

# User Perception to Modern and Classic Mihrab Design Concept

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**Abstract**—This study aims to determine the level of difference between the user perceptions of two different types of Mihrab design concepts, which are Mihrab modern concepts and Mihrab classic concepts. Additionally, comparing the design perceived more positive by the user. We experimented by giving space stimulation to 55 people of research subjects. The stimulation includes to two types of Mihrab with different concepts, classical and contemporary modern design concept, which are tested in the form of the differential semantic question, with the question of perception of Islamic values. The result is the users' perception has a significant difference, but both have positive response values such as perception of clean, comfortable, focused, attention-grabbing, simple (not luxurious), quiet, natural. In addition, the perception of beautiful and Islamic has no significant differences in valuation. A positive assessment of these two design concepts can be proved that there is no absolute in designing Mihrab. Both modern and classical are perceived beautifully and Islamic. But the important thing is how the design can give a positive impression, especially in representing Islamic values. The results of this study are expected to be a reference for the design concept of Mihrab that has a tendency more appropriate for today's society, and also to develop design field of the place of worship.

**Keywords**—*perception, mihrab, mosque*

## I. INTRODUCTION

This article discusses the differences in user perceptions of the two types of mihrab designs, those that are contemporary modern and classic arabic styles. User perception is very important to be taken into consideration in designing a space. A design designed to create a positive space experience for its users, both functionally and aesthetically. This study specifically discusses the concept of design that is perceived to be more positive, especially those relating to places of worship, namely mosques.

Research on space experience and user perceptions of space design is quite a lot, including Wibisono have written about the discussing between vision, lighting, and human perception in Interior Design [1]. Khoury discusses the physical elements and forms of the Classical Arabic Mihrab [2]. At ASEAN Conference on Environment-Behaviour Studies, Dewiyanti, D and Kusuma, H, 2012 have discussed about how a mosque and its parts considered to have spiritual meaning for Muslims, and how these spaces build its spiritual meaning. This paper discused how spatial and visual experience factor as a spiritual values developer [3]. M Arkoun in Taib & Rasdy describes the reasons underlying the

causes of design, form, and special details on mosque buildings, including the shape of the dome, minaret, mihrab, and pulpit are always remade with shapes which is almost the same, because the form has applied to the minds of each individual Muslim, and is always repeated over the centuries, so that the main function of the mosque is not distorted [4]. Regarding worship space perception, it was discussed at Sari, 2005, that space perception is emotionally and psychologically in the interior is more familiar with space experience. Space experience in worship facilities is dominated by lighting and space scale [5]. The influence of light on the worship space was discussed by Wardono and Wibisono, especially with regard to how natural lighting affects one's contemplative perception in worship in mosques [6]

Research that discusses the level of differences between users' perceptions of the two types of mosque design concepts has not been done before, especially those that discuss how mosques that have contemporary modern design concepts affect user perceptions, especially perceptions of Islamic values, because what we all know is that in general Mosque design is strongly influenced by the classic Middle Eastern style. The benefits of this research are the results obtained can be a reference for the concept of mosque interior design, especially for the design of mihrab designs for the community today, so that it can support the scientific development of the design of places of worship.

## II. METHOD

This study uses an experimental method, with a comparative quantitative analysis approach. Experiments carried out by giving stimulation in the form of two types of spiritual space with different concepts, namely:

1. The design concept 1 is the design of the mosque mihrab with the classical concept influenced by Arab culture. This design was represented by Mihrab Agung Mosque TSM Bandung. (Fig. 1)



Fig. 1 Mihrab design 1

- The design concept 2 is the design of the mosque mihrab with the concept of Contemporary Modern. This design is represented by Mihrab Al Irsyad mosque in Kota Baru Parahyangan (Fig. 2)

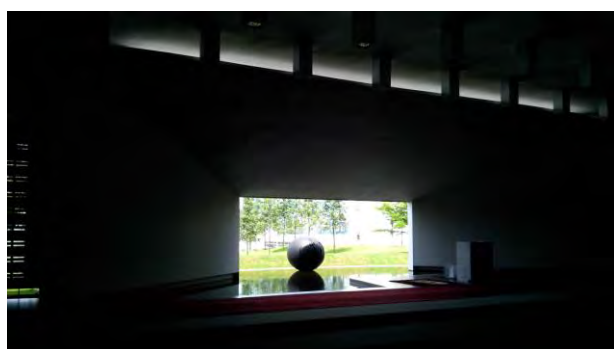


Fig. 2 Mihrab Design 2

Through experiments, the response of the perception of mosque users will be measured through questionnaires in the form of differential semantics. The data obtained were analyzed by Wilcoxon Pair Test method to determine the significance of differences between the two objects of the study. This research will use the sampling of the users of the second mosque of the mosque. The research subjects were taken randomly, with the criteria of Muslim men or women. Subjects were taken with a random technique with age between 18-50 years, and would involve approximately 55 people.

### III. RESULTS

After comparing user perceptions of Mihrab 1 and Mihrab 2, it was found that Clean perception ( $p = 0.03$ ), comfortable ( $p = 0.001$ ), Focus ( $p = 0.022$ ), Attention Grabbing ( $p = 0.014$ ), Simple not luxurious ( $p = 0.000$ ), Calm ( $p = 0.000$ ), and Natural 9 ( $p = 0.000$ ) have a significant level of difference (due to the significant level,  $p < 0.05$ ). While the perception of Beautiful and Islamic, does not have a significant level of difference ( $p > 0.05$ )

Perception	Difference Level	MIHRAB1 (Average Value)	MIHRAB 2 (Average Value)
Clean	Significant	++	++
Comfortable	Significant	+	++
Beatiful	Not Significant	++	++
Focus	Significant	+	+

Attention Grabbing	Significant	+	++
Simple (not Luxurios)	Significant	+	++
Calm	Significant	+	++
Natural	Significant	-	++
Islamic	Not Significant	+	+

TABLE I USER PERCEPTION ASSESSMENT

Note :

(-) value < point 4

(+) value between 5-6

(++)value > point 6

When viewed from table 1, almost all types of perceptions have significant differences between mihrab 1 and mihrab 2, except for the assessment of Beautiful and Islamic.

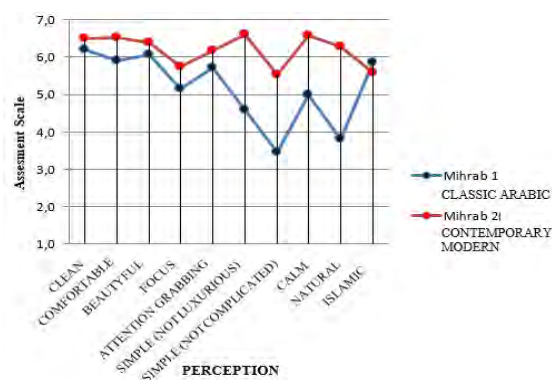


Fig 3. Perception Assessment Results Respondents are based on Average scores

But if it is associated with the average value of perception, the two types of designs tested both get a positive value (average value > 4), but when viewed in more detail, Mihrab 2, namely Mihrab with contemporary modern design, gets more positive values, compared to mihrab design 2 Arabic Classic for almost all aspects of perception tested. (Fig 3)

### IV. DISCUSSION

The form of mosque architecture in general in Indonesia is influenced by Middle Eastern culture or Arabic culture, which is characterized by dome roofs, symmetrical room shapes, monumental scales, decorated with calligraphy, and ornamentation (arabesque), as well as a magnificent Mihrab section, attracting attention, and its position located right in the middle of the front of the building interior. But at this time, in contemporary society, design developed very rapidly, so new designs emerged for buildings including the building of the mosque and its contents which were designed with a new concept, and far enough from the design of Arabic architecture, among them the work monumental by Zaha Hadid and Norman Foster in Mecca and Al Irsyad Kota Baru Parahyangan Mosque by Ridwan Kamil. This new form of design and architecture is one form of expression of the modernity of Muslim society [7].

Mihrab is one of the most important parts in a mosque design, because its main function is as an orientation marker of worshipers when performing prayers, which is a marker of Qibla direction. Review back in Kahera, which “An important injunction in the Qur’an (Q. 2:149) states that the believer should face Makkah while performing the ritual prayer. *This means that the edifice and indeed all mosques have a wall 90 ° to the direction of Makkah– this is commonly called the qiblah*”[8, 9]

So in this study, researchers tried to compare the two designs to the users to find the level of difference between the two design concepts in terms of the user's perception. This comparison is done not to look for the ugliness of one of the designs, but to look for the most positive perception that can be felt by the users at this time.

Based on the results achieved, all aspects of the values tested were positively assessed by the respondents, but Mihrab 2 had a higher positive value than the Mihrab 1 design. Mihrab 2, which is a modern contemporary style, is considered simpler than Mihrab 1, but still has a positive value. On the impression of beautiful, between Mihrab 1 and mihrab 2 has no significance level, but if associated with average level, Mihrab 2 is assessed more positive than Mihrab 1. In Natural perception, Mihrab 1 is assessed less natural (has negative value). So as to create a beautiful mihrab space, it can also be achieved by simple, innocuous, and inexpensive material design, but bringing natural beauty and natural lighting into the room.

Both Mihrab 1 (Classic design) and Mihrab 2 (Contemporary Modern design) are unique in their shape, color and material, but basically have the same function and purpose as a Qibla direction marker in a mosque room. But the simplicity of the design of the Mihrab 2 does not become a barrier to be perceived as having a beautiful and Islamic impression like the Mihrab 1. The important thing is, the main function of the mihrab is becoming the direction of the qibla. And the design and architectural respect to the concept of halal and haram according to Islamic law, as one of the criteria for building / Islamic design. [9]

The virtue of the Muslim worship space in this case is the mosque is expressing the Koran and Hadith, and the most important is the expression of monotheism (the Essence of Allah). In Mihrab 1, One God belief and glorifying God are expressed with aesthetic elements such as Arabesque, which give the impression of limitless of God, and also use the fields of Beautiful and impressive luxury. But in Mihrab 2, One God belief and glorifying God are expressed with simplicity, but incorporating elements of impression is not bounded by natural scenery and also natural lighting. Both types of mihrab express one God belief (Tauhid), this achievement is very important to realize Islamic values in design/architecture in accordance with what has been written by Al Faruqi, that art and architecture in Islam the most

important is expressing the Quran, which limitless and transcendence [10].

## V. CONCLUSION

Mosques with contemporary concepts have positive perception values, so this can be used as a reference that each country / region has the potential to develop mosque design, especially the mihrab which has a local identity and is not dependent on Arab culture as the forerunner of mosque architecture and mihrab , without losing the essence of Islamic values. Design differences do not become a problem, the most important thing is how a designer or architect takes jihad through his creativity to express monotheism/One God Belief.

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