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NEIGHBOURHOOD QUALITY IN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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Abstract
Neighbourhood quality is important for the residents' need and satisfaction in their housing and neighbourhood area. Most research in developed and developing countries generally used physical, social and economic factor in conceptualising the research. In developed and developing countries the neighbourhood quality uses satisfaction concept in illuminating the context of the physical factor, physical and social factor or physical, social and economic factor. The residents will evaluate the physical, social and economic factor by using the satisfaction scale with multivariable attributes. Despite increase in the use of physical, social and the economic factors among developed and developing countries, evidence from literature claimed that in Malaysia, most research used physical or physical and social factors to conceptualise the research. In this paper, extensive review on previous research in developed and developing neighbourhood quality has been conducted to gauge residents' needs in their housing and neighbourhood area. The primary objective of this paper therefore is to examine the existing variable used in neighbourhood quality in developed and developing countries. It was found that most research used multivariable in physical, social and economic factors as their conceptual framework. This paper contributes in the aspect of neighbourhood quality and had implications towards local authority policy and planning guidelines.

Keywords:*Neighbourhood Quality; Physical Factors; Social Factors; Economic Factors; Residents' Satisfaction*

1. Introduction

The residents' satisfaction and necessity in their life are basically influenced by the physical elements in their neighbourhood quality. In addition, the social and economic factors also give a high force to the residents' satisfaction in their neighbourhood quality. Erkip (2010) described neighbourhood quality as the neighbourhood with high security, increased property value, homogeneity, satisfaction, dwelling satisfaction, neighbours positive social image, exclusive tendencies, and organization of community and nearness to the city. As explained by Serrano (2009) the neighbourhood quality is the neighbourhood environment characteristics such as noise, pollution, environmental problems and crime or vandalism. Whereas (Rehdanza & Maddison, 2008) stated that the neighbourhood quality as the neighbourhood characteristics which identify possible factors influencing individual living. These include for example, in a predominantly residential area, industrial or commercial area. The size of the town or city, the distance to the nearest larger city and the closest transport link in neighbourhood quality are important in neighbourhood characteristic.

Most theoretical research framework uses the satisfaction factor for better neighbourhood quality. The satisfaction factor as noted by Aiello et al. (2010) states that the residential satisfaction is considered as a multidimensional variable referring to different domains of urban residential quality. The factors of socio demographic such as gender, age, etc., and residential factors such as length of residence in the place, number of people living together, etc. The socio demographic and residential variables predict the dimensions of perceived urban quality. These, in turn, envisage neighbourhood attachment, considered as the final criterion. Among neighbourhood features, presence of facilities, quietness, pleasantness of buildings and social relationships emerged as the best predictors of neighbourhood attachment. Lovejoy et al. (2010) documented the satisfaction factor as satisfaction levels in combination perceptions of the neighbourhood environment as a reflection of respondents' preferences. The concept of "satisfaction" is generally defined as the extent to which needs are

met, perhaps contrasting with some other types of attitudinal queries that some argue draw more on affective, normative or cognitive beliefs. The determinants of residential satisfaction, considered as potential determinants to the attributes of residents' physical, socio cultural and economic environment. These include the facilities, services or other benefits nearby; and attributes of individuals themselves.

The discussion of neighbourhood quality will explain the experiences in the developed countries, developing countries and experiences in Malaysia. There are three main factors for further discussion in influencing the provision of good neighbourhood quality which are the physical, social and economic factors. The physical factors which are spatial, functional and environmental aspect, the social factor which is the socio-demographic background of the residents and other social factors related to the economic factors which are the socio-economic background of the residents.

2. Neighbourhood Quality in Developed Countries

Largely, the research in developed countries evaluating and measuring the neighbourhood quality used the residential satisfaction factor as a theoretical background. Many of the researchers used the multivariable factors in evaluating the neighbourhood quality. The multivariable is categorised into physical, social and economic factor in housing and neighbourhood area.

2.1 The Physical Factors

Many studies focus only on physical aspects. A study by Ge and Hokao (2004) in housing area in Saga City Japan developed the evaluation method for satisfaction in neighbourhood quality which covered the convenience, amenity, health, safety and community. The multivariable physical factors for the neighbourhood facilities elements included school, public transportation, shops, post office, banks, cultural facilities, sports facilities, medical, and welfare facilities for the evaluation neighbourhood quality. Dunstan et al. (2005) produced the physical factors of conceptual framework in five main items in study at neighbourhood in Neath Port Talbot in South Wales, Australia. The items apprehended are physical incivilities, territorial functioning or personal investment, defensible space, natural environment and miscellaneous such absence of recreational space, poor path condition, vacant properties, commercial outlook, industrial outlook, presence of derelict land, undesirable parking arrangements, poorly maintained shared areas.

Friedman and Rosenbaum (2007) who did a research in neighbourhood area in the United States has conceptualised the framework by using two different places. The first place is at central city dwellers and second place is at suburban, both places included reference person reports within 1/2 block of housing unit, trash or junk, numbers of open spaces, abandoned buildings, buildings with bars on window. Lee, Ellis, and Hong (2008) used natural elements of landscape structures in evaluating the neighbourhood quality in a city of College Station, USA. The landscape natural elements comprise of recreation facilities, trees, grass, water and paved structure as neighbourhood facilities for the neighbourhood quality evaluation neighbourhood. Apparicio, Se´guin, and Naud (2008) emphasized the conceptual framework by focusing on accessibility of public and private services and facilities in Public Housing Buildings in Montréal, Canada. The multivariable used included cultural facilities, educational facilities, health services and facilities, sports and recreational facilities, bank services, other services and shopping facilities. Rogers and Sukolratanametee (2009) developed the conceptual framework in neighbourhood area in Houston Texas, USA. The interaction with the ecology element which incorporated is well-defined, mixed-use of land and activities, density, pedestrian friendly, and public space. Hur, Nasar, and Chun (2010) evaluated greenery in neighbourhood area in Franklin County, Ohio, USA. The greenery elements for evaluation consist of physical measure of the attributes of the environment which include vegetation rate and building density, perceived attributes of the environment include nature, openness and evaluation of the attributes of the environment which include satisfaction with presence of trees, satisfaction with amount of open spaces and satisfaction with density of housing.

2.2 The Physical and Social Factors

Some studies focuses on both physical and social aspects. Bonaiuto et al. (2003) study in neighbourhood area on the city of Rome, Italy, has constructed the study on both aspects. Five main multivariable used for the concept are architectural or town-planning features, socio-relational features, functional features, context features and neighbourhood attachment. The physical aspects for architectural or town-planning features are architectural and town-planning space, organizational of accessibility on roads and green areas, welfare services for functional features, recreational services, commercial services and transport services, pace of life for context features, environmental health, upkeep and care. The social aspect for socio-relational features are people and social relations, and neighbourhood attachment (Bonaiuto, et al., 2003). Bonaiuto et al. (2006) used the same conceptual framework in a study in the city of Rome, Italy in the year 2003 for the study in medium and low

cost housing in Italian cities. Tu and Lin (2008) has constructed the framework by using six evaluation scales and the eleven underlying factors which covered urban planning and design, security and social relationship, transportation and commercial services, residential atmosphere and facility management. In recent years, the satisfaction concept in neighbourhood quality for neighbourhood facilities is incorporated with the neighbourhood attachment. The concept involved with organization of accessibility and roads, green areas, social relational features, welfare services, recreational services, commercial services, transport services, pace of life, environmental health, upkeep and neighbourhood attachment (Fornara et al., 2010).

2.3 The Physical, Social and Economic Factors

Some studies used multivariable physical, social and economic factor in conceptualising the study framework. The study in housing area in Southern Taiwan by Yang et al. used three main multivariable combination factors for neighbourhood facilities satisfaction factor evaluation used in neighbourhood quality. The first factor is perceived social capital which included participating in activities together, greeting each other, mutual concern for each other, providing assistance during an emergency, being able to find somebody to talk with when in need, maintaining public hygiene in the neighbourhood, solving problems together and feeling happy with the neighbourhood. Second factor is perceived security incorporated with quiet and peaceful environment, spacious and roomy environment, order and good public security in the neighbourhood, feeling safe in the neighbourhood. The last factor is adequacy of services and facilities which integrated with adequate lighting and convenient transportation (Yang et al., 2002). In a research done on housing area in western Virginia, USA, the conceptual factor used a combination of factors for neighbourhood facilities which are physical factor in the upkeep of homes and yards, landscape in the neighbourhood, street lighting in the neighbourhood, crowding and noise level, nearness of neighbourhood to facilities needed, quality of the environment in the community and developed three types of factor for the neighbourhood environment quality for the evaluation (Sirgy & Cornwell, 2002).

Serrano (2009) divided the concept into four main characteristics such as study in residential area in European Community Household. The first characteristic is the individual aspects which included socio-economic, socio-demographic, health, income, migration and labour situation. The second characteristic is the dwelling characteristics which involve type of dwelling-flat or house, number of rooms, existence of indoor flushing toilet, hot running water, terrace or garden, shortage of space, inadequate heating facilities, leaky roof and damp walls or floors. The third characteristic is neighbourhood or environment characteristics which consist of noise, pollution, environmental problems and crime or crime and vandalism. The final characteristic is the household characteristics which comprise of duration of residence, annual income, household size, housing costs and variables regarding how households feel about their financial situation. Lovejoy et al. (2010) study in neighbourhood area in California, USA has produced the conceptual framework for the satisfaction factor. The neighbourhood criteria used for the concept are attractiveness, quietness, liveliness, big yards, safety, mixed-use activities, good infrastructures and socio-economic. Aiello et al. (2010) studied on attention of facilities but the satisfaction factor still use physical, social and economic factor study in neighbourhood area in Rome, Italy. The economic attributes are socio-economic and people working away daily from the neighbourhood. The physical attribute uses residential urban quality indicators, architectural and town-planning features, services or facilities, crime and security. The social attributes used are social relation features and context features.

3. Neighbourhood Quality Developing Countries

In developing countries the research in evaluating and measuring the neighbourhood quality used the residential satisfaction factors. The factors use the multivariable factors in evaluating the neighbourhood quality in housing and neighbourhood area. The discussions will categorise theoretical concepts into physical, social and economic factor of housing and neighbourhood area.

3.1 The Physical Factors

Some of the study used multivariable in conceptualising their study in evaluating residential satisfaction in physical factor for the neighbourhood quality in housing and neighbourhood area. Ogu (2002) developed the conceptual satisfaction factor in physical factor in housing and environment for the study in low, medium , high cost housing in Benin City, Nigeria. The elements involved in housing are conditions of housing unit, privacy in the house, room condition, wall and door materials, and adequate number of rooms, toilet facility, and access to water supply. While the elements in environment involved are neighbourhood condition, access road, storm-water drains, maintenance of environmental facilities, collection of refuse and street lighting. Ge and Hokao (2006) and Ge et al. (2006) used the same conceptual framework in their previous study in housing area in Saga City Japan in the year 2004 for the study in high density housing in Japanese cities and the study in residential

area for Changjiang Delta Region of China. Meanwhile, Westaway (2006) conceptualised the satisfaction factor in illegal housing in Doornkop, Soweto, South Africa by combining the multivariable elements. The multivariable used for the evaluation study are housing, schools, clinics, transport, refuse, street light, police, recreation, local government and jobs.

3.2 The Physical and Social Factors

Numerous studies used multivariable in physical and social factor in evaluating residential satisfaction in housing and neighbourhood area for neighbourhood quality study. Djebarni and Al-Abed (2000) recognized the concept by doing research on public housing in Yemen. The satisfaction concept implicated three main variables which are area satisfaction with social environment, satisfaction with roads and satisfaction with facilities location in the neighbourhood. Rukwaro and Olima (2003) stressed, study at medium cost housing in Claycity estate, Kenya with physical and social factor which integrated physical planning, management of city assets, development control, buildings, car parks, and informal settlements; security, infrastructure, social welfare and environment. Zhao (2009) used two main elements to conceptualise the study in residential area in Ningbo city, China. The first factor is measuring the perceived environmental qualities of urban residential for spatial aspects, human aspects, functional aspects, contextual aspects, and second measuring residential attachment. Lotfi and Koohsari (2009) done study on neighbourhood area in Tehran, Iran conceptualising the framework by evaluating the accessibility of public facilities for residents' satisfaction. Two main variables used for the framework are socio-economic inequalities and access to public spaces.

3.3 The Physical, Social and Economic Factors

Not many studies are conceptualised in physical, social and economic factors in developing countries. Gbakeji and Magnus (2007) done a research in residential and neighbourhood area at Warri Metropolis, Delta State, Nigeria used seven indicators for the conceptual framework. The seven indicators are neighbourhood environmental quality, quality of immediate surroundings, neighbourhood social setting, proximity and availability of neighbourhood facilities, housing aesthetics, housing facilities and housing structure. Erkip (2010) determined on high density neighbourhood in Ankara, Turkey. The consideration for conceptual framework in satisfaction factor are the socio-demographic, socio-economic and neighbourhood quality.

4. NEIGHBOURHOOD QUALITY IN MALAYSIA

Malaysia does not experience much research in residential satisfaction factor for neighbourhood studies. Most research focuses on physical factor and social factor. The researches used multivariable in evaluating and measuring the neighbourhood quality by using the satisfaction factor. Generally the studies pay more attention on low cost public housing because of the issues in providing good quality of neighbourhood area for the low income people in Malaysia.

4.1 The Physical Factors

The satisfaction concept studied by Karim (2008) in low cost public housing in Shah Alam, Malaysia presented the elements in community facilities. Whereas Salleh (2008), provided the satisfaction concept in low cost public housing in Penang and Terengganu, Malaysia. The study used three main variables for conceptualising the satisfaction factor which are dwelling features, service and facilities.

4.2 The Physical and Social Factors

Hashim (2005) conducted accessible conceptual framework of study in a neighbourhood in Central Shah Alam, Malaysia in community facilities. The community facilities are used to evaluate the satisfaction of the residents'. Whereas Omar (2008) has constructed focusing on the community facilities and social facilities for conceptual framework for the study in low cost public housing in Malaysia. While Mohit et al. (2010) has conceptualised the framework for the study in low cost public housing in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The satisfaction factor conceptualised with five main variables which are dwelling unit features, dwelling unit support, public facilities, social environment and distance of neighbourhood facilities.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Generally the neighbourhood quality has been influenced by the physical, social and economic factors. Most researchers in developed and developing countries formulate studies, theoretical and conceptual model using

either in physical, social or economic factors. These factors use the multivariable as a basis in formulating the conceptual model. Physical factor can be divided into four classes which are dwelling unit, facilities and services, accessibility and surrounding environment. Social factor can be divided in terms of socio-demographic, social community and social interaction. The economic factor is a socio-economic of the residents' profile background. Meanwhile, in Malaysia not many studies have been done in neighbourhood quality. Some studies formulated the conceptual model by using physical and social factors. Thus, for further research in neighbourhood quality in Malaysia, the possibilities that can be focused as in depth research is probably only on one factor or a combination of all three factors. The possible satisfaction on conceptual factor used for evaluating can be in physical, social and economic factor. The expected result will be categorised in terms of socio-economic and socio-demographic to the physical, social and economic factors. The expected outcomes will evaluate the existing situation provided to the residents in housing and neighbourhood area. With these expected findings, it will help confirm the factors influencing in housing and neighbourhood area for a satisfied neighbourhood quality. The expected implication will be compared with the existing standards and guidelines used by the local authority for future improvement and development for the needs of the residents, requirement and satisfaction.

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