

Administrative Systems of the “Masjids” in Sri Lanka and their Contributions towards Social Development

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Masjid An - Nabavi which was built and administered by the Prophet Mohammed (Peace be upon him) is the model for all Masjids in the world. The prophet developed socio-cultural affairs, religious faith, education, economy and political structure of his society through the administration of Masjid An - Nabavi. Moreover, this administrative strategy was followed by all masjids in the world during the Islamic era (from 624 AD up to 1924 AD). However, European conquest in the mid of 19th century in the Islamic world distorted the potential roles of masjids in society. In particular, it affected Asian countries including Sri Lanka. Consequently, functions of masjids in Sri Lanka was limited only for prayers. Thus far, no study has addressed the current status of masjids in the development of Sri Lankan society. Therefore, this study was conducted in selected Masjids belonged to twenty five districts in Sri Lanka, and objectively tested the administrative and social development roles of masjids. Required data was collected through field visits, questionnaire survey and inter personal interviews. Results revealed that the administrative structure and Sri Lanka Muslims Cultural Affairs can monitor and guide the administrative structure of masjids towards the functions of the model, Masjid An - Nabavi.

Key words: *Masjid, Administration, Culture, Islamic era, European conquest*