction, as in tasawur.

According to Faizal (2016)<sup>2</sup>, events were held to develop the spirituality of the masjid. Some of the study. So far, the 'sermon' after the Maghrib prayers will be held every Friday night. Even on a Friday night, readings will be held. For pilgrims who require services on matters relating to

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<sup>2</sup> Interviewed with M. Faizal who is Masjid Cyberjaya's manager on 3 August 2016 at 9.56 am.

the charity, the charity has opened a branch office in the masjid. In addition, to strengthen the youth with the fundamentals of religion, youth camp 'Imam' will be held during the school holidays. Participation is open to residents in Cyberjaya or to those from other areas. In tasawur, development is not only physical development, but includes spiritual development where it emphasizes human development internally and externally. It can be seen that in the masjid, it not only meets the needs of worship but includes activities organized to enhance the understanding and obedience to God.

From a design standpoint, this masjid is not only modern, but also combined with aesthetic values. Aesthetic values in Masjid Cyberjaya including the beauty of traditional elements, elements of manmade and natural elements. The beauty of this masjid is highlighted with a calligraphy verses of the Qur'an (Figure 1). Also for aesthetic effect, a series of well-designed iron was used on the glass panel and the wall panels around the dome. Similarly, the trees were planted in the area in and outside the masjid is intended to give the impression of living space and the effect of the aroma of perfume. Fragrance plants such as *Kesidang*, *Kemboja* and *Cempaka* are grown in the open prayer hall (Figure 2).



Figure 1

Figure 2

In Islamic tasawur, the environment is related to the human relationship with the Creator. Therefore, it is important to develop harmonious and aesthetic nature, and does not undermine the development of rampant; there is a need to comply with and maintain the function of servitude and became the Caliph of Allah SWT. The environment need to be addressed with a sense of value such as responsibility, honesty, morality and ethics to fully uphold human relations with other human beings (Salleh, 2003). These analysis can be concluded by referring to the Table 3.

Table 3 GBI measurement VS Islamic measurement

	GBI Measurement	Islamic Measurement
Goal	Reduced impact of human activities on nature and human	Mardat Allah SWT
Element	energy efficiency water efficiency material efficiency indoor air quality planning and site management innovation	Allah SWT is the creator Human is an invention Universe is an invention
Other element		faith spiritual aesthetic value sense of value- responsibility, honesty, morality and ethics

However, there are two weaknesses identified in Masjid Cyberjaya. First, in terms of the facilities provided for the disabled. So far, there is no lifts for the disabled to the top level, especially to women. This is because women's prayer hall is placed in the upper level. Secondly, Masjid Cyberjaya will be a function of the message of Islam to non-Muslims. So far, no other staff of the masjid has been dedicated to providing information about Islam to non-Muslim visitors. Therefore, Masjid Cyberjaya plays an important role for the task because the masjid is one of the attractions place for the local and overseas tourist.

**CONCLUSION**

The development of green building has attracted developers to construct masjid to the green building concept that use technology. The involvement of certain parties in putting the masjid to a certain extent be seen as consistent with current development trends and positive step.

According to Rahman and Ahmad (1996), in quoting the words of a lecturer from Harvard University, he said that the 21st century is the era of religion. The signs of enthusiasm for religion has existed and Muslims themselves are experiencing a resurgence of Islam (Rahman and Ahmad, 1996). But the rise is not only really associated with religious practices and Islamic civilization. In fact, it will bring a religion and science and technology combined.

Therefore, the pursuit of development must be consistent with the scope permitted by law, in construction, and do not bring negative effects to humans whether one as a servant of God. Development must be implemented and be able to uphold the human relationship with the Creator, human and human relations, and human and other creatures.



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