

# Mosquepreneur in Perak: Reality or Fantasy?

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## Abstract

Social activities at the mosque are still something new in Malaysia and it has not received a lot of attention. However, there are still a few mosque institutions which have focused on social entrepreneurship activities for increasing the mosque's income source. The questionnaires were distributed to 52 mosque chairmen and observation was done to see the potential of local social entrepreneurship activities based on factors such as the organisational profile, the mosque demographics, assets, income acceptance, social and finance business activities. The data was analysed quantitatively using descriptive analysis. The findings showed that most mosque institutions were able to raise income from entrepreneurial activities. The social activities conducted can increase the mosque income and bring benefit to the local community especially the Muslim community in general. As such, the study findings can provide inspiration and indication for other mosques to take part in social entrepreneurial activities in order to intensify the mosquepreneur efforts.

**Keywords:** social entrepreneurship, mosquepreneur, economic activities, Malaysia

## 1. Introduction

The mosquepreneur activity or more known as social activities at the mosque are still new and considered less popular to be practised among the Muslim community in Malaysia. The lack of knowledge and comprehensive exposure about the masjidpreneur activities caused entrepreneurial activities to be less popular among mosque visitors (Kormishkina et al., 2019).

The social entrepreneurship at the mosques is a business concept which aims to solve social problems and generate income for social purposes, not for private purposes (Ishak, 2015; David, & Mohammed, 2016). According to Yunus et al., (2010), the social entrepreneurship is classified into social business which does not allow the fund contributor to take any dividends or profit from the business and the profit would be channelled for the benefit of the social institution itself.

As such, the mosquepreneur activity should be widened to the public especially the Muslim in Malaysia. The mosquepreneur activity indirectly could increase the country's income as well as help to decrease social problems in Malaysia. The masjidpreneur practice has been suggested by Karim (2017) who stated that the social entrepreneurship activities should be implemented in the mosque institution. This is because the mosque is a place of respect for Muslims and it is also a place of congregation for Muslims. As such, it is indeed logical that the mosque is transformed into a mosquepreneur and also a centre for entrepreneurship to increase the local community's socio-economy and also decrease social problems (Bernardi, 2019).

## 2. Background of Study

The masjidpreneur concept is able to develop an active community in various aspects especially in expanding in propagating Islam in economy. What is important is that successful mosque management should be translated in implementation and action so that the mosque could function fully as what has been suggested in Islam. Hassan (1991) stated that the management concept according to the Islam perspective has a direct connection with Allah swt. As such, every decision made by the mosque management should be directed towards fulfilling the benefits (*maslahat*) as required by the Islamic laws. In Islamic management system, the mosque is a wakaf institution, whether one prepared by the government or given to the government institution to be managed and administered (Hasan, 2008). As such, the mosque institution must be managed effectively with sincerity and full trust to honour Allah's requirement.

The mosque fund and the mosque's income collection is implemented through special fund collection method (such as a donation box for buying mosque equipment, funeral van and airconditioning) or general collection box (such as a box for Friday prayers donations and mosque donation box). This is also practised in the form of wakaf acceptance, zakat money and funds from Majlis Agama Islam Negeri (MAIN), Lembaga Zakat Negeri, business corporations, individuals as well as other parties periodically (Harapap, 1993; Yani, 1999). The usage and allocation of mosque funds is carried out by paying utility bills, maintenance fees, mosque refurbishment and beautifying projects, payment of allowance for religious teachers, imam, bilal, *siak* (mosque assistant) and the mosque committee, donations for orphans, the poor, single mothers, religious school assistance funds, spending for the mosque's special events, Ramadhan *iftar*, Eid celebrations and others (Niazi, 1976; Zahir, 2003).

Lastly, the mosque committee is also involved in the management of mosque funds in a systematic way either by saving it in financial institutions or investing the funds for future profit in the future (Khan et al., 2008; Mohammad et al., 2012; Ezeanyejí Clement, 2016). This clearly shows that the mosque institution is indirectly a key player in the Muslims' socio-economy through Islamic entrepreneurial activities. As such, there is still room for improvement to ensure that the mosque institution can become a platform for the Muslims' economic jihad especially for entrepreneurial activities.

In addition, organizational leadership and strategic orientation are at the heart of institutional change. If a mosque leadership member lacks entrepreneurial traits and is not forward-thinking, the intention of transforming the mosque into a mosquepreneur is difficult to achieve. It will continue to maintain the mosque's status as a religious institution alone. Therefore, the profile of mosque leadership, mosque officials, the strategic orientation of the mosque organization and the characteristics of the mosque's organization must be evaluated first in the quest for comprehensive mosque transformation not only in the religious and social sphere, but also in economics and entrepreneurship by making Al-Ghufran Mosque, Taman Tun Dr. Ismail, Kuala Lumpur, Puchong Al-Salam Mosque, Selangor and At-Taqwa Bertam Mosque, Penang are the benchmarks for the construction of the Mosquepreneur Model in Perak.

### 3. Literature Review

The mosquepreneur is an entrepreneurial model which is conducted by the local Muslim community and is located at the local mosques. The mosquepreneur activity is implemented for the purpose of giving positive impact and to increase the local community's socio-economy in a fair manner. This activity is not only based on profit, but it also practises profit sharing principles.

Social entrepreneurship is an entrepreneurial model which is not only based on profit but also provides a positive impact and increases the community's socio-economic status in a fair manner. Social entrepreneurship according to the Islamic perspective was formed by taking into consideration the implementation following the sources of Quran and Sunnah as outlined in the *Aqidah*, *Syariah* and *Akhlak* framework. There are a few social entrepreneurship models which can be utilised to develop a successful social entrepreneurship.

The mosquepreneur should be implemented according to Islamic principles according to the sources of Quran and Sunnah as outlined in the *Aqidah*, *Syariah* and *Akhlak* framework. Muim et al (2015); Foulidi et al., (2018) developed an Islamic entrepreneurship model which took into account four (4) components : the patronage component which is the *Khalifah*, the building component which consists of the brotherhood, the economic struggle, justice and equality and the call to do good and the prevention of evil, the third component is the capital support which consists of *zakat*, alms and *wakaf* and lastly the component of sustainable outcome which comprises al-Falah, charity , improving the economy of the community, building and enhancing the social value of the donors. These components are able to strengthen the Islamic institution through the field of social entrepreneurship by developing a model which is able to fortify the economy of the Muslim community in Malaysia

The Al-Ghufran mosque in Taman Tun Dr. Ismail, Kuala Lumpur is a mosque which could be considered as a mosquepreneur. According to the study Adnan (2015), the Al-Ghufran mosque owns assets which could generate income for its management purposes. Some of the assets are a café, business kiosks, prayer hall, conference hall, Humaira hall, banquet hall, 24 hotel rooms (musafir rooms), a homestay, primary religious school, Islamic hall and a funeral van. With these assets, the Al-Ghufran mosque could conduct various social entrepreneurial activities such as renting halls and mosque facilities, renting hotel rooms, renting the business facilities (Kafe Al-Ghufran), renting roofs for telecommunication companies (eg: Maxis, Celcom) and renting of the funeral van.

The As Salam mosque is another mosque which could be categorised as a mosquepreneur. The mosque is situated in Puchong Perdana, Selangor, and it owns several assets which could generate an impressive income. According to the study by Sahar and Yusuf (2016), the As-Salam mosque owns a cooperative called Koperasi As- Salam (Ko-Salam),

an Islamic kindergarten, seminar hall, library and multi-purpose hall. To maximise the use of the assets in order to generate an income, the mosque currently rents out shoplots and halls and runs a car wash business, a medical centre, pre-marital courses, a catering business, a *homestay* and a tourism agency. These businesses enable the mosque to increase its funds and also to conduct the planned programmes.

The Al-Taqwa mosque in Bertam Indah, Pulau Pinang is a mosque which was awarded the five-star award in conjunction with the Maal Hijrah 1440H celebrations (2018). This mosque is viewed as a mosque which could generate income via social entrepreneurship activities. A study by Azman, et al. (2017); Tang, & Khan (2018) stated that the mosque acquires profit from the mosque's cooperative, grocery shop, car wash, hemodialysis health service as well as the rental of seminar hall, hotel, kiosks lots and Ramadan bazaar lots. The mosque also develops wakaf property as its economic source such as rental of house, sales kiosks and rice plantation. The income received would be distributed for the benefit and advantage of the ummah.

While the mosquepreneur concepts is still new in Malaysia, the examples given show that this type of social entrepreneurship has the potential to be widened in order to solve the community's economic problems. Based on these examples, a checklist could be prepared as a method to classify and identify other mosques in Malaysia as mosquepreneurs. This checklist could also be used as a guide to identify a mosque's status as having achieved the mosquepreneur status or not.

#### 4. Study Methodology

This study was conducted using the quantitative method. A total of 52 mosque chairmen at 52 mosques in Perak were the respondents. The respondents were selected through a meeting with the Perak mosques administration officers and the district mosque officers to identify the potential mosquepreneurs in Perak. From the meeting, 52 mosques were chosen as the study sample.

The data collection was conducted via observation and questionnaires distributed to the respondents and the data was analysed descriptively. Generally, the aim was to identify the existence of the mosquepreneurs in Perak to see the potential based on factors such as the organisational profile, mosque demographics, assets, income acceptance, social business activity and finances.

#### 5. Research Findings

The study was conducted at 52 mosque institutions in Perak. The observation and questionnaire distribution were conducted on the mosque chairmen to acquire information related to the organisational profile, the mosque demographics, assets, income acceptance, social economy and financial activity. The findings are as the following:

Table 1 shows the number of mosque institutions which took part in the study in Perak districts.

Table 1. Number of mosques according to district in Perak

District	Frequency	%	District		%
			District	Frequency	
Ipoh	3	5.8	Taiping	6	11.5
Batu Gajah	2	3.8	Selama	3	5.8
Muallim	2	3.8	Bagan Serai	4	7.7
Teluk Intan	4	7.7	Parit Buntar	2	3.8
Manjung	3	5.8	Gerik	3	5.8
Seri Iskandar	2	3.8	Pengkalan Hulu	2	3.8
Kampung Gajah	1	1.9	Lenggong	1	1.9
Kuala Kangsar	8	15.4	Bagan Datuk	6	11.5
<b>Total: 52 mosques</b>					

Referring to Table 1, Kuala Kangsar was the district with the most number of mosques (8) in this study while the districts with the least number of mosques were Kampung Gajah and Lenggong with 1 mosque each. All these respondents were chosen via a meeting and discussion with the Perak state mosque management officers and the district mosque management officers.

Table 2. Organisational analysis of 52 mosquepreneurs in Perak

	Available	Not available	%
Chairperson	52	0	100
Vice chairperson	52	0	100
Secretary	52	0	100
Treasurer	52	0	100
Wome affairs bureau	52	0	100
Welfare and Rental facilities bureau	33	19	63.5
Religious school Education bureau	22	30	42.3
Religion and Publications Bureau	39	13	75
Special tasks and Islamic celebration bureau	11	41	21.2
Banquet and entertainment bureau	25	27	48.1
Cleanliness and Building maintenance bureau	41	11	78.8
Education and counselling help bureau	37	15	71.2
Funeral expenses and death benefits bureau	33	19	63.5
Welfare and community Bureau	42	10	80.8
Economy Bureau	35	17	67.3
Information technology bureau	17	35	32.7
Youth affairs Bureau	47	5	90.4
Administration officer	7	45	13.5
Financial officer	6	46	11.5

Table 2 shows the study findings related to factors such as organisational profile. All 52 respondents (100%) were part of the mosque's highest management such as the chairperson, the vice chairperson, secretary and treasurer. In forming a mosque's community, a bureau related to economy and entrepreneurship should be established. As such, 35 mosques had an Economy bureau (67.3%) and 33 (63.5%) had a Welfare bureau. Additionally, 17 mosques (32.7%) had an Information Technology bureau which played a part in promoting and advertising the entrepreneurial activities via mass media, social media and such. Only 7 (13.5%) mosques had an administrative officer and 6 (11.5%) mosques had a financial officer who were located at district mosques.

Table 3. Analysis of Mosque Management in 52 Masjidpreneurs in Perak

	Available	None	%
Organisational chart	52	0	100
Income statement board	47	5	90.4
Activity/program board	46	6	88.5
Educational board	45	7	86.5
Duty table for Imam and Bilal	46	6	88.5
Management office	41	11	78.8
Meeting room	42	10	80.8
Funeral preparation room	18	34	34.6
Facilities store	49	3	94.2
Kitchen mosque management	41	11	78.8
Parking area management	38	14	73.1
Mosque upkeep and maintenance	43	9	82.7

Table 3 shows the management analysis for 52 mosquepreneurs in Perak. About 38 (73.1%) mosques had a good management organisation. However, only 18 (34.6%) mosques had a funeral management room. Overall, 70 percent of the mosques managed the mosque institution well for the comfort of the local community.

Table 4. Mosque location

	Frequency	%
Urban	11	21.2
Suburban	16	30.8
Rural	25	48.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 4 shows the location of mosques which were the respondents for study. A total of 25 (48.1%) were located in the rural areas, 16 (30.8%) mosques at the suburban areas and 11(21.2%) mosques in the urban areas. Many of the mosques in rural and suburban areas conduct entrepreneur agriculture activities such as poultry rearing. However, there were also some mosques which conduct entrepreneur activities such as rental and services especially those in the urban areas.

Table 5. Mosque status

	Frequency	%
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>
District mosque / Main mosque	7	13.5
Jamek mosque	13	25.0
Kariah mosque	32	61.5

Table 5 shows the status of the mosque institutions which included 7 (13.5%) main mosque/district mosques, 13 (25%) Jamek mosques and 32 (61.5%) kariah mosques. However, the status of a mosque would not deter it from being active in entrepreneurial activities to add value to the mosque income.

Table 6. Mosque location

	YES	No	%
Located near Housing estate	36	16	69.2
Location near main road	41	11	78.8
Located near city centre	19	33	36.5
Located near administrative office	13	39	25

The mosque location is one of the success factors for a masjidpreneur. Table 6 shows that 36 (69.2%) mosques were located near the housing estate and main roads. Additionally, 19 (36.5%) mosques were located near the city centres and 13 (25%) were located near the administrative offices. As such, the mosque location can be considered important for the local community's needs.

Table 7. Mosque capacity

	Frequency	%
Less than 1000 people	31	59.6
1001 to 2000 people	10	19.2
2001 to 3000 people	10	19.2
More than 5000 people	1	1.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 7 shows the analysis of mosque capacity of 31 (59.6%) mosques with less than 1000 people and 1 (1.9%) with over 5000 people. In addition, 10 (19.2%) mosques could accommodate 1001 to 2000 people and 2001 to 3000 people respectively. The capacity of a mosque can be interpreted as an estimate of the total Muslim population and that amount also affects the mosque's entrepreneurial income which plays a role as a driving force in the mosque's entrepreneurial activity.

Table 8. Mosque assets

	Yes	No	%
Café/shops	26	26	50
Kiosk / Business arcade	7	45	13.5
Conference hall	4	48	7.7
Multi-purpose hall	13	39	25
Banquet hall	33	19	63.5
Hotel/ room for rent/ homestay	19	33	36.5
Property	32	20	61.5
Religious primary school / kindergarden/ nursery	19	33	36.5
Funeral van	32	20	61.5
Banquet utensils (plates, pots, pans, spoons)	38	14	73.1
Tent/ table and chairs	32	20	61.5

Table 8 shows the assets owned by the mosques which could serve as the basis for adding value to the mosque's income. Nearly 32 (61.5%) mosques owned assets such as real estate, funeral vehicles, tents, desks, chairs, banquets and banquet halls. Only 4 (7.7%) mosques had a conference hall. However, each mosque had different assets and almost all of them were able to generate additional income by renting.

Table 9. Mosque income

	YES	No	%
Hall rental	4	48	7.7
Rental of houses/homestay/room	19	33	36.5
Rental of shoplots	27	25	51.9
Rental of site for vending machines	9	43	17.3
Rental of site for Telecommunications	10	42	19.2
Rental of billboard	5	47	9.6
Kindergarden/ nursery	3	49	5.8
Cooperative	10	42	19.2
Umrah and tourism agency	2	50	3.8
Rental of kiosks	7	45	13.5
ATM machine site rental	1	51	1.9
Agricultural activities/Poultry	26	26	50
Investment	6	46	11.5
Parking lot rental	3	49	5.8

Table 9 shows the receipts of mosques from social entrepreneurship activities that could be used for the continued operation of a mosque. Nearly 26 (50%) mosques received income from the agricultural or livestock activities and rentals of shops. However, only 1 (1.9%) of mosques received additional revenue from the ATM (Automated Teller Machine) rental income. It was clear that each mosque could generate income from various social entrepreneurship activities with creative and bold management. Thus, the revenue generation could benefit the community and Muslims in general.

Table 10. Agricultural and poultry

	YES	No	%
Vegetables	7	45	13.5
Fruits	6	46	11.5
Palm oil	23	29	44.2
Rubber	5	47	9.6
Rice	5	47	9.6
Chicken	1	51	1.9
Ducj	1	51	1.9
Cows	2	50	3.8
Lamb	1	51	1.9
Fish	1	51	1.9

Table 10 shows the analysis of agricultural and livestock activities using real estate assets owned by the mosques. The most active was the oil palm cultivation of 23 (44.2%) conducted by the mosques. In addition, 1 (1.9%) mosque carried out livestock activities such as ducks, chickens, fish and lamb and 2 (3.8%) mosques raised cattle. Most mosques that carried out agricultural and livestock activities were located in rural locations and were based on local demographic and geographical factors.

Table 11. Mosque social activities

	ADA	TIADA	%
Shops	7	45	13.5
Catering	5	47	9.6
Cooking class	3	49	5.8
Sewing class	1	1.9	1.9
Pre-marital course	2	50	3.8
Al-Quran/ Fardu Ain classes	22	30	42.3
Clinic / Health centres	3	49	5.8
Car wash	4	48	7.7
Laundry	2	50	3.8
Hair cut	9	43	17.3
Sports arena	3	49	5.8

Table 11 shows a descriptive analysis of mosque social business activities that can benefit the local community. The Quran and Fardu Ain classes were the most popular activities in 22 mosques (42.3%). The sewing class became the most popular activity held in 1 (1.9%) mosque. These social business activities became popular due to the demand from the local community and the business could benefit and facilitate the community involved.

Table 12. Annual Income for Mosques via social entrepreneurship activities

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
RM 20,000 and below	26	50.0
RM 20,001 to RM 40,000	17	32.7
RM 40,001 to RM 60,000	3	5.8
RM 60,001 to RM 80,000	3	5.8
RM 80,001 to RM 100,000	1	1.9
More than RM 100,000	2	3.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 12 shows the annual income of mosques through the social entrepreneurship activities carried out by the mosque institutions. Almost 26 (50%) mosques earned less than RM 20,000 a year and only 9 (17.3%) mosques received an annual income of over RM 40,001. The results showed that almost all mosques earned as little as below RM 20,000 a year. However, the entrepreneurial activity was seen to have a huge impact on the income of the mosques which could be used in daily use of mosque operations.

Table 13. Mosque social entrepreneurship activity percentage

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Below 10 Percent	19	36.5
10.1 Percent to 20 Percent	12	23.1
20.1 Percent to 30 Percent	8	15.4
30.1 Percent to 40 Percent	7	13.5
40.1 Percent to 50 Percent	3	5.8
50.1 Percent and above	3	5.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 13 shows the results of the percentage of mosque entrepreneurship based on the annual results of the entrepreneurship divided by the annual income of the mosque and multiplied by 100.

A total of 13 (25%) mosques earned a percentage of their income from entrepreneurship activities and over 7 mosques (30%) and 19 (36.5%) mosques earned a percentage below 10 percent. The social entrepreneurship activities involved in the mosque affect the percentage of income of the mosque. The more activities that were carried out, the higher the revenue that the mosque will receive. Overall, the percentage revenue obtained from mosque institutions through entrepreneurial activity could have an impact on the increase in mosque income and give positive impact on the economy of Muslims in particular.

## 6. Conclusion

Although the mosquepreneur appears to be a new concept in Malaysia, the 52 mosques featured given in this paper indicate to us that social entrepreneurship has the potential to be further widened to assist in solving the community's economic problems. The focus on the 52 mosques which are considered as mosquepreneurs show to us that many entrepreneurial activities could be conducted based on factors such as demographics, location and efficient mosque management. The wisdom of the management would be able to add value to the mosque's income and the local community as well. As such, this could be a guide for other institutions in Malaysia.

Cooperation from the State Religious Council, the mosque management team and the local community can help in realising the mosquepreneur concept. Sarif et al.'s suggestion (2013) stated that social entrepreneurship was still in its development stages in Malaysia; as such, it required a firm foundation. The State Religious Councils should be clear in determining the status, needs and other matters which are needed to encourage the mosque's social entrepreneurship in Malaysia. With the mosquepreneur checklist, we could refer to it as a benchmark and guide to identify mosques in Malaysia with the potential to transform into mosquepreneurs and thus become an example for other nearby mosques to move in unison towards the strengthening of the Islamic economy via the mosques. As such,

this study suggested that all parties play a role to ensure that the mosquepreneur activities could be widened all over the nation as it provides advantages to the local community and the country.

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