Students' Intentions and Students' Attainments at the On-campus House: A desk study

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Abstract

There is large call in Malaysia to study on how tertiary students perceived the performance of service quality of student housing; and to understand on how they translated their perceptions into behavioural intentions and personal attainments. The rationale for this paper is to explain the elements which constitute behavioural intentions and personal attainments; which is based on conventional reviews of plentiful volume of published journals from 1985 until 2014 in the area of student housing research. The results of the review clarified that behavioural intentions consist of favourable and unfavourable intentions; while personal attainments comprise of intellectual and self-development gains.

Keywords: Service quality performance; student housing; behavioural intentions; personal attainments

1.0 Introduction

So far, Malaysia has successfully gaining a global recognition and currently ranked at 11th worldwide by *United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (*UNESCO) for her appeal to students as a preferred destination for tertiary and higher education (MOHE Promotional Information (Overview), 2014). To boost the current rank and to make Malaysian universities as always a comfortable and perfect choice of place to pursuing the study, advanced infrastructures along with sufficient facilities need to be provided and seriously taken into account (Down, 2009; Muslim *et al.*, 2012a; Oluwunmi *et al.*, 2012). One of the major concerns on sophisticated university's infrastructures and facilities is the provision of on-campus student housing with the superior housing facilities and good housing services. Having an excellent educational environment on-campus, not only to engender as much as possible tiptop students,it is also a welcoming approach for Malaysia to be able to attract even more local students to pursue their education in the country along with international individuals who are planning to study abroad (Mansur, 2011; Khaled, 2012).

As for the research gaps, most studies on students' residential satisfaction focused on the factors affecting residential satisfaction, students' adaptability style of living in student housing, and assessment of student housing quality (e.g. Amole, 2012; Najib *et al.*, 2012; Abdullah *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, little can be learned from those studies with regard to the relationship between perceiving service quality performance of on-campus student housing with students' behavioural intentions (BIs) and students' personal attainments (PAs). In Malaysia, there is also limited research in understanding how students perceived the performance of service quality of student housing (e.g. Bashir *et al.*, 2012; Zainuddin *et al.*, 2014). Bashir *et al.* (2012) revealed that students perceived service quality in Malaysian student housing as slightly good quality and Zainuddin *et al.* (2014) found that students almost dissatisfied with the quality of their student accommodation. Nevertheless, studies on how the students translated their perceive service quality perceptions into BIs and PAs are rare and being neglected. Besides, the current measurement of students' BIs and students' PAs in Malaysia is flawed plus the study on this topic from the view of facilities management is limited. Therefore, this study being the pioneer on the study of such relationship between perceiving service quality performance of on-campus student housing with students' BIs and students' PAs, has significant value in enriching the body of knowledge.

The main research question of the study is *"What are the elements that exist to constitute students' BIs and students' PAs at the universities in Malaysia?"*. The principal objective is to explore the way in which students' BIs and students' PAs in their universities can potentially be assessed in a more appropriate and even better approach. The second objective is to develop a clear framework of the measurement elements that should be used in evaluating students' BIs and students' PAs for future research reference. Prior to discussing the earlier model on the aforementioned topic, the existing works of Parasuraman *et al.* (1985), Cronin and Taylor (1992), Zeithaml *et al.* (1996), Cronin *et al.* (2000), Tam (2002), Rinn (2004), Olorunniwo *et al.* (2006), Radder and Han (2009), Bashir *et al.* (2012), and Mohammad *et al.* (2012) in the field of service industry and post-occupancy evaluation have been critically reviewed.

2.0 Service Quality Performance of On-Campus Student Housing

Oluwunmi *et al.* (2012) reckoned that appraising service quality performance is a kind of internal evaluation or monitoring system in order to build a feedback mechanism to present the state of facilities with services and their current performance. Furthermore, service quality performance appraisal in student housing is also a mean of maintaining the quality service and proposing the efficient design of service delivery process in supervising the good student housing (Mohammad *et al.*, 2012). Theoretically proven that the most reliable ways to assess the service quality performance of student housing are through the uses of either Service Quality (SERVQUAL) model or Service Performance (SERVPERF) model which had been proposed by Parasuraman *et al.* (1985) and Cronin and Taylor (1992) respectively.

In dealing with the high demanding students nowadays, Chan *et al.* (2011) alluded that students are expecting for a continuous improvement being made to their student housing accordingly to their customization and personalization. This is because having a supportive, modern, and cosy living condition in on-campus student housing is believed can create a healthy or educated environment for study purpose and induce social solidarity in a big and mix community. As Bean and Bradley (1986), Cleave (1996), Rinn (2004), and Nugent (2012) contended that quality student housing is very vital which will significantly stimulate student's personal development, enhance academic achievements, and refine social dealings of the students.

Today, the students desire for a luxurious and high standard homelike living with everything in en-suite style and private rooms (Chan *et al.*, 2011). Thus, Fish (2010) insisted that to build an exclusive on-campus student housing, the right understanding of students different wants and needs for their house is very attentive. By creating a living-learning environment that promoted collaboration, nourished cohesion, and friendly community in the campus area, it can develop social skills to help students become the mature adults and prepare them for the future (Cleave, 1996; Fish, 2010). Likewise, Chan *et al.* (2011), Nugent (2012), and Muslim *et al.* (2013) reckoned that the focus of building on-campus student housing must be deliberately thoughtful to stimulate satisfactory living condition and positively affect people-environment congruity to grant for the academic success, students' self-development, as well as perfect BIs.

By using the SERVQUAL/SERVPERF model to evaluate the student housing condition in Africa and Malaysia, basically, the common factors to affect BIs and PAs are related to the quality performance of physical, social, and management aspect of the provided on-campus student housing (Radder & Han, 2009; Mohammad *et al.*, 2012; Bashir *et al.*, 2012). Amole (2005), Hassanain (2008), and Radder and Han (2009) opined that the presence of repute and efficient student housing system in the campus area may help students to attain the intellectual competence along with forming personal development and character which should lead to a fulfilling of students' on-campus living experience. Chan *et al.* (2011) and Mohammad *et al.* (2012), in other way, proclaimed that perceiving good service quality in student housing should intensify the students' loyalty with their current housing for the next semesters. In a nutshell, factors to influence the students' BIs and students' PAs at the university are best be determined by the service quality of the provided on-campus student

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housing. Hence, what are actually those students' BIs and students' PAs? The next sections discourse on that BIs and PAs in greater details.

3.0 Exploration of Students' Behavioural Intentions And Students' Personal Attainments

3.1 Students' Behavioural Intentions
From the Ajzen & Fishbein's theory of reasoned action, BIs are the salient information or immediate antecedent of someone for performing a certain behaviour which is under full volitional control (Madden *et al.*, 1992). In housing studies, Carpenter and Oloufa (1995) posited that BIs are the residents' response to the environment and the facility on how well their building's needs and goals have been supported. Thus, Zeithaml *et al.* (1996) and Olorunniwo *et al.* (2006) determined that BIs can be categorized into two types as favourable BIs which consist of loyalty thought and unfavourable BIs which lie about betrayal thought.

3.2 Favourable Behavioural Intentions
Favourable BIs can be described as good behavioural beliefs about the likelihood to show positive behaviours (e.g., positive words-of-mouth, recommendation, retention, and repurchase) as well as to strengthen the relationship between someone and the service provider (Madden et al., 1992; Zeithaml et al., 1996). Usually, loyalty or re-patronization of a product or services comes from the customers or residents who are satisfied with their house or perceived service quality at a maximum level (Mohammad et al., 2012). Specifically in student housing research, Chan et al. (2011) and Muslim et al. (2012b) emphasized that if the on-campus student housing is luxury, attractive, and has all the needed necessities and amenities, the students are prone to stay longer and be loyal to their house.

3.3 Unfavourable Behavioural Intentions
Unfavourable BIs can be defined as bad behavioural beliefs about the likelihood to perform negative behaviours (e.g., negative words-of-mouth, complaint, and migration) as well as weaken the relationship between someone and the service provider (Madden *et al.*, 1992; Zeithaml *et al.*, 1996). Olorunniwo *et al.* (2006) clarified that when the customers perceived a low service quality in their dealings, they tend to execute unfavourable BIs. Moreover, customers who encountered service problems, perceived inferior service or poor business operation are also more likely to leave, spend less or dislike the company (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1996). Similarly to the housing study, residents who received imperfect neighbourhood in their residential area are usually forced to migrate to a better place (Sam *et al.*, 2012).

3,4 Students' Personal Attainments
Rinn (2004) remarked that students' PAs are measuring the competency, integrity, self-reliantly, emotions management, identity establishment, and personal affairs development of the students. As such, Tam (2002: p.228) acknowledged that "Any institution is therefore

considered "excellent" if it can deploy its resources wisely and effectively to facilitate the intellectual and personal development of its students". Thus, Rinn (2004) and Fish (2010) alleged that intellectual gains usually can be achieved in the classroom, but self-development gains are emerged and evolved by mixing and engaging with others while staying and living in the on-campus student housing.

3.5 Intellectual Gains

Intellectual gains are personal growth which is more private and individually-directed attainment (Tam, 2002; Billups, 2008). Normally, students intellectual gains being identified as an academically outcome and certainly being signified with Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) (Becker et al., 2009). Thus, Rinn (2004) alleged that with a surrounding of higher educational aspirations, students who lived in the on-campus student housing are more persistence, determine to graduate, and to attain their degree. This is because, in this kind of situation, students are getting a higher chance to be more focused on their study and possibly to mingle around with the success-oriented peers.

3.6 Self-Development Gains

Self-development gains are social growth which is the involvement in planned group activities and public interactions (Tam, 2002; Rinn, 2004; Billups, 2008). Most of the students who choose to reside in the on-campus student housing are more often to engage well with other students from diverse background in their residential community whereby this nature upholds and teaches the esprit de corps, leadership, and independence life skills (Amole, 2007; Fish, 2010; Muslim *et al.*, 2012b). For example, Bean and Bradley (1986) professed that the trend of freshman orientation as one of the campus housing programs which create people-environment cohesion usually should indirectly increase students' interaction ability and being more socially adjusted. Nugent (2012) postulated that this encouraging milieu is also vitally helping to develop students as impressive individuals in the future.

4.0 Methods of Review

A desk study of this current research employed the methodology of archival research technique and content analyses research technique. Archival research technique deals with information exploration process while content analyses research technique addresses the research objectives (Sam *et al.*, 2012; Muslim *et al.*, 2012b). Henceforth, literature search was done exhaustively using that archival research technique, with hundreds of published articles related to the aforesaid research topic were searched and scanned in Elsevier, EBSCOHost, Emerald, SAGE Premier, ScienceDirect, and SpringerLINK databases. Either index journals or non-index journals, both which had been published for the last 29 years from 1985 until 2014 were downloaded and thoroughly been reviewed.

Principally, a comprehensive and conventional reviews discourses on the service quality performance of student housing, SERVQUAL, SERVPERF, BIs of students after experiencing living in on-campus student housing, and students' PAs at the universities.

Through the content analyses research technique, the elimination of duplicate titles and those are apparently not related to the literature review was done. Only suitable and allied concepts, main findings, and research method covered in each article were extracted. All the remaining useful and relevant journal articles were traced from the Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences, Journal of College and University Student Housing, College Student Journal, Quality Assurance in Education, Journal of Facilities Management, Facilities, Journal of Architectural Engineering, Environment and Behaviour, Journal of Marketing, Journal of Services Marketing, and others.

5.0 Results
Propositions to Conceptualization Of Behavioural Intentions And Personal Attainments

The main objective of this paper is to develop a clear framework of the measurement elements that should be used in evaluating students' BIs and students' PAs at the university. The review results clarified that students' BIs consist of favourable BIs and unfavourable BIs; whereas students' PAs are theorized about intellectual gains and self-development gains. Table 1 shows the variables used to measure the students' BIs; consist of words-of-mouth, recommendation, encouragement, duration of stay, re-apply, and contribution.

Table 1: Variables to measure students' BIs

Favourable BIs	Unfavourable BIs
Good words-of-mouth about the house	Bad words-of-mouth about the house
Recommend the house to others	Complaint about the house to others
Encourage friends to stay together	Discourage friends to stay together
Stay longer in the same room/house	Stay shorter in the same room/house
Re-apply the house for the next semester	Move to other house for the next semester
Contribute money as an alumnus	Not contribute money as an alumnus

(Source: Zeithaml et al. (1996), Cronin (2000), Olorunniwo et al. (2006))

Whereas, Table 2 displays the variables used to evaluate students' PAs; comprise of grades, problem-solving skills, thinking, ideas, self-learning, and acceptance as elements for *intellectual gains*. For *self-development gains*, the elements include variables such as independence, values, self-abilities, understanding, responsibility, and teamwork.

Table 2: Variables to measure students' PAs

Intellectual Gains *(Ability to ……)*	Self-development Gains *(Ability to ……)*
Get higher exam grades	Develop independence and self-reliance
Develop the analytical and problem-solving skills	Develop values and ethical standards
Think critically	Understand self-abilities, interests, and personality
Put ideas together, see relations, similarities, and differences	Understand and get along with other people
Learn on my own, pursue ideas, and find information	Gain a strong sense of social responsibility
Accept diverse views and opinions	Function as a team member

(Source: Tam (2002), Billups (2008))

6.0 Discussions
The present study is motivated by the need for higher service quality performance of on-campus student housing in Malaysia and the debate on which measurement elements that should be used to evaluate students' BIs and students' PAs. The review of past studies on the service quality performance of on-campus student housing, students' BIs, and students' PAs, showed that previous studies have established some directions to propose a framework on how to measure the students' BIs and students' PAs for this study in a better way. Referring to Table 1 and Table 2, it was found that to evaluate students' favourable and unfavourable BIs towards their on-campus student housing, the variables comprise of positive and negative elements. Whereas, to assess students' PAs in the universities, the variables entail of elements about intellectual and self-development gains. Above all, former studies have clearly proven that perceiving service quality performance of on-campus student housing can significantly influence students' BIs and students' PAs in the universities.

7.0 Conclusion
In ensuring the students can feel a comfortable and pleasant campus and student lifestyle in their on-campus student housing, thus, the university governance besides the government especially policy officials are accountable to provide high quality facilities and services to these people (Brackertz & Kenley, 2002; Brackertz, 2006; Jiboye, 2011). Hence, regular assessment of the service quality performance of the on-campus student housing is expected and very important because it can affect individual's quality of life. The review results add to our understanding on the influence of quality services of the on-campus student housing onto students' BIs and students' PAs. For instance, previous studies have proven that high quality of student housing will influence positive students' BIs plus excellent students' PAs. The framework of this study submitted that service quality performance of on-campus student housing as the independent variable while students' BIs and students' PAs as dependent variables. Finally, this review will add to the body of knowledge in the area of facilities management specifically in the student housing studies. The conceptualization of students' BIs and students' PAs which has brought forward in this study is valuable for future research reference and imitation.

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