MUNICIPAL WASTE CHARACTERISTICS
AND MANAGEMENT IN
PANTAI DALAM, KUALA LUMPUR

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# TABLES OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .................................................................................. i

ABSTRACT ..................................................................................................... ii

LIST OF TABLES ............................................................................................ v

LIST OF FIGURES .......................................................................................... x

LIST OF PLATES ............................................................................................ xi

LIST OF MAPS ............................................................................................... xiii

LIST OF ACRONYMS .................................................................................... xiv

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION ................................................................. 1

1.1 Introduction ............................................................................................ 1

1.2 General solid waste generation scenario .............................................. 2

1.3 Solid waste generation rate in Malaysia .............................................. 3

1.4 Solid waste composition in Malaysia .................................................. 8

1.5 Solid waste management ..................................................................... 9

1.6 Background information of the study areas ....................................... 11

1.7 Present solid waste status and problems in the study area ............... 14

1.8 Objectives ............................................................................................ 16

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW ................................................ 17

2.1 Definition of waste .............................................................................. 17

2.2 Definition of solid waste .................................................................... 20

2.3 Definition of urban solid waste .......................................................... 24
TABLES OF CONTENTS

2.4 Waste generation rate ........................................ 29
2.5 Waste characteristic ......................................... 35
   2.5.1 Waste density ........................................... 35
   2.5.2 Moisture content ........................................ 42
   2.5.3 Waste composition ....................................... 43
   2.5.4 Socioeconomic survey analysis ......................... 53
2.6 Waste management ............................................ 55
   2.6.1 Waste recycling ......................................... 66

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY .................................. 71
3.1 Background information of the study areas ................. 71
3.2 Methods ......................................................... 72
   3.2.1 Field survey ............................................ 72
   3.2.2 Density ................................................... 75
3.3 Waste composition determination ........................... 75
   3.3.1 Nitrogen test ............................................ 75
   3.3.2 Determination of pH, Acidity and Alkalinity .......... 77
   3.3.3 Conductivity ............................................. 78
   3.3.4 Moisture ................................................. 78
TABLES OF CONTENTS

3.3.5 Determination of water extractable nutrients in municipal solid waste .................................................................... 79
3.3.6 Other determination .................................................................................................................................................. 80
3.3.7 Heavy metals determination ................................................................................................................................. 80
3.3.8 Microbiological testing ................................................................................................................................................ 81

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION ................................................. 82
4.1 Waste generation rate ..................................................................................................................................................... 82
4.2 Solid waste generation and economic status ............................................................................................................. 83
4.3 Waste generation varies according to religion and culture .......................................................................................... 85
4.4 Waste characterization ................................................................................................................................................... 87

4.4.1 Composition of municipal solid waste .................................................................................................................. 87

4.4.2 Physical analysis ......................................................................................................................................................... 91
    1. Moisture content .......................................................................................................................................................... 91
    2. pH/Conductivity .......................................................................................................................................................... 91
    3. The percentage of particles size (sieving) of loose materials .................................................................................. 91

4.4.3 Chemical analysis ....................................................................................................................................................... 94
    1. Carbon to nitrogen ratio ........................................................................................................................................... 94
    2. Water extractable nutrients ...................................................................................................................................... 95
    3. Heavy metal ............................................................................................................................................................... 96
4.4.4 Biological analysis ...................................................... 96

1. Micro and Macrofauna analyses ......................................... 96

4.5 Solid waste storage ....................................................... 97

4.5.1 Household solid waste storage ...................................... 97

4.5.2 Communal storage .................................................... 101

4.5.3 Natural yard waste composting ..................................... 102

4.5.4 Illegal dump sites ................................................... 103

4.6 Waste collection and transportation ................................. 114

4.6.1 Kind of transportation used ......................................... 116

4.6.2 Number of workers involved ....................................... 116

4.6.3 Frequency of waste collection ..................................... 117

4.6.4 The conditions of communal containers ......................... 118

4.6.5 The opinion of public towards the state of waste collection and management in their areas .................................. 121

4.6.6 Cost of municipal solid waste management ...................... 122

4.7 Waste recovery .......................................................... 125

4.7.1 Recovery and the possibilities of waste use ...................... 126

4.7.2 Public attitude towards waste recycling ......................... 127
TABLES OF CONTENTS

4.7.3 Public response on drop-off center .................................................. 131
4.7.4 Public attitude towards enforcing an extra pay for environmental friendly product .................................................. 136
4.7.5 Public opinion on whether packaging and container materials make their life more easier and comfortable ............................. 126
4.7.6 Public attitude towards imposing of a product charge on plastic carrier .................................................................................. 138
4.7.7 Public awareness towards environmental problem caused by municipal solid waste .......................................................... 140

4.8 Waste sorting ................................................................................. 141

CHAPTER FIVE: RECOMMENDATIONS ................................................. 146

5.1 Introduction .................................................................................. 146
5.2 The role of municipal council .......................................................... 148
5.3 The role of private municipal waste management sectors ...................... 149

The role of the government .................................................................. 151
5.4 The role of the public ..................................................................... 152
TABLES OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION ........................................................................ 156
REFERENCES: ......................................................................................... 158

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE .................................................................................. 169
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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this research was to study comprehensively the municipal waste generation (rate, quantity), waste characterization including (physical, chemical and biological parameters), heavy metal content, waste recovery and recycling, and socio economic aspects of municipal solid waste (MSW) generation and management in Taman Bukit Angkasa, Pantai Dalam, Kuala Lumpur and the surrounding areas. The waste characterization and management was determined with actual field observations coupled with questionnaire survey from a random sample of 250 households (200 flats houses, 25 long houses and 25 squatter residences). The quantification and other parameters (heavy metals, water extractable nutrients, nitrogen, pH, acidity, alkalinity, conductivity) were determined using standard methods (X-ray Fluorescence Spectrometry, Flame Spectroscopy, Kjeldahl Auto Analyser, Radiometer Electrical Conductivity measuring Instrument and pH meter).

An average of 1.8 kg of municipal waste was generated by residents' daily, which is higher than the national average generation rate of 1.0 kg per person. Almost 95% of the household waste was mixed waste. It was found that an improvement in the living standard not only results in an increase in the volume of waste generation, but also alters the characteristics of the waste disposed. The findings indicate that, the municipal waste had a C/N ratio of 28:1 for flats, 30:1 for squatter and 26:1 for long house. The average amount of water extractable elements in the waste, such as, Nitrate was 147 mg/L, Phosphrous 107.5 mg/L, Potassium 940.5 mg/L, Magnesium 155.5 mg/L,
Calcium 797.5 mg/L, Aluminium 18 mg/L and Chloride 120 mg/L. The composition of municipal waste generated varied depending on the human behavioral pattern and religious practices, festival seasons and status level. The moisture content in municipal waste from flats was very high (51.7%) because it contained more organic waste compared to waste from squatter (47.3%) and long house (43.8%). The mean pH of municipal waste was 5.98. The finding indicate that, the mean conductivity of municipal waste is 1,375 μS cm⁻¹ for flats, 957μS cm⁻¹ for squatter and 568.5 μS cm⁻¹ for long house.

The study also revealed that, 93.2% of the total respondents were disappointed with the inefficient management of MSW by the waste management municipalities. Improper management of MSW had resulted in a number of environmental impacts and health implications. The study exposed that 72% of the respondents from flats supported the imposing of a payment on plastic bags, and majority of the respondents (86%) supported the need for a drop-off center for all recyclable items. Public participation was not encouraging in solving MSW problems in the study areas. It was found that, the proper place to separate waste materials for recycling and re-use is at the source of generation. Some of the householders are becoming more aware of the importance of source separating newspaper, plastic, glass bottles, aluminum cans and ferrous materials. Waste separation at source can be encouraged by financial rewards, legislation and raising environmental awareness among the public. Solid waste recycling programs should be integrated with other MSW management options to abate degradation in urban environment.
Based on existing solid waste management practices in the study area, six issues were identified: very little emphasize on municipal waste management practices (planning, organizing, and controlling), poor legislative control, lack of public awareness and commitments to keep the environment clean, lack of public participation in decision-making process and lack of environmental considerations in development plans and programs.
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 Waste generated via various activities and needs..........................1
Table 1.2 Solid waste generation per person in selected countries..............2
Table 1.3 Estimated solid waste generated in Malaysia...........................6
Table 1.4 Solid waste generation rates in Malaysia...............................6
Table 1.5 The average waste generation rate in Petaling Jaya
based on source..............................................................................7
Table 1.6 Solid waste composition in Malaysia......................................8
Table 2.1 Waste category subdivision......................................................19
Table 2.2 Materials categorized under broad heading of solid waste..........21
Table 2.3 Difference in definition of MSW in Europe..............................24
Table 2.4 Squatter units in the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur............31
Table 2.5 The average calorific values of waste materials in MSW............34
Table 2.6 MSW composition in Japan....................................................34
Table 2.7 MSW composition and calorific value by different level
of income in Malaysia.......................................................................36
Table 2.8 A comparative data of MSW composition and calorific
value by residence type in Kuala Lumpur.........................................37
Table 2.9 (a) Calorific value of MSW (wet basis) for different
areas in Kuala Lumpur......................................................................38
Table 2.9 (b) Calorific value of MSW (wet basis) for different
areas in Kuala Lumpur......................................................................39
Table 2.10 (a) Calorific value of MSW (wet basis) for office
and commercial areas in Kuala Lumpur............................................40
Table 2.10 (b) Calorific value of MSW (wet basis) for office
and commercial areas in Kuala Lumpur............................................41
Table 2.11 The putricibles and moisture content.................................42

Table 2.12 Typical distribution of components in residential MSW for low-income, middle income and upper income countries (excluding recycled materials)..........................................................45

Table 2.13 The composition and parameter of MSW in Kuala Lumpur.........................................................46

Table 2.14 (a) The percentage and composition (wet basis) of solid waste in Kuala Lumpur.................................47

Table 2.14 (b) The percentage and the composition (dry basis) of solid waste in Kuala Lumpur.................................48

Table 2.15 Waste generation and composition in different socio-economic areas of Accra, Ghana.................................49

Table 2.16 Municipal waste stream (wet basis) in different areas in Spain...............................................................50

Table 2.17 Waste composition in Israel (1997)..................................................51

Table 2.18 Municipal solid waste in various parts of world.................................................................52

Table 2.19 The remaining capacity of waste disposal sites in Federal Territory and Selangor.................................69

Table 4.1 Average number of family members and waste generation rate by residents in flat.................................84

Table 4.2 Average number of family members and waste generation rate by residents in long house.................................84

Table 4.3 Average family members and waste generation rate by residence in squatter..................................................85

Table 4.4 The compositions and quantities of solid waste from selected Malay and Indian families in flats, squatter and long house settlements..................................................86
LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.5  The percentage of solid waste for three different level of groups...........................................................................87

Table 4.6  Solid waste composition and generation
             by residents in flats on three different days.................................88

Table 4.7  Solid waste composition and generation by
             residents in long house on three different days.............................89

Table 4.8  Solid waste composition and generation by
             residents in squatter on three different days...................................90

Table 4.9  Moisture content of solid waste.................................................92

Table 4.10 pH and conductivity of municipal waste.................................93

Table 4.11 The particles size of loose materials.........................................94

Table 4.12 Carbon to Nitrogen ratio and Calcium
to Magnesium ratio.............................................................................95

Table 4.13 Water extractable elements of mixed waste .........................95

Table 4.14 Heavy metals in municipal solid waste................................96

Table 4.15 Some of micro fauna in municipal solid waste.........................97

Table 4.16 Macro fauna in municipal solid waste...................................97

Table 4.17 Public opinion towards the state of waste
collection and management in their area.............................................121

Table 4.18 Percentage of respondents who use
             components of MSW in a year......................................................125

Table 4.19 Flats residents support for waste
             recycling (based upon educational level)......................................128

Table 4.20 Long house residents support for waste
             recycling (based upon educational level)......................................128

VII.
LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.21  Squatter residents support for waste recycling (based upon educational level) .............................................. 129

Table 4.22  Waste recycling (all samples taken together) .............................................. 130

Table 4.23  Support for a drop-off center for recyclable items .............................................. 131

Table 4.24  Flats residents support on drop-off center .............................................. 132

Table 4.25  Long house residents support on drop-off center .............................................. 133

Table 4.26  Squatter residents support on drop-off center .............................................. 133

Table 4.27  Flats residents responses towards enforcing an extra pay for environmental friendly product based on educational level .............................................. 134

Table 4.28  Squatter residents responses towards enforcing an extra pay for environmental friendly product based on educational level .............................................. 135

Table 4.29  Long house residents responses towards enforcing an extra pay for environmental friendly product based on educational level .............................................. 136

Table 4.30  Flats residences opinion on whether packaging and container materials makes their life more easier and comfortable ........................................................................ 137

Table 4.31  Squatter residences opinion on whether packaging and container materials makes their life more easier and comfortable ........................................................................ 137

Table 4.32  Long house residences opinion on whether packaging and container materials makes their life more easier and comfortable ........................................................................ 138

Table 4.33  Flats residence attitude towards imposing a product charge on plastic carrier ........................................................................ 139

Table 4.34  Squatter residence attitude towards imposing a product charge on plastic carrier ........................................................................ 139
LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.35  Long house residence attitude towards imposing a product charge on plastic carrier.................................140

Table 4.36  Public awareness towards environmental problems caused by municipal solid waste..............................141
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Functional elements and productive
outputs of municipal solid waste management system...........57

Figure 2.2 The waste management hierarchy.............................61

Figure 3.1 Summary of the two surveys.....................................73

Figure 3.2 Models the sequence of the research process ..............74

Figure 4.1 Types of household municipal solid waste storage containers...98
LIST OF PLATES

Plate: 4.1 Traditional yard waste composting method ........................................... 104
Plate: 4.2 Dumpsite in front of a squatter house .................................................. 104
Plate 4.3 Dumpsite at the back of the long house .................................................. 105
Plate: 4.4 Hazardous and non-hazardous waste dumped at the back yard .............. 105
Plate: 4.5 A midnight dumpsite near the long house area .................................... 106
Plate: 4.6 Indiscriminate dumping of construction waste near the long house area .... 106
Plate: 4.7 Construction waste is the most visible pollutants of illegal dump site ...... 108
Plate: 4.8 An unauthorized dump site near the roadside ....................................... 108
Plate: 4.9 Some of the garbage had been burned at the roadside ......................... 109
Plate: 4.10 Bulky and solid waste dumped near a food stall .................................. 109
Plate: 4.11 Illegal dumping near a store .............................................................. 111
Plate: 4.12 Improper storage of municipal solid waste by residents near Station B ... 111
Plate: 4.13 Indiscriminate dumping of commercial solid waste ............................. 112
Plate: 4.14 Indiscriminate dumping in squatter area ............................................ 112
Plate: 4.15 Solid waste had been stored near the roadside for collection .................. 112
Plate: 4.16 Illegal dumping into a monsoon drain ............................................... 113
Plate: 4.17 Types of vehicles used to transport the municipal solid waste .............. 119
Plate: 4.18  The waste disposal services provided are far below the expectation of the community served.......................... 119

Plate: 4.19  Runoff from dump site into the waterway.......................... 120

Plate: 4.20  Heaps of bulky waste create an ugly environment.............. 120

Plate: 4.21  Mixed waste had been deposited in heaps at communal collection point......................................................... 144

Plate: 4.22  Sorting been carried out by scavengers............................ 144

Plate: 4.23  Setting a side non-recyclable waste at the point of collection................................................................. 145

Plate: 4.24  Some of the valuable items stored.................................... 145
LIST OF MAPS

Map 1.1 Location of the study area in Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur...12

Map 1.2 Detailed lay out of the housing schemes in the study area.............13
LIST OF ACRONYMS

1. PPFBFS - prefer pack food buy from shop
2. HMHWCGA - how much household waste currently generating can avoided
3. HOGKW - household organic garden and kitchen waste
4. STYDARU - store your daily rubbish
5. KWSCONT - kind of waste storage containers used
6. LYSSWYH - long you store your solid waste in house
7. DROFCEN - support drop-off center
8. OWNSSOR - own sorting
9. FERWACO - frequency of waste collection in a week
10. SAFWCO - satisfied with the frequency of waste collected in your area
11. SAESTS - satisfied service provided by street sweepers
12. WEPEEP - willing to pay extra for environmentally friendly products
13. HMEYWP - how much extra you are willing to pay
14. SIPCPSB - support imposing of a product charge on plastic carrier bags
15. HMPCYP - product charge you prefer
16. WHBYACT - what will your action be
17. SCCOF - sometimes communal containers overflow
18. PMOLMEC - packaging makes life easier and comfortable
19. YDTMCY - you depend too much on others to clean your back yard