

## **UNDERSTANDING THE PEOPLE'S NEEDS OF LIVING IN CITY: SCENARIO IN MALAYSIA**

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### **Abstract**

This research is aimed to understand the needs of the urban population in Malaysia. City is a major focus area for the majority population in purpose of their daily life either working or studying. Most cities in Malaysia built naturally on the encouragement of several key factors. Therefore, urbanization development should take into account the fundamental basis of its population. Thus, this research has conducted survey on the urban population in Malaysia to understand their needs in terms of willingness to stay in the city, distance of workplace, option of housing, option of transportation, and also needs of facilities.

Keywords: City, Urbanization, Willingness, Distance, Housing, Transportation, Facilities.

### **1. Introduction - City**

According to DeBlij & Muller [1], city is defined as an area with a high population density with the same characteristics based on the type of work, culture, political opinion and lifestyle. The city is also defined as an area that has a special type of land use, institutional diversity and efficiency of resource use which also determines the type of city. In addition, the city is also said to be interpretation space that involves a high density pattern with the construction or development of a consistent and continuous. While Fellman et al. [2] stated city as placement based, functional, and has one central core (CDB) so that city can be organized along the principles.

Marcus and Detwyler [3] stated there are three main definitions for the city. First city is a political unit, a settlement that was inhabited by a number of

residents of a group home or residential or other structures or are sometimes viewed in terms of the occupants only. The second is the city as a coalition between the inhabitants. The city covers all the elements of the natural, social and man-made clustered in areas that are heavily populated and its inhabitants have a high culture, including in various skills but are unable to produce sufficient energy. The third definition in terms of the functions of the city can be considered as an open ecosystem that spread through the exchange of cultural material and energy. It catalysed through a good transportation system, rural areas can provide the resources needed by the city and employees are able to absorb some of the results of the city. Besides that, according to the United Nations in the Demographic Yearbook [4] stated that any area in Malaysia can be considered the city when the population of 10,000 or more.

According to the Malaysia's Ministry of Housing and Local Government [5], the criteria taken into account in determining the level of the city in Malaysia are the city as an administrative center of the state, the population is not less than 500,000 people and financially autonomous, with revenue of not less than RM 100 million. But there is also a city in Malaysia, which does not consider the first criterion. In addition, the city should experience growth and rapid economic development, the center of business and industry and has a strong financial institution. City is also a center of higher education, universities and libraries, has special characteristics in terms of long history and cultural activities and sports.

While HabsahHashim [6] stated the main principles of city are sufficient size of the development, pedestrian-friendly environment, a good mix of uses and opportunities for work, an architectural variety and establish a sustainable city, mixing for both residential and use of works, provision of basic shopping, health and educational needs and population have a subsistence level. According to MohdYusofHussain [7], the city is seen as a trigger positive change to local social and physical development. But from another angle, the city also provides pressure and causes various other problems. The dynamics of the transformed through the process of urbanization in general is a process of change in a rural area towards becoming an urban area.

It was also stated by Myrdal [8], the urbanization referred to a spill over effect created by the transmission process development efforts at the center, spread out into the surrounding areas. Whereas, according to Friedmann [9] urbanization is a series of transformations or changes in structure that occur slowly through process innovation or that could trigger a cumulative mix of opportunities they create in society development. A significant area of change in some centers located in the most strategic position and is easily reached via the existing transportation system. From these centers, innovation will spread and spread to other areas in the vicinity.

KatimanRostam [10] stipulates that the urbanization is the expansion of the boundaries of a city. Every city tends to expand its borders. Demand for high business site in the downtown business district has resulted in a residential area in the middle pushed to the edge of the city. Dispersal of the city in the suburbs, especially industry, has also led residents are attracted to the side. Flats and low prices have also grown in suburban areas. According to Von Thünen [11] the border area of a city has a limit and always been set. Land use simple and low-cost housing should be developed close to the city center that is within the city

limits with the reasons for the villagers to commute to work and also to get service in the city center.

A United States of America sociologist from The Chicago School of Sociology, Wirth [12] argued that urbanization is a way of life based on the city dweller which has a style of life that is noticeably different from those living in rural areas or villages. The process of urbanization that is based on the increase and concentration of population in a city often face the issue of quality of life. This is because the increase and concentration of population not only involves aspects alone, but also involves other aspects that are intertwined, especially terms of basic infrastructure and public [7]. The rapid pace of urban development directly sue the new changes in the society that ultimately becomes the defining point of the quality of life of an urban community.

## 2. Urbanization Process

Urbanization often said to be one of the changes that will trigger the development and progress of a society. Basically this phenomenon established through three processes as stated by Abdul Rahman Embong et al. [13], namely:

- i. Changes in terms of population shift, particularly migration of rural residents to cities and settled in the city;
- ii. Changes in employment from the agricultural work to non-agricultural occupations (such as services, industrial, etc.); and
- iii. Changes in the patterns of life, including values, attitudes and behaviors.

Urbanization process created a metropolitan area, a region referred to as containing at least a metropolitan city and its suburbs area with a population exceeding one million people [14]. Accordingly Miesckowski & Mills [15] explained that urbanization is a universal phenomenon that occurs as a result of population growth, increasing household incomes and rising standards of accessibility to transportation. This process is indirectly changed the lives of a society characterized by urban life. The transformation is triggered by the process of urbanization in turn raises many issues to all levels of society, especially the quality of their lives [7]. Harris & Ullman [16] said the city may change from time to time and the importance of the downtown business area may deteriorate. As rival, appear other centers in the suburbs. The focus of development is not just around the city's central business district, but also in other emerging centers. The areas in the suburbs have advantages for certain land use.

According to Aishah @ EsahHj Mohamed [17], Malaysia's urbanization rate continues to increase further with the urban population is 55.1% in 1995 and 61.8% in 2000. In the first decade of the 21st century, Malaysia found the process of urbanization continues to occur with the urban population accounted for of 66.9% in 2005 and rose to 70% in 2008. As in 2020, is expected by 90% of population growth in the period 2000-2020 will be concentrated in urban areas [18]. Peninsular Malaysia is expected to have a total population of 20.8 million or 75.0% of the 27.7 million people in 2020 compared to the rural population of 6.9 million with the percentage dropped significantly to 25%. In addition to the percentage of the urban population is growing, town also found the greater part of it and began to turn into the city.

Meanwhile, according to Abdul HadiHarman Shah et al. [19], urbanization occurred because of the shift from rural to urban areas. Like many theories of economic development, the relationship described is a simplification should be given to the local context, geographical and social. It is often overlooked or not recognized in understanding the impact of development projects development occurs when local agencies can adapt, or are willing to participate in the potential for change. There is a transition and that may be too critical in the overall space and time urban growth, as well as in Malaysia urbanization experience.

It is in line with the views Gladwell [20] that "Urbanization Transition" sets the notion that urbanization experience has moved from one state to another, while the 'critical' in the context of transition involving urbanization decisive turning point from one state to another. Therefore, Abdul Samad Hadi et al. [21] argues that foreign drivers who work with local communities to "Urbanization Transitions" which promotes the rise of cities at first, then the development of cities and eventually to the rise of mega-cities area continued in Malaysia. A turning point in the relationship dimension which trigger the development of new energy and change the direction of a urbanization development is the result of changes in development policies of each period of the previous development.

### **3. Scenario in Malaysia**

Malaysia, like other developing countries are also undergoing a process of rapid urbanization. Therefore, this research will be assess the willingness of the Malaysian people towards urban life, and want to find the necessities of life required of them in terms of residence, the distance of travel, transport and facilities. Therefore, the questionnaire was conducted on 300 residents in the vicinity of the town of Klang Valley. Klang Valley region is the largest urbanization area of Malaysia. Likert scale was used in the survey, which the indicator were 1-strongly disagreed; 2-disagreed; 3-satisfied agreed; 4-agreed; and 5-strongly agreed. Thus, the highest value rate approaching 5 has shown the highest acceptance of the respondents.

Table 1 shows the distribution of descriptive numbers, percentages and means of willingness to live and work in city and willingness to live in rural areas and commuting to city to work. For the willingness to live and work in city, the percentage and number of strongly disagree 1.7% (5 respondents), disagree 7.8% (23 respondents), simply agreed 16.9% (50 respondents), agreed 45.3% (134 respondents) and strongly agree 28.4% (84 respondents). Thus, the mean of the willingness to live and work in city is on the scale of 3.9088 agree. For willingness to live in rural areas and commuting to city to work, the percentage and number of strongly disagree 7.1% (21 respondents), disagreed 11.8% (35 respondents), simply agreed 26.0% (77 respondents), agreed 39.5% (117 respondents) and most agree 15.5% (46 respondents). Thus, the mean of willingness to live in rural areas and commuting to city to work is on a scale of 3.4459 agreed. By comparison, respondents prefer to live and work in city than in rural areas. It is likely to be influence by a factor of distance, which will give added value to the financial needs in terms of tolls, petrol and travel time.

Table 2 shows the distribution of descriptive number, and percentage of type of housing option to stay in the city. The mean value for each type of housing

options are as follows, high-rise housing is 3.7857; terraced house is 3.7603; semi-detached house is 3.4863; bungalow is 3.1959; and townhouse is 2.7388. Based on the mean value, high-rise housing is the highest option to stay in the city. It is influenced on supply factor is highest for that type of housing in city as well as given a more affordable price than other types of housing.

**Table 1. Willingness to stay in the city.**

Scale Frequency		N	%	Overall Mean
<b>Willingness to live and work in city</b>	Strongly Disagreed	5	1.7%	3.9088
	Disagreed	23	7.8%	
	Satisfied Agreed	50	16.9%	
	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>45.3%</b>	
<b>Willingness to live in rural areas and commuting to city to work</b>	Strongly Agreed	84	28.4%	3.4459
	Strongly Disagreed	21	7.1%	
	Disagreed	35	11.8%	
	Satisfied Agreed	77	26.0%	
	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>39.5%</b>	
	Strongly Agreed	46	15.5%	

**Table 2. Type of housing option to stay in the city.**

Type of Housing Option to Stay in the City		N	%	Overall Mean
<b>High-rise Housing</b>	Strongly Disagreed	10	3.4%	3.7857
	Disagreed	28	9.5%	
	Satisfied Agreed	46	15.6%	
	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>48.0%</b>	
<b>Terraced House</b>	Strongly Agreed	69	23.5%	3.7603
	Strongly Disagreed	3	1.0%	
	Disagreed	17	5.8%	
	Satisfied Agreed	71	24.3%	
<b>Semi-Detached House</b>	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>53.8%</b>	3.4863
	Strongly Agreed	44	15.1%	
	Strongly Disagreed	9	3.1%	
	Disagreed	40	13.7%	
<b>Bungalow</b>	Satisfied Agreed	87	29.8%	3.1959
	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>38.4%</b>	
	Strongly Agreed	44	15.1%	
	Strongly Disagreed	27	9.1%	
<b>Town House</b>	Disagreed	65	22.0%	2.7388
	<b>Satisfied Agreed</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>28.0%</b>	
	Agreed	65	22.0%	
	Strongly Agreed	56	18.9%	
	Strongly Disagreed	50	17.2%	
	Disagreed	74	25.4%	
	<b>Satisfied Agreed</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>27.5%</b>	
	Agreed	76	26.1%	
	Strongly Agreed	11	3.8%	

Table 3 shows the number and percentage of distance to commute between home and workplace could be encountered daily. A total of 119 (39.9%) of respondents chose to commute from home to workplace less than 10 km, while 111 respondents (37.2%) chose to commute between 11-20 km. This shows that a large percentage of city residents desire the closest distance between the home and workplace.

**Table 3. Option distance to commute between home and workplace.**

Distance	< 10 km	11 – 20 km	21 – 30 km	31 – 40 km	41 – 50 km	> 50 km
<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b> <b>(39.9%)</b>	111 (37.2%)	54 (18.1%)	7 (2.3%)	2 (0.7%)	5 (1.7%)

**Table 4. Types of transport's option to commute.**

Scale	Frequency	N	%	Overall Mean
<b>LRT/MRT/ Monorel</b>	Strongly Disagreed	12	4.1%	4.0034
	Disagreed	14	4.8%	
	Satisfied Agreed	45	15.4%	
	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>38.2%</b>	
<b>Commuter</b>	Strongly Agreed	110	37.5%	3.7270
	Strongly Disagreed	17	5.8%	
	Disagreed	27	9.2%	
	Satisfied Agreed	58	19.8%	
<b>Car</b>	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>36.9%</b>	4.0171
	Strongly Agreed	83	28.3%	
	Strongly Disagreed	1	.3%	
	Disagreed	16	5.5%	
<b>Motorcycle</b>	Satisfied Agreed	58	19.8%	3.3670
	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>41.0%</b>	
	Strongly Agreed	98	33.4%	
	Strongly Disagreed	29	9.8%	
<b>Public Bus</b>	Disagreed	54	18.2%	2.8737
	Satisfied Agreed	60	20.2%	
	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>29.3%</b>	
	Strongly Agreed	67	22.6%	
<b>Taxi</b>	Strongly Disagreed	39	13.3%	2.3356
	Disagreed	69	23.5%	
	<b>Satisfied Agreed</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>32.4%</b>	
	Agreed	70	23.9%	
<b>Taxi</b>	Strongly Agreed	20	6.8%	2.3356
	<b>Strongly Disagreed</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>30.1%</b>	
	Disagreed	82	28.1%	
	Satisfied Agreed	67	22.9%	
<b>Taxi</b>	Agreed	46	15.8%	2.3356
	Strongly Agreed	9	3.1%	
	Strongly Disagreed	9	3.1%	

Table 4 shows the distribution of descriptive numbers, percentages and means of transport's option to commute in the city. The mean value for each type of transport options are the LRT / MRT / Monorail is 4.0034; commuter is 3.7270; car is 4.0171; motorcycle is 3.3670; public buses is 2.8737 and taxis is 2.3356. Overall for the transport's option to commute are most respondents choose to use LRT / MRT / Monorail and cars.

**Table 5. Types of facilities that needs to be close to housing area.**

Scale Frequency		N	%	Overall Mean
<b>School</b>	Strongly Disagreed	3	1.0%	4.3645
	Disagreed	3	1.0%	
	Satisfied Agreed	27	9.0%	
	Agreed	115	38.5%	
	<b>Strongly Agreed</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>50.5%</b>	
<b>Kindergarten</b>	Strongly Disagreed	0	0.0%	4.2977
	Disagreed	5	1.7%	
	Satisfied Agreed	38	12.7%	
	Agreed	119	39.8%	
	<b>Strongly Agreed</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>45.8%</b>	
<b>Nursery</b>	Strongly Disagreed	0	0.0%	4.2852
	Disagreed	8	2.7%	
	Satisfied Agreed	34	11.4%	
	Agreed	121	40.6%	
	<b>Strongly Agreed</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>45.3%</b>	
<b>Clinic</b>	Strongly Disagreed	0	0.0%	4.4482
	Disagreed	1	.3%	
	Satisfied Agreed	18	6.0%	
	Agreed	126	42.1%	
	<b>Strongly Agreed</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>51.5%</b>	
<b>Police / Fire Station</b>	Strongly Disagreed	0	0.0%	4.2718
	Disagreed	3	1.0%	
	Satisfied Agreed	41	13.8%	
	Agreed	126	42.3%	
	<b>Strongly Agreed</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>43.0%</b>	
<b>Grocery Store</b>	Strongly Disagreed	0	0.0%	4.5470
	Disagreed	0	0.0%	
	Satisfied Agreed	20	6.7%	
	Agreed	95	31.9%	
	<b>Strongly Agreed</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>61.4%</b>	
<b>Bus / Taxi Station</b>	Strongly Disagreed	2	.7%	4.2256
	Disagreed	1	.3%	
	Satisfied Agreed	47	15.8%	
	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>42.1%</b>	
	Strongly Agreed	122	41.1%	
<b>LRT / MRT Station</b>	Strongly Disagreed	1	.3%	4.3131
	Disagreed	2	.7%	
	Satisfied Agreed	33	11.1%	
	Agreed	128	43.1%	
	<b>Strongly Agreed</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>44.8%</b>	
<b>Place of</b>	Strongly Disagreed	2	.7%	4.2609

<b>Worship</b>	Disagreed	11	3.7%	
	Satisfied Agreed	39	13.0%	
	Agreed	102	34.1%	
	<b>Strongly Agreed</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>48.5%</b>	
<b>Gymnasium</b>	Strongly Disagreed	3	1.0%	3.7736
	Disagreed	21	7.1%	
	Satisfied Agreed	85	28.7%	
	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>39.9%</b>	
<b>Playground / Recreation</b>	Strongly Agreed	69	23.3%	
	Strongly Disagreed	2	.7%	4.1443
	Disagreed	4	1.3%	
	Satisfied Agreed	46	15.4%	
<b>Laundry Centre</b>	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>48.0%</b>	
	Strongly Agreed	103	34.6%	
	Strongly Disagreed	2	.7%	3.7710
	Disagreed	23	7.7%	
	Satisfied Agreed	82	27.6%	
	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>41.8%</b>	
	Strongly Agreed	66	22.2%	

Table 5 shows the distribution of descriptive numbers, percentages and means for the types of facilities that needs to be close to housing area. The mean value for each facilities requirements are as follows, school is 4.3645; kindergarten is 4.2977; nursery center is 4.2852; the clinic is 4.4482; police / fire station is 4.2718; grocery store is 4.5470; bus / taxi station is 4.2256; LRT / MRT station is 4.3131; place of worship is 4.2609; gymnasium is 3.7736; playground / recreation is 4.1443; and laundry center is 3.7710. Overall for the types of facilities that needs to be felt near the housing area, respondents strongly agreed with the facilities of schools, kindergartens, nursery centers, police / fire stations, bus / taxi station, LRT / MRT station, clinic, grocery store, and a playground / recreation. In addition, respondents also agreed with the gymnasium and laundry centers that need close to housing area.

#### 4. Conclusions

Results of the questionnaire showed that the need of the population in urban areas is high. As conclusion, based on the questionnaire that was conducted, people prefer to live and work in city and the four most factors influence determination the willingness of people to stay in the city are affordability of price housing which is must be suitable with their current income, short travel distance to commute between home and workplace which is less than 10km, great type of public transport convenience with higher linkage coverage and good facilities close to housing area which is ease their daily life to access. It can be stated that the residents of the city requires a systematic development and simplify their daily business, whether working, attending school, and also undergo other activities of daily life. Form of housing also plays an important role so that every resident could feel the comfort and affordability of housing. Hence, the data obtained from this research can be used as a benchmark for other research and development in the future to city and urbanization in Malaysia more towards sustainable development. It is in line with the definition of the city as described in the topic before which are



stated by Habsah Hashim that the main principles of city are sufficient size of the development, pedestrian-friendly environment, a good mix of uses and opportunities for work, an architectural variety and establish a sustainable city, mixing for both residential and use of works, provision of basic shopping, health and educational needs and population have a subsistence level. Also stated by Mohd Yusof Hussain that the city is seen as a trigger positive change to local social and physical development.

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