CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

Road accidents were the third highest cause of death among Malaysians after heart diseases and cancer (Men’s Health, 2006). Malaysia road accident statistics reported that 25 of every 100,000 Malaysians died in year 2003 alone (PDRM, 2004). Accident involving motorcyclists is the highest among all road users. This is followed by car drivers including passengers, and pedestrians. Pedestrians form an integral part of the urban transportation system and probably will remain as one of the most important mode of transport in the urban environment. Moving on foot will continue to be the feeder mode between any particular trip origin and final destination. Very short trip lengths within the urban environment would be more appropriate by walking as compared to taking a taxi or a bus so long as the facilities are being provided. Provisions of adequate and safe pedestrian facilities in the urban setting would arguably encourage more people to walk, thus increasing the pedestrian traffic. The pedestrian is often the most vulnerable of all transportation system users, and frequently the most overlooked. Accidents between pedestrians and vehicles are examined in terms of minimizing conflict between the two modes, not necessarily maximizing access for either. Despite this growing literature which highlights the impact interventions into the traffic environment on pedestrian behaviour, there is still a lack of knowledge surrounding the relationships between traffic conditions and pedestrian behaviour that
determine the extent of the barrier effects experience by pedestrians (Hine and Russell, 1993). In Malaysia, how a street or jalan accommodates social activities and functions is central to its role in enhancing the image of the city and its identity (Shamsuddin and Sulaiman, 2002).

1.2 Problem statements

Sidewalks are important parts of a “Complete Street”, a national initiative to plan, design, build, and maintain a street for all users, and not just for motor vehicles. An improvement on conditions for pedestrians along existing roads have wide ranging impacts on pedestrians safety in general including public transportation services, children walk to school, people walk for local trips, and perhaps most importantly whether people walk for general health. In addition, walking is in many instances not a choice, except for people with disability, does not own or have use of a motor vehicle, or is too young or otherwise unable to drive. Some of the state agencies just built sidewalks that were too narrow, built right adjacent to a busy road with no buffer, or were cluttered with a host of obstacles such as utility poles, fire hydrants, traffic signal poles, irrigation structures, utility boxes, and other barriers making them undesirable for use for ambulatory pedestrians and often not usable by those pedestrians in wheelchairs. The absence of sidewalks forces pedestrians to walk in the roadway and often causes pedestrians to cross at less than desirable locations, leading to a higher pedestrian crash risk. Furthermore, lack of understanding between pedestrian and motorist also one of the problem. For the motorist, it is maybe difficult to see the presence of the pedestrian and also unable to predict them. While for the pedestrian, they may be difficult to have a motorist that is willing to stop for them. Although the zebra cross have been provided, there are still some pedestrian crossing the road without using it. So the purpose of this study is to study pedestrians’ behaviour and pedestrian facilities quality.
1.3 Research objective

The objectives of the study that need to be achieved are as follow:

I. To study user behaviour’s and perception’s towards signalized pedestrians facilities.
II. To obtain information about pedestrian’s needs for the characteristics of pedestrian quality.

1.4 Scope of works

The study is focused on the area with the signalized pedestrian crossing in Kuantan. The respondent involved will be the pedestrian using the facilities. The number of respondent is 50. Number of respondents was divided by 2 areas. The respondents were interviewed and observed by researcher.