

**Thesis Title:** An Investigation of Fire Emergency Preparedness in the Faculty of Engineering in Universiti Teknologi Malaysia in Johor Bahru.

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## ABSTRACT

Fire in learning institutions is a public concern because of the increased incidences, injuries and deaths of innocent immediate school stakeholders not to mention the destruction caused by the fire to the institution buildings such as the halls of residence and lecture rooms. Preparedness to fire disaster will help to minimize loss of lives, property and learning time. The purpose of this study was to investigate fire disaster preparedness in the UTM engineering faculty in Johor Bahru. The study was guided by the following objectives; to establish the adequacy of firefighting facilities in UTM engineering faculty in Johor Bahru, to determine the extent to which UTM engineering faculty buildings are constructed in relation to policy provisions pertaining to fire disaster preparedness, to establish how UTM engineering faculty has put in place fire safety plans as a measure of fire disaster preparedness, to determine whether UTM engineering faculty in Johor Bahru trains workers and students on appropriate responses in case of fire outbreak and to make recommendations from the study. The research adopted a descriptive survey design. The target population was the academic staff, supporting staff and students in all the six schools in UTM engineering faculty in Johor Bahru. Simple random sampling was used to give every subject an equal chance to be selected. Data were collected by means of questionnaires which were administered to the respondents through drop and pick method, and the site observation checklist. Data collected from respondents were analyzed through descriptive statistics. The results were presented using frequency tables. Basing on the study findings, majority of the respondents reported that a few specific firefighting facilities in schools were adequate and annually inspected contributing to a low level of fire disaster preparedness. In relation to faculty buildings and fire safety, in majority of the schools, lecture rooms are not congested, laboratories have two doors and all laboratory chemicals are properly stored, assembly points and all exit routes are well labeled. This indicated a high level of fire disaster preparedness. On safety plans, most schools have evacuation plans, but they have never used them. The fact that most schools have never experienced the use of the evacuation plans in the schools, shows that in case of fire disaster, the stakeholders may not benefit from them. Most schools do not remind the stakeholders of these plans and this means that the plans may not help them in case of a fire disaster. Most schools lack evacuation plans for vulnerable persons. All these are signs of fire disaster unpreparedness. On training in fire safety, most workers and students have not been trained on appropriate responses in case of fire outbreak and most of them may not know what to do in case of fire disaster leading to fire disaster unpreparedness. Basing on the study findings, the faculty management should consider adding more firefighting facilities like sprinkler system, reliable water supply, fire boots, suits, helmets, hoods, gloves, sacks of sands in buildings, fire blankets, fire fighters' outfits, fire protective clothing, fire hydrants, fire escape ladder and self-contained breathing apparatus so that they become proportional to the number of buildings and people in the schools. It is also recommended that windows should not be gridded, and doors should open outwards. In addition, UTM engineering faculty stakeholders should be made aware of evacuation plans. Finally, all UTM engineering faculty stakeholders should be trained on fire safety. The researcher suggested that a similar study be carried out in other UTM faculties in Johor Bahru to check on fire disaster preparedness in the schools as cases of fire disasters are on the rise.