

URBAN MALAYS' USER-BEHAVIOUR AND PERSPECTIVE ON PRIVACY AND SPATIAL ORGANIZATION OF HOUSING

Ahmad Hariza Hashim, Harlina Mohamad Ali, and Asnarulkhadi Abu Samah

Abstract

The fundamental form of Malay traditional housing is to accommodate their occupant daily needs and also to provide better congruence between human behaviour and culture as compared to the modern housing. Majority of modern housing today are mass-produced and inhabitants have little choice but to adapt and change their lifestyle within the 'given environment' regardless of their behavioural needs and cultural background. In traditional Malay houses, the spaces are more flexible especially in the main house (rumah ibu) where most family activities took place. Separation of space in the traditional Malay house is minimal because their concern is more towards communal intimacy, and this was demonstrated in the serambi (verandah) located in front of the house where guests especially the males were entertained during social and religious functions. Using scheduled-structured questions and graphic aid during the in-depth interviews, this research found that due to the influence of modern link house layout, an interesting pattern from the perspective of urban Malays with regards to privacy concept and Malay culture emerged. Most of the respondents agreed with the re-introduction of the serambi concept in modern housing as a transition zone for informal entertaining, and it has the potential to be a social interaction space for the immediate neighbourhood. Based on the comments given six house plans were generated and respondents were asked to identify

an ideal plan which they feel can fulfilled their privacy needs.

Keywords:

Urban Malay; spatial organization; link house; privacy; culture.

Introduction

A house is not only a physical space in which people live, but also a space where social interactions and rituals take place (Ozaki, 2001). It played an important role in which people can assert a sense of mastery and control over their environment and a significant factor in their well-being and self-esteem (Rapoport, 1976). A good housing development should not only take into account the physical aspects of design but also be sensitive to human needs (Lee, et al., 2004).

Abd. Ghani (2004) highlighted that while most people agreed that they need all the relevant modern facilities to have a better living environment, they also cited that the most important elements which could also enhance the living environment of their homes

are security, privacy and quietness. However this is not the case experienced by majority of the urban Malaysian population, where the only houses they could afford is normally homogeneous in the type of terrace housing. These types of houses are normally mass-produced and adopted from the British housing design and typology. One of the weakness of this type of housing design are lacking in social and cultural considerations including privacy needed by its occupants (Ahmad Hariza and Zaiton, 2008).

This is because culture is not seen to be an important element in designing mass housing for the market as compared to policy and economic issues. Abu Gazzeh (1996) emphasized that the element of culturally suitable features housing is an important element because the use of space is not isomorphic among cultures. Each culture has different specific variables that will influence its' space. Therefore, housing provision should not only aim at merely providing affordable shelters but should also offer design solutions that are sensitive to the local contexts such as privacy, social cohesion, and perceptions on residential density, preferences and the lifestyles of the target populations (Salama, 2006).

However, since the houses offered were without consideration to the local culture, many have little choice but to adapt their lifestyle within the 'given environment'. Thus, this paper therefore will emphasize on the importance of privacy as one of the cultural elements needed to enhance the living environment of those who lived in terrace housing.

The Concept of Privacy

The concept of privacy is usually seen from Western perspectives as privacy is considered an important aspect in their everyday lives. The concept of privacy and degrees of privacy also varies between cultures as the Western concept of privacy is different from its Eastern counterpart. A classic Western interpretation on privacy is by Hall (1959), which stated that privacy is about the control of personal space. This statement described how important personal space vis-à-vis personal privacy to the Western views.

An early theory formulated by Westin (1967) who delineated four (4) types of privacy which is solitude, intimacy, anonymity and reserve. Intimacy with family or familial privacy is translated as being alone with one's family members with the exclusion of others (Pedersen, 1997). It is also closely related to a spirit of happy intimacy within the family and comforting security as privacy of family is protected (Ozaki, 2001). In other words, Ozaki summed up that physical proximity is a symbol of the closeness of family, and the space inside the house belongs only to the family members.

The Eastern perspectives on privacy differ from the West as the Eastern culture values the privacy of the family as a unit and overriding the importance of individual privacy. Interestingly in some Eastern cultures there is no specific word for privacy. In Japanese culture for example, the idea of private spheres that are independent of the group is not acceptable, for the sense of individual privacy exists only weakly (Doi, 1971). The Arab was found to prefer living in large spaces for family congregation and avoid partitions because they do not like to be alone

(Hall, 1969).

Malays Perspective on Privacy

The traditional Malays placed more importance on communal intimacy rather than personal intimacy as the concepts of sharing and cooperation is fundamental to the Malay culture and to their lifestyle (Yahya, 1998). The design of the traditional Malay house has also been dictated by the social mores of the Malays which were influenced by Islam, such as the provision of a private space for womenfolk and a public space for entertaining male guests during functions because the Malay house is always considered a unit of a larger community in the village (Gurupiah & Ra'alah, 1998).

Based on Islamic teachings, the Malays were particularly concerned about inter-relationship or social interaction between the family especially female family members and outsiders (non-muhrim). Thus, the separation of space for men and women during religious or social functions were a symbolic way of controlling the socialization process. On the other hand the Malays were not particular about intra-relationship or interaction within the family which were always maintained to be close as the Malays were known to be a close-knit society. The family is considered as an extended unit of family members consisting of grandparents, children and grandchildren, all living under one roof.

The Malays were also firm adherent of various customs and etiquettes, especially those that were not contrary to the teachings of Islam. One custom that linked directly to Islam and adhered by the Malays was the practice of forbidding

uncontrolled socialization among marriageable men and women (Abd. Halim & Wan Hashim, 1997). In order to accommodate this practice, Malay houses were built with specific portions or sections to house the men and women separately (see figure 1, which shows the layout of a traditional long-roofed Malay house).

This is the beauty of the Malay house because when religious or cultural functions were ongoing, the modesty of the women folks was protected within the confines of the main house (rumah ibu). Segregation of space also meant that the main house was only to be used by family members in their daily activities such as sleeping, praying, eating, family conversation and so on. Thus, familial privacy is maintained inside even when guests were entertained in the verandah area (serambi).

In traditional Malay house, serambi (verandah) is used by the men folks for siestas or conversing (fig. 1 showing a picture of typical traditional Malay House and figure 2 showing the layout plan of a traditional Malay house showing the location of serambi and others types of spaces in a traditional Malay house)). By referring to figure 2, it can be seen that, for the traditional house in Malaysia, the privacy gradient begins at the most public space which is the anjung (entrance porch), increasing in level to the transition space or semi-public space which is the serambi (reception area) and finally into the most private domain, the rumah ibu (main house). The serambi acts a stop-over zone to mediate between the public space and the more private space. The other semi-private spaces such as the dapur (kitchen) and selang (courtyard) are entered only by family members from the side entrance. During family



Figure 1: A Traditional Malay Long-Roofed House (Source: Authors).



Figure 2: Layout Plan of a Traditional Long-Roofed Malay House (Source: Zanariah, 2003),

Anjung = Entrance Porch (to greet guests; omitted in some traditional houses)

Serambi = reception area (to entertain male guests during function)

Rumah Ibu = main house (private space for family members only)

Selang = Passageway/Courtyard (space for side entrance and cross ventilation)

Dapur = Kitchen (for cooking and food preparation)

Pelantar = Platform

gathering (khenduri), female relatives and close female friends use the side entrance to go to the kitchen and help with the cooking and food preparations.

In present day Malaysia, the concept of familial privacy which was an important architectural element in traditional Malay house has long been omitted from link house design. However, Tajuddin (2003) stated that the design for most of the house available in the market especially terrace housing in Malaysia do not consider familial privacy because it is not seen as an important element. Perhaps this was done deliberately by the designing architects due to several reasons such as spatial constraints, restrictive construction laws of the country,

cost-cutting exercise by the clients, adhering to design brief by profit-oriented clients, difference of opinion from the clients or simply it is not the norm to have a transition zone in the modern housing layout anymore as cultural values evolved.

Salama and Alshuwaikhat (2006), said that many architects, engineers, and developers looked at design, environmental quality and affordable as exclusive and are looked at in isolation. Many of these groups tend to believe that once the goal of providing quality design and once the goal of incorporating environmental and social concerns enters the discussion, it is generally assumed that the cost will increase and this will burdened the people. They later suggested

that in order to provide a better housing to the people there is a need to look into all the issues among them are the engineering issues, humane issues, behavioural and cultural issues and urban and landscape issues.

Therefore, this paper will be concentrating on one of the important issues suggested by Salama and Alshuwaikhat (2006) that is the behavioral and cultural issues. It will look into the influence and importance of privacy concept in the spatial organization of modern housing layout from the user-behavioural perspective of urban Malays, and whether their needs are met. The focus is specifically on the Malays because this study wishes to identify any changes in their behavioural perspectives on cultural values and privacy concept in relation to space due to change in lifestyle. The views of present Malays who live in modern housing might differ from the Malays of the past who lived in traditional houses. The built environment, religious beliefs, way of living, educational background, social status, etc. might be the key influences in their altered perspectives.

Methodology

This study was more of qualitative in nature as it emphasized on natural settings where the objects of inquiry were not removed from the venues that surrounded them in everyday life (Groat & Wang, 2002). The focus was interpreting the information gathered and making sense of its meaning.

Thus, the research strategy taken for this study was field work and the 'field' was represented by selected newly occupied typical double storey link houses (lot sizes ranges from 20'x70'

to 22'x75') in Shah Alam, the capital of Selangor as one of the state in Malaysia. Selangor was selected because it consistently recorded the highest overall sales performance of newly launched residential units in Malaysia. The houses are targeted at the middle-class income groups which comprised mostly of white-collar workers. The specific ethnic-group is the Malays as this study were to investigate their perception towards privacy and Malay culture. Thus, Shah Alam is demographically ideal as 70% of the population is Malays (www.mbsa.gov.my).

The houses are fairly new, built and occupied in the last two years, approximately from the year 2004 to the year 2005. In the residential property sub-sector, the link houses spearheaded the residential property market by contributing 47.4% of the sub-sector transactions volume. Link house was chosen because of the close arrangement of building which might affect privacy among its occupants and also because it is the most popular type of houses demanded by the general population in the urban area.

The type of sampling used for this study was purposeful non-random sampling of respondents in newly occupied housing projects. Purposeful non-random sampling focuses on selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study and the cases picked meet the specific or distinctive criteria outlined by the researcher (Patton, 1990). For this study, thirty (30) respondents were involved which was 10% of the 300 households in the area of study. The justification of using 10% of known population is based on Wengraf's suggestion (2001).

The research design was inclined towards multi-tactics qualitative study which involved

scheduled-structured questionnaires for the in-depth interviews with Malay link house dwellers. They were asked to comment on the spaces in their house, their satisfaction on the house layout as well as their perspective on privacy concept and Malay culture and their adaptation process which they adapted to the given environment. The concept of serambi as a transition zone was also asked in the interview as an indicator of whether it is appropriate to be integrated in modern housing. Graphic aid in the form of house layout plan (a copy of the house layout plan were requested from the residents) in the form of SPA (Sales and Purchase Agreement) drawings was used as a guide throughout the course of the study.

From observation it was found that there are six different types of house layout plan involved in the study. Based on the feedback received during the interviews, spatial analyses on the respondents' original and upgraded house plans were conducted (see appendix 1 for the six upgraded house layout plans. The only upgraded involves in this case is the additional of a reception area or serambi). Respondents were later asked to identify one house layout from the six which they considered as their most preferable layout in terms of best fulfilling their privacy and cultural needs.

Analysis of Data from In-Depth Interviews

In terms of privacy concept, respondents stated that they wish for more privacy from neighbours. However, due to close proximity to each other which is the common feature of link houses and thus the problem of visual, noise, smell and privacy intrusion is unavoidable. In addition, the female family members specifically wished for

more visual privacy from adjacent neighbours because as Moslem women they have to take care about the aurat from non-muhrim. As the back of the house is too close to the neighbours, they can see each other directly and it is sometimes inconvenient.

On the concept of intimacy with family/familial privacy where one can be alone with one's family members with the exclusion of others, respondents said that presence of guests affect family activities and privacy of family especially if the guests are unexpected. They also stated that it is important to have space separation for entertaining guest or having social gatherings and this could be achieved through thoughtful space articulation during designed process. The Malays preferred bigger kitchen as the ladies will usually stay at the kitchen area to help with the cooking and food preparation

In terms of the concept of familial privacy in Malay houses, there are respondents who stated that privacy from visitor especially male guests is more important as compared to privacy between family members. There are also residents who feel that privacy from guests is important but privacy within the family is important too as each family member needed their own privacy. Traditionally, majority of the Malays stressed more on inter-relationship and less on intra-relationship. However, there should be a balance between the two types of relationships and it is important to maintain privacy between family members especially between male and female children who have reached puberty.

In terms of spatial consideration, they agreed with the idea of a reception area or an intermediate zone to entertain guests through the concept of

serambi in modern housing. They believed that, the reception area can act as an extended living area for informal entertaining for both adults and children. By having this extended living area with the concept of serambi or reception area as a border space or a buffer zone can also help solve the problem of visual intrusion from neighbours. The respondents also concurred that there is a lack of privacy in the modern houses found in the market especially when the serambi concept are no longer integrated in the design layout in front of the houses, and where reception area and the living rooms were combined.

The respondents also stated that, it is difficult to achieve privacy during social or religious function especially downstairs. Other comments were that the living and dining spaces are quite exposed to view and the kitchen is small and cramped. There is also no second entrance to the house, therefore family members can only go in and out of the house through the front entrance. If there are male guests in front, it is quite difficult and awkward especially for the female family members (in terms of modesty) to go in and out at that particular time.

In terms of personal privacy, most of the respondents cited that it is important to have their own space such as their own bedroom. Even their children want their own bedrooms and not shared with their parents. An increased sense of personal privacy among modern Malays can be detected due to influence of the layout of the house where there are proper rooms complete with lock and key mechanism.

All of the respondents said they have to adapt their lifestyle in present houses as they have no

choice. The houses are ready made and they have to accept what has been bought. Should they be given a choice, they would prefer the spaces to be designed with their input in it. Nearly all of the respondents interviewed said they will adjust or change the features of their house through renovation or refurbishing. There are important spaces in the house from cultural point of view which needed careful consideration from the architects during design stage, as per commented by the house owners. These include the size and location of kitchen, location and design of staircase, location and size of bathroom as well as proper segregation of spaces in the house. This will help the respondents to practice their lifestyle within the spaces of their house in a more comfortable and convenient manner.

From the above responses, it can be derived that intimacy with family or familial privacy is important to the modern Malays. Majority of the respondents appreciate quality time with their family in the house and thus privacy from outsiders has to be taken into consideration too. It is suggested in this study that the concept of serambi, common in traditional Malay house could help solve the problem of privacy of family from being disturbed in the house proper. In modern link house, the concept can be incorporated as a reception area where it could be an informal entertainment and conversation space, as well as an area for the children to play with their friends. It also can double up as an extended space for family relaxation in the evening when it gets too hot and humid in the house. With a few lazy chairs, a coffee table, fans and plants, this space has the potential to develop into a social interaction area for the immediate neighbourhood.

Ideal Link House Layout

In the spatial analyses of respondents' house plans, six (6) common respondents' house plans which was upgraded with the addition of a reception area were presented to the respondents. Then, the respondents were asked to pick their most preferable layout in terms of best fulfilling their privacy and cultural needs. It was found out that, more than half of the respondents (16 out of 30) choose one single plan as the plan that might be able to fulfill most of their privacy and cultural needs (upgraded house Plan C, see appendix 3 which shows the upgraded plan C). The reasons given for choosing this plan is that they found the reception area introduced can be used as chatting space, the separation between living room and dining room is clear, the kitchen is quite big and hidden, the staircase is also hidden and provides privacy and lastly the family hall is quite spacious for family to relax informally.

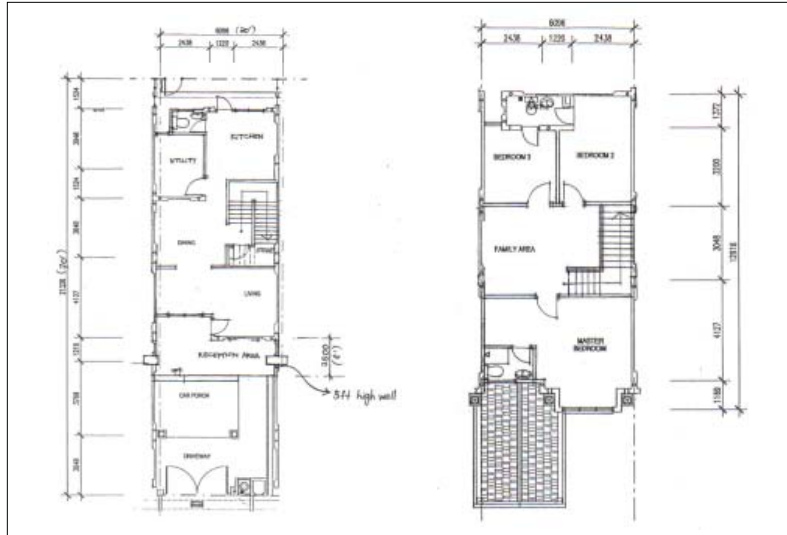
The second most chosen plan is plan F (see appendix 6 for upgraded plan F), where 11 out of 30 choose this plan. They believed that it could fulfill their privacy and cultural needs. The reasons given for choosing this plan are the main entrance door cannot be directly viewed from the driveway and road, staircase is quite hidden and therefore it can give privacy to the occupants to access it, the kitchen, master bedroom and other bedrooms are quite spacious and the family hall is also big for family activities. Based on the comments given from the two plans an ideal house layout plan is drawn as shown in figure 3 and figure 4.

In this plan, the location of the main entrance has been changed to the right, thus there is no direct view from the driveway into the house

and privacy of the family is further enhanced. The reception area serves as an informal entertaining and conversation space with neighbours and friends; and it can also be used as an indoor-outdoor family relaxation space. The position of staircase has been slightly adjusted but is still hidden; thus the dining and kitchen becomes more spacious which is more fitting or suitable for Malay occupants. The size of the living, dining room and kitchen are approximately the same and almost perfectly squared; thus the general layout of the ground floor is more balanced now.

The family hall upstairs has become more spacious and therefore more comfortable for the family to have more quality family time together. There is a spacious attached bathroom for bedrooms 2 and 3 on the first floor. Both bedrooms are square shaped and of almost equal size, thus it is easier to arrange furniture. The master bedroom door swings to the left, which provides more privacy to the parents as the inside of the room cannot be seen directly from the family hall if the door is slightly ajar. The bathroom door opens directly to an ample space for a walk-in closet, which provides convenience and privacy to the occupants to change clothes after bathing.

The layout is seen as perfectly fulfilling the privacy and cultural needs of the respondents, which is the main goal of this study. Therefore, this study wished to propose this layout as one of the ideal house plans for standard link house typology and to be considered as a prototype for future housing development.



Figures 3 and 4: Ground and First floor plans of proposed ideal layout for link house (Source: Authors).

Conclusion

The house is a reflection of self and in this study the house represents the built environment. The built environment can be seen as a behaviour setting – a setting for human activities. Behaviour settings may be neutral or inhibiting; and a behaviour setting may be facilitating to the extent of acting as a catalyst or releasing latent behaviour, but cannot however determine or generate activities. What can be concurred is that the built environment can best be seen as a setting for behaviour and it affects behaviour without determining it. People do behave and act differently in different behaviour settings because they want to match or make congruent their behaviours appropriate to the setting as defined by culture and social norms.

The built environment can be seen in a number of

different ways, such as spatial organization which is its most important and significant characteristic and the most useful for comparison at fundamental level. Space appears to be a more fundamental property of the built environment than form, materials, and the like. Thus in this study, spaces in the house can be seen as the setting for behaviours, and behaviours are influenced by factors such as cultural values, religious allegiance, privacy needs, social customs and economic background.

By considering the perspectives of house buyers in terms of their behavioral needs, cultural background and social customs in the design process, better homes can be designed and built for future house owners. The advantages for this consideration include the process of adaptation to the given environment is faster

and more satisfying. Adjustment to the homes in terms of renovation will be minor or not a priority any more, thus there will be less hassle and grievances between neighbours in terms of noise violations.

With the introduction of the reception area as a transition zone, social interaction with non-family members were more defined which depends on the type of guests and occasion. The family members have more choice to regulate their privacy and with whom they want to interact within this space. Thus, privacy for the family becomes more intact in the house proper as the reception area also enhance visual distraction. The reception can be used as an internal-external space for the family to relax together and escape the hot and humid weather in the evenings. When the layout of the house is designed sensitively, important space to the Malays such as the kitchen is more towards an agreeable size and location. With the staircase hidden, privacy is maintained even when guests are around and this is especially significant for the female family members.

Finally, a pre-occupancy evaluation conducted by architects and property developers on future house buyers regarding alternative design schemes would be a good step in achieving homes that catered to the needs of the occupants. The concept of community architecture which involves participation of potential house buyers and user input in the design process is one great step towards achieving compliant homes.

References

- Abu-Gazze, T. (1996). Privacy as the Basis of Architectural Planning in the Islamic Culture of Saudi Arabia, *Architecture and Behaviour*, Vol. 11 (3-2), pp. 93-111.
- Abdul Ghani, S. (2004). A Changing Pattern of House Market in Kuala Lumpur, Paper presented at the National Conference on Affordable Quality Housing, Miri, Sarawak on 24 -26 November.
- Abdul Halim, N. and Wan Hashim, W. T. (1997). *The Traditional Malay House*, Fajar Bakti Sdn Bhd, Shah Alam, Malaysia.
- Ahmad Hariza, H. and Zaiton, A.R. (2008). The Influence of Privacy Regulation on Urban Malay Families Living in Terrace Housing, *Archnet-IJAR, International Journal of Architectural Research*, Vol. 2, Issue 2 pp 94-102.
- Doi, T. (1971). *The Anatomy of Dependency*, Kobundo, Tokyo, Japan.
- Groat, L. and Wang, D. (2002). *Architectural Research Methods*, John Wiley and Sons, New York, USA.
- Gurupiah, M. and Ra'alah, M. (1998). *The Basic Malay House*, In C. V. Fee (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Malaysia – Architecture*, Archipelago Press, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- Hall, E. T. (1959). *The Hidden Dimension – Man's Use of Space in Public and Private*, The Bodley Head Ltd, London, UK.
- Hall, E. T. (1969). *The Silent Language*, Doubleday and Company, Inc., New York, USA.
- Lee, L.M., Aldrin, A., Tan, S.F., Nurwati, B and Ahmad Sanusi, H. (2004). How We Failed to Plan for Habitability, Paper presented at the National Conference on Affordable Quality Housing, Miri, Sarawak on 24 -26 November.
- Ozaki, R. (2002). *Housing as a Reflection of Culture* :

Privatised Living and Privacy in England and Japan, *Housing Studies*, Vol. 17, No.2, pp 209 -227.

Patton, M. (1990). *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (2nd Edition). Sage Publications, Newbury Park, California, USA.

Pedersen, D. M. (1997). Psychological Functions of Privacy, *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, Vol. 17, pp 147 -156.

Rapoport, A. (1976) *Socialcultural Aspects of Man-Environment Studies*. In A. Rapoport (ed.), *The Mutual Interaction of People and Their Built Environment- A Cross-Cultural Perspective*, Mouton Publishers, The Hague, Netherlands.

Salama, A.M. (2006). A Lifestyle Theories Approach for Affordable Housing Research in Saudi Arabia, *Emirates Journal for Engineering Research*, Vol. 11 (1), pp. 67-76.

Salama, A.M. and Alshuwaikhat, H.M. (2006). A Trans-Disciplinary Approach for a Comprehensive Understanding of Sustainable Affordable Housing, *GBER*, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp 35-50.

Mohamad Tajuddin, M. R. (2003). *Housing Crisis in Malaysia: Back to a Humanistic Agenda*, Center for the Study of Built Environment in the Malay World. Faculty of Built Environment, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Skudai, Johor, Malaysia.

Westin, A. F. (1967). *Privacy and Freedom*, Athenaeum, New York, USA.

Wengraf, T (2001). *Qualitative Research Interviewing*, Sage Publications, London, United Kingdom.

Yahaya, A. (1998). The Kampong, In C. V. Fee (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Malaysia – Architecture*, Archipelago Press, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Zanariah, A.S. (2003). *A Study on the Design and Functions of the Traditional Kitchen of the Malays*, M.A. Thesis, University Teknologi Mara, Shah Alam, Malaysia.

Ahmad Hariza Hashim

Ahmad Hariza was born on the 16th of November, 1962 in Seremban, Negeri Sembilan in Malaysia. He received her primary and secondary education at King George the Fifth, Seremban and completed his Malaysian Certificate of Education (equivalent to O-level in 1979). A year later he pursued his Bachelor Science in Human Development at University Pertanian Malaysia (now known as University Putra Malaysia) (UPM) and graduated in 1985. In 1986 he joined UPM as a Tutor and later went to The University of Birmingham, United Kingdom to pursue his Master and PhD and graduated in the year 1994 in the field of Housing Studies, where his main interest is to study on the residence behaviour. Currently he is an Associate Professor in the Department of Resource Management and Consumer Studies, Faculty of Human Ecology, UPM teaching Housing and Environmental Psychology subjects. His current interest is in person environment relationship and has involved in many research projects in this subject matter. He can be contacted at ahariza@putra.upm.edu.my.

Harlina Mohamad Ali

Harlina Mohamad Ali studied architecture in University of East London, United Kingdom and is currently a registered member with the Lembaga Arkitek Malaysia (LAM). Upon her return she worked in private architectural firms and property developer's office and later she joined University Teknologi MARA, Malaysia as an academic staff. She later pursue her Master of Science specializing in Housing at the Faculty of Human Ecology, University Putra Malaysia and graduated in the year 2007, Her interest is in the indigenous architecture of the Malay Archipelago and can be contacted at harlinaali@yahoo.co.uk.

Asnarulkhadi Abu Samah

Asnarulkhadi Abu Samah is a lecturer at the Department of Social and Development Sciences, Faculty of Human Ecology, University Putra Malaysia.

He received his Ph.D in 1998 from University of Nottingham, United Kingdom and specializes in community development. He has involved in many research works related to community work and community development such as social support among the elderly, juvenile delinquency, poverty among the vulnerable groups, participation, capacity building and empowerment. His current research interests include rural organizational empowerment, application of GIS on social planning, and leadership among the aboriginal people. He has also engaged in consultancy works funded by the state governments, local authorities, and private firms. As a qualitative enthusiast, he has popularized qualitative research methodology in the faculty, and has successfully introducing a mixed method approach in many research works/ groups, where he collaborates. As academician he has published numerous papers in journals and conferences locally and abroad. At present, he is an Associate Professor in the faculty, and research associate to two research institutes in the university, namely the Institute of Gerontology and Institute of Social Science Studies. Asnarulkhadi can be contacted at asnarul@putra.upm.edu.my