

DESIGN FOR IMPROVING SOCIAL INTERACTION OF
HIGH-RISE HOUSING COMMUNITY

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To my beloved family and friends.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to improve the social interactions of the high-rise residential community. This is because nowadays many high-rise housing designs are developed for profit and without considering the culture and social issues of the users in the building. Many people are spending their lifetime to pay for their housing loans. But what they get did not reflect what they pay. Many high-rise housing facilities are often overlooked and social facilities are not provided. Some cases that provided those facilities, they did not maintain from time to time. Active social interaction can promote social harmony and reduce anti-social behaviour among the residents. Therefore, it is very important to instill quality living among the residents to create a strong sense of community in the neighbourhood. There are a few architectural solutions are established to promote active social interactions in high-rise residential based on the analysis of the study group and area. This research was conducted by using interviews, case studies, and questionnaires as the main source of data collection to achieve the objectives. The data collection was done at Johor Bahru area with the target group of Malaysians who commute and work in Singapore but stay in Johor Bahru. From the findings, the author studied the lifestyles and the needs of the target group in order to suggest a few architectural solutions that can be applied to the housing design. Finally, the suggestions are incorporated into the design thesis of high-rise residential.

ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk meningkatkan interaksi sosial dalam masyarakat perumahan berbilang tingkat. Ini kerana pada masa kini banyak reka bentuk perumahan bertingkat tinggi yang dibangunkan untuk tujuan keuntungan tanpa mengambil kira budaya dan isu-isu sosial pengguna di dalam bangunan. Ramai orang yang menghabiskan hidup mereka untuk membayar pinjaman perumahan mereka. Tetapi apa yang mereka dapat tidak mencerminkan apa yang mereka bayar. Banyak kemudahan perumahan bertingkat tinggi sering diabaikan dan kemudahan sosial tidak disediakan. Ada sesetengah kes yang menyediakan kemudahan tersebut tetapi tidak mengekalkan penyelenggaraan dari semasa ke semasa. Interaksi sosial yang aktif boleh menggalakkan keharmonian sosial dan mengurangkan tingkah laku anti-sosial di kalangan penduduk. Oleh itu, adalah sangat penting untuk memupuk kehidupan yang berkualiti di kalangan penduduk untuk mewujudkan semangat kemasyarakatan yang kuat di kawasan kejiranan. Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk mencadangkan beberapa penyelesaian seni bina yang dapat menggalakkan interaksi sosial yang aktif di kediaman bertingkat tinggi berdasarkan analisis kumpulan kajian dan kawasan. Kajian ini dijalankan dengan menggunakan kaedah temu bual, kajian kes dan soal selidik sebagai sumber utama pengumpulan data untuk mencapai objektif. Pengumpulan data dilakukan di kawasan Johor Bahru dengan kumpulan sasaran rakyat Malaysia yang berulang-alik dan bekerja di Singapura tetapi tinggal di Johor Bahru. Dari hasil kajian, penulis meneliti gaya hidup dan keperluan kumpulan sasaran untuk mencadangkan beberapa penyelesaian seni bina yang boleh digunakan pada reka bentuk perumahan. Akhirnya, cadangan-cadangan tersebut dimasukkan ke dalam tesis reka bentuk kediaman bertingkat tinggi.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Johor Bahru is one of Southeast Asia's popular urban areas and an important industrial, tourist and commercial hub for Southern Peninsular Malaysia. Johor Bahru is the capital city of Johor State, Malaysia. With about 1.5 million people in the city and nearly two million in the metropolitan area, it is the second most popular city in Malaysia and one of the cities with high a population growth rate. The city is an important commercial, industrial, and tourism hub for southern Malaysia and one of the biggest industrial centers of the country. Everyday, there are thousands of people who cross over to work in Singapore. It is one of the busiest crossings in Southeast Asia.

Due to the ringgit's depreciation in Malaysia, many people choose to work in neighbouring countries, especially Singapore, for better income. However, this is not a new trend and has happened since a few decades ago. Recently, it has become more apparent as the currency exchange rate is depreciating.

1.2 Problem Statement

According to the Human Resource Ministry, there are about 350,000 Malaysians working in Singapore. They are the group that facing traffic jam at road or custom Johor every day. Most of the commuters do not have enough resting time during weekdays as they wake up early and come back home late.

Those workers who commute from Malaysia to Singapore daily are advised by Johor Unity Executive and Human Resources Councilor, R. Vidyanathan to consider taking up a job back in Malaysia to avoid the recent causeway toll hikes. This is because their daily routine to work in is to leave home as early as 5 am and be back by about 9 pm(Soon, 2015).Consequently, they have no time to spend with the family members and their children grow up. Therefore, problems including neglect of family and increasing divorce are rampant among those commuters that work in Singapore. However, many Malaysians still choose to work across the causeway and the risks to personal and family life seems a small price.

However, according to Stutzer (2008), life as a commuter becomes challenging and difficult to manage due to a range of factors including time spent on traveling back every day, increased expenditure and financial cost, as well as changes in the relationship dynamics with spouses, family, and friends. In turn, stress, anxiety, and the burdens related to these and other commuting related challenges will impact negatively individual commuters' health and quality of life. Not to mention that this arrangement of commuting marriages and families entails a unique set of stressors in terms of emotional and financial cost and sacrifices for the commuter and his/ her family (Patterson-Stewart, 2000).

Therefore, this will bring impacts on work-home life balance for those who demand dual income commuter families, especially among those young Malaysian families. Furthermore, it is also very important to focus on how the family members adapt to the changes that emerge from being a commuter family/marriage. Therefore, the adaptation of changes is to improve the relationship of the target user in their families and marriages as well as their children positive development(Adriana, 2014).

1.3 Research Aim & Objectives

The research aims to establish the relationship between communal and private spaces based on the social interaction perspective in order to develop a set of responsive design strategies for the standard living of the target user. There are three main objectives for this research topic, which are:-

- i. To identify the daily lifestyle of Malaysians who work in Singapore.
- ii. To figure out the activities that promote interaction between the family members and community living for the target user to be involved in.
- iii. To determine the architectural solutions for encouraging active socialization in the family and community interaction.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions derived for this dissertation are:-

- i. What is the lifestyle of Malaysians who work in Singapore?
- ii. What are the activities that involved interactions between the target user and the family members in the community living?
- iii. How to provide a home that encourages interaction and socialization for the target user in the family and community?

1.5 Significance of Study

This research is to provide general design implementations for design thesis as shown in Appendix B. Besides, this research also helps the developers or architects who intend to build a vertical housing project in Johor Bahru. It will provide some useful design solutions for the target user. Based on the World Bank Report in 2009, 54% out of 145,000 Malaysian who have a tertiary education are working in Singapore but stay at Johor Bahru. Every year, the number of these group of people is increasing every year. In future, there will be more and more people go to Singapore for work as the number of this group of people is increasing 300% from year to year. And this scenario is just like Shen Zhen and Hong Kong. Thus, the demand for buying a house in Johor Bahru and working in Singapore will be increasing.

1.6 Scope of Study

The research is focusing on Malaysians who work in Singapore but choose to live in Johor Bahru. This is because the chosen site is at Stulang Laut and it is one kilometer away from the customs, immigration, and quarantine complex (CIQ). Therefore, the people that work in Singapore can save more time to avoid long traffic jams and have more sleeping hours than others that live on the outskirts of Johor Bahru.

1.7 Expected Findings

Through the research, there are a few expected findings that will be delivered. First is the lifestyle of Malaysians that work in Singapore. It is introduced by knowing what are the daily activities during weekdays and weekend, income range, working and resting time, status, age range, their transports to work and so forth. Besides that, there will be a series of case studies that discuss the design implementations to promote active socialization in the housing project. All the data

gathered is important to identify some alternative solutions for them in order to encourage active socialization in the family and community interaction.

1.8 Research Methodology

Primarily, Chapter 3 is to elaborate on the research direction through the understanding of the existing research and literature review patterns. There are four different stages that have been divided through the overall basic reach framework. First is to identify the research problem, data collection, data analysing and lastly conclusion. The adoption and breakdown of the methodology are discussed and further elaborated in Chapter 3. Primary data is collected via interviews and questionnaires. Furthermore, all data collected through via existing literature reviews, reading materials or books, case studies, journal articles and internet-based articles. Next, the dissertation done by alumni will be used as secondary data to support the primary data that had been collected. The overall design of this research takes a qualitative approach, meaning that a formal, objective, systematic process is used to analyse the data in order to achieve the research objectives.

1.9 Structure of Dissertation

There are five chapters in the dissertation. Chapter 1 is the introduction, problem statements, research aim and objectives, research questions scope of the study and the expected findings. Basically, it is to provide the overview of the study.

While Chapter 2 covers the literature review. The topics discuss are the relationship between social interaction and privacy, shared spaces in high-rise building community, Future Housing in 'Vertical Kampung' and the importance of social interaction.

Next, Chapter 3 shows the method of collecting data in order to get the results to be discussed in Chapter 4. In this study, both the quantitative and qualitative

methods are used to obtain the results. The data collected is based on the target user and site in Stulang Laut, Johor.

In Chapter 4, there are several case studies introduced to achieve the objectives stated in chapter 1. The case studies include The Interlace and Kampung Admiralty in Singapore as well as The Met in Thailand.

In Chapter 5, the findings are analysed and discussed, related to the objectives of the study. Therefore, the set of potential architectural solutions that respond to the target users can be implied to achieve the aim and objectives.

Lastly, Chapter 6 is the last part after discussing the end results. This chapter is to conclude the overall study of the research topic and develop the new potential research topic for future study. Therefore, limitations, challenges, and future recommendations will be mentioned in this chapter.

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