

Key determinants enhancing local community acceptance of migrant labour settlements in Seberang Perai, Penang, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Malaysia has received an increasing number of migrant labourers yearly due to growing labour market demands. Consequently, the migrant settlements have increased in number, with the settlements often located within the local community's neighbourhood. The location of these settlements has raised a few concerns among affected local communities. In Penang, the second-highest migration city in Malaysia, the local government has taken measures to address these concerns by preparing the Centralised Accommodation Transit (CAT). The CAT is a settlement built for migrant labourers in an effort to segregate them from the local populace in response to the Not in My Backyard (NIMBY) attitude among the local communities. However, the motive behind the NIMBY phenomenon is unclear and needs further investigation. This research investigates the local community's perception towards migrant labour settlements and examines the factors that contribute to the NIMBY attitude towards migrant labour settlements. By adopting and extending the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) framework with an additional variable, "Concern", this study conducted a survey and a total of 410 questionnaires were collected and analysed by using the PLS-SEM method. The findings confirm that Concern significantly impacts a local community's acceptance towards migrant labour settlements, followed by Perceived Behavioural Control and Attitude. In contrast, Subjective Norms have weak empirical support. The major concern among the local community is crime and safety issues, followed by property devaluation, cultural differences, poor appearances, and hygiene. This study provides the state government with a crucial insight into the local community's concerns about migrant labour settlements. It shows ways to enhance public acceptance of future developments of migrant labour settlements.

1. Introduction

Malaysia is one of the countries that has received a large number of migrants every year due to the growing demands of the labour market. The demands are especially high for 3D jobs, which stand for Dirty, Dangerous and Difficult jobs, such as construction labourers, cleaning services, and estate labourers. These migrants are usually housed by their employers in dormitories, which often have poorly maintained facilities and are crowded in a few rooms with four to five person each. Unfortunately, some employers aim to maximise profit while reducing expenses by overcrowding the dormitories. These unhygienic and inhumane conditions can potentially cause regular outbreaks of contagious diseases. Furthermore, in light of Covid-19, migrant labour is considered to be the main reason for second-wave infections, although they are often overlooked during crises such as the pandemic (Bismonte, 2020). Therefore, the condition of their settlement has become a matter

of concern for the public, especially after the pandemic outbreak.

In this study, the increasing number of migrant labourers has caused the number of their settlements to also increase. Migrant settlements are often located within the local community's housing area, especially in the low-to-mid prices neighbourhood. These settlements have upset the local community due to various factors. Some of the concerns raised by the local community are regarding the depreciation of property value (Brown & Glanz, 2018), safety and security (Bachtiar et al., 2015), unhealthy and unethical behaviours such as fighting and being drunk (Leh et al., 2017), environmental hygiene (Weng-Wai et al., 2022) and the downgrading of social status (Caporale et al., 2020; Sirat & Ghazali, 2011). As a result, the housing market has been impacted by the Not In My Backyard (NIMBY) syndrome, where the community oppose towards having migrant labour settlements near them.

In response to these concerns, the Penang government took measures by preparing the Centralised Accommodation Transit (CAT), a

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settlement built for migrant labourers in an effort to segregate them from the local community. The CAT is a measure adopted from Singapore's workers' housing system to provide proper housing for migrant workers. The launch of the first CAT in Penang took place in Bukit Minyak in 2019, with additional CATs planned to be constructed to tackle the challenges arising from tensions between the local community and migrant labour. Nevertheless, the CAT faced opposition from the local community, leading to its rejection. This study will investigate the local community's perception towards migrant labour settlements by examining the factors that contribute to the NIMBY phenomenon occurring among them.

1.1. Study area

The state of Penang is chosen as the focus of this research due to its record of having the second highest migration rate in Peninsular Malaysia, with 22.4% after Kuala Lumpur (37.7%) (DOSM D. of S. M, 2018). The international migration rate in Penang in 2018 was the third highest after Johor, with a rate of 50.9% and 64.4%, respectively (DOSM D. of S. M, 2020). Penang consists of two parts: the island side (the left side) and another side connected to Peninsular Malaysia called Seberang Perai (the right side). This study will focus on Seberang Perai as a CAT is already built there, and there are plans to develop more CATs there in the future. The district's population is over 1.1 million (SPCC, 2021), and it is Malaysia's second most populous city. The selected areas for this research focus more on Seberang Perai, specifically Bukit Mertajam, due to the availability of a CAT in the area. Batu Kawan in Simpang Empat was also selected as a CAT is planned to be built in that area.

2. Literature review and theoretical framework

Labour migration pertains to the relocation of individuals either within a single state or from one state to another with the objective of seeking employment opportunities. (IOM I. O. for M, 2019); this study will focus on the latter. In the context of Malaysia, migrant labour is commonly associated with unskilled occupations characterized by low wages. (Pappusamy, 2014). These migrant labourers fulfil the scarcity of low-skilled workers in the labour-concentrated economic sectors such as plantations, manufacturing and construction, which the locals avoid due to their 3D nature (Shariff & Ghani, 2016; Tasleem et al., 2019; Weng-Wai et al., 2022). Most migrant labourers need to settle down for the period of their labour services, thus, the number of settlements has increased. These settlements are either provided by the employers, self-rented or self-made such as temporary living quarters, usually near their working site, especially in the construction sector. Often, the settlements are located near or inside the local community neighbourhood, distressing some residents. The local community displayed their concern by rejecting the authorities' effort to segregate the migrant labours from the locals through the development of migrant labour settlements.

Settlement is a complex method of adjustment for migrants in the host country, and it is one of the greatest administrative and social issues worldwide (Tasleem et al., 2019). Migrant labour settlements often reside near or in the local community neighbourhood, creating tension between the two. According to Bloch (2002, pp. 80–81), four key factors will influence the migrant settlements in the host country which are; 1) the policies of the host country, 2) the presence or absence of social networks, 3) the individual characteristics of the migrants and lastly, 4) the circumstances experienced by the migrants. The host country's policies include the legal system imposed on the migrants and their citizenship rights presented to the individuals based on their migration status. Moreover, having a social network would help the migrant workers to better engage in political and social networking. Furthermore, the circumstances experienced by the migrant labourers also holds influence whether they would succeed or fail in settling in a host country. There are many cases where migrant labourers are often exploited and deceived by their employer to work in the host country,

promised with high salary but end up in debt instead (David & Salter, 2022; Devadason, 2020; Putul & Mia, 2020, pp. 125–131).

In 2019, a survey was conducted in four countries, Malaysia, Japan, Singapore and Thailand, to monitor their progress and trend regarding public opinions and perceptions towards migrant labour (ILO and UN Women, 2019). The survey indicated that more than half of the respondents in Thailand and Malaysia believe that migrant labourers are not needed in their country. It has also been shown that migrant labourers in both countries are more likely to rent on their own instead of living in settlements prepared by their employers (Kusakabe et al., 2017). Migrants usually prefer renting their place as it is a cost-effective approach since they can share the space with multiple people. However, the settlements become unhygienic, are often in poor condition and are shunned by the local community. In Singapore, a different approach was taken; completely segregating the migrant labour from the local community neighbourhood using the Purpose-Built Workers Accommodation (PBWA) system (ILO, 2022). Despite the segregation, it is argued that the provided dormitories are often still cramped, and the migrant workers stay in poor living conditions. With this negative image in mind, the local community opposed having the migrant labour settlement to be built near their homes, raising their defensive nature towards things that make them feel uncomfortable. This opposition can be explained as the NIMBY phenomenon due to its contradictory between technology acceptance and opposition towards concrete projects (Brudermann et al., 2019). In this study, the technology or concrete projects are referred to the migrant labour settlements projects which are one of the government's initiatives in segregating the migrant labour from the local's neighbourhood which adapted from the PBWA system in Singapore.

NIMBY refers to a motive among the public to oppose building or unwelcomed facilities (Dear, 1992) necessary for society and industry, which is believed to bring several negative externalities to their backyard (Kikuchi & Gerardo, 2009). Researchers have discovered in the NIMBY literature that the broader public's acceptance of NIMBY facilities is different from that of the local public, with the local population's acceptance having a greater NIMBY effect (Midden & Huijts, 2009; Tanaka, 2004; Terwel et al., 2012). Researchers have also discovered that the perceived risks can be varied, one of which is the devaluation of property (Brown & Glanz, 2018). The locals brood over the migrant labour settlement development in their backyard as they perceive it will cause property devaluation, although the development will benefit the community. Moreover, they perceived that having the migrant labour living near their neighbourhood would pose a danger, and their safety and security are at risk (Bachtiar et al., 2015; Li et al., 2019). However, preliminary studies are insufficient in determining the factors influencing the locals' perceptions towards migrant labour settlements resulting in the NIMBY phenomenon occurring among the locals. Hence, the aim of this study is to examine the acceptance level within the local community regarding the establishment of migrant labour settlements. It will utilize the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) framework to identify the key factors influencing the "Not In My Backyard" (NIMBY) sentiments towards such settlements in Seberang Perai, Penang, Malaysia (see Fig. 1).

2.1. Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) holds that the behaviour of an individual is driven by their intention and perceived control of the behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). They are three main variables that influence the intention of behaviour: Attitude towards behaviour, Subjective Norms and Perceived Behavioural Control (PBC). The TPB postulates a positive relationship between intention strength and the likelihood of performing a specific behaviour (J. Li et al., 2018). This study will include another variable which is "Concern". While Attitude reflects the locals' favourability towards the migrant labour settlement, Subjective Norms indicate the effect of societal pressure on an individual in

performing or avoiding a specific behaviour, and PBC refers to individual's confidence level in executing a specific behaviour depending on the difficulty level. However, "Concern" relates to the experiences and interactions of the locals during encounters with the migrant labourers, which influence the acceptance towards the migrant labour settlement. Gallent et al. (2002) suggest that there are two categories of concern in regards to NIMBY attitude in the context of human settlements which are the local's perceptions towards the project and their perception towards the future residents of the projects. Considering these four variables in the proposed framework, as shown in Fig. 2, hypotheses are derived.

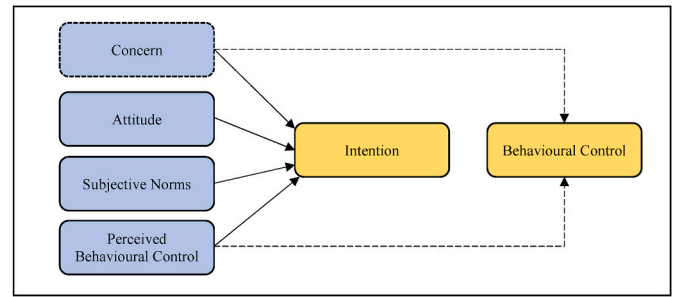


Fig. 2. Proposed research model.

2.2. Hypotheses formation

Based on the proposed framework, the derived hypotheses for this research are as follows.

2.2.1. Attitude

Attitude reflects the overall individual's inner perception of a behaviour evaluation, either positive or negative, where it perceives the favourability in performing specific behaviour (Armitage & Conner, 2010, pp. 471–499). It is driven by behavioural belief. Among various factors influencing behavioural intention, attitudes exhibit the highest predictability and possess a stronger association compared to other factors (Sultan et al., 2020) as it will directly influence one's behavioural intentions (Bamberg et al., 2003). This study refers to the favourability of the locals in accepting or opposing the migrant labour settlement near their housing schemes. Attitudes can be shaped by an individual's knowledge and personal experiences concerning a settlement in close proximity to their neighbourhood. Additionally, the intentions of individuals can be influenced by the opinions of others, particularly when they belong to a specific organization. The organization's principles and goals will play a huge part in determining their intentions (Bortoleto et al., 2012). Therefore, the following hypothesis is suggested.

Hypothesis 1. (H1): Local community's attitude will influence their acceptance of migrant labour settlements.

2.2.2. Subjective norms

Subjective norms encompass the social pressures exerted by

important individuals in an individual's life, such as family or friends, either to perform or not to perform a particular behaviour. (Ajzen, 1991; Armitage & Conner, 2010, pp. 471–499; Rivera-Camino, 2012). Accordingly, subjective norms are formed by normative beliefs and compliance motivations, although the latter is rarely supported (Verma & Chandra, 2018). It is also considered an immediate precursor of behaviour (Ajzen, 2002). In this study, subjective norms refer to the social pressure from family or friends towards the individuals in accepting or opposing the migrant labour settlement near their vicinity. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

Hypothesis 2. (H2): Local community's subjective norms will influence their acceptance of migrant labour settlements.

2.2.3. Perceived behavioural control (PBC)

PBC predict both intention and behavioural control. Influenced by an individual's control beliefs, PBC encompass their assessment of the simplicity or complexity of a certain behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) and individual's confidence level in executing a specific behaviour (Ajzen, 2012). Suppose individuals find it challenging to perform a particular behaviour. In that case, they may halt the action simply because it is useless to go against it unless they possess ultimate control over the behaviour performance (J. Li et al., 2018). In the context of this study, PBC represents the extent to which the local community perceives opposition towards the development of migrant labour settlements and their potential behaviours in expressing this opposition. Therefore, the

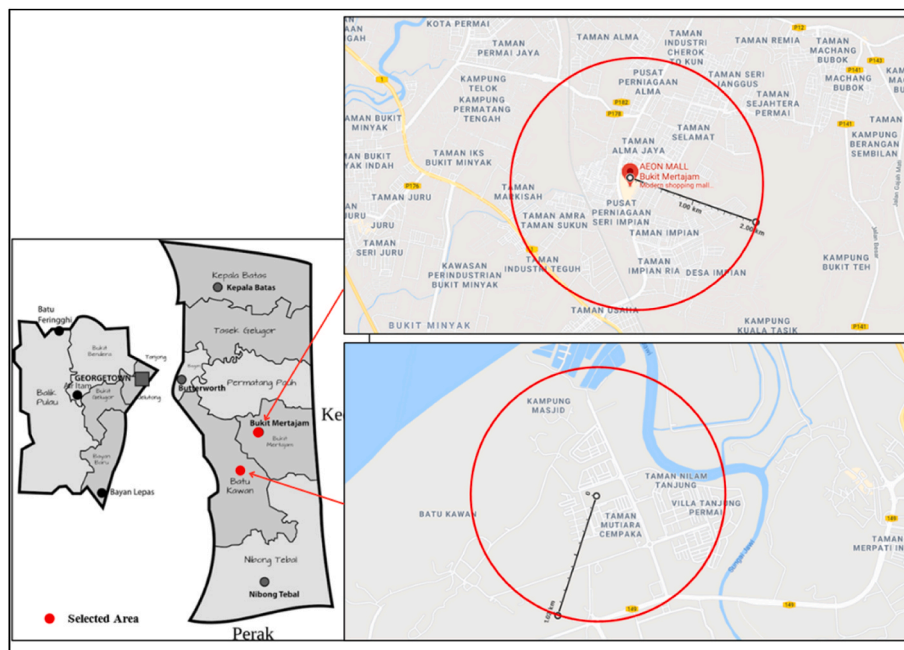


Fig. 1. Selected areas in Penang, Bukit Mertajam and Batu Kawan, with a radius of 2 km and 1 km, respectively (Source: Google Maps).

following hypothesis is suggested.

Hypothesis 3. (H3): Local community’s perceived behavioural control will influence their acceptance of migrant labour settlements.

2.2.4. Concern

In this research, an additional variable, namely “concern,” is included in the TPB framework. This variable aims to provide an understanding of the local community’s apprehensions or worries regarding the presence of a migrant labour settlement in close proximity to their residential area. The variable of concerns measures the extent to which local residents are aware of the potential impacts and risks associated with having a migrant labour settlement in their neighbourhood. The probability of having this anxiety may be caused by their knowledge or past experience and engagement with migrant labourers. Experience and engagement refer to the past involvement and socialising, good or bad, between the locals and migrant labour that may influence the comfortability of co-existing in the same vicinity. Concerns can be multifaceted, including environmental impacts, cleanliness, aesthetics, and crimes. Research into concerns as a variable will provide insight into the residents’ worries about the migrant labour settlement. The following hypothesis is therefore proposed.

Hypothesis 4. (H4): Local community’s concerns will influence their acceptance of migrant labour settlement.

The obtained findings will give important insights into the significant factors that influence the local community’s approval of migrant labour settlements. Eventually, the findings will provide valuable input for the government in understanding a suitable approach to addressing the matter towards building a sustainable city.

3. Methods and analysis

Approximately 384 sample size is required for the finite population (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970), therefore, 410 questionnaires were obtained on-site for this study, with a population percentage of 0.5 and a confidence level of 95% are utilized in the computation. The questionnaires comprised questions that indicate the four constructs: Attitude, Subjective Norms, Perceived Behavioural Control (PBC) and Concerns. The questionnaires were derived and modified from the previous study by Weng-Wai et al. (2022). The survey would be in 7 Likert-Scale formats. The Attitude determinant includes questions about the respondent’s inclination or preference towards the presence of a migrant labour settlement in their neighbourhood; Subjective Norms involve questions about the opinions of significant others who influence the respondent’s behaviour, such as family and friends suggesting acceptance of the settlement; the Perceived Behavioural Control (PBC) measures the perceived level of difficulty in opposing the placement of the settlement, questions may assess the complexity of the procedures involved; Finally, the concern addresses worries of the local community, including crime, property devaluation, hygiene, cultural concerns, and poor appearances, example questions include concerns about property value and the appearance of the settlement. Details of the questionnaire can be referred to in Appendix A.

3.1. Results

The PLS-SEM model analyses data in two levels which are the observation level and the theoretical level (Afonso et al., 2020). Firstly, the measuring model assessed the link between a latent variable and its observable indicators (Afonso et al., 2020; Sarstedt et al., 2017). Secondly, the inner model examines the presence and strength between constructs derived from theoretical interpretations that were expressed through hypotheses (Bagozzi & Yi, 2012). Most respondents are aged 15 to 24, contributing to 62% of total respondents. Furthermore, more than half of the respondents are single and are from the household size

category of 1–5 persons, with a percentage of 74.4% and 82%, respectively. As for the respondents’ household monthly income, most of them lie in the range of RM1001 to RM 2000, contributing to 37.6%, followed by the range of RM2001 to RM5000 with 31.7%. Most of the respondent’s level of education is secondary school level, accounting for 55.9%. Lastly, respondents that have lived 21–30 years in their neighbourhood amount to more than half, which is 58%. Furthermore, most respondents (95.1%) are not appointed committee members for their residential association. Table 1 shows the summary of the respondent profiles.

3.1.1. Indicator loading

Post-analysis reveals that some of the outer loadings of all observed variables or items are generally low. Thus, as suggested by Hulland (1999), ATTD14, ATTD19, ATTD5, SN22, SN6, PBC24, BPE4, BPE7, BSE23, CON26 and CON3 were deleted for further analysis. The loadings that exceed the recommended value of 0.5, as Hair et al. (1998) suggested, are shown in Table 2.

Table 1
Summary of respondent profiles.

Variable	Description	Percentage (%)	Respondents
Area	Taman Alam Jaya	22.7	93
	Taman Selamat	26.1	107
	Taman Impian	14.9	61
	Taman Mutiara	19.3	79
	Cempaka		
Gender	Taman Nilam Tanjung	17.1	70
	Male	39.0	158
Age	Female	61.0	252
	15–24	62.0	254
	25–34	31.0	127
	35–44	4.9	20
	45–54	1.7	7
Marriage Status	55 and above	0.5	2
	Single	74.4	305
	Married	25.6	105
Household Size	1 to 5 persons	82.0	336
	6 to 10 persons	17.1	70
	11 persons and above	1.0	4
Education	No formal education	1.0	4
	Primary school	0	0
	Secondary school	55.9	229
	Technical/vocational	3.9	16
	Diploma holder	27.3	112
	Degree holder	11.0	45
Children aged below 16 on premises	Postgraduate	1.0	4
	Yes	19.3	79
The respondent is an elected Committee member	No	80.7	331
	Yes	4.9	20
Income	No	95.1	390
	No fixed income	6.1	25
	No income	2.7	11
	Less than RM1,000	9.5	39
	RM1,001–RM2,000	37.6	154
	RM2,001–RM5,000	31.7	130
	RM5,001–RM10,000	8.0	33
	RM10,001–RM20,000	1.7	7
	RM20,001 and above	2.7	11
Property ownership status	Own the property	16.6	68
	Owned by spouse	18.8	77
	Owned by family members	22.9	94
Respondents’ period of living in the neighbourhood	Rent the property	41.7	171
	0–10 years	16.3	67
	11–20 years	3.7	15
	21–30 years	58.0	238
	31–40 years	22.0	90
Awareness of MLS in the neighbourhood	41 and above	0	0
	Aware	52.4	215
	Not aware	47.6	195

Table 2
Indicator loading.

Variable	Measurement Items	Outer Loading
Attitude	ATTD1	0.539
	ATTD10	0.895
	ATTD27	0.890
Subjective Norm	SN15	0.904
	SN8	0.675
Perceived Behavioural Control	PBC12	0.768
	PBC2	0.743
	PBC25	0.642
Concern	CON11	0.835
	CON16	0.772
	CON18	0.795
	CON20	0.763
	CON9	0.757
Acceptance of Migrant Labour Settlement	BPE21	0.798
	BSE13	0.772
	BSE17	0.835

3.1.2. Internal consistency reliability (composite reliability) and convergent reliability

When estimating reflective measurement models with PLS-SEM, Cronbach’s alpha often serves as the lower bound and composite reliability as the upper bound of internal consistency reliability. (Sarstedt et al., 2017). Table 3 presents the composite reliability of each construct item analysed in this study.

3.1.3. Fornell-larcker criterion and structural model path coefficient

As shown in Table 3, the AVE of acceptance of migrant labour settlement is 0.644; hence its square root becomes 0.802, as shown in Table 4. This number is larger than the correlation values in the column of Acceptance of Migrant Labour Settlement (0.671, 0.781, 0.659, 0.635). The same observation is also being made for other latent variables of Attitude, Concern, Perceived Behavioural Control, and Subjective Norm. As such, it can be concluded that the result indicates that the discriminant validity is reliable. Table 5 illustrates the testing results for this study’s structural model path coefficient significance. The hypothesised relationships among the constructs were tested by examining the significance of the path. Path coefficients typically range from -1 to +1, with +1 coefficients suggesting strong positive interactions and -1 coefficients indicating significant negative relationships (Henseler et al., 2014). Using a two-tailed t-test, with 5% probability of error level, the path coefficient is considered significant (Sarstedt et al., 2017). Generally, the critical values for the two-tailed test are 1.65 (p < 0.10), 1.96 (p < 0.05), 2.57 (p < 0.01), and 3.29 (p < 0.001).

3.1.4. Coefficient of determination (R²) and predictive relevance (Q²)

The common consensus is that R² values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 are considered to be significant mild, and poor, respectively (Joe et al., 2017). As depicted, the R² value is 0.656, indicating the Attitude, Subjective Norm, Perceived Behavioural Control, and Concern explains 65.2% of the variance in accepting migrant labour settlements.

Table 3
Composite reliability.

Variable	Construct Items	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Acceptance of Migrant Labour Settlement	Acceptance of Migrant Labour Settlement	0.844	0.644
Attitude	ATTD	0.829	0.628
Concern	CON	0.889	0.616
Perceived Behavioural Control	PBC	0.762	0.518
Subjective Norm	SN	0.774	0.636

According to (Chin, 1998), the impact of exogenous constructs on endogenous constructs is measured by using the effect size f². Exogenous latent variables with effect sizes f² less than 0.02 are unlikely to show any effects, while value of 0.02, 0.15, or 0.35 are likely to show weak, moderate, or substantial effects (Cohen, 1992). Table 6 shows that Attitude, Perceived Behavioural Control and Subjective Norm have a weak effect, while Concern has a moderate effect.

The Q² value can also be used in assessing a structural model’s predictive power (Geisser, 1974; Stone, 1974). It is generally accepted that path models are acceptable if the Q² value for a particular endogenous construct is greater than zero (Sarstedt et al., 2017). An exogenous construct that has a predictive relevance of 0.02, 0.15, or 0.35, for a certain endogenous construct, is considered to be moderate, medium or substantial respectively in terms of actual predictive relevance. For this research, the Q² value depicted a 0.291 value, which is a medium rating in accepting migrant labour settlements.

4. Discussion

The results indicate that Attitude, Subjective Norm, Perceived Behavioural Control, and Concern are significant predictors of the intention to determine the local community’s acceptance of migrant labour settlements. Therefore, all the hypotheses, H1, H2, H3 and H4, or Attitude, Subjective Norm, PBC and Concern, respectively, are accepted as the statistical results show support vis-a-vis locals’ acceptance of migrant labour settlements. Concern played the most significant role in accepting migrant labour settlement among the respondents, with a path coefficient of 0.449. The most concerning factors that worry the residents are crime and safety issues, followed by the drop in property value, cultural differences, poor appearances, and hygiene issues.

4.1. Concern

The locals’ disapproval of migrant labour may be caused from their worries regarding crime and safety issues concerning them (Nielsen & Smyth, 2008). Due to the negative stories of migrant labours presented by the media, the locals were instilled with negative preconceptions about the migrant labours and had increased public distrust (Tunon & Baruah, 2012). In this study, the concern on crime issues is the highest, with a factor loading of 0.835.

The locals are also concerned about property devaluation caused by the migrants’ poorly maintained and managed premises nearby. The concern of local residents regarding property value can be linked to their ownership status of the property. A factor loading of 0.795 indicates that the respondents are most worried about having their property drop in value. More than half of the respondents owned the property they were living in, either owned by the respondents themselves or by family members. Hence, majority of respondents have a stake in their property’s worth, either directly or indirectly. Furthermore, the landlords or homeowners are worried about the unwillingness of people to buy or rent their property, which will impact the rate of return for their investment on the property owned.

The third highest factor loading is on cultural differences, with a value of 0.772. Migration brings different cultures, traditions, and belief systems that impact the host countries’ social structure and culture (Tedong et al., 2018). The respondents brood on adapting and coping with the new culture of the migrant labours as it may contradict the locals’ norms. Migrants of various ethnic and racial backgrounds exhibit cultural differences and specific preferences in their coping styles and preferences (Kuo, 2011, 2014). The result of the factor loading indicates that the respondents are reluctant to cope and adapt to the culture or behaviour of the migrant labourers.

Poor appearances in a neighbourhood area will result in a bad reputation, as observed by others, and it is likely to cause a significant level of unhappiness and dejection. Kearns and Parkes (2003) stated that a higher level of vandalism is also more prevalent in poor areas, thus

Table 4
Fornell-larcker criterion.

	Acceptance of Migrant Labour Settlement	Attitude	Concern	Perceived Behavioural Control	Subjective Norm
Acceptance of Migrant Labour Settlement	0.802				
Attitude	0.671	0.792			
Concern	0.781	0.777	0.785		
Perceived Behavioural Control	0.659	0.601	0.691	0.720	
Subjective Norm	0.635	0.555	0.687	0.550	0.798

Table 5
Structural model path coefficient significance results.

Hypothesis	Paths	Path Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	Results
H1	ATTD > MLS	0.122	0.050	2.467**	Significant
H2	SN > MLS	0.153	0.043	3.544****	Significant
H3	PBC > MLS	0.191	0.045	4.215****	Significant
H4	CON > MLS	0.449	0.059	7.671****	Significant

Table 6
Effect Size f².

Path	Effect Size f ²	Effect Size Rating
Attitude - >> MLS	0.017	Weak
Concern - >> MLS	0.155	Moderate
Perceived Behavioural Control - >> MLS	0.053	Weak
Subjective Norm - >> MLS	0.035	Weak

making the residents in the neighbourhood experience gloominess and feel depressed. LaGrange et al. (1992) also state that residents' concerns over safety and crime would increase when the physical appearance of the neighbourhood is poor.

The last factor for concern is hygiene issues which are the least compared to the other four indicators, with a factor loading of 0.757. For example, the waste sorting behaviour of migrants is less efficient, which may cause unsanitary and unhygienic living conditions (Hellwig et al., 2019). As a result, this way of living can be different from how the local community works. The locals also perceive certain stereotypes towards the migrants, such as that migrant labourers are prone to carry diseases due to their unhygienic lifestyle. In this study, the residents of Penang are less concerned about hygienic issues.

4.2. Perceived behavioural control

PBC exhibit a significance factor of 0.191, the second-highest significant influence on accepting migrant labour settlements. In this study, a factor loading of 0.743 suggests that the respondents strongly believe they have the right in opposing the placement of the migrant labour settlement. This number shows that the people have the right to speak up; however, a factor loading of 0.768 indicates the residents' view regarding the complex procedure involved in opposing the MLS. Hence, the locals' impulse to oppose the placement exists but is problematic due to the lengthy standard of procedures involved and the long-drawn-out action by the government.

According to Terry and O'Leary (1995), motivation is considered weak when an individual perceives limited control over their behaviour. The factor loading of 0.642 signifies the extent of helplessness experienced by the respondents when requesting the relocation of the migrant labour settlement in their neighbourhood. Consequently, it can be inferred that the residents possess the legitimate right to reject the migrant labour settlement's placement. Still, the procedures involved

are complex, resulting in locals forfeiting their opposition. The PBC can be utilized to forecast the likelihood of a successful behaviour attempts if the perceived control remains realistic (Ajzen, 1985). Although the outcome may not be considered fair and unfavourable, it will be more likely to be accepted if fairness is perceived regarding the process and decision reached.

4.3. Attitude

Attitude shows the least significant predictor with a value of 0.122. Individual attitude is a common factor in human perception, influencing an individual's behavioural intention. The highest significant factor value of 0.995 indicates that most respondents feel insecure about having a migrant labour settlement in their neighbourhood. Additionally, the next highest significant factor value of 0.890 reveals that a majority of respondents believe that the establishment of a migrant labour settlement will have negative impacts on their neighbourhood. It can be seen that the main reason residents are unable in accepting the migrant labour settlement is their restlessness of feeling insecure and negative perceptions towards migrant laborers.

4.4. Subjective norms

Subjective norms are the second weakest empirical support after attitude on accepting migrant labour settlements, indicating a value of 0.153. The findings of this research demonstrate that respondents' decisions to oppose or accept the presence of a migrant labour settlement within the neighbourhood are influenced by their family and friends. Different opinions imposed on individuals will affect their behaviour towards accepting the development of migrant labour settlements. The varying opinions will influence an individual's intention, especially when they were accustomed with the beliefs and way of living of a particular organization (Bortoleto et al., 2012). The contrast of opinions can have individuals conflicted and choose instead to be neutral when deciding to perform a specific behaviour. In data collection, the respondents would choose the middle option for normative questions instead of leaving the question section blank (Darker et al., 2007). Consequently, middle answers will reduce construct variability and measure contribution to the prediction. Therefore, subjective norms provide a weak size rating with a value of 0.035, the second weakest after attitude (0.017).

5. Conclusion and recommendation

This study's objective is to explore how the local community perceives the settlement of migrant labour and analyse the reasons behind their resistance towards the development of such projects. TPB is adapted to conduct this study, and Concern is added as an extended construct in explaining the locals' perception regarding the matter. As a result, all of the hypotheses, Attitude, Subjective Norms, PBC and Concern were accepted, especially concern shows the most significance, which indicates interesting findings. In order to foster greater public acceptance of migrant labour settlements, we must address the local community's concerns, including crime and safety issues as the most concerning factor, followed by property devaluation, cultural differences, poor appearances, and hygiene issues. For local governments

planning to develop more settlements in the future, the findings can provide the necessary information on factors to be considered in developing the CAT. The findings can help reduce the possibility of project cancellation or delay due to public opposition, as it will cause financial loss.

Furthermore, the development of migrant labour settlements and its issues is significant in light of the post-pandemic coronavirus, where it was shown that improper housing for migrant labourers could cause a crisis during a world emergency in fighting diseases (Khor, 2021). These findings would also help Malaysia's neighbouring countries consider factors that need to be considered in developing migrant labour settlements in their countries. Before the post-pandemic times of Covid-19, the World Health Organization identified many developing countries' struggles in managing proper housing for migrant labour, resulting in the welfare negligence of migrant workers. Therefore, these findings would help provide information as a starting line in projecting the consideration that needs to be considered. In summary, our findings suggest that developing segregated settlements for migrants, the tensions between migrant laborers and the local community can be mitigated. Nevertheless, the likelihood of opposition towards the development of the project can be minimized if the concerns of the local community are appropriately addressed.

There are a few limitations in this study. One of them is the results may reflect more on the younger generation's perception due to the convenience sampling method. For future research, we recommend collecting balanced data between each age group to identify and compare the results between different generations. Furthermore, this research only considers the respondents from Seberang Perai and does not include the population from Penang's island side. Future research on the differences in perception between the population in both parts of Penang would be interesting, if there is any. Some other recommendations in future research would include testing the model or expanding the model by adding more constructs as an extension of the model. Lastly, a qualitative approach could be employed in achieving more precise information by conducting interviews with experts who managed the development of CAT due to their insightful experience in confronting the issues of acceptance of the projects.

In conclusion, the government can resolve the issues contributing to the local community's opposition towards migrant labour settlement. They play an important role in addressing the appeal of the projects to the public and helping them understand their significance. They can re-address the public's perception of crime and safety issues linked to migrant workers by strictly enforcing the law and taking precautions when spreading negative images of migrant labour crime to the public. The media here plays a crucial role in influencing public opinion, whereby they can help balance the negative portrayal of migrant workers by also highlighting the positive actions or contributions of migrant workers. Property devaluation issues involving migrant labours can also be resolved if the segregation of migrant labour from the local community neighbourhood. To foster a harmonious environment and promote sustainable cities and communities, the government must gain a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by both migrant labour and the local community. By doing so, they can work towards creating a conducive environment that benefits both parties and aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 11.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Asma Idayu Izhar: Writing – original draft, preparation, data collection, Data curation. **Weng Wai Choong:** Conceptualization, Supervision, Validation. **Siaw Chui Wee:** Supervision, Writing – review & editing, editing, data analysis.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial

interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Appendix A. Supplementary data

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