DEVELOPING A HOUSING PRICE MODEL BASED ON CARBON FOOTPRINT INDICATORS

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"It always seems impossible until it is done"

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ABSTRACT

Housing is a major factor leading to carbon footprint emissions, which holds the utmost importance in gaining more insights into its emissions at a different location. Housing carbon footprints vary from each other in terms of connection to urban form and housing characteristics. However, it is unclear about the nexus between them. Considering that appropriate estimate is not available in Malaysia, the development of it is required. This research aims to develop a housing price model based on carbon footprint to measure direct carbon footprint emissions based on housing attributes, housing prices and the characteristics of urban form for terraced properties in Johor Bahru. Observing the implicit influences of each attribute is crucial in evaluating the carbon footprint emissions. Housing submarket analyses based on Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and Cluster Analysis; as well as two carbon footprint models, namely the energy-use model and transportation-use model, were used to facilitate the total calculation of housing carbon emissions. Studies on the relationship between housing attributes, especially housing price variables with carbon footprint emission are scarce. Thus, the current work not only highlighted the impact of housing attributes on carbon footprint emission, but also described the changes in housing price through the urbanisation process towards carbon footprint emission on the local scale. To summarise, a spatial pattern map embedded with housing attributes and housing price coefficient was generated on the spatial layout data by using Kernel Density Analysis to define the spatial variability of carbon footprint emissions on the geographical layout. It was found that the density of carbon footprint emissions index for terraced properties in Johor Bahru was doughnut-shaped, where carbon footprint emissions in the city core were lower and gradually building up in the suburban areas, especially Plentong and Tebrau area. Thus, the developed housing price model based on carbon footprint indicators has proven that housing attributes, urban form, and carbon footprint emissions have a strong and unique relationship with the tested variables. Notably, understanding the pattern and linkages of these variables is beneficial in offering new knowledge for urban studies, and to authorities such as JPPH, environmentalists, home buyers and property developers.

ABSTRAK

Peluasan kawasan perumahan dan bentuk bandar telah menyumbang kepada peningkatan jejak karbon secara ketara. Perumahan merupakan faktor penyebab utama dalam kes peningkatan jejak karbon dan ia berbeza mengikut lokasi. Jejak karbon untuk perumahan berbeza antara satu sama lain berhubung dengan ciri-ciri bentuk bandar, struktur dan lokasi rumah. Namun begitu, tiada penjelasan yang terperinci telah dibincangkan. Memandangkan anggaran yang tepat masih tiada di Malaysia, maka pembangunan model baru amat diperlukan. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menghasilkan satu model kluster harga jejak karbon untuk rumah teres di Johor Bahru dengan mengambil kira ciri-ciri struktur rumah, harga rumah dan bentuk bandar. Model ini adalah penting untuk menilai hubungan tersirat di antara ciri-ciri perumahan dengan jejak karbon. Analisa housing submarket melalui Principal Component Analysis (PCA) dan kluster analisis, bersama dengan dua model jejak karbon, iaitu model penggunaan tenaga dan model penggunaan kenderaan telah digunakan untuk mengukur jumlah pelepasan jejak karbon bagi rumah teres di Johor Bahru. Kajian tersedia ada mengenai hubungan antara ciri-ciri perumahan terutamanya harga rumah dengan jejak karbon adalah terhad. Maka itu, kajian ini bukan sahaja menilai impak ciri-ciri perumahan terhadap jumlah jejak karbon, malah turut membincangkan bersama faktor perubahan harga rumah akibat kesan urbanisasi terhadap jejak karbon pada skala tempatan. Untuk merumuskan, satu peta spatial yang merangkumi ciri-ciri perumahan dan pekali harga rumah telah dihasilkan untuk menghuraikan corak spatial jejak karbon secara geografi. Didapati bahawa indeks densiti jejak karbon untuk rumah teres di Johor Bahru berbentuk donut, di mana jejak karbon di kawasan bandar adalah lebih rendah dan kian meningkat di kawasan pinggir bandar terutamanya di Plentong dan Tebrau. Kesimpulannya, model kluster harga jejak karbon yang dibangunkan ini telah membuktikan bahawa ciri-ciri perumahan, harga rumah dan pelepasan jejak karbon mempunyai hubungan yang kukuh dan unik di antara satu sama lain. Memahami corak jejak karbon dan hubungan tersirat untuk semua pembolehubah yang dikaji menawarkan pengetahuan baru kepada bidang hartanah dan pihak berkuasa seperti JPPH, pembeli rumah dan pemaju perumahan.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

The current social and economic modernisation in metropolitan cities, which is better known as '*urbanisation*', has presented unprecedented growth. The world has embarked on the process of rapid urbanisation and modernisation. This process involves a rapid increase in the number and expansion of cities. Towns and cities are formed and expanded towards the peripheries, following the shift of people into the areas for living and working (Tey, 2022; Samat *et al.*, 2020; Surya *et al.*, 2020; Hasan and Nair, 2014; Yaakob, Masron and Masami, 2010).

areas for fiving and working (Tey, 2022, Samat *et al.*, 2020, Surya *et al.*, 2020, Hasan and Nair, 2014; Yaakob, Masron and Masami, 2010). Cities are possibly the most complex things created by humans. All cities in the developing countries and most other cities in other areas have been decentralised over the last decades (Clifford *et al.*, 2022; Jha, 2018; Anas, Arnoot and Small, 1997). The urban spatial structure is continuously changing into a more polycentric and dispersed form (Grunsven and Benson, 2020; Mohd Yusop and Permana, 2016; Lee, 2015). Currently, major cities and metropolitan areas are characterised by decentralised home and working opportunities. The process of urbanisation reshapes the spatial distribution of occupations, industries, residential development, and land use (Penco *et al.*, 2020). This phenomenon denotes that larger urban scale increases the reorganisation of industries and redistribution of residence and employment (Kuddus, Tynan and McBryde, 2020; Zhao, Lu and *de* Groo, 2011; Zhao, 2010).



Besides the rapid restructuring and uncontrolled massive population migration that have emerged due to urbanisation, cities are showing unprecedented growth and expansion (Zhu, Tu and Li, 2022; Yavuz, 2016; Bhatta, 2010), without adequate planning (Hossain and Huggins, 2021; Lanrewaju, 2012). Subsequently, the available resources such as farmlands, urban greenbelts, and green spaces are decreasing (Marzuki and Jais, 2020; Samat *et al.*, 2020; Bhat *et al.*, 2017). The failure in balancing between the continuous expansion of urban spatial structure and the growing need for housing leads to uneven land development (Ahmed *et al.*, 2019; Deng and Huang, 2004), including environmental degradation and a decline in ecosystem services (Samat *et al.*, 2020; Wang *et al.*, 2020; Yavuz, 2016).

The disorganised expansion of cities with a lower mix of land use creates negative impacts on the ecosystem services when green spaces begin to contract and become smaller in size (Yi *et al.*, 2017; Wang, 2014; Zhang and Hao, 2008). As a result, built-up areas spread widely, while the carbon sequestration or support for biodiversity is gradually replaced by residential development (Shao *et al.*, 2020; Brody, 2013; Deng and Huang, 2004). Essentially, the urban form with a disordered sprawl pattern often produces a higher carbon footprint. The scattered and randomly dispersed urban land use encourages longer travelling distances between cities, further vehicle miles travelled, frequent traffic congestions, an increase in living space per capita, and higher residential energy consumption (Lee, 2015; Sun, Green and Wang, 2015).



Today, the world is facing two of the most pressing issues attributed to urbanisation, which include the expansion of urban spatial structure and escalating carbon footprint emissions. It is found that the carbon footprint growth in cities is exacerbated by the extension of urban form and fast-paced urbanisation (Mangum, 2016; Lee, 2015; Zhang, Yi and Li, 2015; Abesamis, Campos and Castell, 2013). Over the years, a considerable growth of interest has occurred around the emergence of carbon footprint due to urbanisation and human activities. According to Wiedmann and Minx (2008), carbon footprint could be described as the measure of human activities' impacts on the environment in terms of the number of greenhouse gases (GHG) produced. It is commonly measured in tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂). Notably, the increase and blooming of carbon footprint in developing cities is becoming a rising issue due to active urbanisation over the past few years (Bekhet and Othman, 2017;

Sovacool and Brown, 2010). In 2020, concentrations of greenhouse gases continued to rise, setting new records.

In 2015, the United Nations acknowledged the significance of sustainable development and established a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be attained by 2030, with the objective of creating sustainable cities and communities, and addressing issues of responsible consumption and production. The issue of carbon footprint, which is the quantity of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emitted by human activities, is one of the greatest obstacles to achieving these objectives (United Nations, 2023).

Cities are places of change and innovation, which incorporate different elements to effectively shape sustainable development. Cities generally need formal urban planning to achieve sustainable urban development. However, the task of making a city a good environment to dwell in has been more challenging over the decades. Following the relatively fast rate of urbanisation in Malaysia, it was expected that the boundary of the cities would continue to expand to accommodate the growth (Bhat *et al.*, 2017). The rapid urban growth in metropolitan areas has created more externalities to the environmental degradation, particularly the rise of carbon footprint emissions. Thus, exploring and demonstrating the impacts of urbanisation on carbon footprint emissions are crucial.



The issue of whether urbanisation and changes in urban spatial structure contribute to carbon footprint emissions has been widely discussed. Many researchers attempted to evaluate carbon footprint emissions through various parameters. These carbon footprint studies are mainly explored from the point of view of residents' lifestyles, household consumption, and urban population density. These research works seemed to overlook and disregard the importance of the most evident factors of the overall carbon footprint emissions, such as housing characteristics and urban form. Furthermore, despite the discussion of the previous studies and literature works regarding the influence of the variation of household consumption and urban form on the direct carbon footprint emissions, there is a wide and independent interpretation on this matter. The approaches and research findings are perceived as different concerns or points of issue. Lee (2015) also highlighted that household consumption has ambiguous and vague impacts to evaluate the exact total carbon footprint emissions.

The process of making a city more urbanised has significant influences on housing carbon footprint emissions. This relationship varies in different regions and economic developments (Li and Lin, 2015). Housing is heterogeneous and is the ideal entity to represent the overall spatial variability of carbon footprint emissions that stem from rapid urbanisation. However, it was also argued that most cities do not have a specific appraisal to monitor the direct carbon footprint emissions (Moran *et al.*, 2017). Nearly forty percent of global carbon dioxide emissions are generated by the real estate sector (Carlin, 2022). Notably, housing is a major contributor to carbon footprint emissions, which receives more insights for its emissions at different locations.

Considering that such an estimate is not available or accessible in Malaysia, the development of it is crucial. In line with this, this thesis studied and evaluated the relationship between urban spatial structure and housing carbon footprint emissions for the terraced properties in Johor Bahru, Malaysia. The study was conducted to develop a specific calculation model for housing carbon footprint emissions by accounting for property attributes and urban form characteristics. A scenario analysis was performed to further reveal the current spatial variability of housing carbon footprint emissions for terraced properties in Johor Bahru, Malaysia. Understanding the pattern and linkages of both variables is beneficial in providing new knowledge for urban studies.

1.2 Problem Statements

Urbanisation plays an important role in carbon footprint emissions in the short term and long term (Mangum, 2016; Zhang, Yi and Li, 2015). The expansion of cities marks a spiralling outward growth into the peripheries from the existing urban core (Yi *et al.*, 2017; Brody, 2013). It has been found that carbon footprint emissions are mostly concentrated in the areas with a high urban population (Abesamis, Campos and Castell, 2013; Makido, Dhakal and Yamagata, 2012) and the areas with higher development density (Moran *et al.*, 2018).

Cities are the largest contributors to carbon footprint emissions. Despite occupying less than 2% of the entire land surfaces worldwide, cities lead to the storage and release of more than 75% of the total carbon footprint emissions (Moran *et al.*, 2018; Churkina, 2016; Johansson *et al.*, 2012; Dixon, 2009; Intergovernmental Panel

on Climate Change, 2007). This figure was expected to propel and continue to snowball in the near future. To illustrate, the survey from BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2019 demonstrated an increase in carbon footprint emissions by approximately 4% in 2018 compared to the previous year, marking it the fastest growth in six years. The report found that Malaysia's carbon footprint increased from 241.6 million tonnes in 2017 to 251.1 million tonnes in 2018 and 256.9 million tonnes in 2019, before decreasing to 240.6 million tonnes in 2020 and 238.6 million tonnes in 2021, during the course of the global COVID-19 pandemic (Greentech Malaysia, 2019). Carbon footprint emissions are a form of pollution that causes global warming and ultimately, climate change.

The increase in urban carbon footprint emissions is an after-effect of city expansion. The overall amount of carbon footprint emissions in the country has been expected to grow steadily in the coming years, which could lead to unfavourable urban environmental deterioration in the short and long terms. With cities leading to a significant increase in footprint emissions, this issue should not be overlooked. More parties and stakeholders have begun to emphasise the need to explore carbon footprint emissions in detail.

Many research works were accustomed to measuring carbon footprint separately through the urban population, household income, household electricity, and industrial manufacturing activities (Naderipour *et al.*, 2021; Goldstein, Gounaridis and Newell, 2020; Yi *et al.*, 2017; Huang *et al.*, 2017; Cui *et al.*, 2010). For example, Majid, Moeinzadeh, and Tifwa's (2014) study to measure carbon footprint emissions with the income of households in Iskandar Malaysia did not take any of the housing characteristics into account. The researchers suggested that household income acts as the most important indicator of lifestyle and would reflect the amount of household carbon footprint emissions. The analysis results demonstrated a significant correlation between the tested variables. Furthermore, high carbon footprint emissions were found in expensive residential areas due to the higher consumption of food, electricity, and personal vehicles among residents with higher incomes.

Saras and Kristanto (2021) measured the total carbon footprint emissions that occurred from electricity consumption with the number of residents in a household, income, and type of region. It was found that the use of household electricity was directly related to the total carbon footprint emissions. Moreover, household income

had a stronger impact on the carbon footprint emissions compared to household size, while urban areas generated more carbon footprint emissions than rural areas. The study results placed more focus on household consumption and lifestyles. It should be noted that limitations were present in quantifying the exact carbon footprint emissions.

Poumanvyong and Kaneko (2010) investigated the influence of urbanisation on household energy use and carbon footprint emissions, which varied across different stages of household income and development. Therefore, it was concluded that the impact of urbanisation on carbon footprint emissions was significant and positive for all tested income groups. A middle-income group led to the largest carbon footprint emissions compared to other income groups. Notably, this study placed more focus on the respondents' lifestyles rather than their living conditions and housing attributes.

Liu *et al.* (2015) defined the spatial pattern of commuting carbon footprint emissions through a list of spatial parameters, such as residential density, employment density, job-housing balance, and land use diversity. It is noteworthy that commuting carbon footprint emissions are lower in the first ring road (city centre), while the carbon footprint emissions intensity gradually increased upon its movement toward the second ring road (suburban areas). The uneven development in each city created a series of issues of imbalance between travel demand-supply, housing, and employment density. For instance, the Yanta district with the lowest job-housing balance generated the largest carbon footprint emissions due to higher reliance on private automobiles even for short commuting distance.

Despite the limited availability of literature works discussing the relation between urbanisation and carbon footprint emissions worldwide, it was found that many researchers solely focused on the source of urban population and its density. Additionally, there is a limitation in the empirical research and supporting literature on the method of evaluating the interlink between urbanisation, urban form structure, and housing carbon footprint emissions. To date, comprehensive studies calculating carbon footprint emissions in Malaysia are rare and not conclusive. The previous research scope and findings were found to be highly restricted and not well-established in urban studies.

Generally, the expansion of urban form is characterised by a steady urbanisation process and high demand for residential housing. Several studies in the recent years used urban population density as a point of reference to quantify the expansion of urban form. However, the sole use of the urban population to evaluate urban expansion was insufficient and lacking in accuracy (Makido, Dhakal and Yamagata, 2012). The expansion of cities and urban areas is a complex procedure that cannot be measured independently by only one or two variables, although this approach was employed in many urban studies. These research works omitted several important variables such as residential built-up density, accessibility or housing characteristics, and neglected the possible interactions between these attributes with the expansion of urban spatial structure (Shao *et al.*, 2020; Frenkel and Ashkenazi, 2008). Urban expansion should not be subject only to urban population or household income.

In fact, the urban spatial patterns could be further explored from their interconnection with the physical parts of cities, such as property type, housing density, accessibility, proximity, and neighbourhood development (Olanrewaju and Adegun, 2021; Williams, 2014). The increasing demand for housing is the main driving force for the widespread urban spatial structure (Al Jarah *et al.*, 2019; Lin *et al.*, 2018). For this reason, housing location and its characteristics, especially housing transaction price could be used to properly describe the transformation of urban spatial structure changes and urbanisation process.



Fundamentally, housing development is strongly related to urbanisation and urban spatial structure (Haffner and Hulse, 2019; Sun and Wang, 2018). The increasing demand for housing has caused the expansion of urban form and has outpaced the commercial and transportation systems development. With the building sector facing a resurgence in growth, a massive direct and indirect impact on the environment has been reported. Notably, housing characteristics are the best supporting evidence to explain the phases of urbanisation and urban form growth, which eventually become highly relatable to the increase in carbon footprint emissions.

Housing accounts for a large share of global carbon footprint emissions due to its important role in driving the country economic growth and social development. It was found that the extensive amount of global carbon footprint emissions was highly associated with human activities (Yi et al., 2017; Fang and Pal, 2016; Wang, 2014). Reports also demonstrate that the increase in direct carbon footprint emissions is generally attributed to household electricity consumption and vehicle fuel emission (Khoo, 2019; Bekhet and Othman, 2017; Li and Lin, 2015). Household accounts for nearly 40% of the total carbon footprint emissions. The development of residential properties is dominating the worldwide building sector, which creates a common phenomenon where the energy consumption and carbon footprint emissions are rather prodigious. It was also postulated that household energy consumption, commuting patterns, and housing carbon footprint emissions are highly interrelated to each other (Zhang et al., 2021; Yi et al., 2017; Zhang, Yi and Li, 2015; Poumanvyong and Kaneko, 2010). It is notably that housing prices and carbon emissions have risen dramatically worldwide in the past two decades. However, it is unclear whether there is a nexus between them.

Housing is a heterogeneous product and the basic component of a city. It is summarised by a group of different structural and locational attributes. Provided that housing is identified to be the main factor of urban expansion and is significantly associated with the growing amount of household consumption emissions, housing characteristics would serve better as an important foundation to predict the overall carbon footprint emissions. The diversity of housing structural and locational characteristics would generate different levels of carbon footprint emissions and create a certain spatial difference between the adjacent areas of a city. This can be seen as particular neighbourhood appears to predispose towards smaller total carbon footprint emissions, while the opposite case takes place for others (Sovacool and Brown, 2010).

Overall, it could be concluded that a definite and positive connection is present between housing, land-use elements, and carbon footprint emissions (Lee, 2015; Zhang, Yi and Li, 2015; Poumanvyong and Kaneko, 2010). However, the link between these variables needs further examination. The existing literature has only recorded preliminary information on the relationship between household consumption and carbon footprint emissions. Following the rapid urbanisation pace and expansion of an urban spatial structure, there is inadequate understanding regarding the spread of housing carbon footprint emissions in Malaysia and the different levels of total carbon footprint emissions based on housing characteristics. The exact relationship between housing and carbon footprint emissions remains unclear. Currently, the number of housing carbon footprint estimate studies available for further discussion is scarce, especially in Malaysia. The overall effect of housing characteristics on the country's carbon footprint emissions has not been fully explored.

In order to evaluate and analyse the distinct relationship between housing and carbon footprint emissions in Malaysia, a housing price model based on carbon footprint indicators should be developed. A carbon footprint pricing model comprising the housing price, housing attributes, and carbon footprint emissions can be utilised to relate and explain the implicit relationship between the components. Each component possesses its own fundamental insights that can be distinguished in order to KAAN TUNKU comprehensively assess the carbon footprint emissions.

Research Questions 1.3

- What are the property attributes used to estimate housing carbon footprint (a) emissions for terraced properties in Johor Bahru?
- How can the derived property attributes be incorporated into the carbon footprint (b) models to measure the housing carbon footprint index for terraced properties in Johor Bahru?
- (c) What is the relationship between urban spatial structure and housing carbon footprint emissions for terraced properties in Johor Bahru?
- How is the spatial distribution of housing carbon footprint pricing model for (d) terraced properties in Johor Bahru?

1.4 **Research Aims and Research Objectives**

This study aims to explore the causal relationship between urbanisation growth, urban spatial structure changes, and housing characteristics while improving the description of carbon footprint emissions. It aims to develop a housing price model based on carbon footprint indicator for the terraced properties in Johor Bahru, Malaysia. The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To identify the property attributes used to estimate housing carbon footprint (a) emissions in Johor Bahru.
- To determine the housing carbon footprint index for the terraced properties in (b) Johor Bahru by incorporating the derived the property attributes into carbon footprint models.
- (c) To discuss the relationship between urban spatial structure and housing carbon footprint emissions for terraced properties in Johor Bahru.
- To describe the spatial distribution of the housing carbon footprint pricing model UNKU TUN AN (d) for terraced properties in Johor Bahru.

1.5 **Research Scope**



This study aims to develop a housing price model based on the carbon footprint indicators for the terraced properties in Johor Bahru, Malaysia. To achieve the proposed research objectives, this study focused on the following scope and limitations.

This study was conducted in the most urbanised district in the southern part of Peninsular Malaysia, which is Johor Bahru. As the capital of Johor, Johor Bahru witnessed rapid urbanisation growth with an increasing amount of urban population and enormous residential development. The rapid growth has resulted in widespread urban land use in Johor Bahru. The most evident land-use change was the expansion of the built-up area, which increased by almost 304.98% from 11,932.71 hectares in 1984 to 48,324.17 hectares in 2015. It was also predicted that the built-up areas in Johor Bahru would extend to 96,296.17 hectares in 2030. Strategically, the extension of built-up areas would increase the number of residential properties and directly lead to increased carbon footprint emissions. Therefore, Johor Bahru is deemed the most suitable case study area to provide detailed information on housing carbon footprint emissions.

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