

Low Cost Housing Programme in Metropolitan Cities: Policy Implication

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Introduction

Housing is an important factor in determining the quality of life of the people. Housing can also have an impact and influence on the human life. Many of the governments in this world believed that, a motivated, stable, less work conflict and high life satisfaction population can only be achieved through providing enough number of housing with good environment. The Malaysian government also held the same belief and starting from the Second Malaysian Plan till the present Plan, the government have emphasized on the importance of housing especially for the urban low-income people. Therefore the aims of this study is to look into the well being of those low income people who live in low cost housing in the big cities. Among the aspect being studied are challenges face by this group of people, and changes and aspiration of those who live in the metropolitan areas.

Materials and Methods

Three metropolitan cities were chosen at random for this study was Kuala Lumpur, Johor Bahru and Kuching. Eight hundred and fifty two respondents were chosen from these three cities at random. Stratified random sampling method was adopted to select these respondents. A list of low cost housing estates was first obtained. From these list, only estates with 10 years of age and above was selected. Three housing estates from this list were later chosen at random and respondents were later selected systematically. Data was collected using a questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of questions on socio economic background, housing information, social environment, social lifestyle, housing aspiration, social integration, neighborhood and satisfaction in life.

Results and Discussion

The results shows that majority of the respondents have live in this area within the range of 10 to 15 years. The household size is between 5 to 6 people and the average age for the youngest child is within 11.9 years old. More than 13% of the respondents have more than one household live in one house and 6.5% of the total respondents can be categorized as aged. In general many of the respondents feel that their present housing is not suitable for old age because it is too small and high (*referring to flat*).

In terms of income, many earns around RM1000-1999 per month. Majority said that they work as a labourer or working as an operator in the factories nearby when they first live here. Out of these 19.2% said that they have changed to a better job. Majority of the respondents still rents the house they live and this is not surprising because majority of the respondents live in a house rented by the local authority such as DBKL and MBBJ for the urban poor. Many of the respondents feel that rent is fair when comparing it with the house they live however for those who feel that the rent is high, said that the house is too small and of low quality. The common housing problems faced by these people are their house is very warm, dark and many crack appearing on the wall and also on the floor. They also said that the kitchen is too small and the number of bedroom is not enough for the family. Almost all the house involved in this study either has one or two bedrooms.

The children in this area said their housing is not comfortable to live because it is too small, noisy, no privacy and also lacking in facilities for them to play, such as football ground or children play ground.

Many of the respondents prefer a terrace houses and not many wants to live in a flat. Nearly 30% said that they have planned to move out from this place to a much better house. The house price that they say they can afford is between RM25,000 to RM45,000 and they prefer a good quality house. They study also found out that there are improvement in incomes and majority owns at least a vehicle and nearly all owns household appliance such as video player and television.

Conclusions

In general the residents of low cost housing in the metropolitan cities in Malaysia needs more than two bedroom houses and much bigger space because of the big household number. There is also a positive improvement in their income and many believed that they could change to a better life after 10 years residing here. Therefore the concept of hire purchase for housing can be implemented for this group of people. The metropolitan cities local authority should also keep on continuing renting houses for the low-income people but for a limited time. The argument for this suggestion is that more 71% said that the willing and want to move to better house once their family become bigger. The study also suggested a more flexible housing should be design for this group where the house grow as the family size and income grow.

To ensure the successfulness of this policy, the government should also come with a policy to promote saving among this people especially saving for housing. Other than this, the government should also give support and incentive for this group to improve their quality of life through small or micro scale industry.

Benefits from the study

The study revealed that low-income people in the cities can improve their financial situation and can afford to own a more comfortable housing suitable for their family.

Literature cited in the text

None.

Project Publications in Refereed Journals

Laily Paim, Ahmad Hariza Hashim, Nurizan Yahaya. 1999. Kesejahteraan Hidup di Kalangan Isi Rumah Perumahan Kos Rendah di Bandar Metropolitan,

Malaysian Journal of Consumer and Family Economics, Vol. 2.

Project Publications in Conference Proceedings

None.

Graduate Research

None.