

Research Article

Perception towards Public Amenities in Malaysia

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Abstract: The environment where a person lives has a significant impact on his or her development. The objective of the study is to determine the person's perception and satisfaction towards safety and public amenity nearby. Purposive sampling method was utilized to collect data in Selangor and Kelang Vally, Malaysia. Data were collected through interview using a set of questionnaire and analyzed using the SPSS program. The results of the study showed that in terms of public amenities and physical surroundings, the most persons used own car to attend personal and family matters such as clinic and programme. On the other hand, the most safety elements which persons employed to protect their house and family were installing door and window grilles, lights on and informing neighbor when going out for the whole night or longer.

Keywords: Environment, psychology, public amenities, safety

INTRODUCTION

Public amenities in Malaysia comprise facilities such as libraries, sport and recreation and community centers, as well as postal facilities. These facilities are well distributed throughout the districts and states and easily accessed by members of the public (Hafezi and Ismail 2012a, 2011a).

The last decade has witnessed the emergence of a movement to develop and systematically gather data on social indicators in an attempt to gauge the 'quality of life' as well as to provide an input to social planning (Korzheva and Zvorykina, 2003). Social indicator reports were first compiled on the basis of existing aggregate statistics in the social area. Such indicators are referred to as 'objective social indicators'. However, research which compared objective characteristics of communities with independently collected subjective perceptions of their inhabitants revealed no consistent relationship between objective conditions and subjective perceptions of the quality of life (Schneider, 1976).

Findings such as this have led to the development of 'subjective social indicators', which are collected by means of sample surveys, in which individuals are asked about their living conditions as well as how they feel about these conditions (Chattopadhyay, 2002). This type of approach offers a unique opportunity to relate reported objective characteristics with perceptual and affective responses in such areas as health, housing,

environment and working conditions on the part of the same individuals (Bastien *et al.*, 2012). This is hardly ever possible with aggregate objective statistics (Semkina, 2004). This kind of analysis enables one to determine which objective indicators are most predictive of important subjective measures, such as overall life satisfaction, alienation, or satisfaction in a particular life domain (Ebertz, 2013). It is hoped that such information may help to provide a better understanding of the causes and conditions which lead to social well-being, the lack thereof or indeed to social unrest (Campbell, 1974).

Public amenities are resources, conveniences, facilities or benefits continually offered to the general public for their use and enjoyment, with or without charge (e.g., restrooms, information displays, public telephones, rain shelters, drinking fountains, etc.) (Hafezi and Ismail, 2011b). As such, public amenities are expected to function around the clock, in adverse conditions such as inclement weather, high noise environments and in varying degrees of light and heat (Hafezi and Ismail 2011c, 2012b, 2011b). Consequently, there are several key attributes that should be integrated into all public amenities to ensure universal usability (Hafezi and Ismail, 2011d; Ismail *et al.*, 2013).

There are however other public amenities e.g., toilets and car parks that have been established for the public good (Ismail *et al.*, 2012a, 2012c). As these are assets of council it is council's duty to control and

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Table 1: Public amenities and community outcomes

Community outcome	How the recreation and community facilities activity contributes
Safe and healthy communities emphasis on public safety	By ensuring that the appropriate physical works are undertaken to provide a safe environment
Strong and vibrant communities enhance public amenities	By ensuring community needs are being reviewed on an ongoing basis To fund a base level of activities for each community
Sustainable funding strategies and pricing policies	Requirements in excess of these are to be specifically funded by each community

manage these in a planned and coordinated manner (Ismail *et al.*, 2012b). The public amenities activity goals are:

- To ensure that adequate public amenities are provided for (by either private or public means) for the residents within the district
- To meet the required levels of service in the most cost effective way through the creation, operation, maintenance, renewal and disposal of assets to provide for existing and future users
- To encourage community involvement

Table 1 shows the key performance measures and targets Council have adopted for their public amenities (Matamata, 2004). The performance targets in Table 1 reflect current industry standards and are based on: Customer Expectations-Information gained from customers on expected quality and price of services; Corporate Goals-Provide guidelines for the scope of current and future services offered, the manner of service delivery and define specific levels of service which the organization wishes to achieve; Legislative Requirements-Environmental standards, Regulations, Acts and Council By-laws that impact on the way assets are managed (i.e., resource consents, building regulations, health and safety legislation). These requirements impact on the minimum level of service that will be provided.

Key attributes for usability are included: location, interactivity and safety. Public amenities must be located on a clear path of travel where accessibility is continuously maintained. Locations of all amenities should be clearly marked at heights detectable by all users. They should be equally discernible to users with varying abilities. Switches, controls, instructions and dispensers must be understandable to the broadest audience possible, accessible from numerous heights and usable by many alternative means. Avoid places public amenities in situations where users are isolated. Isolation, though not a physical threat itself, places the vulnerable user at greater risk of crime. Reflective surfaces (e.g., mirrors) should be installed so that those using them may observe anyone approaching. Provide emergency communications equipment wherever potential security threats exist. Public amenities that require payment before use should accept multiple means of payment (e.g., cash, credit or debit card). In this study we studied public amenities in the some different states of Malaysia.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section presents the research approach used in this study, sample selection methods, data collection methods and method of data analysis.

Respondents: Target respondent is a Malaysian household that is in the range of age between 15 and 60, living in Selangor state and Kuala Lumpur and has the experience of using public bus transport. The ages range 15 to 60 years old chosen because people in these age have a routine commute travel behavior and probably has taken public bus transport as their mode of choice. From the age of 15, the children usually have to go to school that is not in their own neighborhood. After the age of 60, people usually may not have routine commuter behavior because they already pension. The total number of 767 respondents was randomly selected and completed questionnaire.

Questionnaire: The questionnaire was divided into three parts: demographics, the items consist of a correspondent to the city they live, age, sex, driving license, happiness; and public amenities and physical surroundings. Respondents were asked to rate 1 to 6 where 1 has a low rate and 6 have a high rate. Likert-type scale rate ranged from strongly disagree, moderately disagree, disagree, agree, moderately agree and strongly agree.

Procedure: Self-rating and handing out questionnaires were used as a data collection method in this study. Reasons of using three sections questionnaire to collect data are:

- The respondent has break time when fill out the questionnaire in order to understand the aim of each section questionnaire.
- Questionnaire offers confidentiality. The respondents were asked to fill out the questionnaire at the street or at their convenient time.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The aim of this study is to study of public amenities in Malaysia. SPSS software was used for data input and analysis. Data Analysis was conducted in fourth steps; first, frequency analysis was undertaken to highlight the most responder's choices. Second,

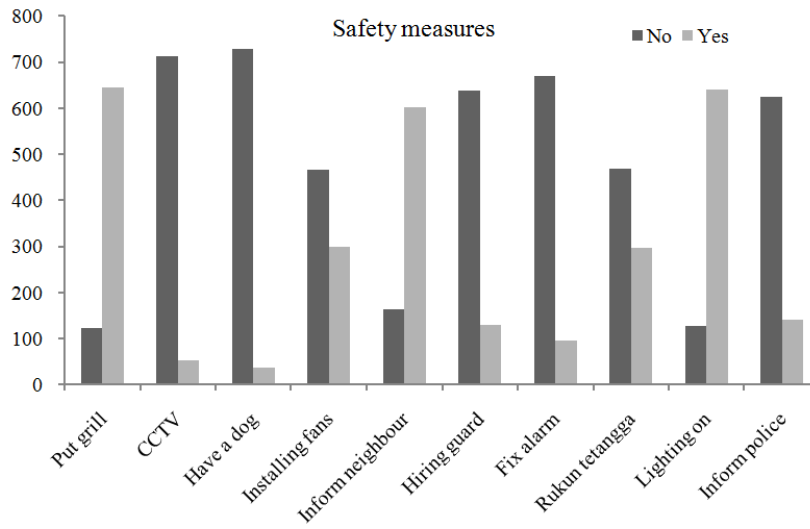


Fig. 1: Frequencies of safety measures

Table 2: Descriptive analysis of the demographic profile of the respondents

	N	Mean	S.D.	Variance
Age	767	35.94	0.560	110.412
Sex	767	1.57	0.495	0.245
Total income	767	2559	124.543	1674.286
No. of vehicles owner	767	1.49	0.058	0.862
No. of motorcycle	767	0.93	0.039	0.799

S.D.: Standard deviation

Table 3: Frequency analysis of safety measures

	Answer	Frequency	(%)
Put grill	No	122	15.9
	Yes	645	84.1
CCTV	No	714	93.1
	Yes	53	6.9
Have a dog	No	730	95.2
	Yes	37	4.8
Installing fans	No	467	60.9
	Yes	300	39.1
Inform neighbor	No	164	21.4
	Yes	603	78.6
Hiring guard	No	638	83.2
	Yes	129	16.8
Fix alarm	No	671	87.5
	Yes	96	12.5
Rukun tetangga	No	469	61.1
	Yes	298	38.9
Lighting on	No	126	16.4
	Yes	641	83.6
Inform police	No	626	81.6
	Yes	141	18.4

correlation analysis was undertaken to measure linear correlation between variables. Then factor analysis was performed with the aim to identify groups or cluster of variables. Fourth, a regression analysis was performed to evaluate the contribution of each factor on overall satisfaction.

Descriptive statistics: frequencies: Table 2 shows the descriptive analysis of the demographic profile of the respondents. Descriptive analysis is included age, sex,

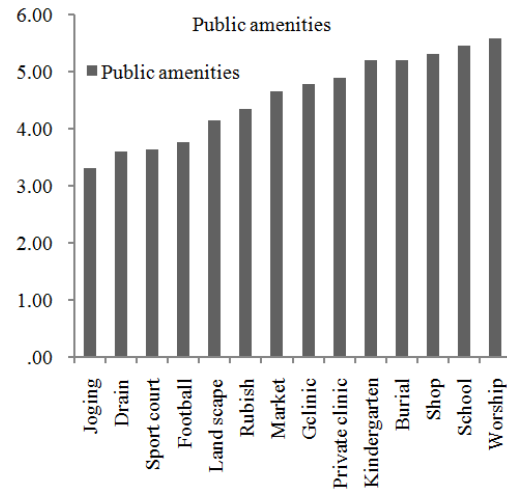


Fig. 2: Public amenities means

total income, total number of vehicles own and motorcycle.

According to Table 2 target respondent mean is 36, living in Selangor state and Kuala Lumpur. Furthermore, the most of respondents have at least one vehicle and motorcycle. Table 3 shows that frequency analysis for employer the safety measures to protect of the house and family where Fig. 1 shows the frequencies of safety measures.

According to Table 3 the most safety measures are related to installing door and window grills, let the lighting on and informing neighbor when going out for the whole night or longer.

Table 4 shows the descriptive analysis of the public amenities in the neighborhood where Fig. 2 shows the frequencies of public amenities mean.

According to Table 4 and Fig. 2, public amenities in terms of worship and public amenities in terms of

Table 4: Descriptive analysis of public amenities in the neighborhood

	Football	Sport court	Gclinic	Jogging	Rubish	Private clinic	Drain
Mean	3.760	3.630	4.770	3.300	4.340	4.900	3.600
Median	4.000	4.000	5.000	3.000	5.000	5.000	4.000
Std. deviation	1.813	1.927	1.665	2.055	1.915	1.595	1.665
Variance	3.286	3.715	2.773	4.225	3.668	2.544	2.772
	Worship	Land scape	School	Kindergarten	Burial	Market	Shop
Mean	5.590	4.140	5.460	5.200	5.210	4.660	5.320
Median	6.000	4.000	6.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	6.000
Std. deviation	1.612	1.598	1.396	1.460	1.509	1.565	1.370
Variance	2.598	2.555	1.950	2.131	2.277	2.449	1.878

Table 5: Correlation matrix of public amenities in the neighborhood

Correlation matrix		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Correlation	1	1.000						
	2	0.621	1.000					
	3	0.270	0.266	1.000				
	4	0.407	0.565	0.208	1.000			
	5	0.162	0.332	0.207	0.369	1.000		
	6	0.216	0.289	0.283	0.249	0.426	1.000	
	7	0.250	0.355	0.191	0.367	0.496	0.366	1.000
	8	0.248	0.180	0.313	0.141	0.213	0.281	0.175
	9	0.284	0.431	0.171	0.423	0.323	0.251	0.431
	10	0.196	0.103	0.433	0.065	0.174	0.343	0.159
	11	0.142	0.124	0.341	0.138	0.232	0.291	0.221
	12	0.192	0.140	0.390	0.069	0.146	0.235	0.193
	13	0.259	0.258	0.379	0.273	0.230	0.394	0.289
	14	0.172	0.188	0.214	0.190	0.398	0.340	0.248

Correlation matrix		8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Correlation	1							
	2							
	3							
	4							
	5							
	6							
	7							
	8	1.000						
	9	0.246	1.000					
	10	0.374	0.195	1.000				
	11	0.424	0.201	0.624	1.000			
	12	0.490	0.129	0.426	0.483	1.000		
	13	0.311	0.227	0.427	0.389	0.413	1.000	
	14	0.372	0.204	0.334	0.362	0.356	0.494	1.000

Table 6: KMO and Bartlett's test of public amenities in the neighborhood

KMO and Bartlett's test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling Adequacy.		0.842
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approx. chi-square	3062.141
	df	91
	Sig.	0.000

jogging have the highest and lowest ranking of public amenities, respectively.

As factor analysis is based on correlations between measured variables, a correlation matrix containing the inter-correlation coefficients for the variables must be computed. Table 5 shows the correlation matrix between some different kinds of public amenities including:

- Football field
- Sport court

- Government clinic
- Jogging track
- Rubbish collection services
- Private clinic
- Drain cleaning
- Place of worship
- Landscape
- Primary and secondary school
- Kindergarten
- Burial facilities
- Market
- Shop

in the neighborhood.

The Bartlett's test of sphericity can be used to test for the adequacy of the correlation matrix, i.e., the correlation matrix has significant correlations among at least some of the variables. The Bartlett's Test (Table 6) tests the adequacy of the correlation matrix and yielded

a value of 0.842 and an associated level of significance smaller than 0.000. Thus, the hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix can be rejected, i.e., the correlation matrix has significant correlations among at least some of the variables which are highlighted in the Table 6.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study aimed at perception towards public amenities in Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur and Kelang Vally citizen were asked to rate their points on the study and pencil questionnaire. It is understand that the Malaysian people in case of safety measures chosen installing door and window grills, let the lighting on and informing neighbor when going out for the whole night or longer. On the other hand, in case of public amenities in terms of worship and public amenities in terms of jogging have the highest and lowest ranking of public amenities, respectively. Furthermore, the correlation matrix has significant correlations among sport court, jogging track and market.

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