

SPACE AND SOCIALITY IN A LUNDAYEH COMMUNITY KAMPUNG KABAN LONG HOUSE IN SIPITANG, SABAH

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Abstract

This study expand our understanding of longhouses within the context of a minority Lundayeh ethnic. Longhouse is a co-housing concept housing typology that often can be found within the indigenous communities in Borneo. A housing concept where a collective of families made a pact to built and stay as a community in the form of a longhouse. The architecture of a Longhouse are commonly known with the shared public long corridor that goes along the longitudinal of the Longhouse, where communal activities are often being conducted by the communities. Each families will each have separated entrance to each private housing quarters. Each quarters are unique due to personalisation and economical capability by each family. But sadly Longhouse housing typology are getting less in number in the process of urbanization. This research will conduct a qualitative research that aim to explore the impact of a Longhouse architecture to the space and sociality on a Lundayeh Community in Sipitang Sabah. Allowing us to understand better of the values that made Longhouse to be successful in creating a rich community culture and social well being compared to the modern housing. This exploration hope to inspire better translation and definition of a housing scheme that not only satisfy the economical needs but also the culture and social needs in our daily life.

Introduction

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Research Background

Lundayeh is one of the minority indigenous race found in Sabah Malaysia. A direct malay translation of Lun - Dayeh means "Orang Ulu". Which a name that was given based on the description of the

people that live in the highland forest. There are other name such as Lun Bawang (the people of the country) that is more commonly used in Sarawak Borneo which also describing the same origin indigenous race.. In the history of British colonialism in Sabah, the people of Lundayeh and Lun Bawang are often being insensitively identified as Murut by the outsider, which the people of Lundayeh had insistent that they never called themselves as Murut. Langub, J. (1987)

Traditionally, Lundayeh is indigenous community that started from the highland of borneo and usually along the river where they use the river as their highway for transportation, from material, harvest goods to migration of community. The community are known as skilled hunters, using spears, bow, blowpipes and hunting dogs. Today, cultivating hill rice is their main occupation. Saw milling, timber processing and military careers are other means of livelihood.

The population of Lundayeh community is relatively small in Malaysia. With an estimated population of 28,000 in Malaysia and 55,600 worldwide. Where most of the population are found at Borneo - Kalimantan. That originate from the highland of Borneo and currently being identified to split into 3 countries which is Malaysia Borneo, Kalimantan Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam. Traditionally the village of Lundayeh community can founded as a cluster of timber stilt houses that usually centralise around a LongHouse as the main architecture component of the village. Dr Yansen Tp, Ricky Yakub (2018)

Through this study, we will be able to learn the sociality and architecture of the Lundayeh Community in Malaysia. Learning the way of living and space usage of the Long house specifically in a

Lundayeh Community Village. This is enable to study the quality of co-living created by this community & maybe apply it into the modern context of civilization improve our quality of living as a neighbourhood.

Architecture of a Longhouse

The design layout of a traditional long house can be described as stated below. A long wall that elected to the length of the building, down the longitudinal axis of the Longhouse. A long space on one side of the wall serves as a corridor that runs the whole length of the building while the other side is blocked from public view for privacy. Where each individual family squatters will have their own private units, bedroom, living space, kitchen with each unit having their individual entrance door. The spaces inside these family units will separated by walls of their own to contain sleeping space for each family. The kitchens, “*dapor*”, may be situated within this private space but are quite often situated in rooms of their own, added to the back of a “*bilik*” or even in a building standing a little away from the longhouse and accessed by a small bridge. This separation prevents cooking fires from spreading to the living spaces, should they spread out of control, as well as reducing smoke and insects attracted to cooking from gathering in living quarters. Behind the kitchen may be the bathroom and toilets. A back door is allocated at the back of the kitchen where neighbours can be connected to share food supply to each others.

The corridor itself is divided into three parts. The space in front of the door, the “*tempuan*”, belongs to each bilik unit and is used privately. This is where rice can be pounded or other domestic work can be done. A public corridor, a “*ruai*”, runs the length of the building in this open

space. On this side a large veranda, a “*tanju*”, is built in front of the building where the rice (*padi*) is dried and other outdoor activities can take place. The “*sadau*”, a sort of attic, runs along under the peak of the roof and serves as storage. Sometimes the “*sadau*” has a sort of gallery from which the life in the “*ruai*” can be observed. The pigs and chicken live underneath the house between the stilts. Paula, Harris; Bellingham, Katy; J Fox, James (September 2006)

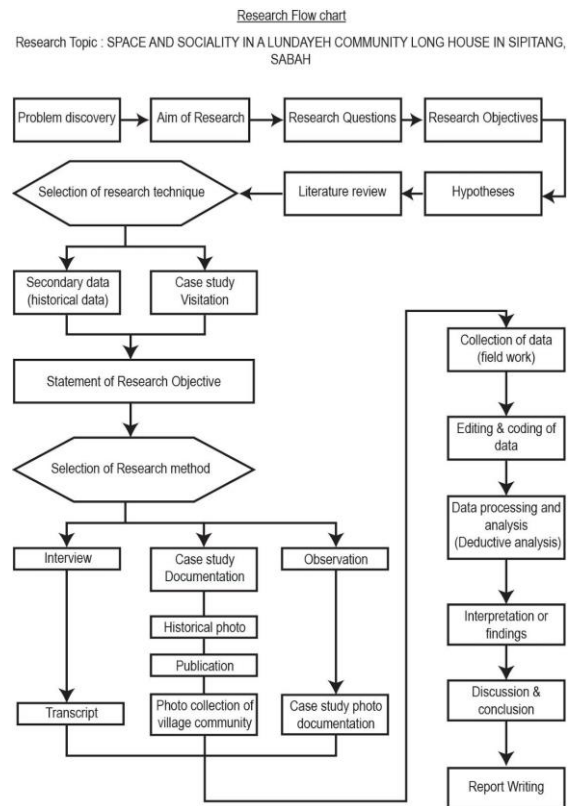
Research Problem

The lundayeh community is one of the unique indigenous race in Malaysia that embraced the idea of Co-Housing or Co-Living through the architecture of a Longhouse. But there’s been lack of study on this community and at the same time the learning of how a longhouse architecture impact the lifestyle quality of a communal neighbourhood.

Objective

The objective of this research is to study the Long house Co-Housing quality of Lundayeh Community lifestyle. To understand the how does a Long house architecture being used by a Lundayeh Community and the impact of the LongHouse architecture to the relationship of this neighbourhood.

Research Method



An arranged 2 night stay (5th and 6th November 2018) in Kampung Kaban, Sipitang Sabah will be used to conduct data collection. A series of visitation and scheduled interview session will be conducted during the stay to engage with the Longhouse community. Throughout the visitation i will be assisted by Jennifer Paren, a 21 year old teen that fluent in English, Bahasa Lundayeh and Bahasa Malaysia to assist me on any need of translation during the visitation session. Jennifer Paren is part of the Kampung Kaban community where she live and school in Kampung Kaban until the age of 18 year old.

To achieve the objective of the research, qualitative research approach will be conducted through multiple form of data gathering methods such as :

Interview

A scheduled 45 minute interview session will be conducted with Encik Baru Labo, which is a 72 year old elder in Kampung Kaban. Encik Baru Labo had been staying in Kampung Kaban for almost 50 years. Where he is involved in the construction and founding of the Origin Longhouse of Kampung Kaban. The aim of the interview record his experience and historical information regarding Kampung Kaban. A set of questions had been prepare ahead of time if there's been any need to facilitate the interview session. But generally the interview will be done in semi structured format.

Observation

An observational analysis will be conducted throughout the 2 day stay. I had identified 3 different time checkpoint to analyse the public corridor space of the Longhouse. The 3 time check point is 9am, 5pm and 8pm. The decision for this 3 checkpoint had been decided after a discussion with Jennifer Paren. The reasoning of each time checkpoint is explained below.

9.00 am

The elders and kids of the longhouse will often come out during these time. Where kids will often found playing around this time. Some of the elder that went to the rice plantation and rubber plantation early in the morning will come back before sun heat is at its peak to rest and hangout around the Longhouse corridor space. Kids will do that same to avoid the sun heat by playing under the roof of the corridor space.

5.00 pm

Some of the elder that work in office hour time with nearby office or school will be coming back around this time, some of

them would hangout around the corridor space while enjoying at the bunch of kids playing outdoor activities such as football and volleyball.

9.00 pm

After having dinner at respective houses, some of the kids and elders will come out to the public corridor space to enjoy to cool night air.

According to Jennifer Paren, the time in between the selected time checkpoint will result with lack of user activity in the public corridor space of the Longhouse. The aim of the observation analysis is to identify the activities that happens in public corridor space of the Longhouse.

The observation exercise will also be an opportunity for me to do some architectural analysis to identify the space quality, condition and issues that might support the validity and understanding of this research topic.

Documentation

Before and during visitation to the case study site, An active effort of data harvesting will be done through the community living in Kampung Kaban and other related resources. The data documentation will be done mainly in 2 form.

Collection of Past Photo and recording

A friendly request will be done to visited individual of Kampung Kaban to share their photo collections that can contribute to the aim of the research. Any form of recording such a digital photos, film, printed copy will be collected with permission from the people of Kampung Kaban. This form of data collecting will enable us to understand better of how the

public corridor space of this Longhouse can be part of the village activities and lifestyle.

This will also enable us to dig deeper to understand the morphology of Kampung Kaban's Longhouse. How the longhouse had change in the past 60 years. This will also allow us to observe and analysis the change in architectural space quality that occurred as the Longhouse in Kampung Kaban morph through time.

Interview transcript

A transcript will be done for the interview sessions as part of this research attachment data. Minor translation & description works might need to be done due to some uncommon use of language, word or names that might be used by the interviewee.

Findings

Kampung Kaban and the Longhouse

Kampung Kaban is a small community village that is located 17km or 20 minute drive from the central district of Sipitang, Sabah. With an approximate village community of 200 people, the people of Kampung Kaban are mostly from the indigenous race of Lun Dayeh or can also be known as Lun Bawang in the Sarawak region. The origin founder of this village is believed to come from Long Pasia. A region of land that is located at the boundary between Malaysia (Sabah and Sarawak) and Indonesia (Kalimantan).

Mula-mula dia orang pindah dari Long Pasia kan, tulah dia orang buat rumah-rumah begitu. Dia buat itu rumah di (inaudible). Saya sampai sini pun tahun 60, pun sudah buruk sudah tu, sudah lama sudah. Mungkin dia orang buat tahun 50-an. Tapi sini kau cerita dia orang, dia

orang pindah dari Long Pasia, tahun 50-an bah. - Encik Baru Labo

In the past, The people of Kampung Kaban are mostly practice animism where they believe in the spirit of nature. Specifically the Alligator. They believe the alligator signify bravery and strength. They even erected a large statue of an alligator in the middle of Kampung Kaban in the past but was demolished around the year 2000 when most of the community of Kampung Kaban had converted and practice Christianity.

The current Kampung Kaban in 2018, are a collective village with 1 long house, 37 standalone houses and a Sidang Injil Borneo Church. The Church and the football field is located at the center of the village and become the main place where recreational activity such as volleyball, sportday, football and church events. The long house that located south of the church are the first building structure build on the land in the year 1950's, with collective contribution of 8 families that had decide to live together in a longhouse. Then after the structure of the longhouse is established more people are interested to join the community and starting to build clusters of houses around the Longhouse.

The longhouse of Kampung Kaban had went through numerous changes in the past. The construction longhouse in 1950's was made with a mix of bamboo and concrete structure where 8 family had "gotong royong" to build up the main column of the longhouse.

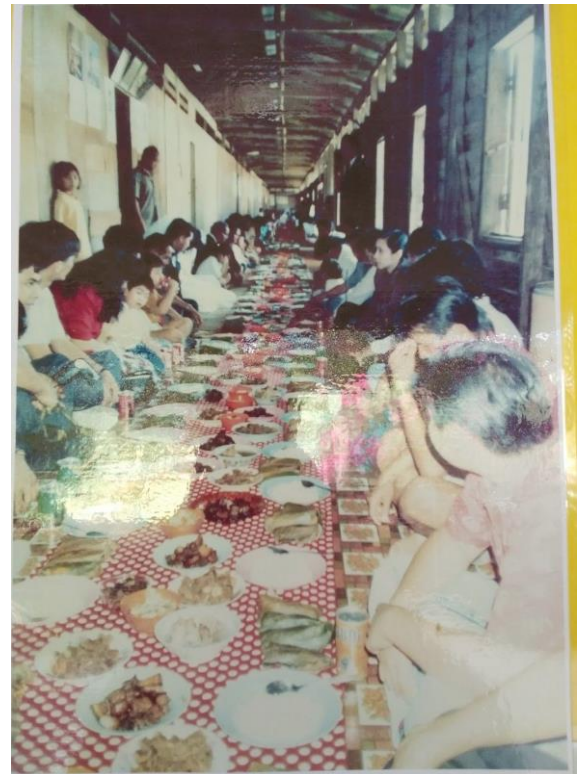
"Tiang tu kerjasama. Jadi yang lain tu masing-masing. Masing-masing cari, gaji orang, cari di mana ada papan, di mana ada kayu untuk beli. Kami beli di Lawas tu. Kemudian beli di Lawas, (inaudible) sampai ke Merapok, angkat dari Merapok sampai sini. Ada bot pergi

sini, angkat, pakai bot. Dulu Sungai Mengalong, dia orang pakai turun getah. Sungai Menalong, besar tu. Kami turun getah dari (inaudible). Beli getah, cukup banyak, satu perahu, turun dia. Hantar barang (inaudible). Lepas (inaudible), bawa barang dari pergi sini. Itu cara kami angkat barang dari Lawas. Pakai perahu saja. Mana boleh pakai orang?" - Encik Baru Labo.

After the main column had been built, then each family of the house can start building or personalise their own house based on their economical capability. Due to this reason, the individual quarter unit behind the longitudinal wall along the longhouse, each family quarter can be made in different size , design & material.



Old Photo of the Longhouse - Kampung Kaban resident in Lundayeh traditional cloth (picture taken from Kampung Kaban community photo collection, 6th November 2018)



Old Photo of the Longhouse - Harvest festival dinner (picture taken from Kampung Kaban community photo collection, 6th November 2018)

In the year 2000, the people of Kampung Kaban had been given a government financial funding to do a major upgrade to the longhouse. The main component of the upgrade is to widen the public corridor of the longhouse. Changing the wide of the corridor from 10 ft to 30 ft. Other component of the upgrade, are the electrical and water supply upgrade.

The public corridor space is the core component of what make a Longhouse unique to compare to others. Corridor space is lifted 1.7 meter above ground level on a mixture number of timber and concrete stilt. The space is well ventilated due to lifted platform that encourage air circulation and sheltered well from glare and direct heat from the sunlight.



Staircase up to the public corridor of the Longhouse. (picture taken during site visit in Kampung Kaban, 6th November 2018)

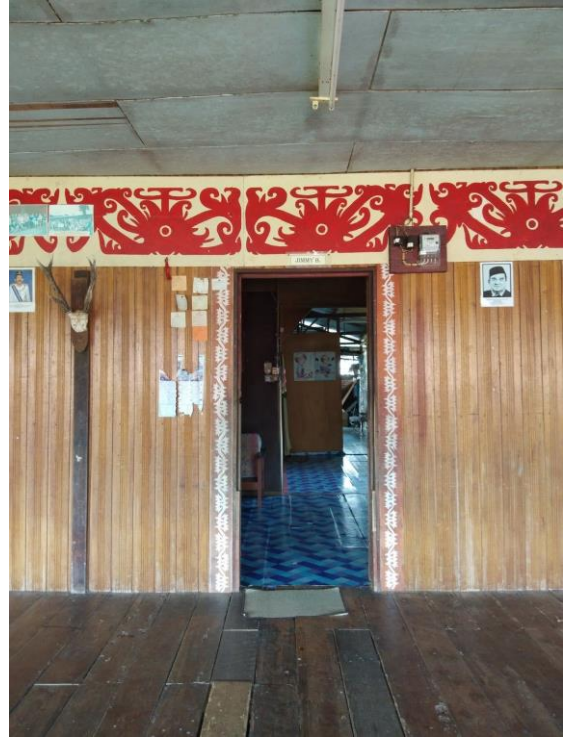


Public corridor space of the Longhouse. (picture taken during site visit in Kampung Kaban, 6th November 2018)



Built-In sitting bench on public corridor space. (picture taken during site visit in Kampung Kaban, 6th November 2018)

The quarters built behind the longitudinal wall of the longhouse corridor have unique personalisation up to each family preference and economic capabilities.



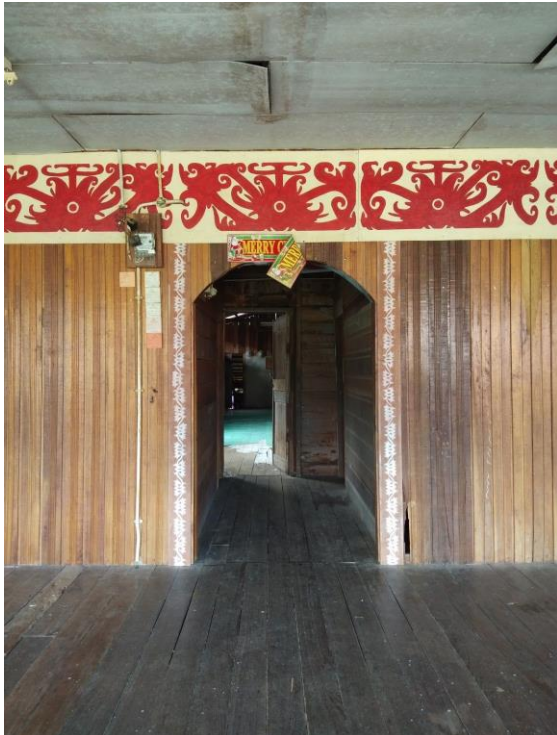
Entrance door to housing quarter 1. (picture taken during site visit in Kampung Kaban, 6th November 2018)



Entrance door to housing quarter 2. (picture taken during site visit in Kampung Kaban, 6th November 2018)



Entrance door to housing quarter 4. (picture taken during site visit in Kampung Kaban, 6th November 2018)



Entrance door to housing quarter 3. (picture taken during site visit in Kampung Kaban, 6th November 2018).



Entrance door to housing quarter 5. (picture taken during site visit in Kampung Kaban, 6th November 2018).



Entrance door to housing quarter 6. (picture taken during site visit in Kampung Kaban, 6th November 2018)



Entrance door to housing quarter 8. (picture taken during site visit in Kampung Kaban, 6th November 2018.)



Entrance door to housing quarter 7. (picture taken during site visit in Kampung Kaban, 6th November 2018)

Robustness of the Common Corridor Space in Kampung Kaban's Longhouse

The common corridor of the Longhouse had been used for multiple occasions. From study space, kids playground, event space, religious communion space, large dining events to resting place for tired adult from a long day of work. The corridor space had been proof to be robust, allowing various form of activities to happen. Following are the findings.

Kid's Playground



Kids playing on the corridor space at 9am (picture taken during site visit in Kampung Kaban, 6th November 2018)

The kids from the longhouse families will usually play at the corridor space in the morning, around 9am. A casual dialog with the kids had shown that they prefer playing on the corridor space is to avoid heat from the sun. They would play games such as hide & seek, football, run race and toys.

Study/Nursery place



Nursery activities. (picture taken during site visit in Kampung Kaban, 6th November 2018)

Occasionally, group of kids can be seen doing homework or nursery activities. Where the nursery activities are run by member community of Kampung Kaban. The frequency of the nursery activities are varies depending on the demand.

Resting Area



Village people resting at the common corridor space. (picture taken during site visit in Kampung Kaban, 6th November 2018)

The common corridor space is known to be quite cooling with constant breeze of air ventilating the space. This attract adults and elder to have their rest at the built-in bench along the longitudinal axis of the longhouse after tiring session working on their agriculture crop in the village. This is also the space where small chat happens between neighbours



Siblings spending time in the common corridor space. (picture taken during site visit in Kampung Kaban, 6th November 2018)

Community event space



Wedding open house event. (picture taken from Kampung Kaban community photo collection, 6th November 2018)



Bride & Groom of the wedding. (picture taken from Kampung Kaban community photo collection, 6th November 2018)



Wedding open house dining set up (left). (picture taken from Kampung Kaban community photo collection, 6th November 2018)



Wedding event crowd. (picture taken from Kampung Kaban community photo collection, 6th November 2018)

Issues in Kampung Kaban's Long house

Vandalisme

Vandalism is one of the major issue faced by the people living in the Longhouse. This issue are mainly due to irresponsible member of the longhouse. Not all family in the Longhouse have the same commitment in maintaining the integrity their front common corridor space. Some individual even commit the act of vandalism either due to impulsive anger in conflict or under the influence of alcohol.



Ceiling destroyed due to act of vandalism. (picture taken during site visit in Kampung Kaban, 6th November 2018)



Removed ornament panel and cavity filled with trash. (picture taken during site visit in Kampung Kaban, 6th November 2018)

Lack of Maintenance

According to Encik Labo, the elder in Kampung Kaban. Initially the maintenance of the Longhouse was supposed to be under the renovation contractor as part of the government contract. But the contractor did not honor the agreement and left the maintenance to the residents of Kampung Kaban after the renovation is finish. The maintenance responsibility are suppose to be bear by the longhouse residents now. Each family are responsible to take care of the door house front region of the corridor space. But not all family have the means or willingness to keep the front clean and proper. Due to this reason, some of the timber piece at the corridor space is starting to break down, creating potentially dangerous holes on the

floor. This had been one of the major conflict that been creating tension between the neighbours in the Longhouse.

Noise and vibration

Due to the long connecting feature of the house, noise and vibration issue had been one of the concern for some of the family. Kids that actively play at night in the corridor space will create vibration & noise from the impact of them running and jumping. So during night time, some of the adults will have problem sleeping due to the loud sound. Some of the hanging frame might even fall from the vibration created according to Encik Baru Labo.

Discussion

The Architecture of the Longhouse surely function as a Co-Housing concept that serve the 8 residence family of the Longhouse. But the usage of the Longhouse extend further to the larger community of Kampung Kaban, Where the Shared Long corridor space are not only limited to the usage of the residents tenant but also people that consider as part of their community. The “Gotong-Royong” culture in Kampung Kaban is strong, where the community will plan and arrange the distribution of job scope to relating people of the community. In communal events such as Wedding planning, Annual Pesta Lundayeh and Festival Christmas celebration.

The Longhouse and SIB Church in Kampung Kaban is a powerful anchor to the whole sparsely located housing around it. The existence of these 2 building had created a center point to the community, where most community event are located or held in these 2 spaces. Contributing to this factor, are due to the architecture of the Longhouse that created its strong

presence through every events held at the robust long corridor of the Longhouse. While the church is a place for their christian religion practice in every Sunday,

The architecture design of the Longhouse is a sensitive design that derived from the community lifestyle pattern in according to our country tropical climate. Due to typical hot sun that heat our outdoor spaces daily especially around the noon hours, the Long corridor space had allowed the community and multiple family residence of the Long house to still have a social space among the residence under a single roof that shades them from the heat. Adult and Elders that work very early in the morning in their paddy field will come back around the 10am time where the heat starting to become unbearable. During noon time, after lunch, most of them will hangout around the Long corridor space while having conversations with their neighbours. Kids that often spend time at the Long corridor space playing will also contribute to the multigenerational interaction within the neighbourhood. The installation of a Long bench along the longitudinal axis for the Long corridor is a crucial design factor that had attract and allow the community engage better. It had created a form of robustness that allow the Long space to be more than just corridor, but also a resting area, playground and events spaces.

The issues that exist in this Longhouse are sharing maintenance and ownership problem. Which is a common problem faced by most Co-housing solution around the world. But in this case, come of this issue is due to an imbalance sense of responsibility between the Longhouse residence. But this issue are being resolved slowly by the elected committee member of the Longhouse. Where they would voice out opinions to certain family through the committee.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Long house shared long corridor is a very flexible space with multiple function for the lifestyle of Kampung Kaban community. But the integrity of the space are not evenly maintained by all members of the Longhouse due to lack of commitment and economical capability of certain family.

Despite that, the Local corridor space is still an important component of the Longhouse the enabled multigenerational interaction between the community members. Furthermore, had become the catalyst that ties the community closer together with every events and activity conducted on the Long corridor platform.

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