

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**OFF-CAMPUS STUDENT HOUSING  
PREFERENCES: A CASE STUDY IN  
SELANGOR**

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## ABSTRACT

The burgeoning number of student enrolment in Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) has outnumbered the available on-campus accommodation hence, leaving students with no other options than having to dwell in privately rented units. These privately rented units are not under the management of the universities and are converted units that are not meant to house students nor do these units fulfil the student's needs and preferences for housing. Malaysia is still far behind as opposed to a country such as the UK which has taken a proactive measure to govern the students' interest by regulating the Housing Act that includes student housing and country such as Ireland where investors had shifted their investment trajectory to venture into this untapped or niche market of student housing by developing Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA). Prevailing studies have emphasized the importance of a conducive learning environment which influences academic performance. Thus, it is essential that these off-campus students be provided with student housing that caters to their needs and preferences in order to attain a conducive environment during their study duration. Though students may have peculiarities in housing preferences yet they are indeed clients and should be treated as a sub-market group in the housing market. Further, students' expectations of housing have been said to evolve relative to their parents back in the day. Henceforth, this research aims to explore off-campus student housing preferences. The research questions are in line with the aim of the research which is what are the off-campus student housing preferences? What is the relationship in the context of off-campus student housing preferences between those studies in public and private universities? Which housing aspects influence off-campus student housing preferences? and how to develop a conceptual framework of off-campus student housing preferences. A case study has been carried out in Selangor state involving off-campus students from selected public and private universities. The research design set out has incorporated a quantitative research approach and 735 questionnaires were distributed. 375 of the questionnaires were received and harnessed in the data analysis stage. Data garnered were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) and inferential analysis (Chi-square test). Key findings ascertained that 3 types of accommodation preferred are single-storey terrace, apartment/flat, and hostel whilst the number of housemates preferred is between 6 to 8 people. The amount of rental willing to be paid per month per person shall not exceed RM200 and off-campus students preferred to have partly to fully furnished accommodation. On top of that, off-campus students also look forward to an accommodation with secured and lockable windows and doors completed with grills and operable deadbolt locks. Additionally, off-campus students prefer to be accommodated in dwellings with available TV cable and internet. These findings were extended in a proposed conceptual model. Findings from this research are imperative to increase knowledge, acting as a benchmark and guidance to related parties especially in the housing sector such as local government and stakeholders to come out with a student housing concept that is able to not just accommodate but fulfil the preferences of off-campus students in our country. Conclusively, this proposed off-campus student housing conceptual framework should contribute a new conceptual idea and provide new directions toward off-campus student housing in Malaysia.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Research Background

Over the past decades, the world has experienced burgeoning population growth, especially in the student age population between 16 to 39 years old. This substantial increase presumes to reach 1.3 billion by 2050. Consequently, this scenario resulted in surging demand for student enrolment in higher educational institutions (HEIs). On average, 6 million student enrolments are recorded per annum globally (Gbadegesin et al., 2021, 2022; Ghani et al., 2020, 2021). In Malaysia, the population stood at 32.7 million as of 2020, 45% constituting the student age population (Department of Statistics, 2021). In the year 2020 alone, the number of student enrolment in public and private universities in Malaysia was 584,576 and 537,434 respectively (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2020b, 2020a). Globally, soaring demand and student enrolment in the HEIs had increased pressure on existing HEIs to provide facilities for students, particularly student housing. Currently, student accommodation available do not commensurate with the high number of student enrolment. These HEIs were ill-prepared to house these students, and the insufficient number of on-campus accommodations had caused a large number of students to find off-campus accommodation (Gbadegesin et al., 2021, 2022; Ghani et al., 2020, 2021).

Malaysia is not spared from experiencing shortfalls in on-campus accommodation, the number of student enrolments outruns the available student housing provided by existing HEIs (Ghani et al., 2020, 2021). Post-independence, public universities were the only higher education provider in the country before private universities were recognized in 1996 (Suharmi et al., 2019). In the year between 1960 and 1975, the government made its move to establish HEIs to cater to the needs of manpower in both the public and private sectors. This is to curb the reliance on foreign manpower and replace it with local manpower in various professional and semi-professional positions. Hence, the development of HEIs was rather hasty during these years, and among the institutions established were Universiti Malaya, Institut Teknologi MARA (1967), Kolej Tunku Abdul Rahman (1969), Universiti Sains Malaysia (1969), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (1970), Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (1971) and