



Women in Building Survey

Nadira Ahzahar¹, Nor Adliza Kayat², Intan Bayani Zakaria³ and Siti Zubaidah Hashim⁴
Department of Building Surveying, Faculty of Architecture, Planning & Surveying, UiTM Cawangan Perak

Corresponding email d_ra81@yahoo.com

Article Information

Keywords

women, building surveyor, low participation

Abstract

Building Surveying is a rapidly growing profession in Malaysia and its services are highly needed in all economics and development situation. At present, there are 95 thousand qualified surveyor, but only 10 percent are women. Based on Malaysia statistics, from 4928 members of the Institution of Surveyors Malaysia (ISM), there are 1,500 women surveyor but only 570 from them are building surveyors. It shows that the participation of women in this profession is still low. Therefore the purpose of this paper is to explore the reasons of low participation of women in building surveyor sector in Malaysia. A set of questionnaire were distributed to 50 respondents from various backgrounds and involved directly in construction industry and the data collected was analyzed using SPSS. From the analysis done, the main reason identified contributed to the lack of women entering building surveyor profession is family commitment which women need traveling long distance or long periods away from home with mean value of 4.28. This paper also suggests various ways to improve the numbers of women in this profession.

INTRODUCTION

Building surveying is a profession that has existed since 1970. Building surveyor involved in many aspects of design and construction, including maintenance, repair and restoration of the proposed new buildings and existing buildings. The largest employer is in the private sector, but also building surveyors working for local authorities. To advance in terms of profession, a building surveyor should seek additional professional qualifications and perform the agreed level of continuing professional development (CPD). According to the world statistic by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (2000), from 95,000 chartered surveyors working in the world only 10 percent are women. [1], the lack of women entering careers building surveying as a career is due to the lack of role models that have become a barrier to entry into the profession of construction-related. Many women choose the positions of senior management because they have a negative view of the way or working environment for this profession. In Malaysia, according to the Malaysian statistic, from 4,928 members in the Institution Surveyor Malaysia (ISM), about 1,500 were women and only 38% are building surveyor where it is 570 women. This situation can be considered similar to the situation abroad, where the participation of women in the profession is still low. Many women who have experienced the challenges and barriers to enter this profession have to compete with men, and employers who prefer to believe that men are better suited for this profession.

Overview Of Building Survey Profession In Malaysia

In Malaysia, building surveyor is a person qualified professionals, with assessments and practices, and is also a registered member of the Royal Institution of Surveyors Malaysia (RISM). The first building surveyors in Malaysia began in Kuala Lumpur Municipal Council (LMC) in 1950s. The higher percentage in the static is contributed by high number of registered student, but the percentage of working building surveyor in the industry is still relatively low. There are more than 100,000 members worldwide RICS with the percentage of women at around 11%. The women in the RICS has risen slightly in the last three years at a rate higher than the 2% increase from ten years ago (about 5%). The rate of growth is still slow, however, and in comparison to higher levels still show a big difference where women are the majority of assistants such as assistant building surveyor. In surveying profession only 300 female members took the RICS federal status. [2]

Reasons Lack of Women in The Profession Of Building Survey

There are some restrictions on women entering and working in the sector survey. Below are some of the reasons identified which lead to low participation of women in building surveying sector.

i. Industry image

The image of the industry is an important factor in choosing job either men or women. Most people assume that this profession is more suitable for men as it requires physical strength and good tolerance to external conditions, bad weather and bad language and they believed this can cause some women are not interested in this profession. [3]. Therefore, some companies are more likely to choose men to fulfill the position in this profession even those from other fields.

ii. Culture and environment

Construction industry show that rough culture where relationships are surrounded with arguments, conflicts and crises [4]. Women thought that their employees are exposed to enmity environments. In addition, women are also exposed to the environmental concerns such as sexual harassment. Apart from that, it is pointed out that value of men is a normal, long working hours, competition, freedom, full-time work and that the rewards and expectations for career achievement is important. However, women who seek entry into the profession dominated by men either need to act like men to succeed or if they cannot adapt to this culture, they can remain in the industry without behaving like a men, but to remain in the position that is not important. [5]

iii. Family involvement

Conflict between work and family is one of the problems faced by women and cannot be satisfied simultaneously and continuously [6]. Although men and women both have to balance the demands of work and home life, however women still bear the main responsibility in many matters related to home [7]. Employees based on location, usually subject to change work locations. This may involve traveling long distances or long periods away from home, which can invite serious problems in terms of transportation and child care [8].

iv. Methods labor recruitment

Some recruitment process in the construction industry often been said unfair against women workers. Male managers use recruitment discrimination methods that put many women who apply for new positions in state of contracts. Some organizations allow the construction of informal recruitment methods that prescribe only for men such as by publication through advertisements and flyers, interviews irregular and unfair selection criteria [9]. Many employers still consider women not suitable for certain work that always been dominated by men, for example in the works at the construction site where workers need a good level of strength and fitness, with some jobs requiring physical strength for lifting or heavy work [8].

v. Career awareness

The public lack of knowledge, information and info about the industry as well as job opportunities offered and qualifications needed in this industry. Moreover, parents, students and the public assume jobs in the construction industry is limited to the use of brick, joinery, painting and decorating. Choose a career decision should be taken out earlier since at the school level, particularly by those who aspire to be professional under construction in the future. To become a professional in this industry, students should consider taking a path to higher education such as a degree in this course [9].

vi. Misconceptions

It is about the type of women who work in the field of male dominance also prevents many women from joining the industry. According Sr. Wan Maimun, there are least number of women in the survey due lack of interest, not because of no opportunities in the field.

Ways to Improve Womens Numbers in Building Surveyor Profession

Following are some of the ways should be put forward to solve this problem. Among these are:

i. Public awareness and career certification

Introduced the surveying profession in the construction industry and providing activities related to construction. This profession also needs to be advertised, promote or published in print or electronic media such as newspaper articles and local widely.

ii. Acceptance of other professional organizations

Create awareness to other professions the importance of building survey scope of work and work with them to improve profitability in the business and certain special. Emphasizes that building profession should be established on the grounds that the only buildings have different and unique in terms of its own knowledge and ability.

iii. Education standard

Improve the progress made by women in social and economic with equal educational opportunities between men and women. Provision of equal educational opportunity and affordable enable achieving gender equality and the elimination of gender disparity in education. Provide an opportunity further their studies higher for workers can also attract more women. For this purpose, the government should provide incentives such as tax breaks to employers who pay employees to study. The next step could be to maintain the participation of women.

iv. The reaction of the government

Raise awareness in the government sector of BS which is one important role in the construction in Malaysia. In addition, the government should expand the profession and have own department to prove building surveyor received recognition from the industry.

v. Training.

Various training programs and practical skills will be carried out to enable women to develop themselves and take a chance in the job market, especially for building surveyors. Efforts will be undertaken to equip women with the skills and knowledge in the field of building survey.

vi. Industry image

Image industry is an important factor in choosing a job either male or female [4]. Women have to prove that they also have the physical strength and good tolerance to external conditions, bad weather and bad language. Provides an awareness campaign to understanding the cultural industries and ways of working in an environment of man.

vii. Culture and environment

Providing training to train the women improves mental strength when working in a male environment because they work in a culture where relationships rough surrounded by arguments, conflict and crisis. Any problems that occur when the work will be completed will not be prolonged until outside working hours

viii. Family involvement

Conflict between work and family is one of the problems faced by women and cannot be satisfied simultaneously and continuously. In order to avoid serious problems in terms of transportation and childcare,

each company must provide transportation to go to the project site as well as providing child care center adjacent to the company. Implementation of more flexible working arrangement which is structured to allow women to work according to the suitability of a particular time, especially among which have many children are still small and can also help in increasing the participation of women in the labor market.

ix. Method of recruitment

A strict action should be taken against managers that using the acquisition method of discrimination that puts many women who apply for new positions in the contract. Assign jobs such as through broadcasting, through advertisements and brochures, interview is for both genders. They need to be fair in terms of employment rights and should assess in accordance with the appropriate qualifications.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

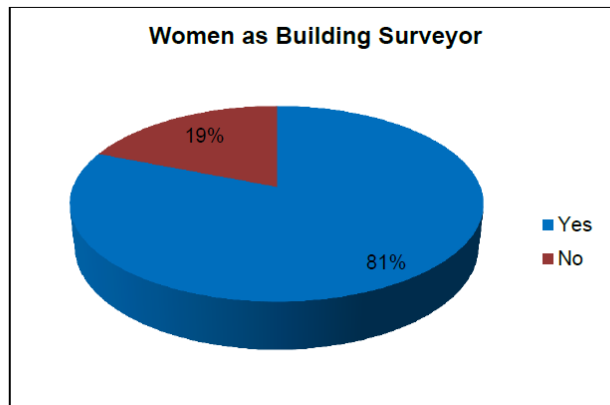
This paper achieves the objectives of the study from the literature and also with questionnaires and interviews. This paper using two categories of data, namely primary and secondary data. Primary data is data obtained directly from actual work situation. Among the techniques used to obtain primary data is like using questionnaires and interviews. Secondary data is information from existing materials and can be obtained through reference library. It involves research texts, documents, papers, mass media, and so on. The data obtained by reading in the library are treated as secondary data. The technique chosen is qualitative where it used questionnaires which 50 sets were distributed to the respondents in the public and private sector. The collected data were analysed using the Statistical for Social Science (SPSS). Frequency analysis is obtained from the SPSS output and average index method is adopted for analysis from the result of frequency analysis. The frequency and the percentage will be representing in the form of table, bar chart and pie chart

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Women as Building Surveyor

FIGURE I
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN BUILDING SURVEYOR

Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	38	81.0
No	9	19.0
Total	47	100.0



From the analysis done and Figure 1, it shows that 81% of respondent with 38 frequency indicated that their companies have at least one (1) woman as a building surveyor, is higher. It shows that some positions in building surveying profession in Malaysia have been filled by women and the percentage is quiet high. Its means that woman as building surveyor is recognized by industry.

Reasons Lack of Women in the Profession Of Building Survey

TABLE II
TABLE OF RANK REASONS LACK OF WOMEN IN THE PROFESSION OF BUILDING SURVEY

Rank	Item	Mean
1.	Traveling long distances or long periods away from home	4.28
2.	Women bear the main responsibility to home	4.24
3.	Conflict between work and family	4.18
4.	Women who want to enter the industry must have fully understanding of the industry	4.14
5.	Construction industry show that rough culture	4.06
6.	Some companies are more likely to choose men in this profession	3.86
7.	People assume that this profession is more suitable for men	3.80
8.	Least number of women in the survey due lack of interest.	3.80
9.	Women thought that their employment are exposed to enmity environments and environmental concerns	3.74
10.	Limited career progression / promotion to women.	3.74
11.	To be building surveyor female students should taking to higher education	3.70
12.	Women need to act like men to succeed	3.68
13.	Some organizations allow the construction of informal recruitment methods that prescribe only for men	3.54
14.	Lack of technical knowledge and information about the industry	3.54
15.	The public lack of knowledge and information about the industry and the career opportunities offered	3.52
15.	Male managers puts women in state of contracts	3.48
19	Lack of training and development opportunities for women	3.44

From the analysis done and Table 1, most of the respondents choose the main reason lack of women in the profession of building survey is women need to travel long distances or long periods away from home with mean 4.28. Women play an important role in the management of the family. If they need to travel long distances or long period, this will pose a problem for them to take care of children such as taking a child in nurseries or school. Apart from that, this profession involves mostly men. If married women need traveling long distances or long periods away from home with a man, the situation is not suitable and would be inappropriate and definitely declined by their husbands. For single women, the situation is rather dangerous for their own safety.

The other reason lack of women in the profession of building survey with second in the rank is women still bear the main responsibility in many matters related to home where the mean not too different with the main reason with mean value 4.24. The inability to balance between work and family or home life be the main reason why women not choose this profession. They wanted to spend more time with family and don't want to work far from them. Based on the two reason, there are various reason related the family issues.

The most least significant reason which contribute to lack of women in building surveying sector is lack of training and development opportunities for women with the mean 3.44. This is because mostly the public lack of knowledge and information about the industry and the career opportunities offered and the qualifications required.

CONCLUSION

There are 17 reasons for the lack of women in building surveying profession and most importantly, because of family issues. From these reasons, some possibilities have been identified to solve the problem where it needs the involvement of various parties, whether government efforts, public and graduates from building survey itself. Although the number of women as a building survey is not as crowded as other profession, there is still a demand for women in this profession. Therefore, efforts should be enhanced to improve or develop the number of women as a building surveyor in the future consistent with other profession. The ways that can be suggested to solve the main reason of the lack of women entering in building survey where it is about families issue is by

providing a family-friendly workplaces and appropriate training programs such as establish child care centers and nursery to ensure quality and affordable care or provide flexibility holidays if there is married women that their children sick or emergency case without decline salary or annual leave. In addition, employers should provide a more conducive working arrangements with regard to the various roles and responsibilities of women, including creating new and flexible working arrangements such as part-time work, group work and preparation of assistants that help their work finish on time.

REFERENCES

- Dainty, A. R. J., Bagillhole, B. M. and Neale, R. H.(2000) A grounded theory of women's career under-achievement in large UK construction companies, *Construction Management and Economics*.)
- Ellison, Louise, (1999) *Surveying the Glass Ceiling*, RICS Research Findings, England
- Fielden, S. L., Davidson, M. J., Gale, A. W. and Davey, C. L. (2000) *Women in construction: the untapped resource*, *Construction Management and Economics*.)
- Gale A. W. (1994a) *Women in non-traditional occupations: the construction industry*, *Women in Management Review*.
- Gale, A. W. (1994b) *Women in construction: An investigation into some aspects of image and knowledge as determinants of the under representation of women in construction management in the British construction industry*, Unpublished Doctoral thesis, Bath University, United Kingdom.
- Greckol, S (1987) *Women into Construction*, National Association for Women in Construction, Toronto.
- Herston (2014). *What Exactly Is A Building Surveyor : About Building Surveyors*. Aibs Home. Retrieved November 26, 2014 from http://aibs.businesscatalyst.com/fabs/about_building_surveyors
- Nicholson, N., West, M. (1988) *Managerial Job Change: Men and Women in Transition*, Cambridge University Press, Northampton
- Srivastava, A. (1991) *Widening Access to Construction Higher Education*, Leeds Metropolitan University, Leeds, England.
- Williams, A., Turrell, P., Moss, C., Wall, R. (2000) *Access to Engineering Education*, Conference Proceedings of 3rd Working Conference on Engineering Education For 21st Century, Sheffield, England.