

Accessible Housing Guidelines: A Global Comparison

Amar Muhammad Ramli ^{a)} Liyana Mohamed Yusof ^{b)} Rahimi A. Rahman ^{c)} and Azlina Ismail ^{d)}

Faculty of Civil Engineering Technology, Universiti Malaysia Pahang, Gambang, Malaysia

^{a)}Corresponding author: amarmuhammad86@gmail.com

^{b)}liyanam@ump.edu.my

^{c)}arahimirahman@ump.edu.my

^{d)}azlinai@ump.edu.my

Abstract. House is one of the most important necessities in one's life. Houses with good accessibility parameters will be able to improve the life quality of the occupants regardless of age and abilities and support the aging process. Hence, guidelines related to accessibility in housing have been developed globally, respectively, either by the countries' governments or as initiatives of its housing developers. Therefore, this research aims to determine and explore the current guidelines on accessibility in housing from several countries. In response, the research employs a qualitative approach by comparing these guidelines to develop a suitable accessibility guideline for the context of Malaysian housing. The findings determine the important spaces are: bathroom; building entrance; circulation/corridor; kitchen; bedroom and; access to the site. Furthermore, the important categories for each element are: size; accessibility; materials; safety; comfort, and; fitting. These findings are hoped to assist local authorities, developers, and professionals in improving the housing development in Malaysia, in particular to accessibility aspects.

Keywords: Accessibility, Guidelines, Housing, Independent Living, Universal Design.

1. INTRODUCTION

Accessibility generally is the quality of being easy to approach, reach, enter, speak with, use, or understand. The word "Accessible" is examined, it is seen to be defined as "to be able to be reached or enter into (a place)" [1]. It is very important when it is involved with people that have a different disability. Accessibility is best defined as the provision of flexibility to accommodate each user's needs and preferences; when used regarding persons with disabilities, any place, space, item or service, whether physical or virtual, that is easily approached, reached, entered, exited, interacted with, understood or otherwise used by persons of varying disabilities, is determined to be accessible [2]. This can conclude that accessible housing is when the house was design and arrangement to allow easy and friendly movement and reachable ability for the users in any conditions.

Most developed countries have their own accessible housing guideline produced by government and private sectors to create a better quality of life for the housing design. However, some countries do not have specific guidelines on accessible housing, including Malaysia. Many countries are still facing challenges in developing accessible housing, especially concerning the aging population, particularly since there is still a lack of awareness regarding both the concept of universal design and its implementation [3]. In Malaysia, accessibility has been implemented several sectors, especially in the built environment. Malaysia has been actively providing accessibility in the built environment since the country signed the 'Proclamation on the Full Participation and Equality of People with Disabilities in the Asia-Pacific Region' in 1994 [4]. This shows that Malaysia has taken a serious measure of accessibility and is ready to move forward without leaving anyone behind. However, Malaysia does not have specific accessible housing guidelines that the stakeholders can refer. This research analyzes and identifies the importance of spaces and elements that need to be considered in the guideline.