

Resettlement housing for flood victims: motivation for the contractors

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Abstract

This paper aims to emphasise the importance of the resettlement programmes carried out after flooding in Malaysia. Specifically, this paper discusses the motivation factors for materialising the resettlement housing projects for the flood victims. The importance of this study was to highlight applicability of institutional perspectives in land and property research, specifically in the construction industry. It also important to emphasise the role of the contractor as an institution or organisation which played a very important role in completing the resettlement housing projects for the flood victims. To this end, the case study of Kampung Telekung, Kuala Kerai Kelantan Malaysia, has been chosen since this area was badly affected by huge flooding, known as the "yellow flood", in 2014. It was reported that more than 1200 households lost their houses and new resettlement housing projects are now needed. Therefore, the state government has allocated a new area, Kampung Telekung, for resettlement housing projects to provide some of the 1200 units houses required for resettlement purposes. The resettlement project was divided into three phases. The first phase was the efforts by society to build the resettlement housing. The second and third phases will be developed by the government. In order to achieve the objective of the study, the qualitative approach was employed and the data was gleaned based on face-to-face interviews with the contractor as the main respondent. Two respondents were involved in this study. The interview results show that there are three main elements which highly motivated the contractor to deliver 60 units of the resettlement housing project within a period of less than six months. First, the appointed contractor had actually been involved in social support programmes, both domestic and international. Second, the project was funded using people's money through the Lembaga Zakat Selangor. Third, the development project was fully supported by various government agencies. From these results, it can be concluded that the profit-oriented organisations, such as the contractor, also considered people's needs and social obligation rather than profit margins.

Keywords: Flood, Motivation, Resettlement

1. Introduction

In December 2014, the State of Kelantan in Malaysia was badly affected by huge flooding, known as the "yellow flood". Several areas, such Gua Musang and Kuala Krai, were seriously affected [1]. This flood destroyed houses and properties, and it was reported that more than 1200 households had lost their houses and new resettlement housing projects are now needed. In this context, the people are relying on the government to allocate the best and most suitable location that can be developed as a new settlement area for the flood victims. Therefore, one of the main elements of the post-disaster flood management was to provide resettlement-housing programmes for the flood victims, rather than controlling the spread of

disease, as well as providing financial support and developing infrastructures. The delay of housing provision for resettlement purposes will deny flood victims the right to occupy their own houses, and indeed it will jeopardize the sustainability of their lives. If this happens, the households affected will have to remain in temporary shelters or tents. Therefore, this article discusses the elements which contribute to the contractor's motivation to provide and complete the resettlement housing projects in less than six months.

2. Who is responsible for providing the resettlement housing projects for the flood victims?

Those flood victims who have been affected by flooding and the loss of their houses but are financially stable will have no

problem in constructing new houses. Nevertheless, those household groups with low income will need support from the government or their local communities in order to have new shelters. However, the question here is: is it the government's responsibility to carry out the resettlement housing programme for this group of flood victims?

In this context, [2] state that there is no international provision/guideline related to the reconstruction of houses for disaster victims. Nevertheless, there is a provision that requires houses to be re-built for flood victims. It is just like a reminder to responsible parties to plan resettlement programmes. In addition, [2] they further contend that there are few written laws linked to the human right of flood victims to have new houses if their houses have been totally destroyed during a disaster. According to [3] there were several international provisions for constructing resettlement housing for disaster victims, including flood victims, as described below:

1. the 'Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights' (CESCR) notes that there is a connection between housing law and emergency housing concerning forced evictions for refugees and IDPs (CESCR, 1997);

2. the UNHCR notes that "Having a secure place to live is one of the fundamental elements for human dignity, physical and mental health and overall quality of life, that enables one's development" (UNHCR: 2004: 2)".

Following the above statements, [4] contend that those countries which have been affected by disaster need to provide housing for the victims who have lost their houses and properties as a result of disaster. In line with this, [5] urges that most developing countries are exercising the same housing policies in terms of resettlement housing programmes. Nevertheless, Khalid and Shafai [1] stress that there were trends towards failure by the developing countries to provide/construct resettlement housing projects for disaster victims, especially for those household groups of low income. Nevertheless, the aim of this article is to highlight a successful resettlement housing programme undertaken by the contractor in Malaysia.

In Malaysia, Directive No.20 by the National Security Council (NSC) stated clearly the disaster management policies to be followed [5], [6] and [7]. In this context, there is no specific provision that requires government to construct resettlement housing projects for disaster victims such as flood victims. Indeed, the provision under the Directive No. 20 placed emphasis on the government's responsibility to bear the cost for repair purposes, with only a limited budget. In this context,

there is no strict regulation that requires government to provide resettlement housing for flood victims in Kelantan. However, it is to the credit of the government of Malaysia that it has struggled very hard to provide resettlement housing projects for flood victims and at the same time it requires the communities' involvement to participate in housing provision for flood victims.

Therefore, there is no doubt that both during and after any disaster there will be community-based organizations which will support the government in helping the flood victims from various perspectives, including providing resettlement housing projects. In this context, Lembaga Zakat Selangor (LZS) has made a commitment to financing the first phase of resettlement housing projects at Kampung Telekung Kuala Krai, Kelantan. The LZS has appointed a contractor for constructing 60 housing units for flood victims as a first phase of the development of new resettlement area allocated by the government at Kampung Telekung.

Since completing the projects is a priority in order to avoid a situation in which flood victims must remain in temporary shelters or tents, the commitment of the appointed contractor is very important. Therefore, this article is an attempt to identify the element that contributes to the contractor's motivation to complete the resettlement housing projects for flood victims within a short period, because another two phases of development which have been carried out by different contractors have not yet been delivered.

3. Methodology

In order to achieve the objective of this study, a case study approach was employed, in which the resettlement housing projects constructed at the Kampung Telekung Kuala Krai was selected, because this project was financed by the LZS and not constructed by the Federal or State Government. The LZS is a client for this project and it has full power to appoint any contractor to undertake the projects.

This project was developed on the particular piece of land provided by the state government known as Telekung Animal Reserve Land, District of Batu Mengkebang, Kuala Krai Territory. 60 units of houses were constructed by the main contractor appointed, known as FNA Builders & Services Sdn. Bhd. The project was started on 9 July 2015 and completed on 20 December 2015, a period of 5 months and 11 days. If one looks at the scope of work given to the contractor, one can see that not only did the contractor have to construct 60 units of houses, but he also had to build a prayer hall, multi-purpose halls, commercial buildings and the infrastructure of the particular development areas.

From the facts presented above, one can see that the main contractor managed to complete the project very quickly, and there must be some reasons for this; also, as mentioned earlier, another two phases of development had not yet been completed. Therefore, this study was carried out to explore the motivation for the contractor to complete the resettlement housing project in less than six months.

Since this study was conducted on a qualitative basis, the data collection was employed using the face-to-face interview technique. The two main respondents for this study were Mr. Md. Nazli Md. Nawi (Respondent 1) and Mr. Fauzan Yusof (Respondent 2). The first respondent was the Managing Director of the company and the second respondent was the Project and Technical Director. Indeed, they are the owners of the FNA Builders and Services Sdn. Bhd.

The study used face-to-face interviews based on several themes such as social support involvement, community support and the participation of government agencies. These three elements were based on the institutional framework for land and property market operations which include the institutions or rules, organisations or players, the social institutions' network of rules, conventions and relationships, all relating to the institutional framework for the land and property market. The data were collected using an audio tape recorder and the audio tapes were then transcribed. The descriptive analysis then followed in order to achieve the objective of the study.

4. Results and discussion

Many studies have been done by researchers that focus on the motivational factors in construction industries [8], [9] & [10]. Most of the factors highlighted by researchers that influence motivational aspect were workplace environment, schedule pressure, financial incentives, empowerment, job satisfaction etc.

However, for the purpose of this study, the themes highlighted in the interviews were based on the institutional perspective, as mentioned earlier in the methodology section. Therefore, this study was an attempt to explore another aspect of motivational factors linked to the institutional perspectives, and the themes developed were institutions or rules, organisations or players and the social institutions' network of rules.

Based on the face-to-face interviews, the data have been analysed according to the themes set up, and it was summarized as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Motivation factor for contractor in completing resettlement housing projects based on the institutional perspectives

Motivation factors (previous studies)	Themes asked for interviews (institutional perspectives)	The results of the study
Workplace environment	Institutions or rules	Social support involvement
Schedule pressure	Organisations or players	Community support
Financial incentives	The social institutions' network rules	Participation of government agencies
Empowerment	N/A	N/A
Job satisfaction	N/A	N/A

4.1 The social support factor

The results which were based on two main respondents strongly agree that the social support factor was a main factor in motivating the contractor to complete the resettlement housing projects in less than six months. According to **Respondent 1**, "I love doing social support activities and this is part of our company policies. Our company has previous experience in participating in constructing religious school mosques and prayer halls." **Respondent 2** urges that "we as human beings should have a feeling that the flood victims really need housing units to sustain their life with the family. If we delayed the project, this means to say we are putting another burden on their shoulder. Ask yourself if it is comfortable to live in temporary shelters or tents?" He further contends that "as a company owner I think cooperating with social responsibility has become a priority for us. I did not say that our company does not focus on profit margins. To me, disaster is something that we sometimes cannot avoid and if it does happen we as human beings should work together and those flood victims really need us in this situation". According to [11], [12], [13] and [14], the people of the communities are more concerned about the social support provided following the disaster. Some of them are willing to participate on a voluntary basis. Indeed, the voluntarism attitude has been increased from time to time and from one disaster to another disaster throughout the world. This concept is well established and provides a platform for those who like to contribute whatever expertise they have for the sake of disaster victims.

4.2 The communities support factor

Based on the analysis done on the second factor, which is the community support factor, the results show that the respondents perceived that community support in terms of donation and contribution to the LPZ Selangor has been considered as a 'pushing factor' to the contractor to complete the project very quickly. According to **Respondent 1**, *"if the communities are willing to sacrifice their money and wealth for the sake of flood victims being able to occupy their own houses why don't we as a profit-oriented organisation not take the opportunity to be with them in terms of trying our best to complete the projects. In this sense, Respondent 2 urges that "being a profit-oriented organization of course we have made profit from other projects in the past. Now is the time for us to return it to communities that really need it. That is why we are willing to use our own equity for starting the project and we are willing not to be paid if the client has not ready for progress payment. Our target is that the project must be completed as soon as possible".* According to [12], [13] & [14], nowadays, people are willing to donate their money and wealth to support those who are in demand, owing to whatever circumstances prevail, such as war or disaster. Profit-oriented companies will always contribute through their cooperate social responsibility and, by doing so, they will have community engagement and this effort will promote their company for better business purposes.

4.3 The involvement of government agencies

Everybody notices that the roles of government are very important in relation to expediting the resettlement housing projects. This is because the state government will decide which state land is suitable for the resettlement projects. There are many factors to be taken into account in order to determine the right particular piece of land for developing the resettlement project [1], [3], [4], [15], [16] & [17]. On top of that, the government was also very participative in terms of approving the planning permission and building plans, and was very supportive during the construction stage. Therefore, there is bureaucratic support for these projects, from the approval stage, construction stage through to the post-construction stage. In this sense, **Respondents 1 and 2** agree that, with the full support from the government agencies involved in this project, the contractor was highly motivated to complete the project within the short period without compromising the quality of the final products.

5. Conclusions

From the discussion of the above results, one can see that the importance of this study was to highlight the applicability of institutional perspectives in land and property research, specifically for studying the motivational factors in the construction industry. The institutional perspectives placed greater emphasis on the role played by the organization as a

social institution. Therefore, a profit-oriented organization, such as a contractor, will also have a desire to support and to contribute to a better life for flood victims. Moreover, the contractor also perceived that the eagerness of communities to donate and contribute their money and wealth voluntarily just for the sake of the flood victims should be repaid following the completion of the resettlement housing projects. The government agencies' involvement was very supportive in order for the project to be completed, as was also the motivation factor for the contractor. Even though the government agencies are very keen about the regulatory aspects, they still channel their support to ensure that the contractor has the ability to complete the project according to the approval plans, and that he can complete it very quickly.

Another importance aspect of this study refers to those who have been given the responsibility to undertake the resettlement housing projects for flood victims; they must carry out this task properly and deliver it within the time frame given to them, because if they fail to deliver the housing units the flood victims will suffer and must continue to live in temporary housing or tents.

From the discussion above, one can see that, for the resettlement housing projects, the contractor was influenced by the factors of social support, community support and government involvement in order to complete the resettlement housing projects very quickly, in less than six months. However, there is no doubt that those factors which previously motivated the construction industry, such as empowerment, financial incentives and jobs satisfaction and so on, remained as motivational factors in the construction industry.

Abbreviations

Lembaga Zakat Selangor – LZS

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