



A STUDY ON CRIMES AND RESIDENTS' PERCEPTION
OF SECURITY IN THE HOUSING AREA IN WANGSA
MAJU, KUALA LUMPUR.

BY

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A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
Master of Urban and Regional Planning.

Kulliyyah of Architecture and Environmental Design
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JULY 2013

ABSTRACT

Urbanization is impossible to be avoided as time passes and technology advances including Malaysia. Rapid urbanization has been experienced by Malaysian and with this rapid urbanization there is a price to pay. Urbanization in Malaysia is closely associated with crime especially in cities and town. Crimes in housing areas have become a big problem today involving crimes against the people as well as properties, demanding a critical attention by the relevant authorities as well as the government. In order to handle the growing problems that plague the housing areas, recently Malaysia has adopted the “Safe City Program” launched by the Town and Country Planning in 2005. It is focusing towards achieving a city free from violence and crime. In order to assist the implementation of this programme and to improve the quality of life, it is important that these issues of crime disorders through studies and research. Through studies, it has been identified that we can change the residents and offenders perceptions of criminality through a proper design, passively or actively or better known as Crime Prevention through Environmental design or CPTED. The main aim of the research is to examine the perception of security of the residents in Wangsa Maju housing area, Kuala Lumpur. To achieve the objectives and answer the research questions, 3 steps approach was used, where data is obtained from both quantitative (questionnaires and observations) and qualitative methods (interviews). The data was analysed using Space-Syntax and SPSS. Space syntax is used to ascertain the integration or depth values of the circulation axes of the site and SPSS to test the data using Cross tabulation, Spearman’s rho correlation test, chi-square and frequencies analysis. The results are used to identify the impacts of physical factors on the perceptions of security of the residents. All factors showed a correlation with the perception of security level and peculiarly the most common break-ins were through the front door. The most frequent type crime was street snatching in groups. Recommendation will include the enhancement of the natural surveillance, adequate lighting for streets and pedestrian walkways, social and educational and awareness programs and target hardening in certain places.

ملخص البحث

من المستحيل تجنب التحضر مع مرور الوقت و التقدم التكنولوجي بما في ذلك ماليزيا. قد شهد ماليزيا التحضر السريع وهناك ثمنا للدفع. و يرتبط التحضر في ماليزيا بشكل وثيق مع الجرائم خاصة في المدن و البلدات الصغيره. أصبحت الجرائم في المناطق السكنيه من مشاكل الكبيره التي تواجهها ماليزيا ومنها جرائم ضد الشعب والمطالبين للاهتمام من قبل السلطات المعينه و الحكومه. ومن أجل معالجه المشاكل المتزايدة التي يعاني منها المناطق السكنيه, اعتمدت ماليزيا في الآونه الأخيره " برنامج المدينه الآمنه" التي أطلقتها تخطيط المدن عام 2005. وهي تركز نحو تحقيق مدينه خاليه من العنف و الجريمة. من أل تنفيذ هذا البرنامج و تحسين نوعيه الحياه, يجب القيام بالدراسات و البحوث التي يمكن ان تغير الاجرام من خلال التصميم الملائم بسلبيه او بايجابيه باسم منع حدوث الجرائم عن طريق التصميم البيئي. ومن هنا تهدف هذه البحث الى دراسته عناصر هذه التقنيات ثم استخدامها في المناطق السكنيه في وانجسا ماجو و كوالالمبور. لتحقيق أهداف البحث والاجابه عن اسئلتها تم استخدام 3 خطوات ومنها الاساليب الكمي (الاستبانات) و النوعيه (المقابلات). ومن ثم تحليل البيانات باستخدام برنامج الاحصاء و برنامج الفضاء لبناء الجمله لمعرفه التكامل و تداخل محاور الموقع و برنامج الاحصاء لاختبار المعلومات من خلال الجداول و و اختبار سبيرمان , مربع كاي و تحليل الترددات. و تستخدم النتائج لتحديد الاثار المترتبه على العوامل الماديه و تصور السكان بالامن . وأظهرت العوامل وجود ارتباط مع تصور السكان في مستوى الامن و القتحام من الباب الامامي. الاكر جرائم شيوعا هو السرقة في الشارع. و التوصيات لهذه البحث هي المراقبه الطبيعيه و الضاءه الكافيه للشوارع و ممرات المشاه و البرامج الاجتماعيه و التعليميه بان تكون في الاماكن المعينه.

ABSTRAK

Urbanisasi adalah mustahil untuk dielakkan apabila masa berubah dan begitu juga dengan kemajuan teknologi. Urbanisasi yang sangat rancak berlaku di Malaysia sedang dialami oleh penduduk Malaysia ada kesan negatifnya. Urbanisasi di Malaysia adalah terkait dengan kadar jenayah terutama di bandar-bandar dan pekan-pekan. Jenayah di kawasan perumahan telah menjadi suatu masalah yang besar pada hari ini yang melibatkan manusia dan harta benda dan amat-amat memerlukan perhatian daripada pihak berwajib dan kerajaan. Untuk membendung masalah ini, Malaysia tidak berapa lama dahulu telah mengadakan satu program bernama “Program Bandar Selamat” yang telah dilancarkan oleh Jabatan Perancang Bandar dan Desa (JPBD) pada tahun 2005. Ia menekankan kepada mencapai taraf bandar yang bebas daripada keganasan dan jenayah. Untuk membantu dalam melaksanakan program ini dan menambahbaik kualiti hidup, adalah amat penting untuk isu-isu jenayah ini dilihat daripada segi pembelajaran dan kajian. Melalui pembelajaran, telah didapati bahawa kita mampu mengubah persepsi tentang jenayah di kawasan perumahan oleh penduduk dan pelaku jenayah melalui rekabentuk, secara pasif atau aktif atau lebih dikenali sebagai “menghindari jenayah melalui rekabentuk” (CPTED). Tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk melihat bagaimana persepsi penduduk kawasan perumahan di Wangsa Maju tentang keselamatan di kawasan perumahan mereka. Untuk mencapai objektif tersebut dan menjawab persoalan-persoalan kajian, pendekatan 3 langkah telah diambil yang mana maklumat diambil secara kuantitatif (soalan dan pemerhatian) dan kaedah kualitatif (temuduga). Data telah dianalisa menggunakan perisian “Space Syntax” dan SPSS. “Space Syntax” digunakan untuk memastikan integrasi atau “depth value” paksi sirkulasi tapak dan SPSS untuk menguji data dengan menggunakan “cross-tabulation”, “Spearman’s rho correlation test”, “chi-square” dan analisis frekuensi. Keputusan analisis tersebut digunakan untuk menegenalpasti kesan faktor fizikal terhadap persepsi tentang keselamatan oleh penduduk. Semua faktor-faktor menunjukkan keterkaitan dengan persepsi tentang keselamatan oleh penduduk. Semua faktor-faktor menunjukkan keterkaitan dengan persepsi tentang tahap keselamatan dan yang paling menghairankan kejadian pecah rumah kebanyakannya masuk melalui pintu hadapan. Jenayah yang paling kerap berlaku di kawasan perumahan di Wangsa Maju adalah ragut berkumpulan. Cadangan kajian adalah termasuk penambahbaikan tahap pemerhatian semulajadi (natural surveillance), cahaya yang secukupnya di jalan-jalan dan laluan pejalan kaki, program kesedaran sosial dan ilmiah serta langkah-langkah aktif (target hardening) di tempat-tempat yang perlu.

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.

Shahrums Zainal Abidin

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Date

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This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Salmah binti Hasshim

Who taught me to never skip school

And my wife, Noorlizah binti Shaharul Anwar

Who is so very patient during the time I am completing this dissertation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the name of Allah most beneficent and most merciful, absolute praise, appreciation and gratitude to Allah the almighty for his grace and blessings for giving me guidance and the strength, without whom it is impossible to complete this dissertation.

I would like to acknowledge my supervisor Prof. Dr Mohammad Abdul Mohit for his guidance and valuable comments throughout the course of this work. I would like to thank all the lecturers who have enlightened me with knowledge and support.

My sincere thanks to my family especially my wife, Noorlizah binti Shaharul Anwar who has been very supportive to me, my mother, Salmah binti Hasshim and my sister, Rosmah binti Zainal Abdin who have always believe in me.

I would also like to acknowledge all my friends and well-wishers for their concern and unlimited help that they have given me towards the completion of this work.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This research is focusing on the perception of security of the residents in the housing areas in Wangsa Maju in terms of planning and the effectiveness of the public facilities provided as well as the mix development around the housing areas in relation with the crime index in the housing areas.

Crime has existed long ago since the beginning of human life and human has been using the environment as self-defence and part of it is to deter crime by digging fortress around castles, building walls around cities and building homes along cliffs. Crime in housing areas is a big issue in Malaysia. The increase in street crimes, crimes against persons and crimes against properties have generated considerable fear within the community and making safety an issue demanding critical attention at local and national level. Residential areas are areas where we live in and it should be the safest place to be, but the reality is, they are not. One of the best way, and has been for a long time, to deter crime is to take early action in the design stage where the design itself should push away crime and not attracting it. In Wangsa Maju to be specific, crimes frequencies have increased as shown by the crime index from Bukit Aman Police Department 2013. (refer table 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6 in pages 33-35).

1.1 BACKGROUND STUDY

The Malaysian theft and crimes in housing areas has always been a major issue for the community living in housing areas. Under the Housing Ministry initiatives, guidelines have been introduced into the housing scheme in order to reduce crime by using design strategies including Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) as introduced by the JPDB in 2005.

Since the 1960's there are many approaches that have been taken in order to reduce crime in residential areas. Defensible space, crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED), broken windows and "eye on the street". CPTED took defensible space a step further towards a more holistic crime prevention strategy that would consider integration of physical design and social interaction. The broken windows theory has the same approach as "eyes on the street", defensible space and CPTED but it does it from a different perspective.

In creating sustainable development and communities, it is important to orders "crime and disorder". Anticipating Oscar Newman's "defensible space" and the theory of crime prevention through environmental design, careful applications of changes to the environments and modifications to the space design can effectively affect both the residents and the offenders' perceptions of criminality. CPTED subdivides public spaces and assigns them to small groups which could be used, monitored and controlled as one's own private spaces. Crime offenders are isolated and movements are restricted. Many approaches and strategies are used on this theory which includes social interactions, traffic flow, sight distance, target hardening and other measures that would create a place which is easy to defend. Using the same strategies, this study is to examine the residents' perception of security in terrace houses in residential areas in Wangsa Maju and to understand how different

characteristics of environmental attributes in residential areas affect the occurrence of crimes and thus the perception of security of the residents. Besides that it also shows the link between the built environment and crimes in residential areas, including other related factors of demographic and social variables.

1.1.1 CPTED in Malaysia

There are 3 major strategies of CPTED implemented in Malaysia which according to the Department of Town and Country Planning of Peninsular Malaysia (JPBD) are as follows:

1. Environmental Design Initiatives; designing with a more vision or eyes to certain areas to reduce or deter crime.
2. Target Hardening; deterring crimes by making it hard for the offenders to do crimes, for example gates, grills, locks and police patrols.
3. Social Activities / Society & Education / Public Awareness; which is a social activities that can enliven an abandoned parks & recreational areas, educative program that can educate people on how to deter crime with activities or designs and awareness about crimes in housing areas and how we could reduce it.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENTS

- a) The number of crimes happening in the housing areas is increasing every year and eventually affected the perceptions of safety of residents in housing areas in Kuala Lumpur.
- b) The general appearance of the housing areas in Malaysia is mostly not well maintained. Lightings are not functioning, landscapes, parks and public facilities looked abandoned and these factors reduce the feelings of security and at the same time can attract crimes.
- c) CPTED is not well incorporated in housing designs in Malaysia starting from the early planning and design stage resulting in dark areas and alleys with minimal surveillance.
- d) There are no proper buffer zones in between different land uses causing less safe transitional zones in between housing areas and other areas such as commercials and industries.
- e) Lack of involvements from the public and experts in safe design in any new development of housing areas making it hard to know what's best for the community as sometimes safety perceptions depends on design, the community and the geographical appearance of the area.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the problems discussed, these questions are left unanswered:

- a) How can we reduce crimes in housing areas in Kuala Lumpur and create better perceptions of security of residents in the housing areas?

- b) How can we improve the appearance of the housing areas in Malaysian housing areas as well as maintenance to the lightings, landscapes, parks and public facilities?
- c) Why has CPTED not been fully utilised and incorporated in Malaysian housing designs?
- d) What can we do to improve buffer zones between housing areas in order to have safer transitional zones between housing areas and different land uses?
- e) Who is responsible to bring together the public and the experts in safe design in making safer new housing developments in Malaysia?

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Aim:

In the light of improving housing areas by reducing crimes in the housing areas in Malaysia for a better and improved living, the research aims at investigating the residents' perceptions of security in their housing areas and what are the factors that influenced this feeling in the Malaysian Housing scenarios.

The research questions above can be translated into these objectives:

- a) To investigate the crime situation in housing areas in Malaysia.
- b) To look at the general appearance of the housing areas in Malaysia (which usually not very good) and how this appearance could influence the safety perceptions of the residents in the housing areas.
- b) To identify precautionary actions taken by the residents in terms of physical and social protection in order to improve the feeling of security in their housing areas.

- c) The measure the level of safety perception of the residents in the housing areas.
- d) To recommend measures and policies to improve security feelings of residents.

Therefore we could formulate a hypothesis as stated:

H₀ There is no significant relationship between the current conditions of housing areas and respondents' satisfaction on the level of feelings of security.

H₁ There is significant relationship between the current conditions of housing areas and respondents' satisfaction on the level of feelings of security.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The first contribution to the community is awareness and knowledge about safety in housing areas and why it is important to have a design in terms of physical and social that can reduce or deter crime.

The second output will assist the policy makers to make a better “safe design” in all housing design schemes in Malaysia.

The industry will also benefits from the first and second outcome as it will lead the housing industries to have a better planning and designs in all housing design schemes.

The government sector will utilize the information from the research to improvise the current conditions of housings in Malaysia and at the same time prevent and reduce crimes that happen in housing areas.

The academia will then improve the research findings by extending the body of knowledge about CPTED in other areas so a better understanding and implementation of CPTED can be improved in the future.

1.6 THESIS ORGANIZATION

This dissertation has been organised into six chapters. The first chapter has set the scene of the current conditions of housing areas in Wangsa Maju, Kuala Lumpur and the level of effectiveness of CPTED on those housing areas.

The following chapter is going to deal with the literature review leading to the invention of CPTED and the description of CPTED and research that has been undertaken from all over the world regarding CPTED.

The third chapter will provide the description of all the information that can be reached about CPTED in Malaysia and the research methodology.

The fourth chapter will focus on the study area where the survey was done which is section 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 in Wangsa Maju, Kuala Lumpur.

The fifth chapter will analyse all the findings from the research that can be used for the whole research to look at the levels of the residents' perception of security in their housing areas in Wangsa Maju.

The final chapter will provide the thesis summary and recommendations for the use of any parties involved in CPTED for housing areas and of course for future research.

1.7 SUMMARY

Chapter 1 has looked at the overall concept of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) and what is the level of implementation in housing areas in Kuala Lumpur. Here we could see that the residents' perception of safety is closely related to the crimes happening in the housing areas. From the scenario given there are four main problems that need addressing, which are:

The level of crimes happening in housing areas in Malaysia especially in Wangsa Maju, Kuala Lumpur as Wangsa Maju has the highest level of crimes in Housing areas compared to the other areas in Klang Valley based on the crimes index given by the Bukit Aman Police Department (refer table 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6).

The level of effort by the residents to reduce crimes in Malaysian housing areas and at the same time improves the residents' perceptions of security in their housing areas.

The areas of improvement needed in the housing areas in Malaysia in terms of physical and social planning, designs and maintenance that could lead to a better housing environments, more sustainability and a crime-free housing areas.

The federal governments, local authorities and other parties that is responsible not only to incorporate and enforce CPTED in Malaysian housing scenarios but also to improve and maintain the housing areas in order to anticipate the increasing numbers of crimes in housing areas and be able to curb the problem.