



PLANNING MALAYSIA:
Journal of the Malaysian Institute of Planners
VOLUME 20 ISSUE 5 (2022), Page 29 – 39

THE ROLES OF GOVERNANCE IN PROVIDING STRATA HOUSING FOR AGING IN PLACE

Amalina Azmi¹, Peter Aning Tedong², Zafirah Al Sadat Zyed³, Wan Nor Azriyati Wan Abd Aziz⁴

*^{1,3,4}Department of Real Estate, Faculty of Built Environment,
UNIVERSITI MALAYA*

*¹Department of Building and Property Management,
Faculty of Accountancy and Management,
UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN*

*²Department of Urban & Regional Planning, Faculty of Built Environment,
UNIVERSITI MALAYA*

Abstract

Ageing in place in strata housing is becoming an aspiration among the elderly in Malaysia, especially in Klang Valley. Accordingly, multiple stakeholders have different roles in providing strata housing for the elderly to age in place. By using thematic analysis, the qualitative analysis analyses their roles in providing strata housing for the elderly to age in place, from different points of view. Fifteen stakeholders from multiple disciplines took part in the interview. Analysis of the interview identified 3 major themes. These themes were Planning, Approvals and Passion. These themes evidenced the importance of stakeholders' roles in strata housing attributes for the elderly to age in place. Explicitly, they demonstrated greater awareness of the importance of strata housing attributes for ageing in place. This research paper demonstrated that states and local governments, as well as private sectors, are preparing for the rapid ageing of the Malaysian population. With this shared understanding, states and local governments, as well as private sectors, can better support those who aim to age in place in strata housing.

Keywords: Ageing in place, Elderly, Strata Housing Attributes, Governance

² Lecturer at Universiti Malaya. Email: peteraning@um.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

The ageing population in most countries and regions has shown a tremendous increment. According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division (2019), the global elderly population as of 2019 is 703 million and is projected to increase to 1.5 billion in 2050. The issue has been the main focus in roundtables by many global organisations, policymakers as well other stakeholders. Previous research has consistently demonstrated that most elderly prefer to age in place (Ainoriza et al., 2015; Amalina et al., 2021; Park et al., 2017; Støre-valen & Smistad, 2019). Ageing in place (AIP) is defined as ‘the ability to live in one’s own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level’ (Nan et al., 2016, p. 1). Moreover, Xiang et al. (2019) contended that ageing and rapid urbanisation had become one of the most significant challenges globally, as Widiyastuti and Ermawati (2019) argued most of the elderly population would live in the urban area. Thus, the trend has changed for the elderly to age in a strata housing in an urban area rather than in landed property (Guillory and Moschis, 2008; Judd et al., 2012; Vasara, 2015).

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

In the Malaysian context, Jariah et al.(2012) defined the elderly as those above 60 years of age. This definition aligns with the definition introduced by United Nations World Assembly on Ageing 1982 in Vienna. Research by Ainoriza et al. (2015) also suggested that Malaysia has selected 60 years old and above as a benchmark for the elderly. There are signs that the population in Malaysia is moving toward an ageing population (Wan-Ibrahim and Zainab, 2014). Based on the Department of Statistics (2019), there are 32.6 million in total population. The elderly population in 2019 is 10.3% of the total population which is approximately 3.35 million in total. By 2020, Malaysia will be a mature society with approximately 9.5% of its population aged 60 and above (Table 1). Interestingly, as shown in Table 1.2, the total number of elderly people aged above 60 years old in Selangor in 2010 is 334,889, with the District of Petaling having the highest elderly population. Due to having the highest elderly population, this research will focus on the District of Petaling.

Table 1: Population projection by age group, Malaysia 2010-2040

Year	0-14 ('000)	%	15-59 ('000)	%	60+ ('000)	%
2010	7822.1	27.4	18518.1	64.8	1425.1	7.9
2020	7911.8	23.4	22121.4	65.5	3749.0	11.1
2030	8082.3	21.2	24161.4	63.5	5818.4	15.3
2040	7726.2	18.6	25546.3	61.6	8230.7	19.8

Source: Department of Statistics, Malaysia (2012)

Table 2: Elderly Population Based on Districts in Selangor, 2010

Age/ District	60-64	65-69	70-74	>75	Total
Sabak Bernam	4,438	3,009	2,531	2,557	12,535
Kuala Selangor	5,693	3,366	2,740	3,128	14,927
Hulu Selangor	4,607	3,062	2,370	2,553	12,592
Gombak	18,747	9,657	6,990	7,749	43,143
Hulu Langat	27,324	14,065	10,480	12,138	64,007
Petaling	46,032	25,334	17,457	22,532	111,355
Klang	21,345	12,119	8,634	9,689	51,787
Kuala Langat	5,851	3,761	2,938	3,279	15,829
Sepang	3,330	1,903	1,472	2,009	8,714
Total	137,367	76,276	55,612	65,634	334,889

Source: Population Distribution by Local Authority Areas and Mukims 2000, Population and Housing Census, Department of Statistics, Malaysia (2010)

The elderly population in Malaysia is rapidly increasing due to several factors. The number of the elderly population has increased primarily because of the increase in longevity (Nurul Aini et al., 2018). In addition, the decline in mortality and fertility rates are also the factors that contribute to the increment in the elderly population in Malaysia (Samsudin et al., 2019). The overall trends reveal that the ageing population will continue to increase over the years. In this light, Aiyoriza et al. (2015) discovered that the elderly show high persistence to age in place. At the same time, factors such as urbanisation, land scarcity, and higher price for landed properties have seen the trend shift to living in strata housing such as condominiums and apartments (Haszlila et al., 2018). Klang Valley is one of the most developed regions in Malaysia. This region consists of five areas: the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur, Gombak, Petaling, Klang and Hulu Langat (Mohd Fadzli, 2017). This research paper will focus on the elderly who lives in condominiums and apartments within the District of Petaling, Selangor. As mentioned earlier, the District of Petaling has the highest elderly population (also as shown in Table 2) and has the most significant number of existing strata housing supply.

The rising number of elderly populations in Malaysia has been considered an important agenda to the Government Development Plan. This is because there is a need to improve the general elderly well-being through the physical environment. Besides, according to Aiyoriza et al. (2015), there are only limited options of institutional and care residents available for the elderly in Malaysia, which is unlikely to meet the need of the burgeoning numbers of the elderly population. It is also not likely to allow the elderly to age in place, particularly in strata housing. However, on another note, Warner et al. (2017) explained that the community needs to be equipped with good housing attributes

for the elderly to age in place. Hence, specific housing attributes that enable the elderly to age in place must be produced to improve their well-being (Beard et al., 2016). Nevertheless, it is nothing new that the government worldwide, including Malaysia, are struggling to establish a good mechanism to provide care for the elderly to age in place. For instance, although Singapore is a developed country and synonym with vertical living, the country is still facing the challenge of providing a suitable strata housing environment for the elderly to age in place (Cho et al., 2018).

Although strata building has currently become a lifestyle in the urban population in Malaysia, there are no specific guidelines in relation to strata living for the elderly in Malaysia. Nevertheless, most of the previous studies only focused on the housing attributes for the elderly to age in place in landed properties (as previous research by (Siti Uzairah et al., 2018; Zainab Ismail et al., 2012). Therefore, one of the objectives of this study is to evaluate the role of stakeholders in providing strata housing for the elderly to age in place in Malaysia. Thus, this study evaluates the role of stakeholders in providing the strata housing for the elderly to age in place. Additionally, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has stressed the importance of including qualitative evidence in the guideline development process, considering it ‘useful to assess the needs, values, perceptions and experiences of stakeholders (Farrugia, 2019). Furthermore, strong human governance through inter-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approaches involving various government ministries and agencies, non-governmental organisations, private sectors and the community” provides a supportive living environment for the elderly.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research paper adopted a qualitative method through an in-depth semi-structured interview with 15 stakeholders from multiple backgrounds. Therefore, there are ethical protocols and interview processes conducted and participants' sampling as explained below.

Ethical Protocol

All participants were clearly informed regarding their participation in an active study as well as the purpose of the study. Prior to the interview process, consent from all the respondents was obtained. The respondents were also informed that they were allowed to withdraw at any time if they felt uncomfortable during the process and wished not to proceed. Participants consented to the interviews being recorded, which were subsequently anonymised and transcribed. All participants were treated equally during the data collection, and very minimal disruption was made. The interviews were stored on a password-protected computer, which kept all the data.

Interview Process

Once the participants agreed to be interviewed, an appointment was made with each participant at a time convenient to both them and the interviewer. Appointments made were based on participants' convenience and did not affect their other commitments. Furthermore, there no harmful information was shared in this study. Interviews were in-depth and semi-structured; a guide was provided to further explore the main topic. Five open-ended interview questions were asked to the stakeholders. The opening question was, "What is your role in providing the strata housing with suitable attributes for the elderly to age in place?".

Participants

Purposive sampling is widely used in richly textured information with limited resources (Palinkas et al., 2016). In this research paper, a group of stakeholders comprised of 15 participants were purposely selected to explain their roles in providing the strata housing for the elderly to age in place. They were selected based on their experiences, knowledge of the subject and willingness to participate. Particularly, a total of 15 interviews were conducted with the stakeholders within the Klang Valley. The stakeholders consisted of representatives of government agencies, local authorities, non-government organisations and developers; 5 participants were from government agencies (GA1 – GA5), 5 from local authorities (LA1-LA5), 2 each from non-government organisations (NGO1 and NGO2) and 2 developers (DV1 and DV2) as well as a representative from REHDA Retirement Village Community (RVC).

RESULT AND FINDINGS

This study adopted a thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) where the interview recordings were transcribed, coded, and the potential themes were reviewed. The themes were then identified, defined and named. The research questioned their roles in providing strata housing attributes for the elderly to age in place. Finally, once the themes were finalised, a report was prepared. Through the thematic analysis, three main themes were identified.

Planning

Most of the participants in this study were involved in planning at various stages and angles. Illustrative examples appear below.

Our role is to observe specific people in a specific area in an urban area. Through the observations, we will make sure to do the urban planning as the urban area is the new "kampung" for the elderly.

Code: GA5

At the same time, one of the local authorities had taken the initiative to be involved in the planning for the elderly community activities. One local authority converted some vacant land to farming activities to occupy the elderly's time. She mentioned.

We were also involved in the planning of the social activity for the elderly within their territory. In fact, the elderly have managed to transform some vacant lands into farming activity, and some have generated income from it.

Code: LA3

Approval

Most of the participants in this study agreed that their role is to provide approval. Illustrative examples appear below.

Before we approve the drawing, we will make sure that the developers really comply with the Universal Design (MS1184: 2014) in the common areas, especially the ramp and handrails.

Code: LA1, LA2, LA3, LA4 AND LA5

The government agencies also provide approval for social and community activities. They explained:

We also provide approval for states' social activities within the area (gardening, aerobic, recycling programs) that involve the elderly as well as the community

Code: GA3 AND GA4

Passion

In this study, passion comes from the private sector. One of the developers mentioned:

It is actually our vision to provide a house to enable the elderly to live independently, safely and healthily. Thus, we took the initiative to do all we could, including hiring local and international consultants, complying with the Universal Design (MS1184: 2014) in the common areas as well as in the unit itself, and importing custom made equipment for our development. Even though we do not know the demand, at the same time, no one is forcing us to do so.

Code: DV1

At the same time, one of the private sectors made similar claims, as the previous developer, who felt obligated to support the elderly issue. He says:

Not all developers are interested in building this type of house. However, due to Malaysia becoming an ageing nation by 2030, some developers have developed some passion inside themselves. Moreover, they also feel the obligation to take care of themselves when they are old. Hence, they are planning to do this type of house. It is considered a niche market, so they will start with only 1 or 2 developments, and we will consider further expanding if the demand is good.

Code: RVC

DISCUSSION

Planning is an important element prior to, during and after development. There are a few liveability policies and practices that local governments can adopt from developed countries in planning in order to support the desire of the elderly to “age in place in strata housing. Multiple stakeholders’ involvements at the planning stage will provide a strong framework to guide, support and evaluate elderly-friendly initiatives, including strata housing attributes for the elderly to age in place. This research paper found that the government agencies, as well as the local authorities, were involved in the planning stage. They had shown strong governance support for ageing in place in relation to strata housing. Guidelines and policies were taken seriously during the planning stage by the government agencies and local authorities. As seconded by Zhou et al. (2019), with the engagement of multiple stakeholders, efficient and effective ageing in place will be achieved. Furthermore, Malaysia’s government programmes continue to prioritise housing and community facilities, which indirectly improve the quality of life and contribute to the formation of civilisation development (Nur Shaffiqah Muhammad et al., 2018).

On top of that, the local authority had prepared a comprehensive community plan for future land use and development to help smooth a demographic transition to an ageing city. This plan included filling up the elderly’s spare time with some activities. This comprehensive planning initiative will consider other types of social or community activities needed to address the future needs of the elderly who age in place in strata housing. As Alias et al. (2006), highlighted, meeting just the housing needs alone is insufficient to produce an integrated and effective housing development.

In Malaysia, the Federal government, and the State Government work together to produce and allocate affordable housing to eligible buyers. The Federal Government will provide the funding for the project, while the State Governments are responsible for identifying the available state land for affordable housing construction and choosing the eligible buyers. These efforts show that they have full control only of the developers involved in the project. Otherwise, developers are not obliged to follow the Universal Design guidelines. This is despite the fact that the local government should be involved in approving

the planning permission and building plans for both public and private developers' housing construction (Noraziah et al., 2018). For instance, the development of an affordable housing scheme under the State of Selangor has allocated specific units for the vulnerable group, requiring developers to incorporate the Universal Design Guidelines.

This research paper found that the local authorities and government agencies had enforced the developers to comply with the Universal Design MS1184:2014, for the internal and external environment and the allocated units. Thus, prior to the development approval, they will ensure that the developers comply with the Universal Design MS1184:2014. The local authorities in Selangor will only approve the drawing only if the developers comply with the Universal Design, MS1184:2014. This is supported by Phang (2009, p. 3), where “the State may choose to provide subsidies to build housing intended for the targeted group consistent with price affordability”. This argument was supported by Alias et al. (2006), where housing requirements are driven by population trends, affordability, and effective household demands.

Noralfishah Sulaiman et al. (2005) mentioned that the State is responsible for providing adequate housing to fulfil human rights. For instance, Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) provides facilities for disabled people with a lower rental house, while Syarikat Perumahan Nasional Berhad (SPNB) give priority to the disabled people with a low-income background in obtaining housing at low costs and medium-low income background with lower prices (Syakir Amir et al., n.d.). In this case, the elderly is also categorised in the disabled group as they are vulnerable. Nevertheless, in Selangor, even though it is compulsory for the private sectors, especially the developers, to comply with the Universal Design, MS1184:2014 for the external environment in development but they do not have to comply with the internal environment. Thus, most development projects that comply with the Universal Design, MS1184:2014 for both internal and external environment are based on their passion and own initiatives. Furthermore, developers are aware that they should take the risk by being more flexible and more adaptable to the changes in homebuyers' wants and needs. Likewise, there will be greater emphasis on ageing in place as the numbers of elderly is burgeoning and their preferences are to age in place especially in strata housing.

Passion is defined as a strong inclination toward an activity that one likes, finds important, and invests time and energy (Rousseau & Vallerand, 2008, p. 201). This research paper revealed that the developers are passionate about providing strata housing with suitable attributes for the elderly to age in place by taking into consideration the internal housing environment even though it is not part of the approval requirement by the government agencies and local authorities. To remain competitive in the industry, developers need to adopt strategies such as being more socially responsible and projecting a good image to

the public because most of the house buyers are not only looking at the price factor but also consider the housing environment, infrastructure and developer's reputation (Sharon et al., 2008). Besides, they need to identify the market preference to deliver superior products to them and anticipate the likelihood in the property market. Therefore, fulfilling the housing needs and demands should be the primary objective to ensure the local housing requirements are adequately and successfully met (Alias et al., 2006).

CONCLUSION

In summary, the focus of ageing in place is to enable the elderly to live independently regardless of their age, finances and ability. The goal of the elderly wanting to age in place is to maintain their autonomy and/or improve their well-being. Thus, good planning that focuses on their well-being, which comprises themselves, home (internal and external housing attributes, technology), and other items, should be drafted as early as possible. This plan should be maintained over time as the time evolves and engages all stakeholders, the government, the private sectors and NGOs. Nevertheless, this research paper revealed that governments, private sectors, and NGOs work within a complex governance system to produce a strata housing that enables the elderly to age in place in Malaysia. Thus, it is hoped that the stakeholders, including the government and private sectors, will step up and continue to provide strata housing with suitable attributes for the elderly to age in place. New guidelines specifically for the elderly need to be created, existing relevant guidelines and policies are to be reviewed and improved, and numerous laws should be revised and amended to update the latest market needs and conditions. By engaging with relevant stakeholders, policies, laws and regulations, existing guidelines can be better shaped to enable the elderly who wants to age in place in strata housing.

Passion can be seen in a good initiative shown by the stakeholders to provide strata housing with suitable attributes for the elderly to age in place. It will ensure the elderly's needs are met and their wishes respected when they age in place in strata housing. Providing the right place for the elderly to age in place will improve their well-being. In conclusion, housing demands are shifting, and a house today is not just a roof over their heads, but it should be part of their lifestyles.

However, this research predominantly focused on the urban point of view, considering the fact that Selangor is one of the urbanised states in Malaysia. The majority of the respondents are well-educated, which correlates to the actual phenomenon in Selangor. Thus, it is believed that the research disregards the rural perspective on strata housing's attributes for ageing in place. Nonetheless, the limitations of the research did not undermine the value of the research, which is solely discussed in order to provide suggestions for further study. Future research could pay attention to strata housing attributes for ageing in place from a different

perspective by considering the rural aspect. As referred to by Aini et al. (2016), respondents from rural areas tend to have a stronger preference for ageing in place. In this scenario, the elderly in rural areas may have different demands for ageing in place due to their environment and lifestyle compared to urban areas. For instance, there will be differences in terms of housing types, accessibility, limited space and resources, financial background, and other factors.

However, most notably, the findings on the roles of stakeholders in providing strata housing for the elderly to age in place are unique to each other. There is a need for the stakeholders and policymakers to tailor interventions, provision of resources, amendments in the related policy, and strengthening the enforcement which will be appropriate to enable the elderly to age in place and at once improve their well-being.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to all participants who have participated in the interview for the research paper. Furthermore, we would like to express our gratitude to NAPREC, the University of Malaya (UM), Kuala Lumpur and Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Sg Long Campus for the support in producing this research paper. Finally, we appreciate all the relevant stakeholders, departments, and those who were, directly and indirectly, involved in this research paper and the cooperation received during the research process.

REFERENCES

- Ainoriza, M. A., Wan Azriyati, W. A. A., & Noor Rosly, H. (2015). To move or not to move?: exploring future housing plan of ageing communities in Kuala Lumpur. *The Asia Pacific Network for Housing Research (APNHR) Conference, Gwanju, Korea*, 573–579.
http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Ainoriza_Aini/publication/276926117_To_Move_or_Not_to_Move_Exploring_future_housing_plan_of_ageing_communities_in_Kuala_Lumpur/links/555c29d608aec5ac2232ac3c.pdf
- Amalina, A., Peter, A., Wan Nor Azriyati, W. A. A., Nur Hafizah, J., Nurhayati, K., Puteri Ameera, M. K., & Sheelah, S. (2021). Assessing the Strata Housing Attributes for. *PLANNING MALAYSIA: Journal of the Malaysian Institute of Planners*, 19(3), 95–110.
- Department of Statistics Malaysia. (2012). *Population projections, Malaysia, 2010–2040*. Putrajaya, Malaysia: Author.
- Department of Statistic. (2019). Press Release Current Population Estimates, Malaysia, 2018-2019. In *Department of Statistics Malaysia* (Issue July).
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>
- Guillory, M. D., & Moschis, G. (2008). Marketing Apartments , Townhouses , and Condominiums to Seniors. *Seniors Housing & Care Journal*, 16(1), 39–52.
- Haszlila, J., Norngainy, M. T., Md Nasir, D., & Aina Edayu, A. (2018). House price movement for primary and secondary markets: Evidence from Selangor, Malaysia. *Journal of the Malaysian Institute of Planners*, 16(1), 334–347.

- <https://doi.org/10.21837/pmjournal.v16.i5.436>
- Jariah, M., Husna, S., Aizan, T., & Ibrahim, R. (2012). Social Sciences & Humanities Financial Practices and Problems amongst Elderly in Malaysia. *Pertanika J. Soc. Sci. & Hum*, 20(4), 1065–1084. http://www.myjournal.my/filebank/published_article/26015/09_Page_1065_1084.pdf
- Judd, B., Bridge, C., Davy, L., Adams, T., & Liu, E. (2012). Downsizing amongst older Australians. In *AHURI Positioning Paper* (Issue 150). http://staging.beweb.fbe.unsw.edu.au/sites/default/files/upload/research/centres/cf/publications/ahuriprojectreports/AHURI_Positioning_Paper_No150.pdf
- Mohd Fadzli, A. R. (2017). Urban Migration In Malaysia : A Case Study Of The Klang. *Journal of Urban Planning, Landscape & Environmental Design*, 2(August), 107–127. <https://doi.org/10.6092/2531-9906/5261>
- Nan, J., Vivian, W. Q. Lou, & Nan, L. (2016). *Does social capital influence preferences for aging in place? Evidence from urban China. September 2017.* <https://doi.org/10.1080/13607863.2016.1249455>
- Nurul Aini, B., Mohamad Zaki, H., Hazilah, M. K., Nor Fazilah, M. H., Rudzidatul Akmam, Dziyauddin, Rafizah, M., Mohamed Azlan, S., Sahnius, U., Firdaus, Muhammad-Sukki, Abu-Bakar, S. H., & Mas'ud, A. A. (2018). Assessment of Health Status of the Elderly and Pre-elderly at a Malaysia Elderly Care Centre. *International Journal of Integrated Engineering*, 10(7), 10–22. <https://doi.org/10.30880/ijie.2018.10.07.002>
- Park, S., Han, Y., Kim, B., & Dunkle, R. E. (2017). Aging in Place of Vulnerable Older Adults : Person – Environment Fit Perspective. *Journal of Applied*, 36(11), 1327–1350. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0733464815617286>
- Samsudin, S., Abdullah, N., Ismail, N. S. A., Hassan, K., & Ahmad, U. A. (2019). Growing old at own home: A study among pre-elderly adults in Peninsular Malaysia. *Economics and Sociology*, 12(1), 115–124. <https://doi.org/10.14254/2071-789X.2019/12-1/6>
- Store-valen, M., & Smistad, I. (2019). Senior Residence Concepts in Norway : Challenges and Actions for a Sustainable Development. *10th Nordic Conference on Construction Economics and Organization*, 337–347. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S2516-285320190000002010>
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division. (2019). World Population Ageing 2019. In *World Population Ageing 2019*. http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-94-007-5204-7_6
- Vasara, P. (2015). Not ageing in place: Negotiating meanings of residency in age-related housing. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 35, 55–64. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2015.07.004>
- Widiyastuti, D., & Ermawati, H. (2019). Travel Motivation Factors of Elderly in Yogyakarta City: Push and Pull Factors. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, 256(1). <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/256/1/012037>
- Xiang, L., Yu, A., Tan, Y., Shan, X., & Shen, Q. (2019). Senior citizens' requirements of services provided by community-based care facilities: a China study. *Facilities, ahead-of-p*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/F-02-2019-0023>

Received: 28th September 2022. Accepted: 1st December 2022