



COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF RESIDENTS'
SATISFACTION WITH OLD AND NEW
CONDOMINIUMS: CASE STUDIES FROM
KUALA LUMPUR METROPOLIS, MALAYSIA

BY

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of Master of Urban
and Regional planning

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APRIL 2010

ABSTRACT

Urbanization in Peninsular Malaysia has been rapid especially during the last two decades whereby the rate of urbanization has increased from 53.4% in 1991 to 65.4% in 2000. As population growth increases, space becomes limited and the land price also increases. For this reason the need to provide adequate housing for the growing population became a necessity. Therefore, high density housing such as condominium became a response to the growing demand for housing in most Malaysian cities. The rate of construction of condominiums in Malaysia keeps increasing since the last two decades. The number of dilapidated and abandoned condominiums is also increasing while some of them are converted for other uses, which is somewhat a waste of economic resource. The study provides a comparative assessment of residents' satisfaction with condominiums of different ages (the older and the younger condominiums) within the metropolis of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, with four (4) basic components grouped as independent variables – dwelling unit features, neighbourhood facilities, residential management and household characteristics. Two hundred (200) respondents participated in the survey exercise with 100 respondents from each Condominium type. Descriptive statistics has been employed to show the socio – economic distribution of the respondents. Findings from the study indicate that the residents of the older condominiums (above 10 years) were not satisfied with the dwelling unit features and the residential management, however, over 40% of the residents are also planning to relocate due to current housing situation. The residents of the younger condominiums (less than 10 years) on the other hand, show a relatively high level of satisfaction with the dwelling unit features and moderately satisfied with the residential management. Spearman's (ρ) correlation has been estimated to determine the extent of the relationship between the residents' satisfaction and the ages of the condominiums. The findings also revealed that ages of the building is a predictor of the assessment. The older condominium showed a more significant relationship between the overall satisfaction and the tested variables compared to the younger condominiums as a result of the age difference. The study further suggests measures which may help enhance management of the condominiums so as to ensure a pleasant living for the condominium residents.

ملخص البحث

لتحضر في شبه جزيرة ماليزيا قد السريع وخاصة خلال العقدين الماضيين ، حيث يمثل معدل التحضر قد ارتفع من 53.4 ٪ في عام 1991 إلى 65.4 ٪ في عام 2000. مع تزايد النمو السكاني ، ومساحة محدودة ، ويصبح سعر الأرض يزيد أيضا. لهذا السبب ، فإن الحاجة إلى توفير السكن الملائم لعدد متزايد من السكان أصبح ضرورة ملحة. ولذلك ، وارتفاع الكثافة السكانية مثل عمارات أصبحت استجابة للطلب المتزايد على المساكن في معظم المدن الماليزية. معدل بناء الوحدات السكنية في ماليزيا في ازدياد مستمر منذ العقدين الماضيين. عدد الوحدات السكنية المهجورة المتهالكة ويزداد أيضا في حين أن البعض منهم يتم تحويلها لاستخدامات أخرى ، والتي هي نوعا ما مضيعة للموارد الاقتصادية. وتقدم الدراسة تقييما مقارنا لسكان ارتياح الوحدات السكنية من مختلف الأعمار (كبار السن والوحدات السكنية الأصغر سنا) في العاصمة كوالالمبور ، ماليزيا ، مع أربعة (4) تجميع المكونات الأساسية باعتبارها متغيرات مستقلة -- ملامح الوحدة السكنية ، مرافق الحي ، وإدارة والخصائص السكنية للأسر المعيشية. مائتي (200) وشارك في الاستطلاع ممارسة شملهم الاستطلاع مع 100 من كل نوع الشقة. إحصاءات وصفية قد استخدمت لأظهار الاجتماعية -- الاقتصادية للتوزيع العينة. نتائج الدراسة تشير إلى أن المقيمين في الشقق كبار السن (فوق 10 سنة) لم تكن راضية عن ملامح الوحدة السكنية وإدارة السكنية ، ولكن ، أكثر من 40 ٪ من السكان هم أيضا التخطيط لنقل بسبب الوضع الحالي في مجال الإسكان. سكان الوحدات السكنية الأصغر سنا (أقل من 10 سنوات) من ناحية أخرى ، تدل على مستوى عال نسبيا من الارتياح مع سمات وحدة سكنية ومعتدل راض عن الإدارة السكنية. والرامح (ρ) ارتباط وقد قدر لتحديد مدى العلاقة بين سكان رضا والذين تتراوح أعمارهم من الوحدات السكنية. وكشفت نتائج المسح أن أعمار المبنى يشكل مؤشرا للتقييم. وعمارات قديمة أظهرت وجود علاقة أكثر جوهرية بين الارتياح الشامل واختبار المتغيرات بالمقارنة مع الوحدات السكنية الأصغر نتيجة لفارق السن. وأشارت الدراسة أيضا إلى التدابير التي يمكن أن تساعد على تعزيز إدارة الوحدات السكنية وذلك لضمان لقمة العيش لطيفا للسكان عمارات.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Urban and Regional Planning.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Ashim, Oladimeji Ogundele

Signature

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In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful
This dissertation is heartily dedicated to Almighty Allah (SWT).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank Almighty Allah for his special grace and mercy on me. I am ever thankful to you for seeing me through this monumental task also for making my vision a perfect reality. I equally owe an immense debt to my parents (Late Alhaji Muhammad Robiu Akanni Ogundele and Alhaja Simbiat Apinke Ogundele) who totally committed themselves in giving me the best legacy that can be treasured while alive and at their departure. Big thanks also to my siblings, friends and relatives both home and abroad for making this pursuit a reality may Allah (SWT) bless your efforts.

Thanks for the inspiration given by supervisor, Associate Prof. Dr. Mohd. .A. Mohit since the inception of the academic program. I am ever grateful for the guidance and suggestions from all members of staff towards achieving excellence in my academic pursuit.

My profound gratitude also goes to my lovely ones, friends and well wishers. May Allah in his eminence bless you all as you have supported me towards realizing my dream I am proud of you all.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CHKL	City Hall Kuala Lumpur
EHA	Established Housing Area
FELCRA	Federal Land Consolidation and Rehabilitation Authority
FELDA	Federal Land Development Authority
HDB	Housing Development Board
MHLG	Ministry of Housing and Local Government
PDCP	Penang Development Corporation Project
PH	Public Housing
REHDA	Real Estate and Housing Developers Association of Malaysia
UDA	Urban Development Authority

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Almost in all the major cities in the South-East Asian countries, most residential apartments are characterized with high-rise and high density as a result of high land values within the cities. Several factors accounts for housing design and structural design. As environmental factors supports Japan's notion of high rise buildings, limited available space also justifies Singapore's initiative towards high rise. Obviously, other cities like Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, Jakarta etc. adopts this initiative due to the increasing rate of urbanization and advancing economic development which certainly influences the pattern and distribution of land uses thus reshaping the residential land use towards high density development. Urbanization in Peninsular Malaysia has been rapid especially during the last two decades whereby the rate of urbanization has increased from 53.4% in 1991 to 65.4% in 2000 (JPBD, 2006, p.13). As population growth increases, space becomes limited and the land price also increases. For this reason the need to provide adequate housing for the growing population became a necessity. Therefore, high density housing such as condominium became a response to the growing demand for housing in the city. The rate of construction of condominiums in Malaysia keeps increasing since the last two decades (MHLG, 2008). Also, the number of dilapidated and abandoned condominiums is also increasing and some are converted for other incompatible uses, which may hinder the prospect of the city's socio -economic development. Under this circumstance,

assessing residents' satisfaction has become a theme of academic research particularly in physical planning and urban development.

Most researches conducted on residential satisfaction and housing management particularly public and private income housing under several geographical case studies, however, there is still little effort to how best urban land can be used within its sphere of scarcity to achieve sustainability and enhance the residents' living environment. Housing policies and strategies varies from one country to another and the residential status is largely determined by the level of urbanization. Going by the Malaysian context, types of housing are divided into three broad categories, namely low cost, medium cost and high cost. Majority of medium and high cost housing is produced by private sector, while low cost housing is mainly provided from government housing programs and from the 30 percent low cost housing quota imposed on private developers constructing new housing development (CHKL 2008). Private developers account for almost all private-sector housing delivery and this accounted for 97% of the overall private sector housing achievement in the Seventh Malaysia Plan (1996–2000). Nevertheless, the requirements for residential satisfaction today are still issues of concern which may hinder the success of the stated vision for the year 2020.

Condominium is a necessity in the city centre. Despite this, limited available space does not necessarily mean unfavourable housing condition for the dwellers if efficiently managed and properly evaluated. The theoretical framework of this research is basically to test the notion that age of building has direct influence on the level of satisfaction derived by the residents regardless of the structural design of the supposed apartment. Most condominium projects in Malaysia are being provided and managed by the private sectors. However, if the current demand requires increasing

construction of condominiums, therefore it would be appropriate to evaluate the preference and the level of satisfaction derived by the residents.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Urban planning in parts of developing countries is arguably a product of Western colonial legacies (Ogu, 2002). Consequently, one of the challenges facing most developing countries is the planning and the design framework of cities in such a way that will ensure sustainability. Facing the problems encountered through housing management in developing cities such as Kuala Lumpur hence needs utmost attention. The most significant innovation in physical development planning is the transition from government-built to privately developed housing (Mabogunje, 2003). Recent studies revealed the perceived influence on building construction in most developing countries emanates from increasing urbanization, strong political influence, developers/private sector's stakeholder-ship, high preference for foreign concept to domestic compatibility and finally poor integration among the concerned authorities and agencies. Despite this, increasing urbanization does not necessitate declining housing quality if effectively and strategically planned with the view of achieving sustainable community through housing.

From construction perspective, the life span of a building should not be less than fifty years (50) if properly maintained hence, there are some dilapidated and abandoned condominiums at both before and after construction within the metropolis of ages less than 50 years and yet abandoned (Figure 1.1). Perhaps, this could be due to the management problems as a result of maintenance practice, coupled with the low government involvement which eventually leads to the dissatisfaction with the basic facilities by the residents. In addition, condominium projects are the riskiest types of

construction project for a developer and the loss ratio is relatively high compared to the other types. This is because of the required facilities such as elevators coupled with infrastructures, which is undoubtedly a high capital intensive project to manage. As building becomes progressively obsolete therefore, the older the condominium, the less beneficial it becomes regardless of the cost of construction and time which is indeed a waste of economic resource.



Figure 1.1: Condominium stands abandoned more than 10 years in Sentul- East
Source: Field survey 2009

The increasing urbanization within the city centre has contributed towards rapid increase in the demand for housing thus, leading to a persistent decrease in residential land area at a rate not less than 35 percent since 1980 (CHKL 2004). In addition, many older and dilapidated low density housing areas occupying land which has high potential value are also being converted to commercial use (CHKL 2008).

One of the fundamental features of a good neighbourhood planning is the provision of space, usually public space and how activities will be organized within the space. Urban space creates the surrounding forms, from which all types of successful urban life spring forth and flourish. It is quite unfortunate that most of the older condo apartments are losing this basic amenity thus adding to the declining housing quality. Wang & Yu (2002) affirm that when a building consist more than fifty (50) apartments, there is likelihood of social disintegration and effects on young children. Other consequences include social and neighbourhood dissociation.

In Malaysia, once condominium apartments are constructed the developer will transfer the management to the respective agent or the residential association with the issuance of the 'strata title, which is one of the problems encountered by developers because it takes longer period usually (15-20 years) before it is given. The period also affects the management because most of the basic facilities would have become obsolete before being transferred to the respective management. Therefore, this affects the management thus making it one of the displeased aspects of condominium living as perceived by the residents within the metropolis.

Measuring conduciveness involves certain parameter (such as infrastructure) which is one of the main indicators of sustainability. According to the CHKL (2008), majority of the condominiums within the metropolis are between 18 - 30 stories which undoubtedly requires relatively high rate of energy consumption apart from the domestic use. This complexity of the physical structure therefore, poses a cumbersome task on the maintenance practice. Appraising the observed problems would be able to answer the questions; can 'condominium' survive for a long period? In addition, how do planners ensure sense of social cohesion within the limited available space? Finally, if the construction of condominiums is the most appropriate

remedy to cater the increasing housing demand in Kuala Lumpur, what are the measures to be taken to enhance the management practice? However, the stated problems describe the focus of the study.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Based on the issues highlighted in the problem statement, the aim of the study is to assess the residents' satisfaction with condominiums in Kuala Lumpur. In order to achieve this aim the following objectives have been formulated:

- To investigate residents' satisfaction with condominium in physical unit features;
- To assess the key determinants of residents' satisfaction with condominiums within the metropolis;
- To relate the extent of the satisfaction with the age of the building and management; and
- To provide recommendations which may enhance satisfaction with condominium living.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the levels of satisfaction perceived by the residents with the dwelling unit features?
- What is the perception of the residents regarding neighbourhood facilities?
- What is the perception of the residents regarding the management of the condominiums?
- What is the view of the residents regarding their intention to relocate?

- How and to what extent the level of satisfaction is influenced by the age of the building?

1.5 SCOPE OF STUDY

The study aims to compare the residents' satisfaction with condominiums in Kuala Lumpur so as to relate the level of satisfaction to the age of the building. For this reason, two condominium apartments were chosen (i.e. older and younger condominiums) in two of the six planning zones where middle income housing including condominium predominates (Wangsa Maju – Maluri and Sentul), respectively. Furthermore, the study also identifies the key determinants of the residents' satisfaction and how the extent of the satisfaction is being influenced by the management of the condominium. Some of the basic features being assessed and analyzed include the dwelling unit features, neighbourhood facilities and the management of the condominium.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

So far housing research in Malaysia has been on public or private low – cost with little attention paid to the growing condominium sector. Although, there is private involvement in the public housing as well, but most middle income housing are principally provided by the private sector. Housing, regardless of user's level of income, there are some notable parameters which must be present in assessing the residents' satisfaction. If studies could have been carried out to evaluate the residential satisfaction from different perspectives, how much more the so called medium cost housing particularly the condominiums; which is meant for more affluent people and personalities. Therefore, this study tend to examine the

effectiveness and the level of satisfaction as perceived by the residents of 'condominium' in Kuala Lumpur, would also set a basis for the evaluation of other forms of medium cost housing towards the overall level of housing satisfaction in the country.

1.6.1 Significance towards Planning

The existing housing stock, the new housing development process, housing renovation process, aging of the house and spatial pattern of the distribution within an entire metropolitan area together form a single dynamic social system (Rodwin & Sanyal 2000). As a result, the success of city planning is to ascertain efficient use of land in a sustainable manner. The task may seem holistic rather constant appraisal based on the uses is somewhat essential. One of the obvious problems facing most metropolitan areas is the planning approach towards solving urbanization problems. It is apparent that the level of socio-economic development determines the pattern of land use. With the increasing rate of urbanization as experienced in most developing cities, it is important to assess the dynamics in virtual to land use planning and control guidelines. In essence this study will enable the concerned authorities and agencies towards ensuring proper housing planning and management within the metropolis.

1.6.2 Significance towards Community

The residential population of a city is its most important resource and its greatest responsibility. The well being of Kuala Lumpur's residents is the utmost concern of the city authorities. A favourable housing condition is also a manifestation of a sustainable community. An improved management strategies and neighbourhood interaction would also aid the formation of a sustainable communities and

development, by this the protection and welfare of the communities can be guaranteed and improvement can be achieved to creating a better quality of urban population and standard of living. Moreover, this will also promote the potential of Kuala Lumpur and the entire Malaysia towards achieving the set vision for the year 2020.

1.7 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The study is phased into four stages which include the background and the theoretical studies, data collection and gathering, analysis of data and findings, and the conclusions and recommendations. The first stage consists of Chapters One and Two which describes the research problems that led to the formulation of the research topic, the research objectives, research questions and the scope. This involves an extensive analysis of various related research works and other relevant publications. The second stage discusses the sampling and methods of data collection through both surveys in the study area and the secondary sources, respectively. It also presents the background information about the study area and the geographical distribution of the sampled condominium in the selected areas within the metropolis. The third stage presents the analysis of the data findings including the analytical technique adopted while the fourth stage of this dissertation summarizes the results of the findings in relation to the stated objectives. It further proffers relevant suggestion on how to enhance condo living in the study area and finally the conclusion of the study.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Obviously, empirical studies are not only time demanding but also requires direct observation and quality data so as to aid good analysis. Constraints being encountered during the course of survey have narrowed the scope of the research. Basically, the

nature of the study area coupled with the complexity of the housing type (condominium) really delayed the scheduled time for the data collection. Another issue was the residents' status, in which the procedures underwent before their responses could be got also added to the delay. In addition, constraint encountered during secondary data collection at the respective agencies also added to the problems, which undoubtedly contributed to the delayed time for not meeting the schedule.

1.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter provides an overview of the study regarding approaches, concepts also the identified problems which require proper evaluation so as to ensure efficient city planning and sustainable community. The scope of the study was also formulated as well as the organisation of the study. The study flowchart which describes the stages involved in the full coverage of the study is also produced (Figure 3.4, p.50).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Cities are part of the environment (Short & Short 2008), and the environment is where we live. Therefore, attempts and efforts made in shaping the environment in order to meet individual and communal preferences regarding the use of available space needs strategic planning approach and regular assessment. Our efforts towards the utilization of space on the available land have given rise to different structural approaches and design methods, which also signify that space and development are inseparable. Aribigbola (2008) stress on the housing quality and equity as one of the inhibiting factors encountered by most developing countries. Evidence from past readings on housing have made it clear that any residential structure or design should consider three fundamental factors of social, economic and environment as its main objectives. Though income levels are uneven, nevertheless, different categories of people must be satisfied based on their respective status regarding shelter and other necessities of life. The basis for this research is to evaluate the level of residents' satisfaction with Condominiums in Kuala Lumpur in order to test the notion that age of the building determines its preference and the level of satisfaction derived. For this reason, this chapter discusses the literatures that are cogent and important to the focus of the study, it outlines some important considerations that have contributed and some of the approaches that have been adopted at realising a sustainable community through housing within metropolitan areas. It also delves into summaries and approaches on private housing management in Malaysia and the steps that have been taking so far in

accordance with the Malaysian development plans. An extensive analysis and experience related to other issues of importance and cases were also considered based on literatures from various researchers and experiences from other countries.

2.2 URBAN LAND USE AND HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Issues regarding provision of urban housing and the use of urban space have been a common issue in most third world and developing cities since their inception (Johnstone 1984). Consequently, the increasing urbanization has greatly influenced the pattern of residential land use within the metropolis (Table. 4.1). One of the common features of most developing countries is employment opportunity which attracts most immigrants thus resulting into increase in demand for housing within the limited available space. This has also been justified from the Malaysian context in the case of the two (2) major cities of Kuala Lumpur and Penang (Figure 2.1) with the influx of over 4 million foreign workers with increasing demand for more residential land use since the last decade (Tapir, Yatim & Usman 2003). The most glaringly empirical fact in housing development had been earlier appraised by Evans (1992) upon his view of residential location and classification based on income and social status, which implies that in any economy, there is usually a residential hierarchy which is comprised of varying zones and districts ranging from the few large districts, medium- sized to the larger numbers of smaller cities and towns. However, reasons for such hierarchical gap are less obvious and could probably be due to numbers of operating factors which are primarily subjected to the changing urban environment and the associated development's trend. Theoretically, the industrial and commercial structure of cities differs, thus causing differences in their land values and other associated benefits. Efforts towards the utilization of space on the available land have