

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TOWARDS QUALITY OF WORKMANSHIP IN
LOW COST HOUSINGS IN KLANG VALLEY

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To my beloved father, mother, siblings and friends

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ABSTRACT

Customer satisfaction is a very popular concept in many industries nowadays including housing industry. In order to enhance quality in the housing industry, the government has introduced CIS 2 as the minimum standardisation requirement for low cost housing. The objective of the survey is to determine customer satisfaction towards the quality of material and workmanship in low cost houses in the Klang Valley. The data was collected by three methods which are by literature review, questionnaire survey and observations on the low cost units. The respondents for the surveys covered fifty (50) low cost housing dwellers in six (6) low cost housings in the Klang Valley area. Statistical Package for Social Sciences Software (SPSS) was used for data analysis based on frequency and average index analysis. The analysis shows the result that the provisions under CIS 2 were fully implemented in the six (6) low cost housings surveyed. However, there are common workmanship defects experienced by the low cost housing dwellers mostly related to the building construction. Despite these defects, the customers or the users of low cost housing in the Klang Valley were generally satisfied with the quality of material and workmanship compared to other unsatisfactory factors covered under CIS 2 such as design and facilities.

ABSTRAK

Konsep kepuasan pengguna merupakan konsep yang semakin mendapat tempat di dalam pelbagai industri pada hari ini termasuklah industri perumahan. Sebagai usaha untuk meningkatkan kualiti perumahan negara, kerajaan telah memperkenalkan CIS 2 sebagai peruntukan seragam bagi perumahan kos rendah di negara ini. Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk mengenalpasti tahap kepuasan pengguna terhadap kualiti bahan dan kerja binaan bagi perumahan-perumahan kos rendah di Lembah Klang. Data-data yang diperlukan diperolehi melalui kajian literatur, boang soal selidik dan kaedah pemerhatian terhadap perumahan kos rendah terlibat. Responden kajian adalah meliputi lima puluh (50) penghuni bagi enam perumahan kos rendah di sekitar kawasan Lembah Klang. *Statistical Package for Social Sciences Software* (SPSS) digunakan untuk analisis frekuensi dan skala indeks. Analisis data menunjukkan bahawa peruntukan seragam CIS 2 telah dilaksanakan sepenuhnya terhadap enam perumahan kos rendah tersebut. Namun begitu, terdapat beberapa masalah berkenaan kerja binaan bagi perumahan kos rendah tersebut dengan majoriti masalah adalah berkaitan dengan pembinaan bangunan itu sendiri. Di sebalik masalah-masalah yang dihadapi, para penghuni perumahan kos rendah di Lembah Klang masih berpuas hati dengan kualiti bahan dan kerja binaan dan berpendapat bahawa ia adalah berpatutan dengan harga yang telah dibayar, berbanding dengan peruntukan lain di bawah CIS 2 seperti rekabentuk rumah dan kemudahan infrastruktur yang disediakan.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.6 Background

Construction industry is one of economic sectors which plays an important role in the economic development of the country. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2001 shows that the construction industry covers 3.4% of the overall GDP. However, the importance of the construction sector should not be determined by its size, but to its role in the economic development which produces all facilities needed by other producers and ultimate consumers (Fadhlin Abdullah, 2004). This is due to the fact that the construction sector covers various types of construction such as civil engineering, special trade construction, non-residential, and also residential.

The residential housing construction is the second highest type of construction after civil engineering (Department of Statistics, Malaysia) as housing provision has been a crucial issue in developing countries including Malaysia. Under the Ninth Malaysia Plan (2000-2010), it is stated that the fourth thrust of the National Mission is to improve the standard and the sustainability of the quality of life.

To achieve this objective, the Government continues to provide basic needs such as water, energy, housing and transportation to the citizens. This effort continued the Eighth Plan objective of increasing accessibility to adequate, affordable and quality houses for all income groups where the priority was given to the development of low and low medium cost houses. The number of houses built in the Eighth Malaysia Plan had exceeded the set targets and for the Ninth Malaysia Plan, the Government plan to build approximately 43,800 units of low cost houses through Program Perumahan Rakyat.

In addition to low cost housing, the development of low cost had also been undertaken. The success of these low medium cost housing developments had significantly helped to overcome housing problems such as illegal housing or squatters. For an example, 5,000 people from 100 families and 200 illegal backyard factory operators from the squatters in Salak South, Kuala Lumpur had been relocated to other low cost and low medium cost housing estates in and around the Klang Valley (Property Times, 26 June 2006).

This showed the success of low cost housing as a way to provide Malaysian, particularly the low income categories, accessibility to adequate and affordable housing. Thus the effort to house the low and middle income group with these low cost housing programmes should be undertaken without compromising the quality of the dwellers to ensure that all income groups will have equal rights for quality houses.

1.7 Problem Statement

The construction industry has always been under criticisms for its defective works and poor quality. This is related to some causes such as unskilled construction workers, inexperienced site supervisors, sub-standard materials, disorganized and labour intensive construction works, rushed construction job and huge demand for the properties (Elias, 2003).

Quality disputes in construction have been commonly studied by researchers such as Woods (1998), Elias (2003) and Holm (2004). All the researches had shown that quality in construction is very essential nowadays as the owner's concern on the goods delivered to them increased. They are also more particular about the quality of the properties they bought (Hamzah, 2003). In other words, the consumers or customers nowadays seem to be more demanding on what they are paying for.

As the concern on quality increased, the Malaysian government has identified and focused on the aspect of standardisation as part of its effort to enhance quality in construction especially for the housing industry. Two main standardisations that have been used for housing industry are Malaysian Standard (MS) and Construction Industry Standards (CIS). These standardisations outline the minimum requirements of achieving the required quality in housing.

The major concern is, are these two standardisations have achieved the objective to enhance quality in housing construction? Have these standardisations been applied to the construction of low cost housing? If so, how these could contribute to the dwellers satisfaction? Are they satisfied with the quality standard of low cost housing which should be covered under these standardisations?

It had been highlighted in the Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan 2020 that the main problem related to low cost housing are poor quality of workmanship and materials in low cost housing development. This has resulted high maintenance cost for this type of housing. A research by Low and Goh (2001) showed that poor workmanship is the major factor that influences quality in construction.

Hence, the study should be carried out to analyze the satisfaction level of low cost housing dwellers or the customers on the quality of material and workmanship. It is important to note that even though the lower cost may cause the use of cheaper materials, the customers still have the rights to good workmanship and material which is of the same value with the price of their house and complies the minimum quality standardisations outlined by the government.

1.8 Aims and Objectives

The aim of this research is to identify customers' satisfaction level on quality of material and workmanship of low cost housing in Klang Valley. This aim will be supported by the following objectives:

- a) To study customer satisfaction concept and its relation to construction industry
- b) To identify common defective workmanships in low cost housing in Klang Valley
- c) To analyse the compliance of quality standardisation in the development of low cost housings in Klang Valley

1.9 Scope of Study

A research by Hamzah, Kwan and Woods (1998) had identified customers demand on the quality of low cost houses in Malaysia and developed a typical Quality Chart for a low cost flat based on this customer's expectation. This chart comprises of twelve related factors influencing the quality of low cost housings as viewed by customers which also includes workmanships.

The low qualities of building materials and workmanships have also been identified as the main problems for low cost housing in the Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan 2020. These problems have also resulted high maintenance for this type of houses. This research will look further on the workmanship factor by focusing on low cost housings in Klang Valley. The respondents of the research will cover the low cost housing dwellers in Klang Valley. The respondents will be asked to give their satisfaction level on the quality of materials and workmanship of their house.

1.10 Brief Research Methodology

The research was conducted by following some major processes such as shown in Figure 1.1. The major processes include:

- a) Stage 1: Preliminary Study
- b) Stage 2: Literature review
- c) Stage 3: Data collection process
- d) Stage 4: Data analysis
- e) Stage 5: Conclusion

1.5.1 Preliminary Study

This stage includes identifying problems and also determining topic and area of the research. This was done by referring articles and journals and also by observations on the current issues on construction. The main problem, aims and objectives were identified before literature review was carried out.

1.5.2 Literature Review

As the topic of the research determined, literature review was carried out to further explore the related topics. Important terms and keywords such as low cost housing, quality, and customer satisfaction were defined for better understanding before the data collection process began.

1.5.3 Data Collection

The data collection process involved two types of data; primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected by questionnaires which aim at identifying the customer satisfaction level on quality and workmanship in low cost houses construction. The survey on selected units to observe the quality of low cost house unit as compared to the requirements in standardisations in CIS 2 had also been carried out. The secondary data was gathered from reports, articles, journals conference papers and books.

1.5.4 Data Analysis

All of the data collected was scheduled and analysed. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to analyse the data. Two methods used are frequency analysis and average index analysis. The output was presented in the form of charts and schedules.

1.5.5 Conclusion

This stage includes the summary and conclusion for all the data analysed. The final stage involved assimilation of the findings. The findings were concluded and some recommendations were made for future study.

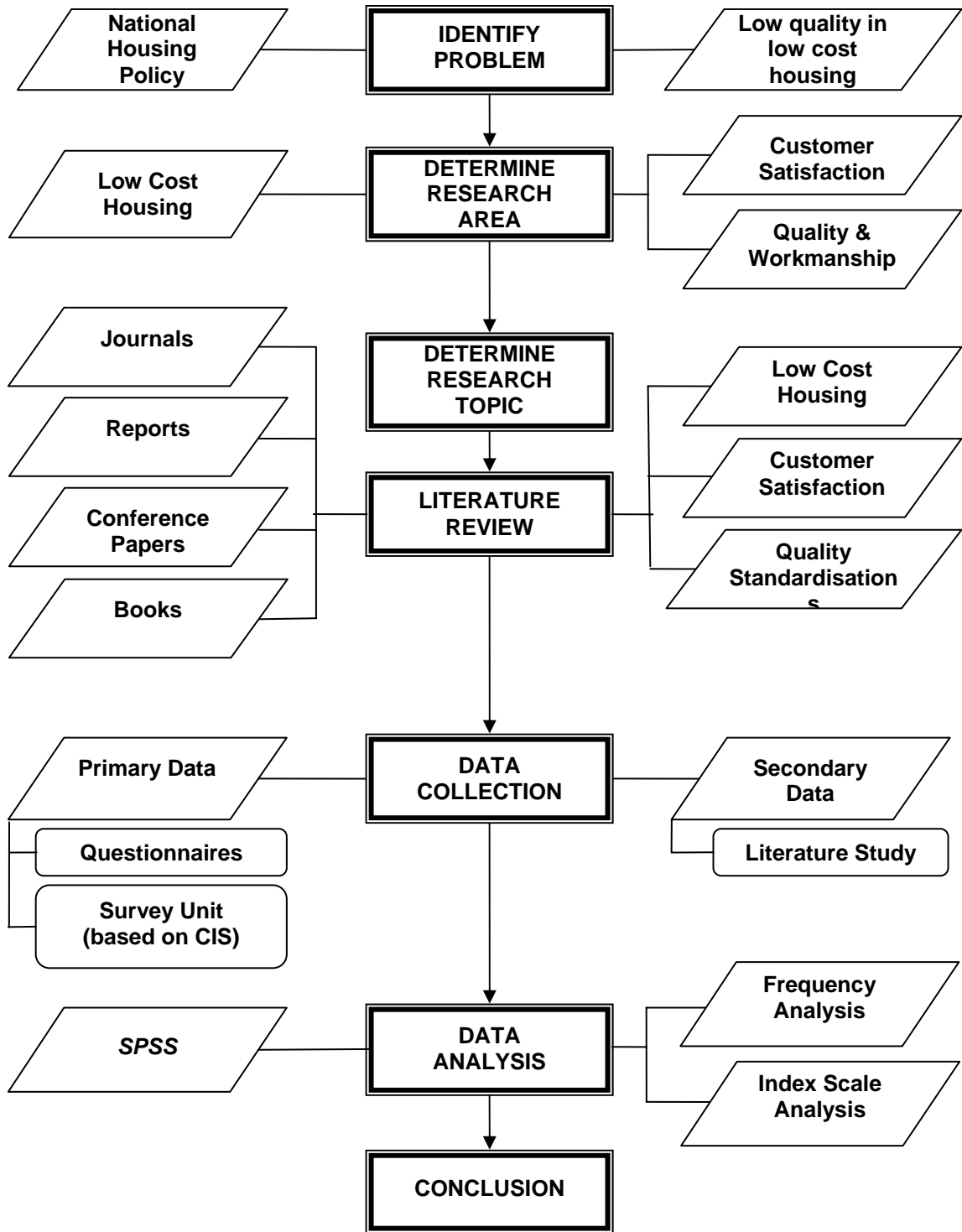


Figure 1.1: Methodology of the Research

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