Architecture and Visual Privacy in Islam: Comparative Analysis of Hausa and Malay Traditional Houses

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ABSTRACT

Housing is a multi-faceted issue and fundamental to the well-being, survival, and health of human beings, transcending their mere physicality as shelters to assume a profound role in safeguarding the privacy of their inhabitants. This research endeavour seeks to conduct a comparative analysis and exploration of the mechanisms governing visual privacy within two distinct cultural contexts: the traditional Hausa housing of Nigeria and the traditional Malay housing of Malaysia. To provide privacy, visual components of the idea of "seeing but not being seen" are essential. Using a research approach based on in-depth case studies that include careful observations, this investigation reveals a common feature that exists in both cultural situations. Irrespective of variations in dwelling size, these traditional houses emerge as adept providers of visual privacy. Notably, this is achieved without compromising the ethos of community intimacy, social interactions, and the intrinsic warmth of hospitality. It is envisaged that this research will serve as an enlightening exploration into the intricate paradigms of visual privacy, shedding light on the nuances of regulation within the traditional housing of both the Hausa and Malay communities.

Keywords: Visual privacy, Hausa Traditional House, Malay Traditional House.

INTRODUCTION

The definition of house is a symbolic space that provides ideas of comfort, domesticity, and well-being through private and intimate domestic settings (Alkhazmi and Esin 2017). Another way to put it is that, homeowners should be able to live near one another yet have a respectable amount of visual privacy (Yousif and Aziz 2021). Additionally, rooms in houses must be arranged to offer as much privacy as possible. As a result, the spatial arrangement of homes is managed by the need for intimacy and seclusion (Manaf, Rahim *et al*., 2019). The idea of privacy varies depending on the culture(Altman 1977). Manaf, Rahim et al. (2019) contend that, privacy functions at the individual, collective, and institutional levels; nevertheless, they emphasise that their theory of privacy is exclusive to Western cultures since it aligns with the socio-political principles of Western democracies.

Privacy needs to be viewed from the viewpoint of the relevant culture. Different cultural interpretations of privacy led to varying physical reactions and levels in home architecture. The demand for privacy, how space was used, and how privacy was governed are just a few of the remarkable ways that cultures vary and lead to diverse types of houses across the globe (Rapoport 2019). The key location for privacy is the home, and the design features that are linked with it serve as crucial privacy-regulating mechanisms (Babangida and Katsina 2018). A home may not offer a comfortable degree of privacy if the accompanying design feature is not created by the culture of the people who will be occupying it. To meet psychological demands and maintain privacy in the built environment, behavioural and architectural factors must work together (Abuhussain, Al-Tamimi et al. 2022).

The environment's behaviour and culture have a direct impact on social behaviour (Hwaish 2015). Additionally, the environment and behaviour highlight the range of behavioural systems (Melnikova 2020). Human behaviour can decide how much privacy is needed for day-to-day activities. The degrees of privacy can be attained by utilising a variety of behavioural mechanisms, such as environmental behaviours like personal distance and verbal and Para verbal behaviour (Cho, Knijnenburg et al. 2018). Depending on the need for privacy, the dynamic of privacy regulation necessitates a varied level of behaviour (Reis and Lay 2004).The value of privacy is examined across many academic fields, and several philosophers psychologists, sociologists, and architects have addressed this issue (Razali and Talib 2018). All academic fields have looked into privacy and concluded that, "people need to avoid touch and make a distance to engage to others at specific occasion and time, where people seek to be open or closed." It's the dynamic process referred to as privacy regulation (Razali and Talib 2013). Additionally, privacy might be defined as a line drawn between an individual and their surroundings, kept private from strangers, and used to separate private activities from public interactions as well as gender roles (Babangida and Katsina 2018). The pursuit of privacy may contribute to the evolution of morality and human behaviour (Omer 2008, Manaf, Rahim et al. 2019)

The notion of privacy was explored in depth by (Rapoport 1976) who pointed out that, people who are modest, territorial, require personal space boundaries, and can tell the difference between public and private areas are strongly associated with privacy. Both traditional Hausa and Malay dwellings have this component of seclusion requirements prominently woven into their architectural designs. The inside layout of space carefully follows the cultural and religious guidelines provided by (Karim 2021). A strong emphasis on meeting the requirements of women, individuals, families, close relatives, and non-family guests, this arrangement of interior spaces has a significant impact on architectural design and proportions (Mortada 2003, Rapoport 2019). Social interactions between individuals of different genders are thoughtfully guided in these environments.. (Mortada 2003).

In conclusion, gender separation and the establishment of separate spheres for men and women are deeply ingrained in both the Hausa and Malay communities, as elaborated by (Hamzah 2019). The architectural arrangement emphasises a clear demarcation between the public and private domains (Hashim and Rahim 2010, Fattah, Badarulzaman et al. 2018)functioning as a safeguard against any intrusions on the confidentiality of family life .In these cultures, privacy is defined by a focus on women's seclusion, gender-segregated areas, zones that divide private from public life, women's hijab wear, and the use of architectural features (Othman, Aird et al. 2015). The security and purity of the family as well as each member individually are strengthened by these combined actions (Hashim and Rahim 2010).
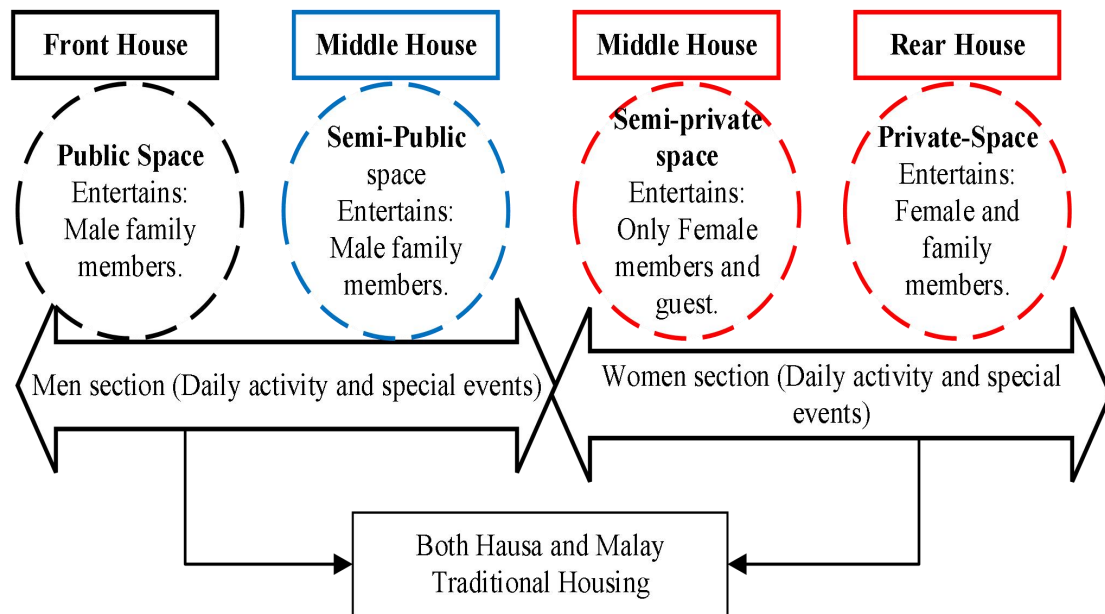
Figure 1: The privacy-enhancing zoning of both Hausa and Malay Traditional Housing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Visual Privacy

Visual privacy is defined by Manaf, Rahim et al. (2019) Internal visual privacy regulation is defined as controlling the level of visual integration, or whether to allow or forbid visual connections, and viewing perspective as what is observed from a single point of view in a certain space (viewing angle and distance). However, according to Zamri, Ismail et al. (2023) the best way to control the amount of visual exposure and openness is through visual privacy. Regulation of privacy is more consistent with definition, according to which privacy is an open-close system intended to get the optimal degree of privacy required for every person's needs (Elgadra and Fotios 2023). Visual privacy is an essential aspect of privacy, particularly in residential building settings and architectural design (Al-Kodmany 1999). It fulfils the vital function of serving as a visual barrier between the interior and the exterior, allowing for unhindered visual surveillance and providing the capacity to regulate and restrict visual exposure (Manaf, Rahim et al. 2019). In this sense, "visual exposure" refers to the chance that those in one's near vicinity would witness one's actions. However, having visual access has the advantage of allowing one to see and keep track of one's immediate surroundings. It becomes imperative to provide visual privacy when it comes to housing to limit family members' visual exposure to strangers while preserving their freedom to visually engage with their immediate surroundings (Lafi and Al-khalifa 2022).

To protect the privacy and safety of female family members, Muslim homes must prioritise visual privacy in their architectural designs (Razali and Talib 2013). A variety of interventions, including windows, balconies, building heights, entrance doors, and gendered areas, are used to accomplish this. Entry doors in traditional residences are positioned to keep the public and private spheres apart from one another (Hwaish 2015). Regarding everyday life and comfort, Muslim families have a right to visual privacy as well as a religious obligation. In traditional households, privacy is divided into four main layers: privacy between neighbouring homes, privacy between men and women, privacy inside the family, and individual privacy (Othman, Aird et al. 2015, Maknun, Hasjim et al. 2020).
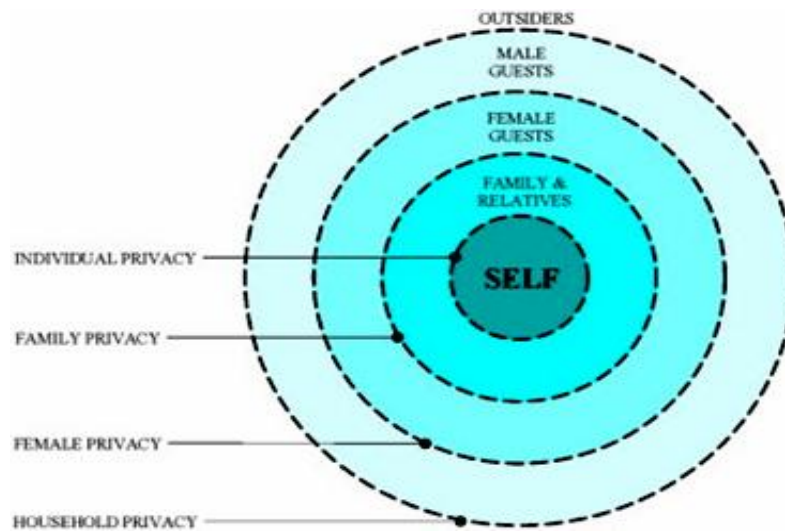
Figure 2: Layers of privacy in Traditional Housing.

Adapted by: (Othman, Aird et al. 2015)

Islamic Architecture and Visual Privacy

Nonetheless, in Muslim society, having visual privacy within one's home does not mean avoiding any outside connection, as this would be unproductive and have negative psychological and social implications that would eventually lead to social isolation (Siwi 2023). This suggests that, it might be challenging to strike a compromise between the demands of architecture and maintaining a certain amount of visual solitude without sacrificing access to the outside world. By using various techniques related to the division of responsibilities and spaces within the house like separating the guest area from the public space and leading it into the semi-private space before ending in the private chamber traditional Islamic architects were able to overcome this challenge. Additionally, the centre has an interior courtyard. When analysing the topic of studying architecture that is the product of a specific religious culture or civilization, like Islamic architecture, the proper theological perspective must be applied (Zamri, Ismail et al. 2023). Islamic culture has the greatest impact on how domestic units develop in terms of defining what is socially acceptable or unacceptable both overtly and covertly, as in the Quran's law (Prima 2021). Islamic

culture maintains that, women should take care of the home and their spouses by raising their children, while males should be out in public engaging in other activities. Islamic sharia regulates men's and women's roles, which has consequences for matters of public and private space. Areas outside the home are designated for men's activities, whereas houses are seen as women's spaces where they carry out household chores. The division of places at home and in the city results from this division of roles. The regulations of aurat, mahram, hijab, and visitation also dictate the limits of space in Muslim homes. It's thought that Muslim households draw their boundaries depending on The boundaries of space in Muslim houses are also governed by the laws pertaining to aurat, mahram, hijab, and visiting. These four interconnected factors are thought to serve as the foundation for boundary establishment in Muslim homes.

Imam Ibn Qudamah (rahimahullah) defined mahram as everyone who is not allowed to marry due to nasab, or sharing a nursing mother as a parent (Hasan, Prabowo et al. 2021). Imam Ibn Athir (rahimahullah) defines mahram as those relatives such as fathers, sons, uncles, and other family members whom one is never permitted to marry. According to Sheikh Sholeh Al-

Fauzan, husbands and wives are regarded mahram, as is everyone who shouldn't be married because of nasab (descendants), such as fathers, sons, and brothers, as well as other causes such siblings or stepsons (Yousif and Aziz 2021). The mahram law determines whether or not a woman may be seen without Muslim clothing (i.e., whether aurat is revealed or not). Both sexes should abstain from displaying their aurat to non-mahram individuals. The legislation about aurat is the hijab, which refers to barriers (either clothes or spatial boundaries) (Rashid, Baharuddin et al. 2021). The body of a Muslim woman is shielded from observation and, more significantly, from touch. Adult Muslim women are expected to follow the rules on covering one's body with clothing, with the exception of the face and hands (Siwi 2023). When a woman leaves the house, her aura needs to be contained because other people view her home as private and the outside world as a public space. Shaykh Abdurrahman bin Nasir al-Sa'di said, "Hijab can be attire that covers (the body) like a hijab: a scarf and the like (Razali and Talib 2018). One can utilise the hijab as a kind of garment that acts as a barrier to protect themselves from non-mahram persons.

Table 1: Visual Privacy in Traditional Housing

Type of privacy	Location	Design considerations
Visual	External	1. <u>Doors</u>: The entrance doors are not immediately facing the neighbours and are placed away from the main road. 2. <u>Windows</u>: a) windows with tiny holes above eye level (about 1.75 m height) on lower stories; b) Higher level windows that are smaller in size. 3. <u>Building heights</u>: The identical building heights and windows on the opposite side that face away from the neighbour
	Internal	1. <u>Courtyard</u>: allowing unobstructed views of the inner living spaces and a microclimate. 2. <u>Gendered spaces</u>: To ensure the safety and privacy of ladies, the guest spaces are divided into male and female sections.

Aspects of Privacy and Hausa Traditional Housing

According to Umaru, Adamu et al. (2022) a typical Hausa home can be divided into three separate sections: an exterior core, a middle core, and an inner core. The ward, the guest/servant area, and the backyard devoted to animal husbandry and trash disposal are all located within the inner core, which is called the women's area (Batagarawa and Tukur 2019). The main focal point of the centre is a courtyard that serves as a multipurpose area for social events, household chores, and a source of natural light and ventilation (Olotuah and Olotuah 2016). These architectural ideas have their roots in Egyptian domestic architecture from circa 500 CE, and they have helped transform traditional Hausa village plans into towns and villages (Umar, Yusuf et al.,2019). Families conduct a variety of social and ceremonial events as well as their everyday household chores in the centre's open courtyard (Noma, Bakr et al. 2022). It promotes family time and relaxation by acting as a calm playground for kids and a calm spot to retire to on warm evenings or seasons (Aliyu, Sagir et al. 2022). Influenced by the notion of "PURDAH," which emphasises the segregation of women and is represented in the design split into Haremlik (accessible) and Selemlik (non-accessible) zones, Hausa architecture highlights the

unique boundary between interior and outdoor spaces (Danjuma, Mukhtar et al. 2020).Three main spatial divisions are visible in some courtyard layouts but are more prominent in others: the kitchen and dining areas, which are typically located away from the main compound; the individual or communal dining spaces within a parlour or open area; and the central courtyard for household and social activities. Restrooms or latrines are usually situated outside or at the far end of the complex to preserve privacy, hygiene, and other factors (Zhang and Yusuf 2018).

Table 2: Privacy enhancing zoning for Hausa Traditional Housing

Privacy-enhancing zoning	Daily Activities	Privacy Requirement	Application or Architectural Elements
Public Space (Male family member & male guest. Main Entrance	Guests are mostly men and are welcomed in the "Zaure." The Zaure space can be utilised for a variety of things, depending on the circumstance or time of day. A place for socialising, conversation, and overnight visitor entertainment when not with family.	This is a male-only area; women are not allowed. Architectural elements like a wall and a door were constructed to keep visitors from looking between public and semi-public areas. Zaure is typically utilised for family events like ceremonies and guest receptions.	Full height wall and a door.
Semi-Public Area (Guests: A male relative and a male family member) Intermediate Region	The courtyard is used for worship, Quran recitation, relaxation, meal preparation, and domestic tasks by men, women, and guests.	Dominance of women. The architecture was designed to deter male visitors from staring.	Archway and full-height wall
Private Space Room (rooms depend on the size of the family because the majority of traditional houses are extended family size)	There may be space for the father, the female children of his wife, the male children who are not married, and the married male children together with their portions.	Ladies ought to have their area so they may feel safe, awrah. Men, women, and single women must share a bed.	Full height wall, door, window and curtain.

Aspects of Privacy and Malay Traditional Housing

This section examines the functions of architectural features seen in traditional Malay homes as well as concerns about seclusion in Malay culture at large (Rashid, Baharuddin et al. 2021). Since the researcher(s) are Muslims and since Islam is regarded as a way of life for the Malay people, the Islamic worldview serves as the foundation for our privacy requirements (Ahmad, Yetti et al. 2022). Muslims view the right to privacy as one of the eight fundamental human rights (Yaman, Ramele et al. 2018). As Rashid, Baharuddin et al. (2021) noted that, in Muslim homes, where privacy is strongly valued and has traditionally been the deciding factor, the family takes precedence when it comes to visual privacy.

Malay culture has prioritised community connection over individual and family privacy (Said, Ab Majid et al. 2022). The typical Malay house's open and flexible floor arrangement reflects the low value placed on privacy (see Figure 3). The distinctive manner the spaces are zoned—family zone (private domain), which is the feminine

domain, and guest zone (public domain), which has a clearly masculine domain at the front—provides the required level of seclusion. Spaces are organised in a linear fashion, with a clear understanding of each space's purpose as well as the how, what, and when of each activity (Harun and Jaffar 2018). The arrangement gives the women privacy to go about their daily lives, even when they are with male guests (Lai 2019). Slight changes in elevation create unique spaces, rather than being confined by walls or other barriers. There are few enclosed spaces and rooms, which suggests that privacy inside the home is not given the same value as it is in the Islamic perspective, which requires parents and children to sleep in separate rooms (Putra and Putri 2023). The regions of the house are defined by sliding panels and drapes, with very little internal wall use. Young female family members are assigned to a room that is usually situated apart from the main living area of the house. Young children frequently share beds with their parents. One prominent feature of a Malay home is its lack of seclusion, emphasising the closeness of the community (Samat, Ariffin et al. 2023).

A typical Malay house's main veranda, or serambi, is a large space in the front that is used for entertainment and hosting guests, especially men (Ismail and Ibrahim 2023). While some social and neighbourhood contacts occur on the front porch, serambi is the location of other activities like gatherings, discussions, and prayers. After Islam arrived, walls were built to designate spaces and construct rooms in place of the curtains that had previously served as walls (Yusof, Sabil et al. 2023). Malay traditional wooden buildings are raised above the ground to provide shelter from the elements, including heat, rain, and animals (Chung 2023). Fenestrations, which include windows, doors, and ventilation panels, are affixed to the walls, floors, and roof to facilitate unobstructed air circulation and cooling of the dwelling. Decorative ventilation panels were designed to provide brightness and a view in addition to facilitating air circulation (Elgadra and Fotios 2023). The house's elevation above the ground and its ornamental window panels gives its occupants visual seclusion.

Behavioural norms are crucial methods for managing privacy in traditional Malay society. The customs of bahasa (language) and budi (etiquette) govern behaviour in the tightly-knit traditional Malay community (Ahmad, Yetti et al. 2022). The term "budi bahasa" refers to the appropriate conduct that one should exhibit in both private and public settings. Examples of this behaviour include not intruding into the personal affairs of others, greeting others and obtaining permission before entering their homes, refraining from looking into their homes, and adhering to social norms regarding attire and behaviour (Abuhussain, Al-Tamimi et al. 2022). The community as a whole benefit indirectly from privacy when normative behaviour patterns are observed. These standards closely align with Islamic morals, therefore in this sense, Malay traditions and Islam are entirely compatible (Yaman, Ramele et al. 2018). Islam places a high priority on privacy, and the right to privacy is among the most valuable liberties, all-encompassing rights, and most precious freedoms (Rashid, Baharuddin et al. 2021). The Holy Qur'an makes it very evident that everyone has the right to privacy and that no one should infringe on that right without consent.

Table 3: The privacy-enhancing zoning daily activities, privacy requirement and application of architectural elements in Malay Traditional Housing

Privacy-enhancing zoning	Daily Activities	Privacy Requirement	Application or Architectural Elements
Public Area: A male relative and a male visitor.	main doorway for males. For the celebration of this special event, men are invited into the home as guests.	This is not a place for ladies; this is for guys alone. The design of architectural components was intended to prevent visitors from glancing between places that are semi-public and public.	Open veranda; just a railing.
Men's Door and Open Veranda	Depending on the situation and time of day, the central area and open veranda can be used for a variety of purposes. A location to host guests, have conversations, and pass the night. 24 people can be seated comfortably on the floor thanks to the open-concept design.		
Semi-Public Space (Male family member and Male relative guest) Middle Area	A location where people of all genders, family members, and visitors can pray, read the Quran, unwind, dine, and take care of housekeeping duties.	Dominance of women. Architectural elements were designed to prevent male visitors from ogling.	Archway, curtain, and full-height wall.
Private Space Room (3 unit)	Male in room 1. Parents in Room 2. Unmarried female in Room 3. The room is utilised for many purposes, including sleeping and resting.	Awrah, women ought to have their own area where they can feel safe. Men, women, and single women must share a separate bed. The holy place was hidden by the architectural elements.	Full height wall, door, window and curtain.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Utilizing a case study methodology, this research includes images, with the occupants, an inventory of the building floor plans, and on-site observations. The case study sample consists of two distinct types of traditional homes from the traditional cultures of the Hausa and Malay. The Hausa home is located in the Kumbotso local government in Nigeria, while the Malay home is located in Johor Bahru, Malaysia. The selected residences display a range of floor plan sizes as well as the privacy of the occupants. We got in touch with the selected respondents to find out whether they were available and would like to be interviewed. In the natural environment of traditional Hausa and Malay communities, this study will be carried out.

The locations were carefully selected taking into account their home environments, sociocultural requirements, and the local Muslim cultural norms. To understand the inhabitants' behaviour and privacy needs, on-site observations were conducted. Both

Hausa and Malay households from a variety of age and gender ranges were included in the study. The majority of the observations took place at around ten (10:00am) when ordinary villagers men and women alike were going about their daily lives, spending time with their families, and most often women were making lunch. At approximately eleven in the morning, observations were done at another residence, concentrating on the domestic tasks carried out by women while the homeowner served guests in the common area.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the results of the case study, behavioural norms based on the cultural and religious beliefs of the Malays and Hausas continue to be significant behavioural mechanisms in regulating privacy among both communities living in traditional housing that provide privacy to the family and community at large. Some of the behavioural norms are more crucial for protecting community privacy.

Hausa Traditional House

According to (Aliyu and Haruna 2021, Noma, Bakr et al. 2022) looking at the floor plan, it is clear that, the house is divided into zones that increase privacy: the front house, which includes the Zaure, storage, and a section for the male family members; the main building, which includes the kitchen and a courtyard for daily activities; and the rear part of the house, which is the most private, secure, and entirely dedicated to the sleeping area, where the rooms are. When women must withdraw as family members or visitors to areas where visual privacy is not regulated, head coverings or the hijab are crucial for protecting their bodily privacy from non-family male strangers and maintaining their modesty (Mukhtar, Mandi et al. 2020). Maintaining physical modesty through clothing code is essential in traditional Hausa homes because it protects women's autonomy over their bodies and permits the continuation of friendly interactions.(Oladejo 2020).

(Moughtin 1964, Haruna 2016, Zhang and Yusuf 2018) posits that, the main materials used in traditional Hausa traditional construction have been earth, stone, and straw, which have been skilfully utilised respectively and in combination.
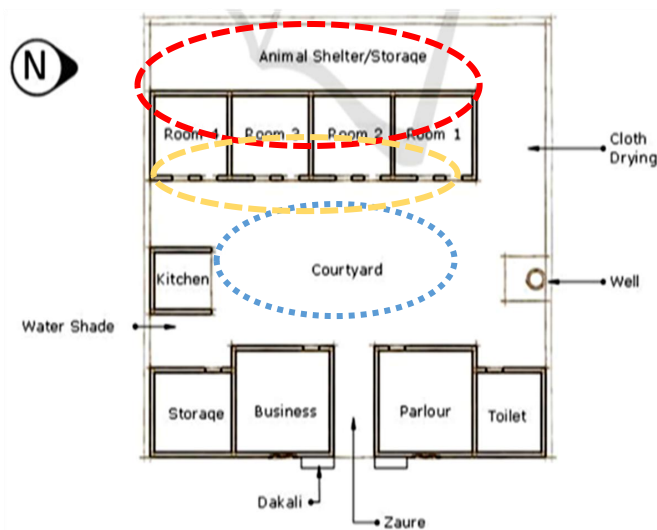

Figure 2: Typical Hausa Traditional House.

Adopted by: (Zhang and Yusuf 2018).

Malay Traditional House

Close-knit communities are preferred over family privacy in Malay communities (Zamri, Ismail et al. 2023). A spacious main verandah or serambi at the front of the house, especially for entertaining and greeting male guests, is a necessary for a typical Malay residence (Fig. 3) (Ahmad, Yetti et al. 2022). Meetings, talks, and prayers are among the events held at Serambi; additional social and neighbourhood get-togethers and conversations happen on the front porch (Harun and Jaffar 2018). "Budi bahasa," according to Malay tradition, is the proper conduct that one should display in both public and private settings. Examples of this include not meddling in other people's personal matters, extending a courteous greeting to guests, getting permission before entering their homes, and following social norms regarding behaviour and attire (Rashid, Baharuddin et al. 2021).

The majority of traditional Malay homes are built using wood and a special technique called tanggam application. A "Tanggam" system is a way to connect forests. According to (Harun and Jaffar 2018, Yaman, Ramele et al. 2018, Zamri, Ismail et al. 2023)the understanding of Malays, tanggam means wooden building frame assembly in the experimental stage.
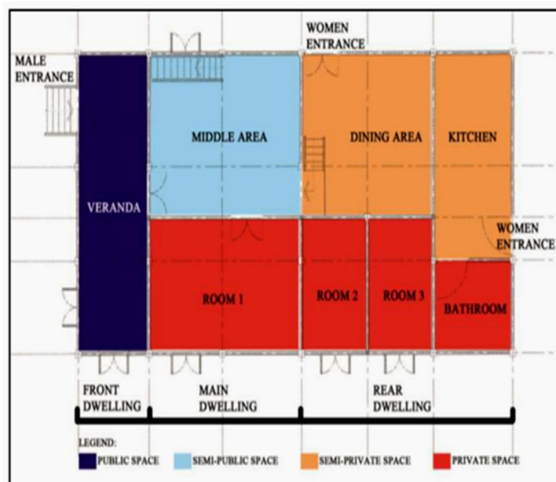

Figure 3: Typical Malay Traditional House.

Adopted by:(Razali and Talib 2013)

It is evident that, in both cultures, the way people express their emotions and behave reflects their responses to certain occurrences in the lives of Muslim women. If Muslim women disclose their aurat, it is viewed as a disgraceful incident when others who are not mahram suddenly appear (body). Muslim women who wear headscarves may feel and act ashamed, furious, want to seek sanctuary, retreat, and flee. When faced with such circumstances, Muslim women seek to either locate a place to hide or quickly cover their bodies (aurat) with garments. A Muslim woman wearing a hijab feels as though she is seeing someone naked when she exposes her aurat, which is a region of the body that ought to be covered.
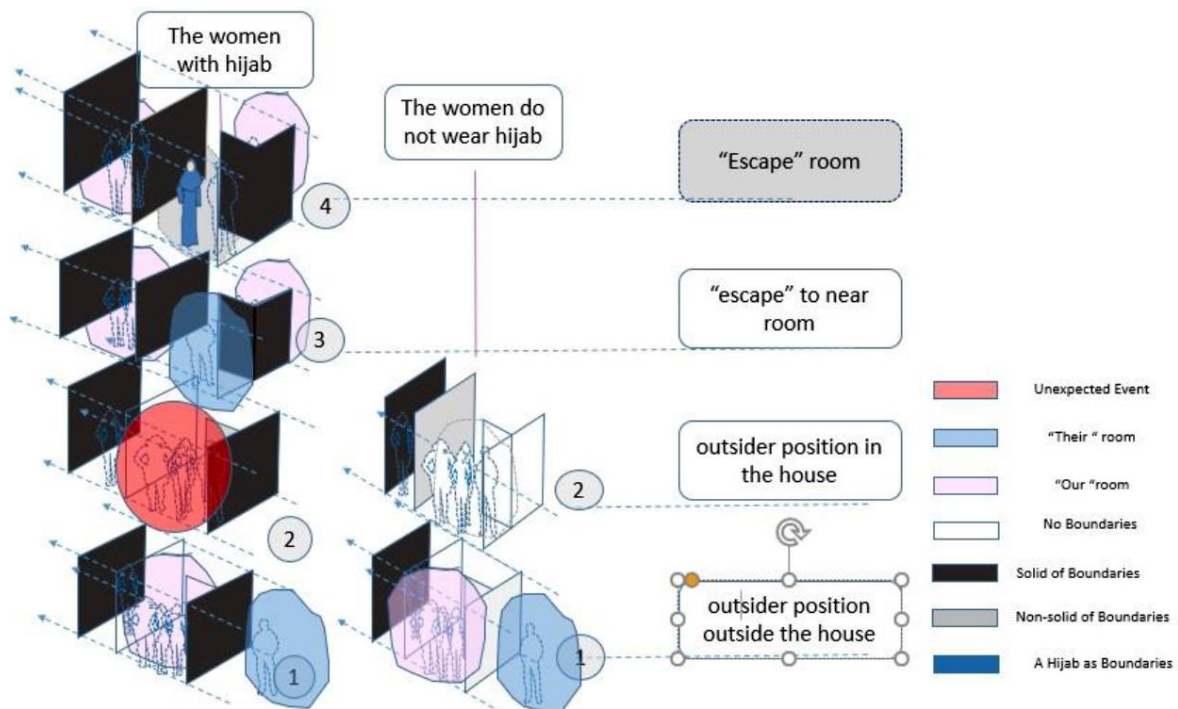
Figure 4: Guest Interaction Processes in Spatial Practices

(Siwi 2023)

Figure 4 depicts the protocols for communication between guests and inhabitants in both Hausa and Malay. A wide range of people with wildly varying levels of privacy awareness are taking part as guest actors in this process. The statistics classify them as guests who understand Islamic law and those who do not, as well as mahram and non-mahram guests (mahram, visiting, aurat, and hijab). The phases of visitation and "space events" are described. Initially, guests knock or ring to sign in (sensory via touch). Then, they make a sound to signal that they are there (saying "assalamu alaikum," etc.). Using sound (familiar/nonfamiliar, mahram/non-mahram), guests can be distinguished. These things take place outside the fence or boundaries of the house. Next are the inhabitants' replies to the voice signals made by the other participants. The locals watch to see who's around and listen. The next step is to either (1) ignore or (2) reply to greetings so that locals can discern between known and unknown, as well as between mahram and non-mahram. In the house, these things take place. The next step is for the resident to don the hijab despite having acknowledged and greeted the guest (the event is taking place inside the house). A visitor is permitted admission if they are aware of sharia and are a mahram (the event is taking place inside the house). If they are not mahrams, they just enter the living room. If guests enter the house without knowing Islamic law, Muslim women living there will get confused and feel compelled to "leave" so that they won't be noticed by non-Mahram guests who don't know sharia law. Muslim women will duck into the nearest room to avoid being seen by those who are not mahram.

Similarities

Table 4 compares Hausa and Malay traditional houses with regard to privacy gradient zoning, everyday activities, the need for privacy, and the use of architectural components. Figure 2 illustrates the similarities.
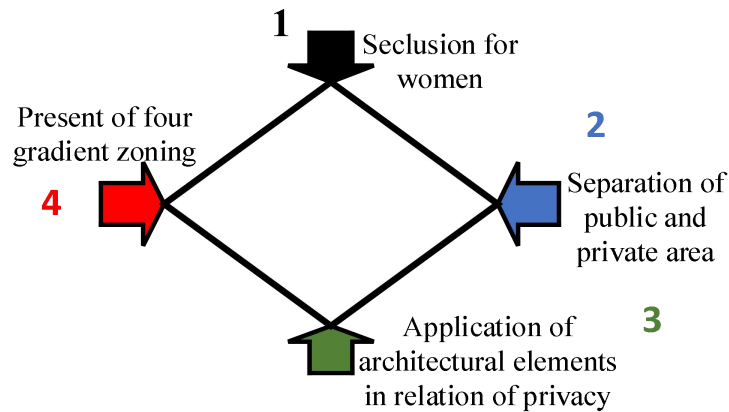
Figure 5: Similarities of Hausa and Malay Traditional Houses.

Differences

Table 4: The differences between Hausa and Malay Traditional Housing.

Differences	
Hausa Traditional Housing	**Malay Traditional Housing**
Only one entrance but there is a "Zaure" that is manly made for receiving male visitors.	Provision of two entrances for men and women.
No provision of dining area	Availability of dining area.
Courtyard	Varenda
Depending on the type of space, different architectural features are used. For example, the main entrance, interior doors, and windows can be made of steel or wood.	Architectural aspects such as the open veranda and men's entrance, the eating area, the kitchen, the centre area, the women's entrance, and rooms 1 (big), 2 and 3 are applied based on the type of space and functions (small)

CONCLUSION

Privacy practices in traditional housing are deeply rooted in cultural traditions and religious beliefs. While some behaviours align with religious teachings, privacy remains a fundamental principle. In predominantly Muslim nations, a shared commitment to a "modest design" ethos is evident, using resource-efficient and sustainable materials. Integrating privacy guidelines into contemporary housing design can create a secure residential environment, especially in low-cost housing. The interpretation, requirements, and regulations of privacy are influenced by socio-religious and cultural norms.

African and Middle Eastern cultures, including Nigerian and Malaysian culture, are similar in terms of family structures, customs surrounding visiting, and home architecture. Both cultures construct their homes with gender-specific transitional spaces, private and public zones, and entrances. In addition to these design elements, both cultures have rigorous entry requirements, such as requiring visitors to obtain permission from locals and enabling both mahram and non-mahram identification. Escape rooms are required since both cultures have customs of visiting that involve entering without permission, especially when the visitor feels like family.

A broader comparative investigation into privacy meanings, requirements, and practices among different ethnic groups is needed to formulate universally embraced housing design concepts. Longitudinal research on privacy needs could also provide valuable insights for establishing comprehensive guidelines. However, the results of this literature analysis on the various design strategies employed by Muslims worldwide are probably going to help experts in the building sector by broadening the range of design choices they may provide to their Muslim clientele

residing in non-Muslim nations. Moreover, the numerous design elements discussed in this literature study may find wider applicability in the homes of non-Muslims who want to achieve common design goals with Muslims, like thermal comfort, visual seclusion from neighbours, and the use of affordable and ecological materials.

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