

EDITORIAL

Assalamu-alaikum Wrahmatillahi Wabaratuhu

Welcome to the second issue of the Journal of Architecture, Planning and Construction Management or in short JAPCM.

JAPCM endeavours to present original and peer-reviewed research based papers and theoretical papers, practice papers, book reviews and abstracts of Masters dissertations/ theses and PhD theses related to the specialized areas of Architecture, Quantity Surveying, Urban and Regional Planning, Building Technology and Engineering, Applied Arts and Design, Construction Management and others related to built and natural environments. Although there exist established journals and publications addressing these areas; however, they appear to be fragmented. The Editorial of JAPCM observed a lack of published works addressing issues related to these specialized areas that are both packaged under ‘one roof’ and addressing them from the perspectives of Malaysia, Asia and Islam. JAPCM offers to act as a bridge to narrow this gap in the body of knowledge.

This issue (vol.1, no.2) of the Journal of Architecture, Planning and Construction Management (JAPCM), contains five research papers, abstracts of five PhD theses including one book review, all of which discuss the various issues and challenges pertaining to the built and natural environments. The content of this second issue, although dominated by Malaysian case studies, include one study from Nigeria, which gives the journal an international platform. Collectively, the papers relate to Building Project Delivery, Islamic Architecture, Park users perspective of neighbourhood parks, Islamic perspective of myths rooted in architectural studio, and the impletenation of EMS ISO14001 by the Malaysian construction companies.

The first paper by Ujene, Achuen and Abakadang, investigates the level of use and effects of subcontracting in building project delivery in South-South geo-political zone which comprises of six states and a total of 185 Local Government Areas of Nigeria. The authors identified that roofing, plumbing and electrical installations, are the work items which mostly use subcontractors. By using 280 structured questionnaires on a cross-section of a sample of project participants including clients, contractors and consultants, the authors found that subcontracting has significant effect on quality than cost and time of building projects. Delay in progress payment, effectiveness of client’s representative team and misunderstanding of client’s requirement were identified as the factors

that mostly affect the performance of subcontractors and the project delivery. Based on these findings, the authors recommend that in order to improve project performance, quality requirement, clear definition of client requirements and scope of work should be well articulated and defined during the time of engagement of subcontractors. Finally, it is suggested that there should be adequate project team to monitor the subcontractors and prompt valuation and payment of subcontractual jobs.

The second paper by Spahic Omer discusses the Islamic notion of *tawhid* (the Oneness of Allah) and its implications for Islamic architecture. The paper is divided into two parts – the first part provides the meaning and significance of *tawhid*, as a corner-stone of the Islamic belief system; the second part deals with *tawhid*'s most important implications for perceiving, creating and using Islamic architecture. The author argues that “based on the Islamic principle of *tawhid* and its dominant influence on the culture and civilization of Islam, Islamic architecture could be perceived as a type of architecture whose functions and, to a lesser extent, form, are inspired primarily by Islam”(p.7). He further reiterates that Islamic architecture works through the corporeal, cerebral and spiritual dimensions in which “the roles of form become equivalent to the roles of function” (p.8). For non-Muslim readers, the paper may be inspiring, as it shows how religious values and ideals can be used to explain built and natural environments. Although the paper is based on philosophical and ideological premises, as the author has mentioned (p.1), it may inspire other researchers to endeavour to transform those into built environment principles or guidelines.

The third paper by Nurhayati Abdul Malek on understanding the use pattern of Malaysian neighbourhood parks through park users' perspectives, is an empirical research which has used a sample of 414 dialy park users from two neighbourhood parks in the Klang Valley region of Peninsular Malaysia. The case study parks are – Taman Lembah Kiara in TTDI, Kuala Lumpur and Taman Rimba Riang in Kota Damanara, Petaling Jaya. The author used three use pattern scales which are activities (10 items), passive activities (3 items) and active activity (2 items). The analysis of the paper includes frequency of visitation, length of stay in hours, distance of the parks (in KM) from users' residences, and use pattern of parks. A technique of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) model was used to test the three use pattern sub-scales. The model provides a goodness-of-fit and 15 items of the use pattern, with 7 correlated error terms. The paper makes an important contribution to the literature on park users' use patterns in neighbourhood parks in

Peninsular Malaysia and the findings can be used to better planning of neighbourhood parks in urban areas.

The fourth paper by Fadzidah Abdullah discusses on Islamic perspective of myths rooted in studio culture of architectural education. Studio culture encompasses myths which are considered necessary for architectural students to carry out in order to be successful architects. The author argues that in architectural education, studio culture was generally developed after western architectural schools with secular perspective and then adapted by schools of architecture in various Islamic countries. The paper aims to evaluate the appropriateness of embracing the myths based on Islamic perspectives. The author expects that by critically analysing this issue, it is hoped that this research could benefit architectural students, academicians and even practitioners in general.

The fifth paper by Shamzani Affendy Mohd Din and Basyirah Riduan studied the construction companies in Malaysia with respect to their adherence to the implementation of EMS (Environmental Management System) ISO14001. The EMS ISO 14001 is a set of international standards for voluntary environmental management that has the potential to significantly impact the activities of the construction industry. Seven construction companies were interviewed, of which three did not implement the ISO 14001, while the other four companies have applied the system. The paper identified ten barriers, of which the important ones are, lack of government support, lack of client support and weak environmental awareness, which obstruct the implementation of EMS ISO 14001 in Malaysian Construction companies. It is expected that if these barriers are removed, more and more Malaysian construction companies would implement EMS ISO14001.

This issue of JAPCM incorporates five abstracts of recently completed PhD theses by the academic staff of the Kulliyyah (Faculty). These relate to the areas of land use and GIS, green infrastructure and residents' well-being, role of state and market in the provision of low-cost housing in Malaysia, low energy ground cooling system for buildings, urban biodiversity in Malaysia.

The book reviewed by Mohammad Abdul Mohit, explores the relationship between tourism and development in the developing countries against the background that tourism is widely regarded as an effective contributor to socio-economic development in these countries. Focused mostly on developing countries and drawing on contemporary case studies, the authors of the book have raised many questions about the role of tourism in development and highlight the dilemmas faced by destinations seeking to achieve development through tourism.

The research papers included in the second issue of JAPCM covers a wider geographical scale by including one study from Nigeria. It is hoped that professionals, lecturers, researchers and postgraduate students, in built and natural environments, will find this issue (vol.1, no.2) of JAPCM interesting, useful and knowledge-expanding.

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