



## ISLAMIC PERCEPTION OF SHOPPING MALL THROUGH THE DIMENSION OF FACILITY MANAGEMENT

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### ABSTRACT

A shopping mall refers to a structure with several retail establishments managed as a single property that offers various products and services. It has become essential to the functioning of contemporary society, particularly for residents of urban and suburban areas. However, concerns or issues regarding facilities and services in shopping malls continue to surface even today. Past studies have suggested that facility management is a best practice for overcoming management and operation issues. It also aligns with the Islamic principle as it is beneficial knowledge relevant to the modern management approach. Therefore, this paper seeks to comprehend the potential facility management approach to shopping mall management. The main objective of this study is to emphasize the importance of facility management in shopping malls by evaluating consumer satisfaction. A survey is conducted with a total sample of 200 respondents based on three facility management maintenance characteristics: functional, technical, and image. One of the reputable shopping malls in Johor Bahru is selected for this study because it attracts numerous visitors from throughout Johor Bahru. The results show that most of the visitors are pleased and satisfied with all three aspects from the dimension of facility management.

### KEYWORDS:

Facility management, Shopping mall, Consumer, Perception, Satisfaction

## INTRODUCTION

Retailing services today are getting a more competitive market contributing to the economy. The number of establishments for the wholesale and retail trade sector in Malaysia for 2018 is 469,024 compared to 370,725 establishments in 2013, with a yearly growth of 4.8 percent [1]. Consequently, the importance of selling services in retail has attracted attention, particularly in marketing. Islamic marketing can be described as the method and strategy (*Hikmah*) of satisfying needs through *Halal (Tayyibat)* goods and services with the mutual consent and welfare (*Falah*) of both parties (buyers and sellers), to achieve material

and spiritual well-being in this world and the hereafter [2].

In the context of Islam, marketing ethics strongly emphasize the values of justice, equity, and maximization for the benefit of society. The standards of customer behavior are raised significantly because of these principles. This brilliant marketing strategy can help a shopping mall to be a better provider to consumers. Customer pleasure, loyalty, and intention to suggest are all influenced by the service and shopping experiences [3]. A bad shopping mall or store experience could impact people's interest in visiting the location. It could also harm the merchant's reputation in the marketplace. Hence, a practical

measure must be adopted to avoid drawing attention to the possibility of such risks. Therefore, the concept of facility management can be endorsed as a pivotal guideline for shopping malls. This study aims to highlight the significance of facility management for shopping malls and to evaluate the consumer's satisfaction level on three maintenance aspects of facility management: functional, technical, and image.

#### **FACILITY MANAGEMENT AND SHOPPING MALL**

One of the ways to encounter this is to utilize the idea of facility management. Facility management entails several multidisciplinary skills in architecture, civil engineering, behavior, accounting, management, and so on, according to [4]. Thus, various parties, including a landlord, retailers, managing agents, subcontractors, local government, and emergency services, are involved in managing a shopping mall. In this scenario, growth in the number of shopping malls would prompt intense competition among them, forcing mall management to consider strategies carefully and plan to up their game to attract more customers [5]. This means that specific abilities and frameworks that satisfy the requirements are needed to provide top-notch facility services, primarily cleaning, security, and maintenance.

How a place is operated and managed impacts how well an organization or institution provides comfort, congeniality, and pleasant. Both are crucial factors, especially for a shopping mall. In general, a shopping complex or shopping mall has grown into a sizable retail space and is the greatest option for making it simpler for people to visit one location with access to all services. Shopping mall development is frequently given attention in Malaysia's major cities due to the rising demand from city people. The well-established shopping malls in Johor Bahru City include Paradigm Mall JB, Angsana Mall JB, Holiday Plaza, KSL City Mall, Sutera Mall, Johor Bahru City Square, Galleria Kotaraya (KOMTAR), AEON, Plaza Pelangi, Beletime Danga Bay, and more. Not just that, the shopping mall has emerged as one of the service sectors that requires customer satisfaction assessment, which was discussed earlier on how crucial to maintain the shopping mall's capability and aptitude for the benefit of prospective customers.

Various studies have been conducted to connect the importance of adequate facilities for shopping malls with facilities management. The perception of facilities management in the retail industry has significantly changed. The operation of a shopping mall would be functional and relevant if it had the

necessary facilities. This explains facility management is significant to an institution such as a shopping mall. Proper facility planning might greatly improve production line performance and save operational costs for businesses in the manufacturing industry [6]. It all starts with an adequate planning and management system to produce a good-end outcome regarding goods or services. This concept can be implied concerning facility management and shopping mall too. An appropriate facility planning will enhance the shopping mall functions and attract more visitors. It helps to provide customers with excellent service and, indirectly, grow core businesses. Facilities management serves as the foundation for all operations [7].

In the meantime, maintenance management is an integral component of the discipline of facility management and must be under business objectives to help improve performance over the long run [8]. However, in this case study, maintenance management also compromises the functional, technical, and image. Therefore, these three key elements must be preserved for them to continue playing an important part in how well a structure performs, particularly in a shopping mall. In comparison, research by Bieser and Menzel [9] indicated that maintenance management is a crucial component of facilities management due to the growing significance of securing and effectively using the facilities. Because of this, facility managers should be aware of and contribute to their organization's core competencies [10].

As a result, maintenance has a right to be accountable for the equipment and building assets' safety and unwavering quality and play a crucial role in an organization's strategic operational planning process [11]. Therefore, it has always been necessary for shopping malls to upkeep their maintenance because it is so important for daily operations. Three key maintenance aspects—functional, technical, and image were employed as performance building indicators in a research study to evaluate the maintenance component of facilities management of five high-rise buildings [12]. This kind of research is highly helpful for the current study and can serve as a valuable source of examples.

#### **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Numerous journals and studies have raised issues with shopping malls. For instance, a study on mall safety and security issues [13]. Based on the findings, visitors of shopping malls are probably worried about their safety outside the shopping mall, where the level

of worry is associated with high precautionary behaviors, particularly about parking lot security. Additionally, problems with the shopping mall's servicescape, such as a malfunctioning closed-circuit television system, a lack of parking places, an awful layout, improper signage, and a lack of atmosphere, will reduce the number of people who visit the mall [14]. The study also indicates that the issues can impact consumer satisfaction because the internal and external environments of shopping malls have a key role in drawing customers. In essence, how customers see a mall affects its reputation.

Despite its diversity of races and religions, Malaysia is a country that adheres to Islam. Therefore, a shopping mall must allocate a department or a room for Muslims to pray. Nowadays, the majority of the shopping malls in Malaysia provide areas where Muslims can perform their prayer. However, there are still some lacks and concerns. For example, there has been limited research on how the religious characteristics of the prayer room as the main worship site in public spaces affect a user's decision and satisfaction [15]. Therefore, this issue needs more attention too. To ensure customers have a positive shopping experience, problems in shopping malls must be resolved.

Customers are becoming more aware of their rights and expect higher service levels. Defining and improving the customer experience for market research is becoming a major consideration because experience replaces quality as the competitive battleground for marketing [16]. That is why measuring and exploring consumer happiness or impression is critical in this study. It has become the main research objective. It also serves as an indication for calculating a building's performance and the facilities management services provided. Simply put, it is necessary to assess the success of facility management. Hence, a thorough understanding of facilities management is essential in shopping mall operations.

Meanwhile, Noor and Pitt (2010) [7] mentioned that Malaysia is different from other advanced as well as developed countries such as Singapore, Hong Kong, Australia, and Japan as this facilities management discipline is still in its early stages and its associated duties are fragmented with limited knowledge on the subject. In addition, the lack of a specific body to give rules and control over the quality and performance of facilities management activities makes analysis difficult [17]. This emphasizes the importance of implementing facilities management for shopping malls, which

provides multiple benefits. Furthermore, there is a limited study linking facility management and shopping malls in Malaysia, notably in Johor. As a result, this could be a gap in the research.

## **METHODS**

In this study, to acquire raw data, a self-administered questionnaire is used. The survey received 200 responses from consumers that visit Paradigm Mall Johor Bahru, including visitors, staff, customers, and shop owners. The questionnaire components are embodied in demography, the Likert Scale for evaluating consumer's level of satisfaction (which covers technical, functional, and image), issues of facilities management services confronted, and their recommendation for improvement. However, this paper will only accentuate the Five-point Likert Scale (1 – Very not satisfied, 2 – Not satisfied, 3 – Less satisfied, 4 – Satisfied, 5 – Very satisfied) which is implemented in the study for satisfaction evaluation.

The survey data is analyzed using descriptive statistics. The data was then recorded and evaluated using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software, allowing them to be presented as tables, charts, or summaries by measuring central tendency.

## **DISCUSSION**

This part starts with a discussion of the demographic analysis of consumers in Paradigm Mall JB, which includes the attributes of consumers and a brief explanation. The next section comprehends the satisfaction level of consumers on the functional, technical, and image of the shopping mall. On the other hand, the final section ends with the general opinion of consumers, which compares mall visitor satisfaction with the influence of facilities management on shoppers' preferences and more.

## **DEMOGRAPHY**

This section will review the attributes of shopping mall consumers in Paradigm Mall, Johor Bahru. According to Table 1, the majority of respondents are female (70.5%, or 141 respondents), with male respondents accounting for 29.5% or 59 respondents. Therefore, females are more likely to like shopping than males. However, aside from the fact that females are more responsive than males during survey collection, this may alter the percentage of gender.

Most respondents are between 20 and 29 years old, accounting for nearly half of all respondents (49.5%). This appears to be the case because some of

them are students from UiTM, UTM, and UNIKL, which stand for a higher percentage than other age groups. This age group is typical among students. The 30-39 age group came in second with 20.5% (41 respondents), followed by the 40-49 age group with 10.0%. (20 respondents).

Furthermore, at 48.0%, the private sector has the highest percentage (96 respondents). The public sector ranks second with 26.5% (53 responses), while students are close behind with 21.0%. (42 respondents). Nonetheless, the percentage of unemployed people is the lowest, at 4.5%. This implies that Malaysia's economic problems are tolerable, although we have entered the pandemic era (COVID-19). People can purchase products at a shopping mall, notably in this situation.

The greatest percentage for frequent shopping mall visits is 40.0% (80 respondents) many times each month. The rate of once a month or rarely is 28.5%. (57 respondents). On the contrary, every day has a percentage of 14.5% (29 respondents), which is slightly higher than once a week, with a rate of 12.0% (24 respondents). People who travel to the shopping mall daily work there as store owners, shop employees, or building workers. Finally, several times each week has the lowest rate, with only 5.0%. (10 respondents).

The average time most respondents spend is 2 hours, with 37.5% spending more than that (75 respondents). The average time spent more than 3 hours is 32.0% less than that of 2 hours (64 respondents). Meanwhile, they chose 3 hours as the third highest average spend, with a proportion of 21.5%. (43 respondents). This indicates that more than half of those polled will spend two hours or more at the mall to shop, dine, entertain, and work. With 42.9%, the most common reason for visiting a shopping mall is to shop (146 respondents). This is typically the primary function of a shopping mall, where people go to buy goods or services. The second highest percentage for eating activity is 30.0% (102 respondents). Customers can choose from various well-known restaurants, cafes, and even food courts. Finally, 17.6% (60 respondents) go for entertainment such as cinema, wall climbing, arcade, and ice skating.

**PERCEPTION OF THE SHOPPING MALL**

**SATISFACTION EVALUATION**

Table 2 shows the percentages for each of the five levels of satisfaction. In summary, most respondents are pleased with the minor details for each key component - functional, technical, and image. Except for sufficient parking, toilet location, prayer

room location, the number of resting areas, and building exterior finishes, all percentages are greater than 50.0%. These are the most common complaints expressed by respondents.

**Table 1. Demography of Respondents**

| Variable                          | Evaluation terms (%)   |      |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|------|
| Gender                            | Female                 | 29.5 |
|                                   | Male                   | 70.5 |
| Ethnicity                         | Malay                  | 81.5 |
|                                   | Chinese                | 10.0 |
|                                   | Indian                 | 7.5  |
| Religion                          | Islam                  | 83.5 |
|                                   | Buddhism               | 4.5  |
|                                   | Hinduism               | 5.5  |
| Age group                         | Below 19               | 8.5  |
|                                   | 20 – 29                | 49.5 |
|                                   | 30 – 39                | 20.5 |
|                                   | 40 – 49                | 10.0 |
|                                   | 50 – 59                | 10.5 |
|                                   | Above 60               | 0.5  |
| Occupation                        | Invalid                | 0.5  |
|                                   | Public sector          | 26.5 |
|                                   | Private sector         | 48.0 |
| Category of respondent            | Student                | 21.0 |
|                                   | Visitors               | 83.5 |
|                                   | Shop owner/shop worker | 9.0  |
| Frequency go to the shopping mall | Shopping mall building |      |
|                                   | Everyday               | 14.5 |
|                                   | Several times a week   | 5.0  |
|                                   | Once a week            | 12.0 |
|                                   | Several times a month  | 40.0 |
| Average time spent                | Once in a month/rarely | 28.5 |
|                                   | Below an hour          | 1.0  |
|                                   | 1 hour                 | 8.0  |
|                                   | 2 hours                | 37.5 |
|                                   | 3 hours                | 21.5 |
| Purpose go to the shopping mall   | Above 3 hours          | 32.0 |
|                                   | Shopping               | 42.9 |
|                                   | Entertainment          | 17.6 |
|                                   | Work                   | 9.1  |
|                                   | Eat                    | 30.0 |
|                                   | Window shopping        | 0.3  |

Furthermore, by examining the median or mode, it is determined that respondents are completely satisfied with the small attributes of each of the three major shopping mall satisfaction variables. The median and mode for the location of the prayer room are 3, indicating that many respondents are quite dissatisfied. All prayer rooms are located in the corner of the shopping mall, as in Figure 1. Since Paradigm Mall JB is a massive building, people need to walk more to the prayer room. The prayer rooms are only available on certain levels, specifically in Levels 1, 2, and 3. The design location of the prayer room needs to be revised more in the future to bring convenience to all ages, including people with disabilities (PWD). A prayer room's effectiveness and significance in design are key factors in offering ease and comfort to the user, especially Muslims [15].

Table 2. Satisfaction Level on Shopping Mall

| Shopping mall satisfaction variables |  | Evaluation terms (%) |               |                |           |                | Median/Mode |
|--------------------------------------|--|----------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------|----------------|-------------|
|                                      |  | Very Not Satisfied   | Not Satisfied | Less Satisfied | Satisfied | Very Satisfied |             |
| <b>Functional</b>                    |  |                      |               |                |           |                |             |
| 1.                                   | Distance of the facility               | 0.0                  | 2.5           | 26.5           | 55.0      | 16.0           | 4           |
| 2.                                   | Sufficient parking                     | 1.5                  | 4.0           | 29.0           | 49.0      | 16.5           | 4           |
| 3.                                   | Opening and closing time               | 0.0                  | 3.0           | 18.0           | 59.5      | 19.5           | 4           |
| 4.                                   | Space and layout planning              | 0.5                  | 2.0           | 21.5           | 61.0      | 15.0           | 4           |
| 5.                                   | Location of toilet                     | 0.5                  | 2.0           | 40.5           | 48.5      | 8.5            | 4           |
| 6.                                   | Location of prayer room                | 0.6                  | 8.4           | 42.8           | 39.8      | 8.4            | 3           |
| 7.                                   | Location of shop/restaurant            | 1.0                  | 2.5           | 25.0           | 55.5      | 16.0           | 4           |
| 8.                                   | Number of resting areas                | 4.0                  | 11.0          | 34.0           | 39.0      | 12.0           | 4           |
| 9.                                   | Number and quality of shops            | 0.0                  | 4.0           | 22.0           | 58.5      | 15.5           | 4           |
| 10.                                  | Number and quality of restaurants      | 0.5                  | 5.0           | 20.0           | 59.5      | 15.0           | 4           |
| 11.                                  | Number and quality of entertainment    | 1.0                  | 3.0           | 23.5           | 55.5      | 17.0           | 4           |
| 12.                                  | Information service centre             | 1.5                  | 5.0           | 27.5           | 51.0      | 15.0           | 4           |
| <b>Technical</b>                     |  |                      |               |                |           |                |             |
| 1.                                   | Adequate temperature (AC)              | 0.5                  | 3.0           | 12.0           | 61.0      | 23.5           | 4           |
| 2.                                   | Adequate lighting                      | 0.0                  | 2.5           | 8.5            | 66.5      | 22.5           | 4           |
| 3.                                   | Acoustical comfort                     | 1.0                  | 1.5           | 16.0           | 63.5      | 18.0           | 4           |
| 4.                                   | Adequate air ventilation               | 0.0                  | 3.5           | 10.5           | 64.5      | 21.5           | 4           |
| 5.                                   | Safety from hazardous/criminal acts    | 0.5                  | 4.0           | 16.0           | 61.0      | 18.5           | 4           |
| 6.                                   | Adequate emergency exits               | 1.5                  | 5.0           | 18.5           | 56.5      | 18.5           | 4           |
| 7.                                   | Adequate signage                       | 0.0                  | 2.0           | 22.5           | 56.5      | 19.0           | 4           |
| 8.                                   | Building cleanliness                   | 0.5                  | 1.5           | 14.0           | 67.0      | 17.0           | 4           |
| 9.                                   | Quality and cleanliness of toilet      | 1.0                  | 3.5           | 24.0           | 58.5      | 13.0           | 4           |
| 10.                                  | Quality and cleanliness of prayer room | 0.0                  | 3.6           | 23.5           | 61.4      | 11.4           | 4           |
| 11.                                  | Lift                                   | 1.5                  | 3.0           | 14.5           | 67.0      | 14.0           | 4           |
| 12.                                  | Escalator/travelator                   | 1.5                  | 1.5           | 14.0           | 68.5      | 14.5           | 4           |
| <b>Image</b>                         |  |                      |               |                |           |                |             |
| 1.                                   | Decoration/aesthetic value             | 0.5                  | 1.0           | 19.5           | 52.0      | 27.0           | 4           |
| 2.                                   | Interior design of building            | 0.0                  | 1.0           | 18.5           | 54.5      | 26.0           | 4           |
| 3.                                   | Exterior design of building            | 0.5                  | 1.5           | 21.0           | 51.0      | 26.0           | 4           |
| 4.                                   | Internal finishes of building          | 0.0                  | 0.5           | 18.5           | 53.0      | 28.0           | 4           |
| 5.                                   | External finishes of building          | 0.5                  | 2.5           | 21.5           | 49.0      | 26.5           | 4           |



Figure 1. The layout of the First Floor [26]

In general, technical can be considered as the best service offered by the shopping mall management among the three primary aspects (functional, technical, and image), and many of the small attributes from the technical aspect show more than 60.0% satisfaction. The median for cleanliness for building,

prayer rooms, and toilets are 4. This is a good sign, as cleanliness is the path to good health and power. Islam aims to build a strong, healthy Muslim society that is immune to infectious diseases, able to understand and put God's message into practice, and capable of disseminating it worldwide. (Surah Al-Imran, 3:110).

A massive commercial structure such as a shopping mall necessitates much effort and consistency to provide customer service. Proper planning and management can strengthen the entire operation and organization, especially regarding facility management for a building. Even today, the importance of facility management cannot be overstated because it provides multiple benefits to end users. They include maintaining cleanliness, creating a desirable environment, lowering maintenance costs and liabilities, and improving the professional image. Furthermore, additional benefits of facility management include ensuring the safety of the premises and tenants, maintaining peak efficiency in

property systems and services, lowering the cost of operating space, streamlining responsibilities, and tailoring services to specific needs [18]. Therefore, the shopping mall management must keep track of the concerns and implement good measures to make customers feel welcome and pleasant. A good building is rated based on how well it performs its fundamental function: providing a space and location for people [19]. Thus, new construction should carefully study Paradigm Mall's shortcomings and use it as a model for future development that considers not only profit but also the interests of consumers.

#### GENERAL OPINION OF CONSUMERS

Based on Figure 4, many respondents (94.0%) believe that facility management performance influences consumer satisfaction. The remaining 6.0% of respondents do not agree with the question. The results show that customers understand the value of facility management performance to their satisfaction. Next, most respondents (93.0%) stated that they feel safe, secure, and enjoy themselves in the shopping mall, indicating that the shopping mall did a sufficient job of ensuring visitors had the greatest experience possible. Meanwhile, 91.0% of them are satisfied with the shopping mall's overall satisfaction, which is slightly lower than the second highest percentage.

Islam gives guidance to give full measure and cause no loss (Surah Ash Shuara, 26:181). When you give to people, give them the full amount. Do not cause them harm by giving them less than the full measure; when you take from them, take the complete measure from them. Give and receive in equal measure. Providing good quality service is a big responsibility for the shopping mall. Many aspects of the building need to be taken into consideration. According to the result, most consumers are pleased with the building's performance. This indicates that the shopping mall management tried to give their best services as a provider.

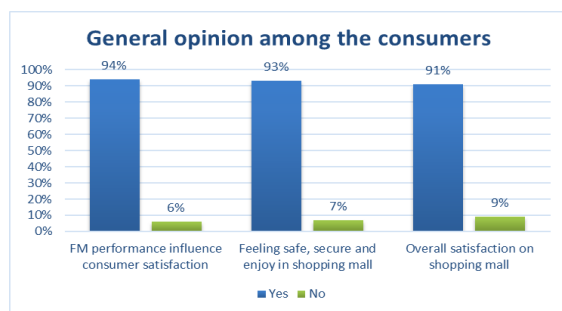


Figure 2. The percentage for General Opinion

#### CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, the methodology proposed achieves the main objective of this study. Respondents' viewpoints reflect a wide range of results. Most of

them are satisfied with the maintenance aspects of the shopping mall – functional, technical, and image. Since shopping malls have become an integral component of the modern community, addressing issues with their facilities and services is critical. The shopping mall's availability regularly illustrates its importance for daily use. Facility management is one solution for accommodating an institution like a shopping mall. It is the knowledge that can help society, even if it is not ideally from an Islamic scholar. As Muslims, we still have to embrace great 'Ilm (knowledge) and benefit from it for ourselves and society.

Additionally, prior research on the connection between facility management and the building has been carried out to highlight its crucial function [20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25]. This indirectly shows the support and recognition from academic studies regarding facility management for years. Some respondents acknowledge the importance of facilities management in shopping malls, which can aid the institution in building performance. They believe that facility management may have an impact on their satisfaction. As a result, this study strongly suggests that facility management can benefit a building or an institution.

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