

COMPARING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INDICATORS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN SELANGOR, MALAYSIA

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Abstract: Besides the natural system, the concept of sustainable development also encompasses the economic and social systems. In line with this concept, the Selangor State Structure Plan, 2002-2020 stated that the state is very committed towards implementing sustainable development and acknowledged the importance of social improvement. This is consistent with the Selangor sustainable development philosophy that highlighted the need to balance between economic growth, social wellbeing and environmental conservation. However, it is a common tendency for state and local authorities to focus more on the physical aspects and economic growth without comparable agenda in the social aspects. The state of Selangor can certainly be proud of its robust economy and extremely rapid physical development but could the same be said of its social infrastructure and public facilities? In an attempt to answer the aforementioned question, this paper presented the comparisons of several economic and social development indicators between the state of Selangor and the other states in Malaysia. Seven indicators for economic development and eight indicators for social development were compared. The economic development indicators include employment by various sectors, income and socio-economic measures, while the social development indicators include the provision of health, education and public facilities. The findings from comparing the various indicators show that the states of Selangor and Johor share the third rank, behind the states of Penang and Melaka in the economic development indicators. However, for social development indicators, Selangor ranked the lowest among all the fourteen states. Findings from the comparisons indicated that the social development in the state was not at par with the rapidly growing economy and the

extensive physical development that had taken place. As such, the state government and local authorities in Selangor should give greater emphasis to social aspects of development in order to achieve the state's sustainable development agenda.

Keywords: development indicators, economic growth, social improvement, sustainable development

INTRODUCTION

The World Commission on Environment and Development defined sustainable development as “development which meets the needs and aspirations of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). In the Conference on Environment and Development convened in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the United Nations proclaimed under Principle 1 that “Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature” (United Nations, 1992: 2). As such, other than focusing on the environment, sustainable development is also related to improving the quality of life within a community. In the 1995 World Summit for Social Development, delegates agreed that development should aim at improving and enhancing the quality of life of all people. The delegates felt that there is a need to “integrate economic, cultural and social policies so that they become mutually supporting ...” (United Nations, 1995). The sustainable measures website (n.d) stated that sustainability relates to whether the three major components of development i.e. “the economic, social and environmental systems that make up the community are providing a healthy, productive, meaningful life for all community

residents, present and future". A sustainable community defined by the Institute for Sustainable Communities (2011) as "one that is economically, environmentally, and socially healthy and resilient". The concern for improving the quality of life is also emphasized by the Malaysian government whereby in the latest strategic plan (the 10th Malaysia Plan), the government expressed that it is "committed to ensuring a high quality of life in urban and rural areas in line with Malaysia's aspiration to become a developed nation" (Economic Planning Unit, 2010: 246). Although there were concerns for ensuring the quality of life for the community, it is a common tendency for state and local authorities to focus more on the physical aspects of development and economic growth without comparable agenda in the social aspects. Mountjoy (1982) observed that, "Economic growth alone is not development; social improvement in terms of education, health and welfare is an integral part of the modernization process" (p. 234). This discrepancy was also addressed in the Beijing Declaration whereby it was mentioned that "Accelerated economic growth, although necessary for social development, does not by itself improve the quality of life of the population" (United Nations, 1996: 8). Similar observation was also made in the Ninth Malaysia Plan, stating that "there is a need to strengthen the overall mindset, culture, values and social institutions to be more in step with the country's economic development" (Economic Planning Unit, 2006: 4). In analyzing this issue, this paper compares several development indicators between Selangor and the other states in Malaysia in terms of economic and social development. The indicators chosen reflect economic growth, quality of life and standard of social facilities provisions. Most of the indicators were obtained from published governmental reports and national census.

DEVELOPMENT IN SELANGOR

Development in Selangor has a long history and can be traced back to begin in 1880 when the state administration moved from Klang to Kuala Lumpur (Dewan Negeri Selangor, n.d.). On 1st. February 1974, the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur was established and Selangor's state capital shifted from Kuala Lumpur to Shah Alam (Shah Alam City Council, 2006). Therefore, the early development in Selangor started with the growth of Kuala Lumpur as the state capital. Thereafter, development which centered in Kuala Lumpur spread to surrounding areas around the district of Petaling, Hulu Langat and Gombak forming the most developed region in the country i.e. the Klang Valley. As such, the state had enjoyed development overspill from the nation's capital, Kuala Lumpur. Figure 1 shows the location and the state of Selangor, Malaysia. The percentage of urban population can become an important

indicator for development. The percentage of urban population in Selangor was second lowest among the thirteen states in Malaysia in 1970. However, the urban population in Selangor increases drastically thereafter; by 1980 Selangor is second to Penang in terms of the level of urbanization. The past two decades had witnessed tremendous growth in the state and in the latest census Selangor took the lead as the most urbanized state in Malaysia. The level of urbanization which stood at 88.4 percent in 2005 matched some of the more developed countries. Refer to Table 1. Selangor had certainly undergone very rapid development, where its urban areas became centers for population concentration. This rapid growth is only possible through migration of people from outside, especially from the rural areas. Towns in the Klang Valley like Shah Alam, Petaling Jaya, Subang Jaya, Klang, Selayang, Rawang, Kajang and Bangi were swarmed with migrants seeking for jobs and better living condition.

Selangor Sustainable Development Initiative

According to the Town and Country Planning Department of Selangor and The Institute for Environment and Development (LESTARI) UKM (2003), sustainable development initiative started with the Selangor's Commitment to Sustainable Development in June 1999. This was followed by a three-year project to produce blueprints for sustainable development, namely: Environmentally Sensitive Areas of Selangor, Strategy for Sustainable Development of Selangor, Agenda 21 Selangor and Guidelines for the Implementation of Agenda 21 Selangor. These documents were published between 1999- 2002. The State government has also declared the year 2002 as the "Year of Implementation of Agenda 21 Selangor". The state defines sustainable development as "development that requires a reformation of the economy that takes into serious account the impact of development on the environment, natural resources and society" (p. 3). As such, besides safeguarding the environment, development should also ensure the well-being of society. This is in accordance to the State's commitment made in 1999. In outlining ten commitments that covers several areas (including society, ecosystem, economy, natural resources, agriculture, settlements, infrastructure, human resource and public involvement), the State government recognized that "the growth of the State's economy is closely related to the need to enhance social well-being and the importance of preserving the quality of the environment" (p. 4). The sustainable development strategy for Selangor outlined five sectoral and six cross sectoral policy objectives. Several of these policy objectives addressed society and social well-being.

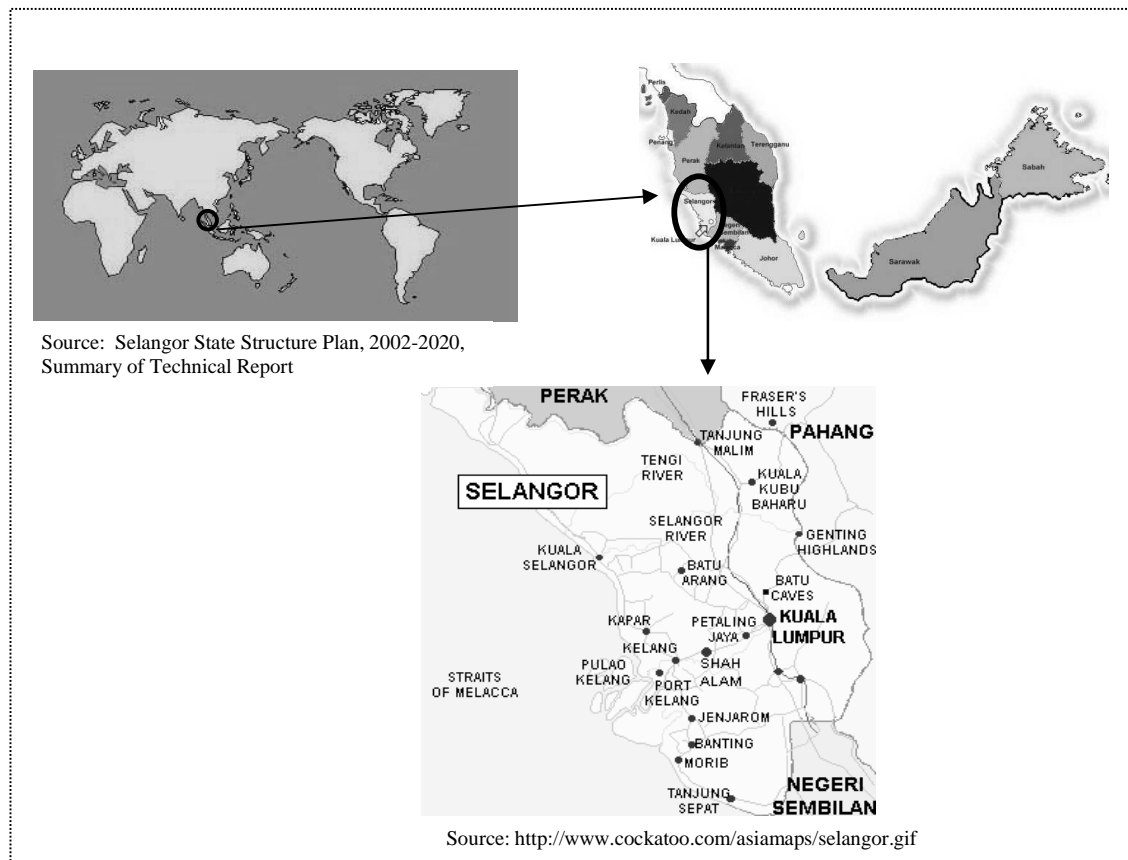


Figure 1: Location of Selangor within Malaysia

Table 1: Level of Urbanization by State, Malaysia, 1970 - 2005

| State | 1970 | 1980 | 1991 | 2000 | 2005 ¹ |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Kuala Lumpur | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Selangor | 9.5 | 40.9 | 75.2 | 88.3 | 88.4 |
| Penang | 51.0 | 47.5 | 75.0 | 79.5 | 79.8 |
| Melaka | 25.1 | 23.8 | 38.7 | 67.3 | 70.6 |
| Johor | 26.3 | 35.2 | 47.8 | 63.9 | 66.5 |
| Perak | 27.5 | 33.8 | 53.6 | 59.5 | 59.3 |
| Negeri Sembilan | 21.6 | 32.6 | 42.0 | 55.0 | 56.3 |
| Terengganu | 27.0 | 42.9 | 44.5 | 49.4 | 49.8 |
| Sabah | 16.9 | 19.9 | 33.2 | 48.3 | 49.8 |
| Sarawak | 15.5 | 18.0 | 37.5 | 47.9 | 49.5 |
| Pahang | 19.0 | 26.1 | 30.4 | 42.1 | 43.5 |
| Kedah | 12.6 | 22.5 | 32.5 | 38.7 | 39.8 |
| Kelantan | 15.1 | 28.1 | 33.5 | 33.5 | 33.4 |
| Perlis | - | 8.9 | 26.6 | 33.8 | 35.1 |
| MALAYSIA | 26.8 | 35.8 | 50.7 | 61.8 | 63.0 |

Source: Jamaliah (2004) Table 2

¹ Economic Planning Unit (2006)

Selangor State Structure Plan

In-line with the State's sustainable development strategy, the preparation of the Selangor State Structure Plan 2020 had incorporated the principles of sustainable development at every levels of the plan preparation (Town and Country Planning Department of Selangor, 2005). This was achieved through the implementation of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Social Impact Assessment (SIA). SEA was undertaken to ensure that the policies and proposals outlined did not cause negative impact to the environment while SIA ensures that the same policies and proposals did not affect the quality of life of any groups in the community, but could further enhance their quality of life.

The goal of the Selangor State Structure Plan is to ensure physical development that supports the vision of a holistic developed state, sustainable development and the formation of a prosperous society. The objectives for economic development are: (a) to diversify economic activities, sustainable utilization of existing economic and natural resources and introduce new economic base that is innovative and sustainable; (b) to support economic and commercial development that are environmental friendly and continuous; (c) to increase the socio-economic status of the population and eradicate poverty.

The objectives for physical and environmental development are: (a) to ensure that resources are used sustainably according to current needs; (b) to conserve environmentally sensitive areas that have been identified and to improve environmental quality; (c) to create a balance in the distribution and hierarchy of towns within and between districts; (d) to increase the provision of transport facilities, infrastructure and utilities that are more efficient, comprehensive, sufficient and in-line with technological advancement.

The objectives of social development are: (a) to increase the provision of adequate housing and fulfill the needs of every levels of society; increase homeownership and avoid the formation of squatters; (b) to provide social facilities fairly and in accordance with population distribution; (c) to increase the provision of community facilities that are sufficient, of good quality and with latest technology for every levels of society.

To achieve the above objectives, the Selangor State Structure Plan 2020 had recommended 34 policies which consist of 9 policies for economic development, 19 policies for physical and

environmental development and 6 policies for social development. The policies that relate to sustainable development and social well-being are as follows: (a) FZ 1: All development should be based on sustainable management of resources. (b) FZ 2: Sustainable city development methods such as compact and mixed development should be given emphasis in the development of every town. (c) FZ 5: Environmentally sensitive areas in the state must be gazetted and managed according to the types of development and land use that had been determined. (d) FZ 6: At least 30 percent of the state is to be gazetted as permanent forest reserve or conservation areas. (e) FZ 7: Environmental quality in urbanized areas to be improved to create environments that support a safer, comfortable and prosperous living. (f) FZ 8: Planning and integrated management of the environment to be implemented with the involvement of all parties. (g) FZ 15: Travel demand management needs to be implemented to create sustainable urban transportation. (h) FZ 18: The level of infrastructure and utility provision need to be improved. (i) FZ 19: The level of social facilities and community services need to be improved.

DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

Can the various neighborhoods in cities, towns and villages in the state of Selangor afford to cater for the massive in-migration of people and ensure decent quality of life in fulfilling the State's commitment to achieve sustainable development objectives? This section explores several development indicators that attempts to gauge and compare situations in Selangor with the other states in Malaysia. Each of the 15 indicators for the 14 states in Malaysia were ranked from 1 (as the highest) to 14 (as the lowest). The indicators for economic development are: (a) Percent of labour force in manufacturing (b) Percent of labour force in agriculture (c) Per Capita GDP (d) Mean monthly household income (e) Gini Coefficient (f) Private cars registration per thousand population (g) Fixed telephone line per thousand population. From this list, 2 indicators are negative whereby; a lower value is more desirable i.e. indicator 2 and 5. The indicators for social development are: (a) Hospital beds per 100,000 population (b) Doctor : Population Ratio (c) Teacher : Pupil Ratio (primary school) (d) Teacher : Pupil Ratio (secondary school) (e) Post Office per 100,000 population (f) Public Library per 100,000 population (g) Public bus establishment per 100,000 population (h) Juvenile Offenders per thousand population. From this list, 4 indicators are negative whereby; a lower value is more desirable i.e. indicator 2, 3, 4 and 8

Table 2: Economic Development Indicators by State

| | Manufacturing Labor Force (%) (2002) ¹ | Agriculture Labor Force (%) (2002) ¹ | Per Capita GDP (RM in current prices) (2000) ² | Mean Monthly Gross Household Income (RM in current prices) (2002) ³ | Gini Coefficient (2002) ³ | Private Cars Registration | | Fixed Telephone Lines | |
|-----------------|---|---|---|--|--------------------------------------|---|--------|-----------------------|--|
| | | | | | | (per thousand population) (2002) ³ | | | |
| Johor | 33.6 | 10.4 | 13,954 | 2,963 | 0.4081 | 223.0 | 206.9 | | |
| Kedah | 26.3 | 15.9 | 8,919 | 1,966 | 0.4255 | 89.2 | 160.1* | | |
| Kelantan | 14.0 | 20.1 | 6,241 | 1,674 | 0.4422 | 88.5 | 107.8 | | |
| Melaka | 26.4 | 6.2 | 15,723 | 2,650 | 0.3859 | 214.0 | 231.7 | | |
| Negeri Sembilan | 22.3 | 17.5 | 12,791 | 2,739 | 0.4011 | 189.0 | 206.4 | | |
| Pahang | 12.8 | 29.4 | 10,370 | 1,991 | 0.4035 | 130.1 | 145.7 | | |
| Perak | 21.5 | 13.1 | 13,183 | 2,153 | 0.4171 | 170.8 | 210.4 | | |
| Perlis | 13.8 | 14.7 | 10,802 | 2,006 | 0.4368 | 44.6 | - | | |
| Penang | 40.4 | 1.8 | 21,469 | 3,496 | 0.4353 | 346.7 | 272.7 | | |
| Sabah | 10.9 | 31.0 | 9,123 | 2,406 | 0.4649 | 79.6 | 83.0 | | |
| Sarawak | 11.8 | 31.2 | 12,775 | 2,515 | 0.4451 | 135.2 | 130.5 | | |
| Selangor | 26.0 | 2.4 | 17,363 | 4,400 | 0.4234 | 149.5 | 244.1 | | |
| Terengganu | 12.4 | 13.6 | 22,994 | 1,837 | 0.4239 | 91.5 | 148.0 | | |
| Kuala Lumpur | 11.6 | 0.2 | 30,727 | 4,930 | 0.4481 | 994.5 | 231.7 | | |
| MALAYSIA | 21.7 | 13.8 | 14,584 | | | 203.9 | 187.3 | | |

Source: ¹ Department of Statistics (2004)² Economic Planning Unit (2001)³ Economic Planning Unit (2004)

* Including Perlis

Table 3: Ranking of Economic Development Indicators by State

| | Manufacturing Labor Force + | Agriculture Labor Force - | Per Capita GDP + | Mean Monthly Gross Household Income + | Gini Coefficient - | Private Cars Registration + | Fixed Telephone Lines + | Average Score | Rank |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|------|
| Penang | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 3.00 | 1 |
| Melaka | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3.71 | 2 |
| Johor | 2 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 4.14 | 3 |
| Selangor | 5 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 4.14 | 3 |
| Kuala Lumpur | 13 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 13 | 1 | 3 | 4.71 | 5 |
| Negeri Sembilan | 6 | 10 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 6.00 | 6 |
| Perak | 7 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 6.29 | 7 |
| Terengganu | 11 | 7 | 2 | 13 | 7 | 10 | 8 | 8.29 | 8 |
| Kedah | 4 | 9 | 13 | 12 | 8 | 11 | 7 | 9.14 | 9 |
| Pahang | 10 | 12 | 11 | 11 | 3 | 9 | 9 | 9.29 | 10 |
| Perlis | 9 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 14 | - | 10.17 | 11 |
| Sarawak | 12 | 14 | 9 | 7 | 12 | 8 | 10 | 10.29 | 12 |
| Kelantan | 8 | 11 | 14 | 14 | 11 | 12 | 11 | 11.57 | 13 |
| Sabah | 14 | 13 | 12 | 8 | 14 | 13 | 12 | 12.29 | 14 |

Table 4: Social Development Indicators by State

| | Hospital Beds per 100,000 population (2002) ¹ | Doctor : Population Ratio (2002) ² | Teacher : Pupil Ratio (Primary) (2001) ¹ | Teacher : Pupil Ratio (Secondary) (2001) ¹ | Post Office per 100,000 population (2002) ¹ | Public Library per 100,000 population (1999) ³ | Public Bus Establishment per 100,000 population (2000) ² | Juvenile Offenders per 100,000 population (2002) ¹ |
|-----------------|--|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| Johor | 190.8 | 1617 | 18.8 | 18.0 | 2.7 | 2.6 | 1.4 | 13.2 |
| Kedah | 141.2 | 1858 | 18.6 | 16.6 | 2.8* | 3.6 | 0.7 | 19.6 |
| Kelantan | 117.7 | 1545 | 19.6 | 16.3 | 2.1 | 0.9 | 0.4 | 24.4 |
| Melaka | 211.6 | 1075 | 18.0 | 16.7 | 3.6 | 3.1 | 2.2 | 10.4 |
| Negeri Sembilan | 168.0 | 1236 | 16.7 | 16.0 | 4.0 | 2.3 | 2.4 | 29.3 |
| Pahang | 137.4 | 1912 | 16.9 | 16.7 | 3.1 | 3.1 | 1.8 | 25.4 |
| Perak | 315.5 | 1376 | 17.9 | 17.5 | 3.8 | 2.2 | 1.9 | 24.1 |
| Perlis | 188.3 | 1490 | 17.0 | 14.7 | - | 6.8 | 0.5 | 29.4 |
| Penang | 272.7 | 1069 | 19.2 | 17.0 | 2.7 | 3.1 | 1.0 | 25.2 |
| Sabah | 118.8 | 2887 | 17.1 | 17.6 | 1.5 | 2.7 | 0.6 | 8.9 |
| Sarawak | 176.2 | 2499 | 17.0 | 17.8 | 2.9 | 13.4 | 1.7 | 14.9 |
| Selangor | 123.5 | 1543 | 20.6 | 17.5 | 1.8 | 1.2 | 0.3 | 20.6 |
| Terengganu | 133.3 | 2278 | 17.9 | 16.4 | 2.8 | 7.0 | 1.8 | 43.0 |
| Kuala Lumpur | 333.0 | 407 | 20.4 | 17.7 | 3.6 | 0.7 | 1.8 | 52.7 |
| MALAYSIA | 180.2 | 1406 | | | 2.6 | 3.4 | 1.2 | 21.8 |

Source: ¹ Department of Statistics (2004)² Calculated from Population Census and State/District Data Bank 2003 (Department of Statistics, 2001 and 2004)³ Calculated from Population Census and Social Statistics Bulletin 2000 (Department of Statistics, 2001 and 2000)

* Including Perlis

Table 5: Ranking of Social Development Indicators by State

| | Hospital Beds + | Doctor : Population Ratio - | Teacher : Pupil Ratio (Primary) - | Teacher : Pupil Ratio (Secondary) - | Post Office + | Public Library + | Public Bus Establishment + | Juvenile Offenders - | Average Score | Rank |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|---------------|------|
| Melaka | 4 | 3 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 3.88 | 1 |
| Negeri Sembilan | 8 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 10 | 4.38 | 2 |
| Perak | 2 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 7 | 5.13 | 3 |
| Perlis | 6 | 6 | 3 | 1 | - | 3 | 10 | 11 | 5.71 | 4 |
| Sarawak | 7 | 13 | 3 | 11 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 6.13 | 5 |
| Penang | 3 | 2 | 9 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 12 | 6.50 | 6 |
| Pahang | 10 | 11 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 9 | 6.38 | 7 |
| Kedah | 9 | 10 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 6.75 | 8 |
| Kuala Lumpur | 1 | 1 | 11 | 10 | 3 | 12 | 4 | 14 | 7.00 | 9 |
| Johor | 5 | 9 | 8 | 12 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 7.13 | 10 |
| Terengganu | 11 | 12 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 13 | 7.13 | 10 |
| Sabah | 13 | 14 | 4 | 9 | 10 | 6 | 9 | 1 | 8.25 | 12 |
| Kelantan | 14 | 8 | 10 | 3 | 8 | 11 | 11 | 8 | 9.13 | 13 |
| Selangor | 12 | 7 | 12 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 12 | 6 | 9.50 | 14 |

Comparing Economic Development Indicators

Table 2 lists the data on seven (7) economic development indicators for all states in Malaysia. Based on the ranking of these indicators shown in Table 3, Selangor ranked second for mean monthly gross household income and fixed telephone line per thousand population and third for percent of labor force in agriculture. For the other economic development indicators, Selangor did not rank lower than position 7. This reflects that the economic growth that has taken place in the state during the past two decades had caused a tremendous increase in wage as reflected in the mean monthly household income of RM4400. Other than the federal territory of Kuala Lumpur, which has the highest mean monthly household income and the state of Penang with RM3496, the other states could hardly reach RM3000. The fact that people become more affluent is reflected in the number of telephone lines per thousand population; whereby the state of Selangor is not far from the state of Penang (rank 1), federal territory of Kuala Lumpur and the state of Melaka (both at rank 3). Being the most urbanized state, Selangor, (again with Kuala Lumpur, Penang and Melaka) depicts the characteristic of a developed society whereby employment in the agricultural sector diminishes. This is in-line with the literature that defines urbanization as the transformation of rural agricultural societies into industrial urban ones (Reissman, 1970).

Comparing Social Development Indicators

Table 4 lists the data on eight (8) social development indicators for all states in Malaysia. Based on the ranking of these indicators shown in Table 5, Selangor did not occupy the top ranks when compared to the other states. For teacher: pupil ratio for primary school, Selangor ranked the lowest with a ratio of one teacher for 20.6 pupils while Kuala Lumpur the second lowest with a ratio of one teacher for 20.4 pupils. The less developed states like Negeri Sembilan, Pahang, and Perlis ranked high on this indicator with a ratio of one teacher for 16 to 17 students. The rapid increase of population due to a large extent on the in-migration of people from the rural areas and other towns into Kuala Lumpur and Selangor has certainly increased enrolments and created tremendous demands on the existing schools. Other than schools, the rapid increase in population also puts a strain on health facilities in Selangor. Comparing hospital beds per 100,000 population, with a ratio of 123 hospital beds, Selangor is third lowest, before Sabah with a ratio of 118 and Kelantan with a ratio of 117 hospital beds for 100,000 population. For other social development indicators, Selangor did not rank better than position 6.

CONCLUSION

The overall results show that the states of Selangor and Johor share the third rank, behind the states of Penang and Melaka in the economic development indicators. However, for social development indicators, Selangor ranked the lowest among all the fourteen states. Based on the indicators being analyzed, the case study of Selangor had proven that social development in the state was not at par with the rapidly growing economy and the extensive physical development that had taken place. It also indicates that the provision of social facilities could not cope with the rapid increase in population as the state becomes more urbanized and people become more affluent. Urbanization, a necessary process in becoming a developed society brought about tremendous pressure on existing social facilities. Unless the existing facilities being upgraded, new facilities being built and both actions taken at the same pace or faster than the population growth, the urbanized state like Selangor would always lag behind the other states (that are less developed) in many of the social development indicators. In the transformation into a developed status and to fulfill the State's sustainable development agenda, greater emphasis should be given towards the social aspects of development. The National Social Policy introduced in 2003 by the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development provides a platform for the implementation and management of social development to be in line with the economic development in the effort to build a strong and balanced society. To achieve satisfaction and excellence in community living, each individual is entitled to enjoy basic amenities and other needs through proper delivery of social services that encompass society's welfare, health, education, employment, housing, values and culture, safety and healthy environment (Ministry of Unity and Community Development, 2003). The Selangor State Structure Plan 2002-2020 had acknowledged the importance of social development and highlighted that upgrading the provision of social facilities and infrastructure is needed to produce a secure and competitive society, one that is peaceful, united, healthy and prosperous. The State of Selangor is also fortunate to have outlined various strategies towards achieving sustainable development objectives in 2001. Among these objectives, there were several strategies related to improving the quality of life as stated in Agenda 21 Selangor (Town and Country Planning Department of Selangor and the Institute for Environment and Development, 2001). Since the data being used in this analysis are for the year 1999-2002, it would be interesting to look at the indicators again after 5 or 10 years after the implementation of the blueprint for sustainable development in Selangor.

and the implementation of policies in the Selangor Structure Plan since 2002.

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