



A Case Study of The Causes Of Urban Poverty In Kampung Chubadak, Sentul

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ABSTRACT

Urban poverty introduces to a disastrous impact to our country. Poverty in the urban area can bring health effect, environmental effect and social decay to the community. This study made effort to determine the causes of urban poverty in Kampung Chubadak by analyzing the characteristics of the poor people. The overall purpose of the study was to identify whether the residents in Kampung Chubadak Sentul are categorized as urban poor based on the data collected. Data were randomly selected from the households in the Kampung Chubadak area and the questionnaires were distributed from door-to-door. Some interviews towards the households also have been conducted and recorded. Findings indicate that there are significant correlation between causes of urban poverty and socio-economic factor. On the whole, respondents perceived level of education, household income, and the household size as important factors to increase their quality of life and escape from being the people that fall below the PLI line.

Keywords: Urban poverty, level of education and skills, household income, household size, poverty line income (PLI), Kampung Chubadak

INTRODUCTION

Kuala Lumpur is the center heart of Malaysia and its rapid urbanization is the highest among other urban areas in Malaysia. According to Jamaliah (2004), there is an increment of 100 percent of the urbanization there since 1970 to 2000 is 100 percent. PLI is the main approach or indicator to identify the poor that refer the borderline income that separates the poor from the non poor (Roslan, 2004, p. 27). Those incomes that fall below the poverty line are considered to be poor. Thus, this study identifies whether the residents of Kampung Chubadak, a slum area in Kuala Lumpur are among the urban poor based on the level income indicated by the Poverty Line Income (PLI). Further, the research would immerse into causes that contribute toward urban poverty in the area.

Urban poverty is a problematic phenomenon in the city because it causes plenty impacts to the residents of the city. According to Gottdiener and Hutchison (2006), the most dangerous places are the places where the poorest urban residents live. This matter can contribute to social crumble in our society and can bring the disharmony to the people in the city. Furthermore, according to Low and Khairuddin, the City Hall of Kuala Lumpur has recognized the seriousness of the squatter problem like communicable disease where a high infection rate caused by a combination of crowding, low immunization rates, and poor sanitation (1991). Poverty is a multidimensional notion that is captured by a poverty line in terms of measured income and thus poverty is inability to meet certain basic needs (Athar, 2003). Sen (1999) defines poverty as the deprivation of basic capabilities that provide a person with the freedom to choose the life he or she has reason to value and these capabilities include good health, education, social networks, command over economic resources, and influence on decision-making that affects one's life (as cited in "Urban Poverty", 2007) .

Urban poverty can be caused by urbanization and the migration of rural people into the urban area. The Prime Minister stated that the urbanization is increasing rapidly with 63 percent of population residing in

the urban areas. The poverty rate in urban areas continues to increase due to the high cost of living, low income and housing problem (The 2010 Budget Speech, 2009). When the rate of urbanization is increasing, people will start to migrate into the city to increase their quality of life and this will increase the number of population in the city. Jamaliah (2004) stated that the proportion of population of urban areas from 50.7 percent in 1991 to 61.8 percent in the year 2000. According to Olotuah and Adesiji (2005), the rapid increase in the population of the urban centre has resulted in an increase in the cost of living, because of higher demand on urban commodities that are getting shorter in supply by the day.

However, the researchers focus on the socioeconomic factors that contribute to urban poverty. One of the main factors that contribute to urban poverty is the household income. According to Chamhuri and Mohd. Yusof (1997), the household income was used to determine the level of poverty. A comprehensive income concept was used incorporating cash and non-cash incomes of heads of household and household members. Non-cash incomes include imputed value of own house, assistance and subsidies in kind. Household Income can make a household better off today (able to consume more goods and services). Both regular and irregular income, as well as cash and non-cash income are included if they are received in a form that can be spent (consumed) immediately (Smeeding & Weinberg, 2001). Household income has been a general indicator to a person whether he or she is poor or not. Low wages are a major cause of poverty (Harris *et al.*, as cited in Mitlin, 2005). Furthermore, the rates of income, wage and productivity of the urban poor are generally low due to their low-paid employment if these people cannot hold a better job employment (Shahadat, 2007).

The researchers also discussed about the education and skills of the poor. The researchers want to focus whether the respondents finished their formal education and hold the official education certificate for their education and skills from the education institution. Based on Ragayah (2005), low level of education and skill is when someone does not have formal education. Besides that, based on Nair (2000), people with low skill are the one who hardly conductive for attaining a decent education or acquiring critical skills that are needed in the modern sector of the economy.

Many of researchers agreed that low education and skill can contribute to poverty. According to Ragayah (2005), in her study showed all of the very poor respondents had received primary or secondary education but as her expectation, none of those with pre-university or tertiary education are classified as poor. As referred to Nair (2000), people with low levels of education and skills are largely unemployable and find themselves competing with others for low paying dead end type of jobs thus perpetuating their poverty. Similarly with Jandhyala (1999), he also agreed that education can help the poor to going out from poverty because education can be a life-empowering experience for all and what the poor need most is empowerment. The Royal Professor Ungku Aziz also agreed about education is important in helping people out from poverty. In his interview with Utusan Malaysia, he said that Malay should be force to learn and improving themselves until the highest education in life (“Orang Melayu Perlu Dipaksa”, 2006). The reason of this statement because many of the Malay are involved in poverty and the only way out from poverty is by learning either they Malay like it or not.

Besides that, household size also the contributor to urban poverty. Household size can be defined as the number of individual, related to the family who share the same dwelling unit. According to Smeeding and Weinberg (2001), household size can be defined as the number of all members related or unrelated who share the same dwelling unit. Simultaneously, Ragayah (2007), she defines the household size as the number of individuals in a household. When incomes earned by a household have to be separate among the household, the value of the income will be small (Ragayah, 2007). The larger the household size, the smaller the value of income earned by the household. As the value of income earned becomes smaller, the possibility of the household to be poor is high.

There are many researchers that shown the larger household is tend to be poor. According to Chamhuri and Mohd. (1997), the poor have a relatively larger family size of 5.7, compared with the non-poor (4.5). According to Ragayah (2005) research in July and August 2004, she also comes up with the same result with Chamhuri where the larger the number of household, the higher the possibility of the household to be poor. Based on respondents, the average family size was 5.5 members, the same size as

the average non-poor households. On the other hand, the average size of poor households is much larger at 6.9 members respectively. Similar with Pakistan, in the case of Multan City, it is showed that the average household size is 7.4 persons per household of the poor in that City (Imran, Shahnawaz, and Asma, 2006).

METHODOLOGY

There are several main objectives regarding this study which are to determine the causes of urban poverty in Kampung Chubadak Tradisi using the quantified measures, socio economic factors. The respondents of this research are the Malaysian head of household in Kampung Chubadak Tradisi, Sentul, Kuala Lumpur. There 46 head of household in that area. Therefore, the researchers use population sample in conducting the investigation.

Data Collection

The data of this study were collected by using closed ended questions questionnaires. The questionnaire were divided to two section which are Section A and Section B. Section A covers about the straightforward demographic questions such as the age, the gender and occupation. Mean while, in the Section B, the researchers will ask about the independent variables which are low education and skill, household income and household size. The questions functioned as to determine the relationship between the causes of urban poverty and urban poverty in Kampung Chubadak.

Data Analysis

The Correlation

The researchers aim to determine whether the independent variables (causes of urban poverty) are correlated with the dependent variable (urban poverty). Besides that, the relationship between the variables also can be found out in the range of +1 to -1.

RESULTS

According to the literature review, the causes of urban poverty are because of the household income, number of household and the attained education and skill.

The results that the researchers find from this research were this study gives the latest overview about what the current situation of urban poverty in Kampung Chubadak. The result can be used by the government to find a solution to eradicate the urban poverty in Malaysia in particularly the research area.

Besides that, the study is important encourage the students of Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Kedah to do more research on urban poverty in the future. The research about urban poverty is rarely conducted by the students of UiTM Kedah. Therefore, researchers hoped by the successful of the study, there will be more research about urban will be done in order to enhance the variety of such research in UiTM Kedah.

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, urban poverty is an inevitable phenomenon that is faced by the people who lives in the city because of the rapid rate of

urbanization. Therefore, comprehensive measure should be taken by the government to make sure that the activities and programs that have been done by the government bring benefits to the urban poor. The government should not only gives solutions but also act accordance to the solutions that have been proposed in order to decrease the number of urban poverty in the city.

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