

READINESS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY IN HERITAGE MANAGEMENT: A STUDY ON ADAPTIVE REUSE APPROACH OF HISTORICAL BUILDINGS IN PERAK

Daeng Haliza Daeng Jamal

Department of Heritage Studies, Faculty of Creative Technology & Heritage,
Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, Malaysia

**Zuliskandar Ramli, Nur Farriehah Azizan, Mohammad Razin Norman, Natasha
Edreena Mohamad Nasruddin, Mohd Fauzan Zuraidi and Preethevan Ramu**

Laboratory of Archaeology and Archaeometry,
Institute of the Malay World and Civilization,
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

The local community is often referred to as the target group in the planning and development process that meets local needs. This matter also includes efforts to protect heritage products including historic buildings from the threats of destruction. By that, this study aims to explore the involvement of local community in heritage management by focusing on historical buildings in their area. Besides, this study was also done to identify the readiness of the local community in the protection of historical buildings from the threat of destruction through the adaptive reuse approach. This study uses the instrument of questionnaire distributed to respondents consisting of 444 people from the local community through the simple random method. The questionnaire was analysed using the Statistic Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 16.0 software. The descriptive statistics used are frequency and percentage. There are six historical buildings that undergone adaptive reuse involved in this study. The study results found that majority of the respondents have an understanding in conservation and preservation efforts of historical buildings through the adaptive reuse approach. Respondents of the study also agreed that historical buildings that are still in their area should be protected from annihilation by the method of changing their functions. In addition, respondents of the study also confirmed that responsible parties have played proactive roles in conserving and preserving historical buildings in their area.

Keywords: Adaptive reuse, historical buildings, readiness of local community and heritage management.

Cite this Article: Daeng Haliza Daeng Jamal, Zuliskandar Ramli, Nur Farriehah Azizan, Mohammad Razin Norman, Natasha Edreena Mohamad Nasruddin, Mohd Fauzan Zuraidi and Preethevan Ramu, Readiness of the Local Community in Heritage Management: A Study on Adaptive Reuse Approach of Historical Buildings in Perak, *International Journal of Management*, 11(8), 2020, pp. 1276-1283.
<http://www.iaeme.com/IJM/issues.asp?JType=IJM&VType=11&IType=8>

1. INTRODUCTION

In general, heritage in Malaysia is protected by the National Heritage Act (Act 645) which was introduced in 2005. However, this legal document is seen as still not able to conserve heritage products comprehensively without receiving the cooperation and involvement from the local community. This is because the involvement of the local community is seen to be able to realize the wishes and objectives of the government in protecting heritage products including historical buildings that can be implemented through the up-bottom approach and bottom-up approach. Thus, indirectly, the involvement of the local community in the efforts to conserve and preserve heritage products can be done comprehensively in every layer of society [1-3].

Therefore, in ensuring that the community closest to the heritage products are involved together, their readiness to manage heritage products must be taken into account. In other words, the local community need to be exposed to the environment of managing heritage assets in ensuring that the objective of protecting heritage in their area is achieved. However, to ensure that this objective is achieved, the community need to understand the concept of conservation and preservation of heritage products so that its management will be more effective in the long run. In the context of this study, heritage management refers to comprehensive actions to protect an area of cultural significance from the threat of destruction [4]. The same definition is also expressed by A. Ghafar Ahmad et al. [5] who describes heritage management including historical buildings is the retention and preservation of urban heritage from destruction, uncontrolled alteration and lack of systematic management. Meanwhile Zainuddin Baco & Bilcher Bala [6] conclude heritage management as a process conducted on a heritage resource comprising preservation, management, utilisation, financial implications for the purpose of preservation and disposal. Thus, it can be concluded that heritage management is related to the action of controlling, planning, administering, leading and organising heritage resources. Therefore, this study was conducted to explore the readiness of the local community in Perak to manage the historical buildings that have undergone adaptive reuse. Their readiness is reviewed in terms of their understanding and acceptance of efforts towards protecting historical buildings from the threats of annihilation especially through the adaptive reuse approach.

2. HISTORICAL BUILDINGS AND ADAPTIVE REUSE

Historical buildings that are rich in heritage value and high in aesthetic value should be retained as an effective source of historical storytelling for future generations. Beside becoming the storyteller of the history of a city, historical buildings also have aesthetic values that are not found in most modern buildings. Historical buildings in simple language means buildings that have historical values with a unique heritage of architectural beauty. The same definition is also interpreted by A. Ghafar Ahmad [7] which means a building that has elements of history, culture and high architectural values. Meanwhile, English Heritage [8] lists 6 heritage values found in historical buildings namely cultural, educational and academic, economic, recreational, resource and aesthetic values. In short, historical buildings that have its own heritage values must have relation with the history of the formation of that place. In

Malaysia, the history of its formation has also indirectly created a variety of design and architectural influences of historical buildings that generally include 7 design influences as stated by Kamarul Syahril Kamal & Lilawati [9]. The 7 designs are the influence of India (Indian Influenced Kingdoms), Malay Regionalism (Malay Vernacular), Straits Electic, Hindu temples (Chitya Indian Vernacular), Chinese temples, share houses and mansions (Chinese Boroque), Colonial and Modern. Among the states that are rich in collections of historical buildings is the State of Perak Darul Ridzuan. The formation of this state of 21,000 sq km is strengthened by the formation of major towns in Perak that are filled with stories of the past such as Ipoh, Kuala Kangsar, Taiping, Batu Gajah, Teluk Intan and Kampar [10]. This explanation is also strengthened by the study conducted by Syed Zainol Abidin Idid [11] who found a total of 3,351 pre-war buildings built around early 1900 to 1940 in Perak.

However, historical remains like this especially historical buildings need to be conserved and preserved for the benefit of the present and future generations. Among the effective methods to ensure the existence of these valuable assets in the future is to apply the concept of adaptive reuse [12]. Adaptive reuse is understood as reuse of historical buildings by altering their original functions. The same definition is also interpreted by Lilawati et al. [13] who have defined the adaptive reuse of historical buildings as the process of changing the function of a building to a new function and usually involves a slight modification to meet the needs of the new function of the building. Meanwhile, A. Ghafar Ahmad [14] stated that the adaptive reuse of historical buildings is a process that changes the function of the building to a new function but still retains the original features and form of the building. The interpretation of Sarah Hill [15] about adaptive reuse is to change the old structure of a building to meet current needs or changing its use to something new.

3. READINESS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY IN THE ADAPTIVE REUSE OF HISTORICAL BUILDINGS IN PERAK

Readiness in plain language means the tendency and determination both mentally and physically in doing something with earnestness and willingness to achieve a goal. In this study, community readiness means understanding of the concept, involvement, appreciation and willingness of the local community whether directly or indirectly in efforts to protect historical buildings from the threat of annihilation. The readiness of the local community in the conservation and preservation of historical buildings proves their caring attitude and experience towards heritage objects in their area. This is as explained by Allport [16] regarding to attitude which means mental readiness based on experience so as to influence a person's response to an object or situation. Based on the discipline of psychology, attitudes are closely related to interests, motives, morals, ideas, values, sentiments and loyalty. Thus in short, the readiness of the local community in protecting historical buildings from the threat of annihilation is formed as a result of a combination of cognitive components that form the same attitudes, willingness or tendencies. On the other hand, the tendency and willingness of the community to engage in the effort to protect a heritage object shows that they understand the purpose and are willing to develop and advance their community. However, the readiness of the local community in heritage conservation requires a comprehensive understanding. This is because heritage conservation usually involves products that are loved, understood and passed down [17]. Understanding the concept of preservation and joint involvement is one of the dimensions of community readiness in acting on something [18].

The analysis results of the research findings found that the respondents are ready to be involved in the adaptive reuse of historical buildings in Perak based on several items posed in the questionnaire. For example, statement analysis of item 1 shows an almost identical percentage value between yes and no, *Do you know about the concept of adaptive reuse of*

Readiness of the Local Community in Heritage Management: A Study on Adaptive Reuse
Approach of Historical Buildings in Perak

historical buildings? in which 49.8% knew about the concept of adaptive reuse meanwhile 50.2% didn't know about the actual concept of conservation and adaptive reuse of historical buildings. While 45.9% of respondents who know about the concept of conservation and adaptive reuse of historical buildings support the item statement (*IF YES*) *Adaptive reuse of historical buildings is to change the function of the building to a new function*. However, 16.2% of respondents rejected this statement and 37.8% of respondents were unsure of this statement.

However, majority of the respondents that is 362 people (81.5%) agreed with statement of the 3rd item, *Historical buildings need their functions to be changed to ensure that historical buildings continue to remain* compare to 82 respondents (18.5%) who rejected this statement. Analysis results in this section also show that the majority of respondents which is 287 (64.6%) know about the original functions of historical buildings in their district. Meanwhile the remainder, 57 respondents (35.4%) didn't know about the original functions of historical buildings in their district. This is as recorded based on the mean score for the analysis of local understanding about the concept of conservation and adaptive reuse is at a low level that is in the low score range, below 2.33. This discussion can be seen in table 1 below:

Table 1 Knowledge of respondents on the approach of adaptive reusing historical buildings in Perak

Item	Yes		No		Unmarked	Mean	Standard Deviation	
	N	%	N	%				
Do you know about the concept of adaptive reuse of historical buildings?	221	49.8	223	50.2	0	0	1.50	0.500
(IF YES) Adaptive reuse of historical buildings is to change the function of the building to a new function	204	45.9	72	16.2	168	37.8	0.78	0.703
Historical buildings need their functions to be changed to ensure that historical buildings continue to remain	362	81.5	82	18.5	0	0	1.18	0.388
Did you know that historical buildings in your district once had other functions?	287	64.6	157	35.4	0	0	1.35	0.479

Source: Field Research, 2015

Therefore, this study found that the understanding of the respondents regarding conservation and the concept of adaptive reuse of historical buildings is still unclear. The understanding of conservation and the concept of adaptive reuse of historical buildings among the community is at a low level and still vague. Basically the community understands the meaning of conservation of historical buildings but does not understand the meaning of adaptive reuse of historic buildings as a whole. However, the local community represented by the study respondents support the adaptive reuse approach in efforts to save historical buildings in their area from the threat of destruction. This can be seen in the research analysis which found that the respondents support the statement of item in section B5, *Do you agree that historical buildings in Perak undergo the process of adaptive reuse of building* as in table 2 which shows 386 people out of a total of 444 respondents (86.9%) agree with the statement of item B5 while the remainder, 58 people (13.1%) rejected.

Table 2 Feedback of respondents on the need to adaptive reuse historical buildings in Perak

Item	Yes		No		Mean	Standard Deviation
	N	%	N	%		
Do you agree that historical buildings in Perak undergo the process of adaptive reuse of building?	386	86.9	58	13.1	1.13	0.337

Source: Field Research, 2015

In addition, the study also proves that the local community is ready to be involved in preserving historical buildings through the adaptive reuse approach. Based on table 3, respondents in the study were found to understand and appreciate historical buildings with their functions changed. Analysis results show that majority of this study respondents agree with the statement of items in this section. A total of 426 respondents (95.9%) agree with item 1, *Historical buildings are national heritage buildings*. Meanwhile 420 respondents (94.6%) of the total study respondents support the statement of item 2, *Historical buildings have a unique architecture*. The highest percentage value for this section is recorded in item 3, *Historical buildings can become a tourist attraction* that is as many as 435 respondents (98.0%). While 429 respondents (96.6%) agree with the statement on item, *Historical buildings should be well preserved and taken cared for the future generations*. High score in agreement was also recorded in the statement analysis *Community needs to be together in preserving and conserving historical buildings* with the record 95% of the total respondents. Meanwhile, 9 respondents (2.0%) disagree and 13 respondents (2.9%) are unsure. This analysis results also support the study of English Heritage [19] which asserts that the heritage environment is a shared resource and members of the community should be equally involved in preserving it.

Table 3 Understanding and readiness of local community towards adaptive reuse approach of historical buildings

Item	Yes		No		Uncertain		Mean	Standard Deviation
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Historical buildings are national heritage buildings	426	95.9	6	1.4	12	2.7	1.07	0.342
Historical buildings have a unique architecture	420	94.6	6	1.4	18	4.1	1.09	0.409
Historical buildings can become a tourist attraction	435	98.0	1	0.2	8	1.8	1.04	0.270
Historical buildings should be well preserved and taken cared for the future generations	429	96.6	6	1.4	9	2.0	1.05	0.303
Community needs to be together in preserving and conserving historical buildings	422	95.0	9	2.0	13	2.9	1.08	0.362

Source: Field Research, 2015

Based on this analysis results, it can be concluded that respondents have a high level of readiness towards the importance of preserving historical buildings. Indirectly, it shows that the community is aware of the potential and benefits of adaptive reuse of historical buildings

now and in the future. This is also described in the study of English Heritage [20] which explains that a comprehensive understanding towards the heritage environment among the local community will encourage community members to appreciate the heritage products available in their environment. Apart from taking advantage of archaeological, historical and cultural heritage to build national identity and develop the economy, the three things can also be applied in the creation of publishing products [21]. Moreover, the publishing products can also be created through various media such as the print media, video, photography and many others [22-23]. It can also indirectly provide a clearer picture and action in managing heritage products especially buildings that have undergone adaptive reuse. Besides, involvement of the local community in supporting efforts to reuse historical buildings is also seen as enabling them to obtain benefits from heritage preservation in the area. Benefit in the context of developing a tourism product a destination or a place should be able to highlight its strength, superiority and uniqueness, whether it is tangible or intangible so that it is easily recognised, remembered and becomes well known or a household name for those who have already visited the destination [23].

4. CONCLUSION

The readiness of local community members in defending treasures sources and their national identity is found to be important in managing heritage. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of a conservation approach needs to be emphasized in ensuring the involvement of the local community in heritage management that is more comprehensive. This is because the local community who are ready to manage and preserve heritage products is seen to be able to help the ongoing efforts of the government. In other words, efforts to manage heritage can be done through the up-bottom approach and bottom-up approach. This was proven when majority of the respondents found to understand the approach of preservation and conservation of historical buildings through the adaptive reuse approach. So it can be concluded that the local community in Perak is found ready to be involved together in managing heritage that is historical buildings that have changed functions. Besides, efforts to preserve historical buildings including adaptive reusing them symbolize strong self-determination in defending the survival of historical buildings for the benefit of future generations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This study was conducted under the University Research Grant PP-ATMA-2020. Therefore we would like to express our gratitude to the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) and Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK) for the research Grant Awarded.

REFERENCES

- [1] Yazid Saleh. Pengenalan Pemuliharaan Bandar. Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur, 2010.
- [2] Mohd Jaki Mamat. Penglibatan Masyarakat dalam Pemuliharaan Kawasan Warisan di Pusat Bandaraya Ipoh, Perak. Ph.D. Dissertation, Georgetown: Universiti Sains Malaysia, 2014.
- [3] Esther H.K. Yung & Edwin H.W. Chan. Problem Issues of Public Participation in Built-Heritage Conservation: Two Controversial Cases in Hong Kong. *Habitat International*, 35, 2011, pp. 457-466.
- [4] Majlis Perbandaran Melaka Bandaraya Bersejarah. Pelan dan Tindakan Kawasan Pemeliharaan Majlis Perbandaran Melaka Bandaraya Bersejarah. Melaka: Unit konservasi Majlis Perbandaran Melaka Bandaraya Bersejarah, 2002.

- [5] A. Ghafar Ahmad, Kamarul Syahril Kamal & Lilawati Ab. Wahab. Pengekalan Kepada Pemuliharaan dan Kerosakan Bangunan Bersejarah. Dlm. Kelestarian Warisan Negara. (ed.). Saidatulakmal Mohd, Azlinda Azman & Jamalludin Sulaiman. Pulau Pinang: Penerbit Universiti Sains Malaysia, 2011.
- [6] Zainuddin Baco & Bilcher Bala. Isu dan Cabaran Pembangunan dalam Pengurusan Warisan Bina Bandar: Satu Kajian ke Atas Bandaraya Kota Kinabalu, 2012.
- [7] A. Ghafar Ahmad. Rangka Kerja Pemuliharaan Bangunan Warisan di Malaysia. Kertas kerja Bengkel Konservasi Monumen dan Tapak Tanah Bersejarah, 27-29 November, Melaka, 2006.
- [8] English Heritage. Sustaining the Historic Environment: New Perspectives on the Future. London: English Heritage, 1997.
- [9] Kamarul Syahril Kamal & Lilawati Ab. Wahab. Bangunan Bersejarah: Kerosakan dan Penyataan Kaedah Kerja Pemuliharaan. Shah Alam: Penerbit Universiti Teknologi Mara, 2014.
- [10] Anonim. Muallim Daerah kesebelas Negeri Perak, 2016. <https://www.perak.gov.my/index.php/lain-lain-artikel/519-muallim-daerah-kesebelas-negeri-perak-11-januari-2016>
- [11] Syed Zainol Abidin Iddid. Pemeliharaan Warisan Rupa Bandar: Panduan Mengenali Warisan Rupa Bandar Berasaskan Inventori Bangunan Warisan Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur: Badan Warisan Malaysia, 1995.
- [12] Kincaid, D. Adapting Buildings for Changing Uses: Guidelines for Change of use Refurbishment. London & New York: Spon Press, 2002.
- [13] Lilawati Ab Wahab, A. Ghafar Ahmad & Badaruddin Mohamed. Pemuliharaan dan Penyesuaigunaan Semula Bangunan Bersejarah Bagi Menyokong Industri Pelancongan Warisan Negara. Prosiding Seminar Penyelidikan Siswazah Alam Bina, Fakulti Senibina, Perancangan dan Ukur, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Kampus Seri Iskandar, Perak, 4 Disember, 2008.
- [14] A. Ghafar Ahmad. Siri Syarahan Umum: Perlantikan Profesor. Pemuliharaan Bangunan Warisan di Malaysia: Pengalaman dan Cabaran Masa Hadapan. Pulau Pinang: Penerbit Universiti Sains Malaysia, 2010.
- [15] Sarah Hill. Constructive Conservation - a Model for Developing Heritage Assets. *Journal of Cultural Heritage, Management and Sustainable Development*, 6(1), 2016, pp. 34-46.
- [16] Allport, G. The Nature of Prejudice. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1954.
- [17] Dioum, B. Speech Presented at the General Assembly of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). New Delhi, 1968.
- [18] Plested, B.A., Edwards, R.W., & Jumper-Thurman, P. Community Readiness: A Handbook for Successful Change. Fort Collins, CO: Tri-Ethnic Center for Prevention Research, 2006.
- [19] English Heritage. Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment, 2008. www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/conservationprinciplespoliciesguidanceapr08web.pdf
- [20] English Heritage. Heritage Works: the use of Historic Buildings in Regeneration. A Toolkit of Good Practice, 2013. www.englishheritage.org.uk/publications/heritage-works/heritage-works-2013.pdf
- [21] Khaidir Sirajuddin, Rosmawati, Muhammad Nur, Akin Duli, Erwin Mansyur U. Saraka, Zuliskandar Ramli, Mohammad Razin Norman and Nur Farriehah Azizan, Advanced Technology by Using Geographic Information System (GIS) to Measure the Level of Natural

Readiness of the Local Community in Heritage Management: A Study on Adaptive Reuse
Approach of Historical Buildings in Perak

Disaster Vulnerability of Archeological Heritage in South Sulawesi, Indonesia, *International Journal of Advanced Research in Engineering and Technology*, 11(6), 2020, pp. 764-773.

- [22] Razman, M.R., Jahi, J.M., Mokhtar, M.B., Arifin, K., Ramli, Z., Aiyub, K., Zakaria, S.Z.S., Awang, A. The law of Tort Focusing on Negligence Towards Environmental Sustainability in Malaysia. *Research Journal of Applied Sciences*, 8(8), 2013, pp. 398-403.
- [23] Zuliskandar Ramli. Heritage Tourism in Malaysia: Potential and Challenges. *The Social Science*, 12(3), 2017, pp. 431-440.