



Evaluation of Residential Satisfaction towards Building Maintenance at *Rumah Selangorku Damai Utama*

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ABSTRACT

Low-cost high rise housing project is developed to provide a chance for low-income citizen to own a house at a lower market price. Each low-cost high-rise residential building possesses its own building management body where one of its duties is to manage residential area after the strata title has been issued to the purchaser. The study was carried out to evaluate the level of satisfaction among residents of one low-cost housing area towards the maintenance activities administered by the building management body. This research employed mixed-method approach; quantitative and qualitative, as it able to capture accurate data from both residents and the building management body. This study concluded that the residents of Rumah Selangorku Damai Utama are mostly leaning towards dissatisfaction with the building and facilities maintenance services provided by the building management body.

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1. Introduction

Malaysian Government's has implemented initiatives to provide residences that could be afforded by low-income group of citizens which is through public housing programs. However, with inadequate land in urban and sub-urban area, high-rise building is the most suitable type of residence that fit the program well, compared to landed property, as it will provide many units of residences without consuming much space in an area [1]. High-rise residential building can be defined as a property which comprises of multiple housing units that located in same lot of land. This type of housing shares basic amenities for instance garbage area, security system, elevators, and others [2]. Building maintenance turned out to be important activity in Malaysia as the government has emphasized on the necessity and importance of it to the high-rise building. The worth of building will deviate in proportional to the quality of maintenance that said building possessed. The needs of excellent maintenance for the building is one and only method to preserve the building condition

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rather than pouring enormous resources to demolish, renovate, and restructure new building in exchange for existing ones [3].

1.1 Problem Statement

The administration of public housing under government initiative in most countries is frequently associated with poor maintenance and will yield to unsatisfied residents on their housing units. This outcome contributed towards the general decline of living quality in public housing and further intensified by the increasing of vacant unit which causing said unit to be left without any care [4,5]. Poor maintenance of the building and facilities will cause structures in Malaysia not complying with the standard and not meeting or even exceeding residents' expectations. The inefficiency of maintenance provided by the building management body has resulted federal government experiencing numerous problems, which in the end will affect the public and also the government itself in negative way. The maintenance activities are said to be reactive rather than preventive which will incur excess of resources spent for higher maintenance costs [6].

Nowadays, residents happened to capture the idea of good management performance and in accordance to that, enhancement of management skills is necessary and important for the building management body [7]. In contrast with people in the past who complacent with only basic care-taking and cleaning of their properties, owners currently are more towards expecting residence maintenance as a whole, which comprises of other areas, from basic cleaning service to comprehensive maintenance [8].

Rumah Selangorku Damai Utama, a low-cost high rise residences located at Selangor, Malaysia, is one of the low-cost public housing programs under the initiative of state government. This property possesses its own building management body, complying with Strata Management Act 2013, to ensure it is under proper maintenance and provide its residents comfortability in living in a sense that all facilities and amenities provided are well kept and preserved. The effectiveness of building maintenance is important to successfully retain the quality of the services and facilities, and ensure that all elements are managed in good condition. However, past studies have yet to be conducted to measure the efficiency of building management in mentioned residential area.

1.2 Objective of Study

There are two main objectives of the study that has been identified. The objectives are:

- i. To determine the satisfaction level of residents at Rumah Selangorku Damai Utama
- ii. To suggest necessary strategies for better building management system

2. Literature Review

Building management body, particularly for residential, where its responsibilities include extensive scope of works for instance residence development, facilities management, risk management and many other relevant activities that contribute to the benefit of the residence itself. Traditionally, there are not many exposures on the management of property as the property market is only concentrated on horizontal residence; landed terrace to be exact. In current era, people has becoming more receptive towards the idea and importance of property management such that it able to preserve the value of their property and promised them high return on investment (ROI) in near future. The development rapidness of high-rise residences shows that the citizens are willing to

invest in property management as it is able to provide them with better living experiences [1]. Besides, customer satisfaction and housing improvement in resident area was studied by [9] and [10].

Residential satisfaction is defined as the feeling of gladness when one has or accomplishes what one needs or desires in a house unit [11-13]. Satisfaction of residents towards their residential units indicates the absence of complaints regarding the maintenance services and facilities provided. However, the level of satisfaction between residents inclines to vary by types of residential, tenancy, country, and culture [13]. Study was conducted by Musa *et al.*, (2015) to assess households living experience for both owners and tenants in low and middle-cost high rise residential building in Johor, Penang, Kuala Lumpur, and Selangor. The authors found that respondents living in low-cost residential area are less satisfied with the maintenance services provided by the building management body [14].

2.1 Building and Facilities Maintenance

Maintenance can be defined as an activity to preserve, restore and care for buildings and amenities, for it to carry out its intended functions according to standard defined at the beginning of construction plan. The descriptions of maintenance are always associated with buildings or structures and with the present of maintenance, building or structures are expected to be as good and functional as it supposed to be. Residents' level of satisfaction will increase with the help of efficient maintenance conducted by the building management body in any housing area [15].

The utmost important duties of building management body, as described in the Strata Management Act 2013, is to properly maintain and manage the building, and also to take measures as they see fit or necessary for proper maintenance of residential area.

Maintenance of facilities by building management body is included as part of the high-rise residence packages but however, is indifferently executed. Some of the management personnel are unprofessional, inexperience, and also more towards profiting rather than solving arising issues. During the beginning of any housing project, the developer only accentuated on the marketing part which in the end enables them to sell the particular housing unit to the customers, with little concern on the management of the property itself [1]. The low-cost public housings are experiencing problems with maintenance services of their building. The most common defects in low-cost housing area are leaking pipes, water supply system failure, external walls cracking, concrete walls dampness, and door knob faulty [16].

3. Methodology

This study employed both quantitative for data collection. In realizing this method, questionnaire survey was distributed among the residents of Rumah Selangorku Damai Utama. The main objective of the survey was to measure the satisfaction level of respondents regarding matters related to the maintenance services. The level of satisfaction of respondents will be measured using five-point Likert scale, ranging from "1" for very unsatisfied to '5' for very satisfied.

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework that will guide this study. The respondents were asked to provide their level of agreement concerning their expectation towards maintenance services. Towards the end of the survey, respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction level, between satisfied and not satisfied, regarding maintenance services delivered by the building management body at the premise. Among all available units of houses, there are number of units still vacant. The number of unit that is not vacant was assumed to be 300 units and according to Krejcie and Morgan's table, the number of sample would be 169 samples.

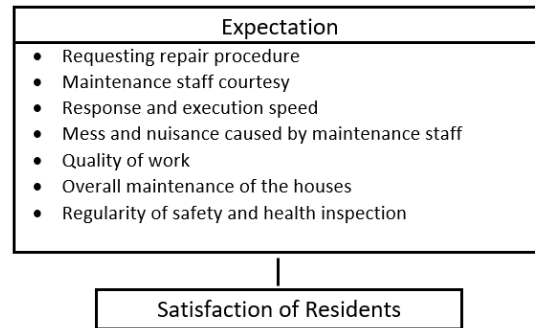


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework

3. Results and Discussions

3.1 Demographic Information

Table 1 shows the demographic information tabulation of the respondents based on the returned questionnaire survey.

Table 1

Demographic Information

	n	%
<i>Age</i>		
≤ 20	6	3.6
21 – 30	25	14.8
31 – 40	126	74.6
41 – 50	9	5.3
≥ 50	3	1.8
<i>Resident Status</i>		
House owner	115	68
Tenant	54	32
<i>Occupancy Period</i>		
< 1 year	9	5.3
1 year	25	14.8
2 years	60	35.5
≥ 3 years	75	44.4
<i>House Level</i>		
Ground floor	35	20.7
1 st floor	33	19.5
2 nd floor	34	20.1
3 rd floor	34	20.1
4 th floor	33	19.5

* N = 169

The demographic information shows that the group from the age of 31 until 40 years old was the biggest number among all respondents with 74.6%, followed by the group of 21 until 30 years old with 14.8%. The senior citizens, with 1.8%, were the least number of respondents that completed the questionnaire. Among all 169 respondents, 68% of them were the house owner while the remaining 32% were tenants. The respondents that reside at Rumah Selangorku Damai Utama for more than three years were the majority with 44.4% and this group was the longest group to stay there since it was ready for occupancy in year 2014. The respondents that live at mentioned residential area for less than one year were the smallest group. Meanwhile for house level in the premise, the result is

almost equally distributed; ground floor with 35 respondents, first floor and fourth floor with 33 respondents, and second floor and third floor with 34 respondents.

3.2 Expectation towards Maintenance Services

Table 2 shows the expectation of respondents towards maintenance services provided by the building management body. Around 93.5% respondents declined to agree with that statement of “*It is convenient to file a complaint.*”. The remaining 2.4% and 4.1% of respondents voted neutral and agree, respectively, as their notion in that matter. As much as 80.5% of respondents found that the building management body was not very helpful in explaining to them on the process of solving the complaint while the remaining 4.7% opposed that opinion.

More than 91% of respondents felt that the response and execution period on the repair was slow; not according to their expectation and only 3% of respondents felt otherwise. A total of 65.7% of respondents felt disagreed when they were asked about the capability of building management body to contain any nuisance after repair or restoration works. The remaining 34.4% of respondents were on neutral and agree side, whereas none of them opted for strongly agree. Regarding the quality of works, 88.8% of respondents felt that the maintenance work quality was not according to their expectation and only 3.0% felt the opposite.

As much as 86.4% of respondents declined to agree concerning the attentiveness of building management body in ensuring overall residential area is in good condition. When the respondents were asked about the frequency of safety and health inspection conducted by the building management body, 91.1% of them disagreed.

Table 2
 Expectation towards Maintenance Services

No.	Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	It is convenient to file a complaint.	17.2%	76.3%	2.4%	4.1%	0%
2.	The staff explained the process of complaint solving.	16.6%	63.9%	14.8%	4.7%	0%
3.	Repair or restoration process was fast.	33.1%	58.6%	5.3%	3.0%	0%
4.	No mess was left after repair or restoration works.	6.5%	59.2%	23.7%	10.7%	0%
5.	Quality of repair or restoration works was very good.	36.1%	52.7%	8.3%	3.0%	0%
6.	The staff always ensuring residential area is in good condition.	24.3%	62.1%	5.9%	7.7%	0%
7.	Safety and health inspection are conducted regularly.	21.3%	69.8%	8.3%	0.6%	0%

* N = 169

3.3 Level of Satisfaction towards Maintenance Services

Table 3 shows the respondents’ level of satisfaction towards maintenance services. Among 169 respondents, 82.8% of them felt not satisfied with the services provided by the building management body and only 17.2% of them felt otherwise.

Table 3
Level of Satisfaction towards Maintenance Services

Level of Satisfaction	Percentage
Satisfied	17.2%
Not satisfied	82.8%
Total	100.0%

* N = 169

Based on the result from the questionnaire survey, necessary strategies are important in order to improve the maintenance services at Rumah Selangorku Damai Utama. These strategies are as follow:

- i. Improve on complaints logging process
 - Assign staff on standby to work outside office hours e.g. at night or on weekends
 - Re-engineer the process by installing telephone line and internet services at the office
- ii. Concentrate on cleanliness of residential area
 - Allocate more fund to employ more cleaners
 - Revise the garbage collection schedule
- iii. Spend more time to check the premise regularly
 - Spot for problem at the residential area rather than waiting for residents to file a complaint
- iv. Meeting with local authorities
 - Discuss about the best strategy to provide maintenance services at the premise
 - Compare between the current guideline with the guidelines employed by authorities
- v. Keep residents aware of their responsibilities in keeping the premise clean
 - Increase awareness among residents by handing them with flyers, notice placement, talk or seminars, door-to-door reminder, and others.

4. Conclusions

Based on the analysis and findings from this study, it can be concluded that the residents of Rumah Selangorku Damai Utama are mostly not satisfied with the building and facilities maintenance services provided by the building management body. However, in order to improve the level of satisfaction of residents, the responsibility must not fall under the building management body alone. The residents also have to play their part in order to provide better living experience at low-cost high-rise residential building.

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