

**PLANNING MALAYSIA:***Journal of the Malaysian Institute of Planners***VOLUME 17 ISSUE 2 (2019), Page 280 – 289****EMPOWERING COMMUNITY MOVEMENT: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE****Aisyah Abu Bakar<sup>1</sup>, Mariana Mohamed Osman<sup>2</sup> & Muhammad Faris Abdullah<sup>3</sup>**

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**Abstract**

The living environment in which humans dwell in and are surrounded by, and thus include the immediate built environment, is fertile ground for personal development leading to community advancement. *Issue:* Ample amount of studies have been carried out on the influence of personal empowerment (PE) on community movement (CM). Little attention was given to the empirical evidence of the impact of PE on CM. *Purpose:* This paper sets out to confirm the statistical predictability of CM based on PE. *Approach:* Multiple Correlation and Multiple Linear Regression were executed to assess linear associations and parameters of linear equations to predict CM components based on PE items. *Findings:* Majority of PE items were significant predictors of CM components and ‘*setting goals and striving to meet goals*’ was the strongest predictor of CM.

**Keywords:** community movement, personal empowerment

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## INTRODUCTION

Interdependency between human and other humans (HIH) is a significant causal agent of subjective sustainable well-being (SSWB). Understanding HIH helps architects plan and design houses, cities and other kinds of human habitations to enhance individual empowerment resulting to improved community development. Awareness deficits on HIH and SSWB can lead to users' dissatisfaction, alienation and eventually weak community interaction. Personal empowerment (PE) and community movement (CM) are dimensions of HIH. Many authors have theoretically recognised the positive impact of PE on CM. This paper measures the statistical predictability of CM based on PE.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Case studies based on articles from selected Asian Journals from the year 2011 onwards highlight conditional factors and potential determinants of Community Movement (CM). Table 1 summarises these findings.

**Table 1** Conditional factors and potential determinants for community movement

Conditional Factors	Potential Determinants	References
Sensory overload (over-stimulation from the environment due to overcrowding - how long the neighbourhood has been established, the diversity composition of its people and the surrounding developments), and the degree of cohesion	collective actions (taking actions together for a common objective), inclusion (embracing), trust, and belongingness	Hamdan, Yusof, & Marzukhi (2014)
Social capital, participation, awareness, concern and care for each other, inter-racial relationships, sense of belongingness, a sense of trust and approach on shared life values and shared social obligations.	proactivity, tolerance, a sense of trust and protection (the feeling of safe and assured), and shared values	Ahmad Marzuki et al. (2014)
Social embeddedness (a set of relationship defined as institutional), perceived support from friends, family and neighbours, availability of assistance when needed and availability of someone to count on	Willingness to help others, friendliness (sociability), closeness (strong connection), trust, and shared values	Ibrahim & Hamid (2014)
Sense of integration (incorporation of community members), safety and trust among neighbours, trust among people in general, trust among members in formal groups, openness to communicate and discuss any issues concerning the community	Civic engagement (collective actions to resolve issues of public concerns), awareness (concern on others and local issues), trust and helpfulness	Chong, Ten, Er, & Koh (2013)
Inconsistent priorities (conditions regarded as more important), motives (the stimulus to an action) and contexts of needs (circumstances of requirements)	Shared values, ability to compromise, empathy (the ability to understand others)	Mahadi & Sino (2013)
Participation (attendance in organized activities), trust (maintaining social interaction), and social network (offer help, readiness to help and resources of help).	Self-help (the use of one's own effort to achieve things), trust, and participation	Nawaz (2017)
Willingness to celebrate diversity: appreciate each other's contribution, helping others in needs. Ethnic composition and geographical population – the lesser diversity, the higher willingness to tolerate others.	Tolerance to diversity (to accept something foreign to one's own through openness, appreciation, helpfulness and respect of others)	Yassin et al. (2013)
Racial microaggression (indirect and subtle form of racism in everyday life intentionally and unintentionally executed by the perpetrators and often catch the recipients off-guard)	Egalitarian behaviours (actions upon the belief that people are equal and deserve equal opportunities)	Lino, Hashim, & Ricardo (2017)
Trust (reliable surrounding), and fear of the unknown (unpleasant emotion of something unfamiliar)	Social interaction, tolerance, respect, open mindedness	Rahyla (2017)

Meaningful activities (activities that have important purposes, useful qualities, and consequential)	Volunteering (freely offering to undertake tasks),	Tunku, Rahman, & Campus (2017)
Attitudinal factors (instrumental values, desirability of volunteering, attitude and satisfaction from volunteering) and motivational factors (altruism, egoism, religiosity, social obligation, political interest)	Volunteer commitment (keenness to offer assistance), and solidarity (mutual support within a group)	Thomas, Selvadurai, Er, Lyndon, & Moorthy (2011)
Gender – female score higher in Islamic religiosity (striving, universality, integrity, respect, surrendering, trust, humility, and practical spiritual consciousness).	Tolerance, moderation (restraining self from something extreme)	Ortega & Krauss (2013)

The findings from the case studies generate three significant components of CM: (i) Proactive Participation (CMA), (ii) Affability and Respect for Diversity (CMb) and (iii) Belongingness (CMc).

**Table 2** Components and determinants of community movement

Definition of CM	Components	Indicators	Code
Sense of inclusiveness expressed in open and friendly interaction, awareness and helpfulness in the social network and initiatives to be more engaged	Proactive Participation	conscious of new updates	CMA
		participating enthusiastically in organized activities	
		assuming responsibility when foreseeing community issues	
	Affability and Respect for Diversity	approachable to people of different ethnicity and religion	CMb
		approachable to people of different ranks and status	
		enjoying social interaction with community	
		adapting and adjusting fast to new social environment	
	Belongingness	ability to influence shared decisions	CMc
		offering assistance voluntarily when necessary	
feeling sense of belonging with the community			

Personal Empowerment (PE) manifests in the opportunity to exercise control, voice and choice with regards to social surroundings. Qualities adhere to PE include (i) self-motivation with regards to goal orientation, autonomy and self-regulation (Chin, Khoo, & Low, 2012; Kok, 2016), (ii) social acceptance and coherence with others (Nesbit, Jepsen, Demirian, & Ho, 2012; Kadir, Omar, Desa, & Yusoff, 2013; Zamani, Khairudin, Sulaiman, Halim, & Nasir, 2013), and (iii) composure, stability and resilience (Sulaiman et al., 2013; Sipon, Nasrah, Nazli, Abdullah, & Othman, 2014).

**Table 3** Determinants of personal empowerment

Definition of PE	Indicators	Code
Self-esteem in taking control over life along with sense of composure to progress in the social environment	setting goals and striving to meet goals	PE1
	striving and working hard even for easy goals	PE2
	monitoring behaviours to suit with situations	PE3
	knowing when somebody is offended	PE4
	ensuring others are comfortable when making deals	PE5
	able to be friendly with distasteful persons when necessary	PE6
	able to work out solutions during stress and difficulties	PE7
	tackling problems efficiently in unexpected conditions	PE8
	feeling energetic for daily routines and activities	PE9
	having hardly distracted and focus mind	PE10

Based on theoretical underpinnings, this research hypothesises that CM components are predictable by PE. The following sections provide empirical evidence to the predictability of CMa, CMb and CMc based on PE items.

**METHOD**

A sample of 4,315 was gathered after the data screening process. The Malaysian respondents were given an 11-point Likert scale to respond to questionnaire items which include the components of CM and the ten (10) PE items. Pearson correlation analyses were conducted to observe if there were linear associations between the CM components and PE items. Ensuing correlation analyses, multiple linear regression analyses were conducted to estimate parameters of the linear equations used to predict values of CMa, CMb and CMc from PE items.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

At 95% confidence level, there were statistically significant positive correlations between (i) CMa and each of PE items, (ii) CMb and each of PE items, and (iii) CMc and each of PE items. The null hypotheses claiming there are no statistically significant correlations between (i) CMa and respective PE items, (ii) CMb and respective PE items, and (iii) CMc and respective PE items were all rejected.

**Table 4** Multiple Correlations between PE items and CMa, CMb and CMc

Correlation Strength Threshold (Dancey & Reidy, 2004)											
	0	.1	.2	.3	.4	.5	.6	.7	.8	.9	1
	zero	weak			moderate			strong		perfect	
H <sub>0</sub> There is no statistically significant correlation between CMa and respective PE items											
H <sub>0</sub> There is no statistically significant correlation between CMb and respective PE items											
H <sub>0</sub> There is no statistically significant correlation between CMc and respective PE items											
DV	Stats	PE1	PE2	PE3	PE4	PE5	PE6	PE7	PE8	PE9	PE10
CMa	r	.385**	.384**	.362**	.352**	.343**	.353**	.347**	.340**	.352**	.322**
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315
CMb	r	.416**	.420**	.415**	.367**	.404**	.352**	.371**	.351**	.372**	.331**
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315
CMc	r	.420**	.430**	.421**	.390**	.419**	.362**	.383**	.373**	.397**	.358**
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315	4315

Statistical Interpretation of Multiple Correlation Analyses

CMa	At 95% confidence level, there were statistically significant and moderate correlations between CMa and (i) PE1 (r =.385, p = .000); (ii) PE2 (r =.384, p = .000); (iii) PE3 (r =.362, p = .000); (iv) PE4 (r =.352, p = .000); (v) PE5 (r =.343, p = .000); (vi) PE6 (r =.353, p = .000); (vii) PE7 (r =.347, p = .000); (viii) PE8 (r =.340, p = .000); (ix) PE9 (r =.352, p = .000); (x) PE10 (r =.322, p = .000).
CMb	At 95% confidence level, there were statistically significant and moderate correlations between CMb and (i) PE1 (r =.416, p = .000); (ii) PE2 (r =.420, p = .000); (iii) PE3 (r =.415, p = .000); (iv) PE5 (r =.404, p = .000). Additionally, there were statistically significant and weak correlations between

	CMb and (v) PE4 (r=.367, p = .000); (vi) PE6 (r=.352, p = .000); (vii) PE7 (r=.371, p = .000); (viii) PE8 (r=.351, p = .000); (ix) PE9 (r=.372, p = .000); (x) PE10 (r=.331, p = .000).
CMc	At 95% confidence level, there were statistically significant and moderate correlations between CMc and (i) PE1 (r =.420, p = .000); (ii) PE2 (r =.430, p = .000); (iii) PE3 (r =.421, p = .000); (iv) PE5 (r =.419, p = .000). Additionally, there were statistically significant and weak correlations between CMc and (v) PE4 (r =.390, p = .000); (vi) PE6 (r =.362, p = .000); (vii) PE7 (r =.383, p = .000); (viii) PE8 (r =.373, p = .000); (ix) PE9 (r =.397, p = .000); (x) PE10 (r =.358, p = .000).

Three (3) multiple regression analyses were carried out to predict the values of each of dependent variables (i) CMA, (ii) CMb and (iii) CMc given the set of PE explanatory variables (PE1, PE2, PE3, PE4, PE5, PE6, PE7, PE8, PE9, and PE10).

**Table 5** Multiple Linear Regression – PE predicting CMA

H <sub>0</sub>							
There will be no significant prediction of CMA by PE1, PE2, PE3, PE4, PE5, PE6, PE7, PE8, PE9 and PE10							
Model Summary							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson		
1	.449	.202	.200	1.34629	1.649		
ANOVA							
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.		
Regression	1971.479	10	197.148	108.772	.000		
Residual	7800.959	4304	1.812				
Total	9772.439	4314					
Coefficients							
Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	$\beta$			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	3.651	.128		28.439	.000	3.399	3.903
PE1	.115	.020	.135	5.624	.000	.075	.155
PE2	.068	.023	.076	2.910	.004	.022	.114
PE3	.049	.021	.054	2.362	.018	.008	.089
PE4	.056	.022	.058	2.566	.010	.013	.098
PE5	-.010	.021	-.011	-.473	.637	-.052	.032
PE6	.125	.020	.131	6.245	.000	.086	.164
PE7	.016	.023	.017	.680	.497	-.029	.060
PE8	-.017	.024	-.020	-.709	.478	-.065	.030
PE9	.065	.023	.075	2.773	.006	.019	.111
PE10	.031	.019	.038	1.630	.103	-.006	.067

A multiple regression was generated to predict CMA based on PE items. R value of .449 indicated a satisfactory level of prediction ( $R > 0.4$ ). The Durbin-Watson statistic was 1.649 which is between 1.5 and 2.5 and therefore the data was not autocorrelated. A significant regression equation was found,  $F(10, 4304)$

= 108.772,  $p = .000$ , with an  $R^2$  of .202; indicating that the proportion of variance in CMa that can be explained by PE items was 20.2%.

At 95% confidence level, PE1 ( $B = .115$ ,  $t = 5.624$ ,  $p = .000$ ), PE2 ( $B = .068$ ,  $t = 2.910$ ,  $p = .004$ ), PE3 ( $B = .049$ ,  $t = 2.362$ ,  $p = .018$ ), PE4 ( $B = .056$ ,  $t = 2.566$ ,  $p = .010$ ), PE6 ( $B = .125$ ,  $t = 6.245$ ,  $p = .000$ ) and PE9 ( $B = .065$ ,  $t = 2.773$ ,  $p = .006$ ) were significant predictors of CMa. On the contrary, it was found that PE5 ( $B = -.010$ ,  $t = -.473$ ,  $p = .637$ ), PE7 ( $B = .016$ ,  $t = .680$ ,  $p = .497$ ), PE8 ( $B = -.017$ ,  $t = .680$ ,  $p = .497$ ) and PE10 ( $B = .031$ ,  $t = 1.630$ ,  $p = .103$ ) were not significant predictors of CMa.

Personal Empowerment (PE) items account for 20.2% of Proactive Participation (CMa). Seven (7) of PE items were significant predictors of CMa.

**Table 6** Multiple Linear Regression – PE predicting CMb

$H_0$							
There will be no significant prediction of CMb by PE1, PE2, PE3, PE4, PE5, PE6, PE7, PE8, PE9 and PE10							
Model Summary							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson		
1	.485	.235	.233	1.35845	1.692		
ANOVA							
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.		
Regression	2442.280	10	244.228	132.345	.000		
Residual	7942.545	4304	1.845				
Total	10384.825	4314					
Coefficients							
Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std Error	$\beta$			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	3.675	.130		28.369	.000	3.421	3.929
PE1	.113	.021	.129	5.478	.000	.072	.153
PE2	.072	.024	.078	3.073	.002	.026	.119
PE3	.098	.021	.106	4.724	.000	.057	.139
PE4	.000	.022	.000	-.009	.993	-.043	.043
PE5	.104	.021	.112	4.848	.000	.062	.146
PE6	.062	.020	.063	3.069	.002	.022	.101
PE7	.040	.023	.044	1.755	.079	-.005	.086
PE8	-.035	.024	-.039	-1.443	.149	-.083	.013
PE9	.063	.024	.071	2.659	.008	.017	.109
PE10	.021	.019	.026	1.127	.260	-.016	.058

A multiple regression was generated to predict CMb based on PE items. R value of .485 indicated a satisfactory level of prediction ( $R > 0.5$ ). The Durbin-Watson statistic was 1.692 which is between 1.5 and 2.5 and therefore the data was not autocorrelated. A significant regression equation was found,  $F(10, 4304)$

= 132.345,  $p = .000$ , with an  $R^2$  of .235; indicating that the proportion of variance in Cmb that can be explained by PE items was 23.5%.

At 95% confidence level, PE1 ( $B = .113$ ,  $t = 5.478$ ,  $p = .000$ ), PE2 ( $B = .072$ ,  $t = 3.073$ ,  $p = .002$ ), PE3 ( $B = .098$ ,  $t = 4.724$ ,  $p = .000$ ), PE5 ( $B = .104$ ,  $t = 4.848$ ,  $p = .000$ ), PE6 ( $B = .062$ ,  $t = 3.069$ ,  $p = .002$ ) and PE9 ( $B = .063$ ,  $t = 2.659$ ,  $p = .008$ ) were significant predictors of Cmb. On the contrary, it was found that PE4 ( $B = .000$ ,  $t = -.009$ ,  $p = .993$ ), PE7 ( $B = .040$ ,  $t = 1.755$ ,  $p = .075$ ), PE8 ( $B = -.035$ ,  $t = -1.443$ ,  $p = .149$ ) and PE10 ( $B = .021$ ,  $t = 1.127$ ,  $p = .260$ ) were not significant predictors of Cmb.

Personal Empowerment (PE) items account for 23.5% of Affability and Respect for Diversity (Cmb). Six (6) of PE items were significant predictors of Cmb.

**Table 7** Multiple Linear Regression – PE predicting CMc

H <sub>0</sub>							
There will be no significant prediction of CMc by PE1, PE2, PE3, PE4, PE5, PE6, PE7, PE8, PE9 and PE10							
Model Summary							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson		
1	.500	.250	.248	1.34241	1.652		
ANOVA							
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.		
Regression	2582.930	10	258.293	143.333	.000		
Residual	7756.035	4304	1.802				
Total	10338.965	4314					
Coefficients							
Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std Error	$\beta$			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	3.478	.128		27.169	.000	3.227	3.729
PE1	.094	.020	.107	4.605	.000	.054	.134
PE2	.081	.023	.088	3.481	.001	.035	.127
PE3	.081	.021	.088	3.955	.000	.041	.121
PE4	.033	.022	.034	1.539	.124	-.009	.076
PE5	.106	.021	.114	4.985	.000	.064	.147
PE6	.048	.020	.049	2.401	.016	.009	.087
PE7	.018	.023	.020	.785	.433	-.027	.062
PE8	-.023	.024	-.026	-.954	.340	-.071	.024
PE9	.080	.023	.090	3.431	.001	.034	.126
PE10	.041	.019	.049	2.174	.030	.004	.077

A multiple regression was generated to predict CMc based on PE items. R value of .500 indicated an acceptable level of prediction ( $R > 0.5$ ). The Durbin-Watson statistic was 1.652 which is between 1.5 and 2.5 and therefore the data was not autocorrelated. A significant regression equation was found,  $F(10, 4304)$

= 143.333,  $p = .000$ , with an  $R^2$  of .250; indicating that the proportion of variance in CMc that can be explained by PE items was 25%.

At 95% confidence level, PE1 ( $B = .094$ ,  $t = 4.605$ ,  $p = .000$ ), PE2 ( $B = .081$ ,  $t = 3.481$ ,  $p = .001$ ), PE3 ( $B = .081$ ,  $t = 3.955$ ,  $p = .000$ ), PE5 ( $B = .106$ ,  $t = 4.985$ ,  $p = .000$ ), PE6 ( $B = .048$ ,  $t = 2.401$ ,  $p = .016$ ), PE9 ( $B = .080$ ,  $t = 3.431$ ,  $p = .001$ ) and PE10 ( $B = .041$ ,  $t = 2.174$ ,  $p = .030$ ) were significant predictors of CMc. On the contrary, it was found that PE4 ( $B = .033$ ,  $t = 1.539$ ,  $p = .124$ ), PE7 ( $B = .018$ ,  $t = .785$ ,  $p = .433$ ) and PE8 ( $B = -.023$ ,  $t = -.954$ ,  $p = .340$ ) were not significant predictors of CMc.

Personal Empowerment (PE) items account for 25% of Belongingness (CMc). Seven (7) of PE items were significant predictors of CMc.

**Table 8** Summary of findings

		IV (Predictor Variables) - $\beta$									
		PE1	PE2	PE3	PE4	PE5	PE6	PE7	PE8	PE9	PE10
DV (Outcome Variables)	CMa	<b>.135</b> ✓	<b>.076</b> ✓	.054 ✓	.058 ✓	-.011 ✗	<b>.131</b> ✓	.017 ✗	-.020 ✗	.075 ✓	.038 ✗
	CMb	<b>.129</b> ✓	.078 ✓	<b>.106</b> ✓	.000 ✗	<b>.112</b> ✓	.063 ✓	.044 ✗	-.039 ✗	.071 ✓	.026 ✗
	CMc	<b>.107</b> ✓	.088 ✓	<b>.088</b> ✓	.034 ✗	<b>.114</b> ✓	.049 ✓	.020 ✗	-.026 ✗	.090 ✓	.049 ✓

✓ = statistically significant predictor; ✗ = not statistically significant predictor

DV	Indicators	IV	Top 3 Strongest Predictors	$\beta$
CMa Proactive Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conscious of new updates</li> <li>participating enthusiastically in organized activities</li> <li>assuming responsibility when foreseeing community issues</li> </ul>	PE1	<b>setting goals and striving to meet goals</b>	<b>.135</b>
		PE6	able to be friendly with distasteful persons when necessary	.131
		PE2	striving and working hard even for easy goals	.076
CMb Affability and Respect for Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>approachable to people of different ethnicity and religion</li> <li>approachable to people of different ranks and status</li> <li>enjoying social interaction with community</li> <li>adapting and adjusting fast to new social environment</li> </ul>	PE1	<b>setting goals and striving to meet goals</b>	<b>.129</b>
		PE5	ensuring others are comfortable when making deals	.112
		PE3	monitoring behaviours to suit with situations	.106
CMc Belonging- ness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ability to influence shared decisions</li> <li>offering assistance voluntarily when necessary</li> <li>feeling sense of belonging with the community</li> </ul>	PE5	ensuring others are comfortable when making deals	.114
		PE1	<b>setting goals and striving to meet goals</b>	<b>.107</b>
		PE3	monitoring behaviours to suit with situations	.088

The empirical evidence reveals that the majority of PE items significantly account for CMa, CMb and CMc. PE1 which stand for ‘setting goals and striving to meet goals’ was in the top three strongest predictors for all components of CM — thus suggesting that community members’ goal setting and commitment to attain those goals are the key to community advancement. Goal setting calls for inspiration, while commitment requires concentration and sense of dedication. Designs strategies that exhibit respect to local history and regional character,



well-designed and -maintained civic buildings, as well as mixed land uses to allow various activities can revitalise communal happenings and promotes a sense of belongingness. Such conducive neighbourhoods empower community members to restore social and economic fabric leading to positive community movement.

## CONCLUSION

HIH in SSWB accounts for personal development in relation to the surrounding context. This paper proves that community movement is a significant outcome of personal empowerment. The results warrant for further tests on the constructs explained in this paper.

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