SOCIAL ENTERPRISE APPLICATIONS IN AN URBAN FACILITIES MANAGEMENT SETTING

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Annual increases in the costs of running facilities operations and associated services for many local authorities in various countries have drawn the attention of a large number of researchers in the facilities management field. In seeking solutions to this problem one can look at some approaches that have been applied elsewhere, such as privatization, and outsourcing. The move away from the traditional service provider approach is seen as a way of reducing costs in facilities operations. This brings a new notion of developing a sustainable design for managing public facilities for the benefit of the community. However, many researchers have argued about whether it is possible for private companies to both protect the public's interests and make profits at the same time. The use of urban facilities management (urban FM) as a mechanism for developing a sustainable system for managing public facilities operations could be a way of achieving this in order to make a difference. The underlying philosophy of urban FM has been identified as facilitating social enterprise applications. So, social enterprise applications could be used within an urban FM setting. Within this context, this paper explores the relationships between urban FM and social enterprise principles within multiple and diverse organizations in order to gain further explanations towards developing acceptable criteria for the suggested new model. Accordingly, this paper focuses on community facilities and the premise of community alignment in order to explore a new service delivery model. Its focus on community facilities will involve two recognized stakeholders: the facilities provider, which is the local council, and the user, which is the community itself. In highlighting the above, this paper further discusses the identified criteria for the new model, which has been developed through a comprehensive literature review coupled with initial findings from the case studies undertaken. As a result, this study proposes a list of enablers for a new service delivery model.

Keywords: community alignment, community facilities, local council, social enterprise, urban FM.

INTRODUCTION

The literature review has revealed that one of the major problems faced by local authorities in running the public facilities operations is ever-increasing annual operational costs (Alexander and Brown 2006, McShane 2006, Ngowi and Mselle 1998). In seeking solutions to this problem, approaches such as privatization and outsourcing have been applied. These approaches seem to be more efficient than most of the public services providers. However, there are arguments about the ways in which private companies need to protect the public interest, while at the same time

being profit-seeking organizations, as this creates a conflict of interest. Therefore, this study identifies the need to move away from the traditional service provider's approach, as stated above. This emphasizes the need to develop a new sustainable design to manage community facilities operations for the benefit of the community. By considering sustainable factors in seeking new ways of delivering public services, the study, in the context of urban FM, could be regarded as illustrating a new service delivery model to manage community facilities operations for urban sustainability.

The primary objectives are to explore the urban FM concept, as it is a part of the new FM alignment, and also to understand the underlying philosophy of urban FM in relation to social enterprise principles. This is in order to understand the applicability of social enterprise principles as a new service delivery model in the urban FM setting. This target could be reached by exploring the variety of service delivery models of social enterprises that suit an urban FM setting. The conceptual arguments from the literature centred around two main concepts: urban FM as a new FM direction, and its relationship to social enterprise, with emphasis on managing community facilities operations. The result will lead to identifying the characteristics of such a model in order to develop the model to be applied in the Malaysian context.

Accordingly, the broad aim of this study is to have an approach for developing a new service delivery model that complies with social enterprise principles, through urban FM setting for managing community facilities operations within the Malaysian context. This broad aim will be achieved by four objectives, as given below:

- To explore urban FM principles within the concept of 'new FM alignment'
- To understand the underlying philosophy of urban FM and its relationship with social enterprise principles
- To understand the applicability and characteristics of social enterprise principles as a new service delivery model in the urban FM setting
- To develop and test the applicability of such a model in the Malaysian setting in using it as an enabler in managing community facilities operations.

KEY LITERATURE REVIEW

Exploring FM new alignment
In searching and debating for new alignment in FM, the conference on 'Futures in Property and Facility Management II' in 2004 brought together the respected parties such as service providers, senior facility professionals, property clients and academics to debate on the alternative future of the following issues:

- Identify and progress the areas of common purpose across these fields of expertise and experience
- Jointly confront the key issues for a more consolidated future on the supply-side, to begin to establish a new coherence for the management of infrastructure, facilities and support services across all sectors
- Clarify and demonstrate the real relevancy and critical value of property and facility management on the demand side, to business clients, public sector organizations and to individual customers, consumers and stakeholders of all kinds
- Lay the foundation for a 'multi-professional' and 'cross-disciplinary' alliance to fundamentally realign the interface between the supply and the demand for business infrastructure, facilities and services.

The alignment opportunities were reviewed between business, property, facilities, services and the environment, before considering the likely impacts of new forms of user, customer, consumer, urban and community alignments as part of the challenges in putting the future alignments in place.

Urban FM (new urban and community alignment)
The idea of new urban and community alignment by Roberts (2004) creates room for alignment opportunities between FM, its associated services and urban community support, which arose from the 'Best Value' programme of the UK government. He tries to introduce the basis of having a new service delivery model based on the approach of the new 'Public Interest Company'. By putting the 'public' and 'end client' in perspective, Roberts realigns FM with the public interest. Taking from the two major trends of the 'Best Value' programme has created an impetus to the debate on urban FM on having new urban and community alignments. Moving a step further, this study attempts to have a look at and understanding of community alignment.

Community alignment
'Align' is defined by the Oxford Dictionary (2007) as 'to place something in a straight line or in the right position in relation to other things'. On the other hand, 'community' means 'a group of people living together in one place or having the same religion, race, etc.' Therefore, any benefit towards the community and its related purposes (for community and from community) could be considered as community alignment. Adding to this, the urban FM idea of 'putting people first' by having an approach of 'community alignments' towards the provision of community services (Roberts, 2004) is a new approach in delivering services, waiting to be explored.

Furthermore, the concept of community alignment in managing community facilities has been used and identified by many researchers in the context of facility management focusing on the physical assets. Table 1 summarizes the application of the concepts of community alignment within facilities management.

Initially, during the exploratory stage of a thorough review of the literature and from the pilot study findings (not discuss in this paper), the five enablers at the bottom of the initial list of suggested criteria for the new model, are geared towards community alignment. These are: managing community assets for the benefit of the community, community facilities as resources, community empowerment, community engagement, and creating local employment. Based on this list, the idea of community alignment could be broadened into a wider perspective by looking at community involvement and participation. All these point towards having an enabler of community alignment within the new service delivery model. This will not be restricted to one particular enabler, but will have various tools within the community alignment approach.

What is urban FM? The underlying philosophy
The concept of urban FM as first cited by Roberts (2004) is one of the major elements of future FM alignment. He explains an exciting and expansive overview of the alignment opportunities between FM and the management of public infrastructure, and also the associated services and urban community support. This new alignment opportunity is supported by Nutt (2004), Alexander (2006) and Alexander and Brown (2006). They suggest exploring the social enterprise approach in relation to the underlying philosophy of urban FM which needs to be further explored. On the other hand, Kassim and Hudson (2006) also have taken these new directions by outlining FM as a social enterprise in a regeneration case study of neighbourhood facilities.

Table 1: The idea of community alignment in FM

Title and authors	Paper entailed
Building communities from the inside out: a path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets (Kretzmann and Mcknight 1993	By developing an inventory of a community's assets help people to understand the diversity of their community and that what people consider important to life in the community may vary from one to another.
Community-managed infrastructure facilities (Ngowi 1997)	The paper is based on an ongoing case study, and shows how with proper planning the people in local communities can be mobilized, sensitized and made to participate in the management of the infrastructure facilities on which they depend. Communities are willing to participate if they are given responsibility and control.
Community participation in facility management (Ngowi and Mselle 1998)	There were inequalities among the various categories of the community. Therefore, community participation should be practiced with full awareness of the heterogeneity of the community members and the actual power structure in them.
FM: new urban and community alignments (Roberts 2004)	Urban FM is simply a logical extension of the need to reinvest in community facilities and systems, and provide a flexible 'platform' in which agencies and the private sector can come together in new and innovative settings for th benefit of the community (focused on the objective of 'putting people first').
Community-based facilities management (Alexander and Brown 2006)	The proponents of community-based FM suggest using FM as a vehicle for achieving local socio-economic objectives. This could be done by becoming a leading agent in regeneration and providing community infrastructure and services, and by creating a platform for skilled employment opportunities and training in trade skills. It could also provide the opportunity for genuine involvement of the communities in the design and management of services and the urban environment.
FM as a social enterprise (Kasim and Hudson 2006)	Social enterprises tackle a wide range of social, environmental and economic issues to achieve public benefit. It is a promising vehicle for the development of community-based FM. Hence, FM as a social enterprise represents new thinking on how to integrate organizational support services and the community support services.
Community assets: the benefits and costs of community management and ownership (Thake 2006)	When a community takes control of the building they occupy, they may embark on a journey that can produce significant positive outcomes for themselves, the communities they serve and a wide range of other stakeholders. The benefits were analysed from the point of view of the community, the stakeholders and the organizations.
Managing community assets for urban sustainability (Alexander 2008)	It is highly important to identify and develop the community assets, as a basis for urban sustainability. Engaging and empowering the community assets, as a basis for sustainability. Engaging and empowering the community by involving them directly in managing community facilities will contribute to building social capital.

The viewpoint of urban FM creates a new alignment in FM. Urban FM could be used as a mechanism to develop a sustainable design to manage community facilities operations. Roberts' ideas provide an exciting and expansive overview of the alignment opportunities between FM and the management of public infrastructure, its associated services and urban community support, which is backed by impressive international examples of success, and describes the basis of a new service delivery model based on the approach of the new Public Interest Companies. The town of Celebration based in Florida was developed by the Disney Corporation following the principles of New Urban Design. This was in emphasizing community and privacy, and the development mix. The management of community services used 'best practice' in cleaning, waste disposal and the management of public areas. Roberts (2004) also indicates three not-for-profit companies based in the UK, where each of these public interest companies has been successful in improving public service provision both in terms of quality and cost. Therefore, to understand the concept of urban FM, a variety of companies can be ranked in a scale from 'not-for-profit' to a 'profit making' and 'more than profit' companies. This makes the social enterprise applications an appropriate underlying philosophy for urban FM in parallel to community alignment.

This research is different from the 'private finance initiative' (PFI) approach, due to the fact that the PFI is an approach to fund the construction of public infrastructure facilities such as roads, bridges, tunnels, schools, hospitals and prisons (Wettenhal, 2007), as well as other community facilities (Heywood and Smith, 2006) with private capital. On the contrary, urban FM approach is used as a mechanism in finding a new service delivery model to offer a better solution for local councils in managing community facilities operations. This is more towards looking into the service delivery model (intangible product) rather than the public infrastructure or community facilities 'physical asset'. Therefore, the approach of this research takes a very different approach from the PFI approach as one way of creating a 'public-private partnership' (PPP). Therefore, by taking social enterprise applications in an urban FM setting towards finding the new service delivery model is acceptable.

The concept of social enterprise
Social enterprises are known to be social mission-driven organizations, which trade in goods or services for a social purpose. Spreckley (2008) defines social enterprise as 'an enterprise that is owned by those who work in it and/or reside in a given locality, is governed by registered social as well as commercial aims and objectives and run co-operatively may be termed as social enterprise. Traditionally, 'capital hires labour' with the overriding emphasis on making a 'profit' over and above any benefit either to the business itself or the workforce. In contrast, there is social enterprise where 'labour hires capital' with the emphasis on personal, environmental and social benefit'.

According to the UK government (DTI, 2002) the social enterprise sector includes organizations which 'are businesses with primarily objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximize profit for shareholders and owners'. Examples include co-operatives, building societies, development trusts and credit unions. Pearce (2003) argues that all are committed to community ownership and to the reinvestment of profit into the community. Regardless of that, social enterprises are not charities or voluntary organizations. They are more than that, as enterprises with the equity finance to operate sufficiently.

As derived from the discussion synthesized above, further studies need to be undertaken. They need to seek the right type of new service delivery model which complies with social enterprise development in an urban FM setting. Accordingly, the following section discusses the relationships between urban FM and social enterprise.

Relationships between urban FM and social enterprise
As was explained in the discussion above, the urban FM concept will be explored by understanding its underlying philosophy. This is done by considering social enterprise as a stepping stone in the process of finding a new model for managing community facilities operations. Resulting from this, the link between urban FM and social enterprise needs to be reconciled in order to develop a strong root to develop this new organizational form.

Therefore, an attempt has been done to identify the links between the concepts of urban FM and social enterprise which look at the differences in the definitions, principles and approaches of each concept. Although there are differences between these two main concepts, nevertheless a series of similarities between the two can be used as a strong base to develop a new service delivery model.

Enablers for the new service delivery model
Table 2: The initial list of suggested criteria for the new model

Having a social purpose	Holding social objectives lying somewhere within the business objectives.
Market-driven business	This can range from non-profit (charitable status) companies to profit-making companies. By having social enterprise principles, they can partly promote the social economy by making a profit.
Independent and accountable	Being independent organizations accountable to a defined constituency and to the wider community
Initiated by the government	The organization needs to be initiated by the government in order to gain funding before it can be operated independently.
Co-operative values and principles	At the outset, taking a cop-operative approach seems to be one that would be easy to adapt into the foundation of a new organization / enterprise. (This includes voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, members' economic participation, autonomy and independence, education, training and information, co-operation among co-operatives, and concern for the community).
Sense of ownership	The involvement of the organization will later be verified as the ownership of the facilities as a way of recognizing their contribution.
Managing community assets for the benefit of the community	This tends towards a social mission (it seems to be more social than economic) by delivering services for the benefit of the community in response to local needs.
Community facilities as a resource	Facilities used as community resources to be managed and taken care of.
Community empowerment	The giving of confidence, skills, and power to communities to shape and influence what public bodies to for or with them.
Community engagement	The process whereby public bodies reach out to communities to create empowerment opportunities.
Create local employment	If communities are given the opportunities and are trusted to set up their own enterprises to manage the community facilities, this will create job opportunities for the local people.

Source: Pearce2003, Ridley-Duff 2008, Alexander 2009, ICA 1995

Within this context, this section suggests criteria, which have been identified based on similarities within and also between, the main concepts. These will act as the initial criteria. They are developed from the literature review by looking at other settings and other countries in accordance with the underlying philosophy of urban FM and social enterprise principles. Later, these criteria will be expanded by looking at current international practice. By obtaining an understanding of social enterprise principles, it is hoped that the newly created service delivery model will be capable of operating without relying on government funding, and that it would be both sustainable and at the same time capable of creating a profit. This profit or surplus would then be put back into the company in order to make it self-sufficient. This is a fair assumption to make of the arrangements, as social enterprise is seen as a new form of company that is working towards a social mission. Having a variety of companies as social enterprises might enable interested bodies to choose the most suitable type of company relating to their mission and objectives. This would in particular not restrict them to having to choose a company with a charitable status, which would therefore be limited in its profit-making. It could increase the available choice by providing a variety of profit-making companies that comply with social enterprise principles. Drawing on the inter-relationships between the concepts, Table 2 outlines the initial list of suggested criteria or enablers to be dealt with, within the context of the study.

The enablers (the list of suggested criteria) discovered from the literature review discussions and pilot study findings (which are a foundation to be further explored) are used to seek the applicability of a new service delivery model for the Malaysian setting. The following section will discuss the research methodology in explaining the case study design deployed for this study.
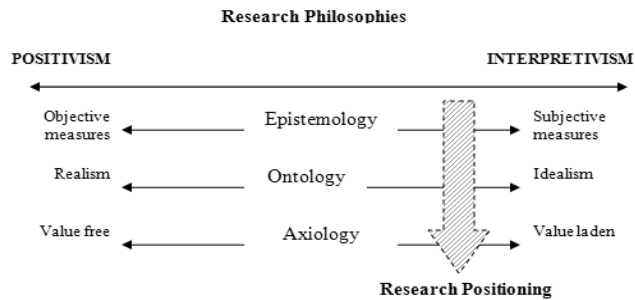
Figure 1. Positioning the research within the philosophical continuum

RESEARCH METHOD

Research positioning towards interpretivism has been identified as the most appropriate research philosophy for this study. This is because the main aim is to obtain an approach for developing a new service delivery model that complies with social enterprises development through urban FM setting for Malaysian application. The justification for this study is built around the two main concepts of urban FM and social enterprise. With the emphasis on delivery of community facilities operations in this study, the interrelationship between those two main concepts will be able to provide a strong basis for an approach to develop the new service delivery model that is sought. Accordingly, Figure 1 illustrates the positioning of research within the philosophical continuum within which it may fall pertaining to this study.

In summary, this study will contribute to the establishment of a research philosophical base within the epistemological territory of social constructionism (interpretivism), the ontological stand of idealism and the axiological view of being value-laden. It will therefore possibly be biased, as it is determined by the experience and interpretations of the researcher. This philosophical standing of the research has influenced the selection of an appropriate research approach as described within the next section.

Case study research approach
The aim of this study is descriptive and exploratory, with 'what' and 'how' questions as guides. Thus, the approach should be suited to exploration and description. Also, Creswell (1998) suggests that the questions 'how' or 'what' can be classified as qualitative, and indicates five traditions of research design within qualitative inquiry. These are, namely: case study, biography, phenomenology, grounded theory and ethnography. Therefore, taking all these into account, a qualitative approach with a case study design has been identified as an appropriate approach for this study.

This study demands an in-depth investigation as an approach to develop such a model, as well as having a breadth of perspectives in exploring the applicability of the model in a Malaysian context. Therefore, having a unit of analysis in each individual case will contribute towards achieving the main research aim. The unit of analysis of this study, community facilities operations, is embedded in finding a new organizational form for a Malaysian setting. Accordingly this research deploys a qualitative approach for data collection by interviewing two target groups as a stakeholder in each case study. Using multiple embedded case studies here is a means of triangulating data sources to give strong findings. These groups act as several units of analysis involved in understanding Malaysian contextual factors.

The identification of stakeholders involved in community facilities operations in the new model that is sought would come from two target groups in local councils.

Although they are located within the same local council, these two target groups are distinct. The first group represents the public sector that is currently running the community facilities operations and holds the ownership of the assets. The second group represents the community, as the council members are chosen by the community to take care of their interests and should know what the community needs. This research will only try to focus on the decision maker/top management level in order to gain an insight or understanding of the new model that will be developed.

Semi-structured interviews are the main mode of data collection. Along with the interview questions, this study will comprise a questionnaire survey which will be used to complement the interview findings. Both techniques will be used to gather information and knowledge relating to the new suggested model in order to seek suitable criteria that could fit the Malaysian application.

Case study findings
Interview transcripts provide raw data that needs to be analysed systematically. Firstly, the interview questions were registered into three thematic distinctions to help the researcher to capture the important point or opinion for the content analysis later. The thematic distinctions help the researcher look at the possible continuous relationships between one point and another, based on their perception or understanding within the context of the study (Krippendorf, 2004).

Furthermore, the semi-structured interviews were analysed using content analysis with a word-based and code-based approach. According to Krippendorff (2004) content analysis can range from the simplest form of word count to thematic analysis or conceptual analysis. Accordingly, the analysis is carried out by developing a table of data matrices and pattern matching to accomplish literal and/or theoretical replication for external validity. The interview transcripts were coded under three thematic distinctions and later mapped to the literature review arguments in order to identify any gaps. Later, the identification of factors was developed using the evidence from the mapping of the case study to the literature review. These cross-case procedures could be changed according to the particular multiple case study undertaken and all of the procedures could be modified as needed to fit the research objectives (Stake,2006).

Following the above procedures, we identified the factors that emerged from the raw data (interview transcript). Currently sixteen factors have been identified which could be classified into ten positive contributors, and six negative contributors. Thereafter, these factors were clustered according to potential groups. However, this initial finding could be changed and altered accordingly, as the negative and weak factors showed a gap that needed to be further clarified. At this stage, a series of expert interviews was undertaken, as a way of clarifying the validity of the list of enablers. In conclusion, nine factor clusters were developed to funnel down the related factors.

Positive contributors
- Community as resources
  - community facilities need to be utilized by all
  - community has a 'resident association' to deal with issues
- Social responsibility
  - working towards social purpose will be local council, NGOs and public association
  - local council should play a proactive role to promote facilities and ensure they are well managed
- Malaysian culture as benchmark

- o community need to be reminded of the need to have 'good value' in life
  - o value of humanity and working together, having good spirit among each other (originally Malaysian village culture)
- Be selective
  - o aiming for the right place and selecting the right community to promote this approach is important
- Genuine leader
  - o choosing the right and true leader is vital to unite the community
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) approach
  - o having CSR approach by private organizations (pure philanthropy)
- Create trust fund
  - o put money in a trust fund to be self expanded and self sufficient

Negative contributors
- Political influence
  - o different layer of ruling government (may be hard to implement new thing)
- Immature behaviour
  - o people's behaviour towards their surrounding environment
  - o grouping attitude based on political views
  - o low work integrity
  - o subsidized minded, especially Bumiputera (66.4% of population)
  - o need to start to educating people

CONCLUSION AND THE WAY FORWARD

As was revealed in the findings of the literature review and the initial findings of the case study, the inter-relationships between the principles of urban FM and social enterprise have led to the identification so far of the following:

- A list of suggested criteria has been identified that could be used as an initial basis for this new service delivery model. This needs to be further explored and explained in order to gain a better understanding of its application. Also has tuned the focus of the research towards community alignment for the case study data collection stage.
- Next, the requirements of the project have been mapped. These are based on the findings of the literature review compared with the stakeholder requirements from case studies. Later, the conclusion will be drawn from those findings in order to identify the enablers for a new service delivery model for a Malaysian application in managing community facilities operations.
- Finally, the researcher needs to come up with the Critical Success Factors (CSFs)/enablers for the new service delivery model for managing community facilities operations, along with benefit realizations from the list of enablers.

In conclusion, the study will therefore seek a robust finding to come up with a list of enablers for a new service delivery model with the chosen type of social enterprise form within the urban FM setting. The exploration and explanation towards finding such a model could later be achieved by using the benefits realization framework to make use of the knowledge gained from this study.

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