



EVALUATION OF STAKEHOLDERS'  
PREFERENCES IN URBAN REDEVELOPMENT

BY

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## ABSTRACT

The multicultural society in Malaysia is ingrained with the built up heritage of its early townships. Architectural details of traditional shophouses, which are the early urban settlements, are a rich mixture of Chinese, Indian, European and Malay cultures. The recent vintage of these built up heritages poses a threat to their existence. Rapid development and escalating market value increasingly replace these buildings with newer and higher-density structures. The current guidelines on redevelopment for traditional areas and buildings have been heavily biased on façade conservation, regardless of other aspects such as cultural merits. The rigidity of the guidelines, or lack of it as perceived by others, has resulted in conflicts and inconsistent redevelopment outcomes, not to mention inefficient implementation of development plans because the stakeholders, particularly the existing community, disagree with planned development for their areas. The aim of this research is to objectively evaluate stakeholders' preferences in redevelopment decisions for traditional area. The subjective elements of multiple stakeholders' different values and interests are explored using Multiple Criteria Analysis (MCA). MCA has been widely applied in various urban land use decision making as a structured approach to semi-structured decision problems. It is believed that the structured approach in MCA can be of a significant benefit towards a more constructive and transparent decision process. Eventually, it will lead to easier acceptance of development plans, thus more effective implementation of the plans. Using a relatively common MCA technique, the Analytical Hierarchy Process, stakeholders' preferences on a set of criteria for redevelopment decision are derived and compared. It is found that homogeneity does not necessarily exist within and in between homogeneous groups. This study indirectly contributes to discovering the potential of MCA evaluation to increase transparency in redevelopment decision making process.

## خلاصة البحث

يترسخ التنوع الثقافي في المجتمع الماليزي من خلال البناء التراثي في مدنه القديمة. وتتميز التفاصيل المعمارية في المحلات التجارية التقليدية المنتشرة في المستوطنات الحضارية القديمة بخليط من الثقافات الصينية والهندية والأوروبية والملايوية. إلا أن هذه المباني التراثية مهددة بالزوال في العصر الحديث. ويعد التطور السريع وتزايد أسعار الأسواق نقطة تحول لتلك المباني القديمة إلى مبانٍ جديدة وشاهقة. فالتعليمات الحالية في إعادة تطوير المناطق والمباني التراثية متحيزة بشدة إلى المحافظة على واجهاتها فقط، دون النظر في مظاهرها الأخرى مثل السمات الثقافية. وأدت صرامة التعليمات أو نقصها من وجهة نظر أخرى إلى نزاعات ونتائج متناقضة في إعادة التطوير. ولا نشير بذلك إلى عدم كفاءة التنفيذ في خطط التطوير، لأن أصحاب الشركات ولاسيما في المجتمع الحالي لا يوافقون على تخطيط تطويري لمناطقهم. لذا، يهدف هذا البحث إلى التقييم الموضوعي لأولويات أصحاب الشركات في قرار إعادة تطوير المناطق التراثية. واستخدم التحليل متعدد المعايير MCA للكشف عن العناصر الذاتية في المصالح والقيم المختلفة والمتعددة لأصحاب الشركات. وطُبق هذا التحليل بشكل واسع في العديد من عمليات صنع القرار في المناطق الحضارية بوصفه منظورا منظما إلى شبه منظم في قرار المشكلات. ويعتقد بأن المنظور المنظم في التحليل متعدد المعايير بإمكانه تقديم مصلحة مهمة تجاه العديد من الإجراءات البناءة والشفافة للقرارات. وفي نهاية المطاف، سيقودنا هذا التحليل إلى تسهيل قبول خطط التطوير، وهكذا ستظهر العديد من التطبيقات الفعالة لتلك الخطط. وإلى جانب استخدام تقنية التحليل متعدد المعايير، استخدم التحليل الهرمي للقرارات وذلك لمقارنة واستنتاج تفضيلات أصحاب الشركات ضمن مجموعة من المعايير لقرار إعادة التطوير. وأظهرت النتائج أن وجود التجانس لا يعد ضرورياً بين المجموعات المتجانسة. وتسهم هذه الدراسة بشكل غير مباشر في استكشاف التقييم المحتمل للتحليل متعدد المعايير، وذلك لرفع مستوى الشفافية في عملية صنع القرار لإعادة التطوير.

## **APPROVAL PAGE**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis 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.

Noor Amila Binti Wan Abdullah Zawawi

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*This chapter in my life is dedicated to my family who stood by me and experiences this journey for life-long learning. To Hana and Hafiy, the sky is the limit, my love. You can be anything you want to be.*

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Redevelopment in traditional areas is often complicated and conflict laden involving multiple stakeholders with different interests and values. Development planning and land use decisions for these areas are sufficiently complex, controversial and non-routine in nature that their resolution requires not only knowledge, expertise and data drawn from several distinct domains, but also debate of multiple and often conflicting viewpoints, objectives and solution strategies. In a dynamic and rapidly growing city such as Kuala Lumpur, redevelopment is often biased towards replacing the traditional areas and their values with new development that has little or no association with the past, wiping clean the heritage legacies. The more sustainable way forward is to embrace the past in our future planning (Jacobs, 1961), because the past gives a sense of belonging to the society, essentially supporting future growth. Therefore, there is a need to balance progressive development with conservation of important cultural values within its society (Steinberg, 1996). A reasonable balance must be obtained among conflicting viewpoints by exploring each stakeholders' values and objectively evaluate them using a formal framework that effectively decompose the decision problem into a set of criteria that allows individual preferences to be judged quantitatively.

Multiple Criteria Analysis or MCA is a method routinely used to facilitate decision makers' learning and understanding of their decision problem and the priorities, values and interests of their own and other parties. The understanding is



normally achieved via exploration of the context of the problem and guides the decision makers towards deeper understanding the decision problem and other stakeholders' different values. The application of MCA to urban planning decisions have gained wider acceptance worldwide (Feick, 2002; Geneletti, 2008; Jankowski, 1995; Janssen, 1992; Joerin, 2001; Langston, 2007; Lee, 2008; Nijkamp, 1990). The multiple dimensions of urban planning problems are well-suited to the ability of most MCA methods to objectively evaluate stakeholders' preferences based on a set of criteria simultaneously. MCA aids decision making process by integrating objective measurement with the preferences of stakeholders, i.e. their values and interests, and manage subjectivity in decision making. In other words, MCA aids decision making by giving structure to decision problems, thus increasing transparency in decision process.

In addition, urban planning problems naturally involve multiple stakeholders with different values and often conflicting interests. Decision making in a pluralistic context is considerably more difficult than by a single stakeholder as participation of multiple stakeholders are likely to involve different values, objectives and conceptualization of issues which are equally likely to be non-coincident or in conflict (Bacic, 2003; Stewart, 1997). The development of various MCA methods gives the flexibility for understanding different decision problems based on relevant factors such as nature of the decision problem, information availability and expected outcomes. This powerful decision aid is yet to be applied to many strategic planning problems in Malaysia (Kamalruddin, 2006).

This study will focus on application of MCA method to evaluate stakeholders' preferences in redevelopment decision for traditional shophouses in the city center of Kuala Lumpur. The thesis focuses on defining redevelopment decision problem and

choosing the most suitable MCA method to explore multiple stakeholders and their different preferences, ultimately assisting stakeholders in understanding their own and others' values and interests. Further it is suggested that the MCA method discussed in the following chapters provides a mechanism for increasing transparency and consistency in decision making. This would eventually lead to consensual or compromise-based development strategies, towards enhancing participatory approach to plan making involving multiple decision makers.

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Redevelopment decisions are not a straight forward decision process because it typically involves multiple parties, particularly the local communities which include tenants, lived-in owners, users, adjacent owners and anyone else with interest to the existing structures. These interests are so diverse that it includes many aspects, be it economic, social/cultural or environmental. Traditional shophouse in Kuala Lumpur traditional areas are a significant historical structure because they are indicators of early urban settlements in Malaysian towns. Many of this structure still exist in heritage zones in the city centre of Kuala Lumpur. Rapid development of Kuala Lumpur over 150 years puts this original urban settlement within prime commercial areas today, hence increasing the demands for redevelopment of these 'old buildings'. The redevelopment decision for traditional shophouses and the heritage zones in general, are subjected to various interests of different decision makers, many of them are conflicting. Each decision makers, be it individual (as in owner) or groups (non-governmental organization, local authority, traders), have their own values and objectives, and many of them view others' interest with very little trust, even when the decision to redevelop seems to be on their side. A clear example is the redevelopment

of Petaling Street, a traditional shopping area in the city center. This project was initiated by the City Hall of Kuala Lumpur, here after the City Hall, in the year 1992, but was continually postponed for almost a decade, because decision makers involved failed to come to a consensual agreement on the redevelopment outcome. Local traders refused to give their cooperation to the project because of the uncertainties, such as whether they would be part of the new completed project, despite many assurances by the local authority and their local political representatives. This single event exemplifies the level of distrust and conflicts resulted in unaccountable resources wastage, including deprivation of the benefits of development for the local community, and the nation in general. The main problem can be seen from unstructured problem approach and lack of transparency during the decision process. This problem was further complicated by the involvement of multiple stakeholders, whereby their different objectives and perspectives of the problems negatively affected the decision making process. The advancement in MCA methods paved ways for approaching decision problems in a more structured manner and increase transparency in decision process. Recent developments MCA methods encourage learning and understanding of the decision problems and the values and interests of the stakeholder himself and of others as well, by approaching the decision in a constructive manner, as oppose to descriptive or normative approach in earlier methods.

### **1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

This research would significantly contribute towards encouragement of participative planning via increased understanding of the decision problems and the constructive learning of the differences in values and interests of multiple stakeholders in decision

process, hence generating a more structured and transparent decision making process. The significance of this research is in developing the initial evaluation tool for objective evaluation of stakeholders' preferences. The individual or group preferences can be compared which helps stakeholders to understand their own and other's values and interest. The innovation of this research lies with its practical application, in the sense that actions can accurately represent wider interests, leading to acceptance of planned development thus resulting in more efficient implementation of development plans. The outcomes of the research will make a significant contribution to knowledge, as there is a substantial gap in literature on this topic. This applies especially to the problem of redevelopment decisions in traditional areas in Malaysia, critical to this research as the fundamental benefits of having a mechanism to objectively evaluate the importance of criteria lends credibility to decision process in urban planning, which is otherwise very subjective and lack transparency.

#### **1.4 OBJECTIVES**

This thesis has several research objectives. The aim of this study is to evaluate the stakeholders' preferences in redevelopment planning decision using the MCA method.

In order to achieve this aim several objectives have been identified:

1. To identify the most suitable MCA methods for evaluating preferences of multiple stakeholders in redevelopment decisions in traditional areas in Kuala Lumpur.
2. To analyze redevelopment decision problem using the selected MCA method.
3. To appraise the capability and efficiency of the selected method for structuring and analyzing decision problem

4. To model participative planning via demonstration of more efficient planning using MCA as planning support tool.

## **1.5 THESIS STRUCTURE**

The first chapter outlines the introduction to the thesis. This is followed by Chapter Two, a literature review which built the conceptual and theoretical foundations in urban planning, conservation and redevelopment of traditional areas and their relationship to decision support tool. Sections 2.2 until 2.4 review the importance of land use planning in alleviating land related conflicts and make specific reference to its relationship with traditional areas redevelopment in Kuala Lumpur. Particular attention is directed at the ill-structured and multi-dimensional nature of strategic urban development and redevelopment issues, such as identifying and evaluating competing development alternatives for a commercial development. The contributions that multiple participants MCA can make to the resolution of planning decision problems are described. Its shortcomings in supporting consensus- and compromise-building among individuals and groups with diverse interests are identified. An MCA approach is proposed based on this discussion. Section 2.4 specifically focuses on the technical aspects of the chosen MCA that is appropriate for eliciting preferences in redevelopment decision. This section covers the introduction to MCA and its methods, the criteria and the stakeholders involved. The technical aspects of MCA approach is discussed based on its relevance to the redevelopment decisions in traditional areas.

Chapter Three reviews the methodological approach undertaken in carrying out this research. Chapter Four concentrates upon the case study of the commercial redevelopment of heritage zones in City Center of Kuala Lumpur, in which MCA method is applied. The evolving context for commercial redevelopment and land use

planning are described with reference to recent growth of commercial sector, the effect of this growth on land use change and traditional areas, and the planning frameworks that have been adopted to manage this change. The chapter goes on to discuss the selection of stakeholders as research participants. Chapter Five presents the findings of the first stage of the case study research. The selected stakeholders are identified and the set of criteria are developed. The findings identify the preferred criteria for redevelopment in the heritage zones. Preliminary indications of consensus and conflict among decision makers are developed. Chapter Six concludes the thesis by revisiting the main objectives and evaluating them against the research findings.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The literature review has taken two approaches from the aspects of decision problem and decision tool. Under decision problem, the research identified urban planning and urban conservation domains. Both are discussed exhaustively in Section 2.2 and 2.3 respectively. In Section 2.2, urban planning in Malaysia is explored in terms of the decision environment in town planning and the level of public participation. Planning decision is established as ad hoc and unstructured as per conventional decision making, whilst multi-faceted in nature and most of the time, the decision problem is poorly defined. Level of public participation is minimal yet involving multiple stakeholders with diverse interests and conflicting values are common though not always included in the decision process. In Section 2.3, urban conservation in traditional areas in Kuala Lumpur does not protect the traditional shophouse because of its recent vintage. Tremendous redevelopment pressure due to its location puts the shophouse at a threat of demolition. In Chapter Three, the nature of redevelopment decision is explored based on the types of redevelopment, its strategy and motives.

Section 2.4 discusses the decision tool and its suitability to establish its suitability for preference evaluation in redevelopment decision making. The appropriate MCA method was identified based on its ease of understanding to general stakeholders, well-grounded theory and ability to check stakeholders' consistency in expressing their preferences. It is established that MCA's strength lies in its ability to

provide coherent guide to decision making, make the process transparent thus promote stakeholders' contribution and incorporate intangible aspects into decision process.

## **2.2 TOWN PLANNING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN MALAYSIA**

The town planning system in Malaysia is mainly regulated by the Town and Country Planning Act 1976 (hereafter TCPA 1976). This Act provides local authorities with the legal powers to regulate, to control and to plan the development and use of all lands and buildings within their areas of jurisdictions. In performing these roles, the local authorities have to carry out two important tasks: prepare the development plans and undertake development control. The development plans consist of structure plans and local plans, official documents that state future plans. Ideally, both development plans should be gazetted as legal documents to have the weight of the law. The development plans will control future development as all development application must adhere to the gazetted development plans.

This section demonstrates that weak application of the Structure Plan system by the planning authority may have encouraged ad hoc approvals of urban redevelopment thus contributing to haphazard development and redevelopment that undermines older and possibly historical areas in Kuala Lumpur. The main problem lies in the non-existent local plan. The themes explored in this chapter are:

- a. The non-existence of gazetted local plans in Kuala Lumpur has undermined the implementation of the Structure Plan system and induced ad hoc decision making by the planning authorities.
- b. The minimal level of public participation has been a factor to types of redevelopment that overlooked the interests of the local community and other stakeholders, eroding sense of place and unique identity.