

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

There is a lot of superstitious belief phenomena occurred nowadays in Indonesia. Superstitious belief is something that traditionally owned by people who believe in taboos. Even though there is no reason that can explain why it can be, yet people still believe and consider it in each of their action.

One of the examples is the number belief. There is a lot of superstitious belief related to numbers. For Chinese people, number 4 (four) is a number which can bring a bad luck because it sounds like 'death' in Mandarin language. In the United States, people believe that Friday the thirteen (13<sup>th</sup>) is a bad day and or date for them to do any activities; any activities that they do will fail or not getting well. Another superstition about number is a wedding date choices. People tend to search or choose some dates and a day which they believe is a good date or date to have a wedding ceremony.

Another superstitious belief is related to color. For Chinese people, red color is a sign of good luck because the color is bright; in contrast, black color will bring a bad luck for them. In Indonesia for example, people who visit Parang Tritis beach cannot wear green outfit, because they believe that Nyi Roro Kidul who is believed as the queen of that beach like green color, therefore whenever people who wear green to that beach, they will drown in the waves.

Along with these superstitious beliefs, there is an interesting phenomenon about real estate industry in Indonesia, especially in big cities and its surrounding. By time passes, many new real estate's built and the price of some of the land in some area is also increasing. This affects the price of housing in Indonesia becomes more expensive day by day in some specific area, especially housing that is located in a strategic area.

There are numbers of superstitious beliefs phenomenon in real estate industry that people believe it holds a negative belief among real estate industry. People's superstitious belief towards property purchasement is strong to determine their purchase intention. Therefore, in this research, the author wants to investigate about whether or not the marketing strategies such as location and price and the superstitious belief that people held about buying property can affect people's purchase intention towards it. This research is the replication research continuation from the original journal by Thomas Kramer and Lauren Block with the title of "Conscious and Non-conscious Components of Superstitious Beliefs in Judgment and Decision Making". Moreover, this current research is a part of the author's thesis to complete her undergraduate study program and fulfill a requirement of obtaining Sarjana degree.

## **1.2 Superstitious Belief in Asia**

All over the world, superstitious belief can be different between each country, race, tribe, and even religion. In Asia, most of the people own similar

superstitious belief; for example a superstitious belief about cat. According to Dobbs (2015) if a black cat crosses in front of a person, that person will experience something bad. Another superstitious belief about cat is when a person is driving a car or riding a motorcycle and then hit a cat, that person should bury the cat because they believe that cat is a sacred animal. Some people have their own belief that they should bury the cat with their own clothes and some of them believe that they should flush the car or motorcycle with flower water.

There are a lot of superstitions that Chinese people believe, for example they believe if one marries a person who has three or six years different, it will bring bad luck for the couple (Rituparnaa, 2010). Based on article *Chinese customs, superstitions and traditions* (2004) Chinese people also believe that if they have their nail-cut at night, they are cursing their parents to death. Sasha (2012) also state about the popular superstition in Chinese people is related to number and color. They believe that number 8 is a luck number because the pronunciation of number 8 in Chinese language means prosperity and luck. They are even willing to pay more money to buy a number with 8 for their car. Red is a bright color and is believed to bring luck for them. In contrast, number 4 for Chinese people is considered as an unlucky number because the pronunciation of number 4 in Chinese language means death. Therefore, if we pay attention to some of office building or apartment and other building, there will be no 4<sup>th</sup> floor.

According to Mack, another popular superstition among Chinese people is to eat noodle when they are having special occasion, such as birthday, marriage, and so on. If in Japan, a person who goes to a funeral should throw salt over

himself or herself before entering their house (Rituparnaa, 2010), for Chinese people, they should bring red onion and a nail with them, after they visit the funeral, they should throw the red onion and nail on the street. This action is believed to be cleansing. According to Maki (2009), in Japan and China, it is believed that chopsticks should not be stuck upright into food, especially rice. Chopsticks in their culture are only stuck upright into rice on the bowl when at a funeral. In Thailand, they believe that in choosing a Thai name, most of people consult with a monk to select a name that will bring the child good luck, good fortune, good health and happiness (Rituparnaa, 2010).

There are some superstitious beliefs that commonly practiced by Indonesian people that might be similar with the others. Opening an umbrella in a house or building might bring a bad luck for all the people who live in the house or building (Orenstein, 1994). Walking under a stair will also bring the person a bad luck over seven generations (Berril, 2012). According to Feng Shui World (2007), another superstitious belief that is owned by Indonesian people is that they believe if they sweep the house at night, they will sweep their luck and prosperity. Relating the superstitious belief towards house, Indonesian people believe that building a house facing north would cause the owner to get lack of prosperity. They also believe that tusuk sate house will bring a bad luck to the owner because the main gate is facing directly to the external 'objects'. House with a water-balloon shaped with bigger size at the front of the house is believed to bring a bad luck for the owner because prosperity and luck can get out easily from them.

### **1.3 Superstitious Belief in Purchasing Property in Indonesia**

Even though developer knows majority of people believe in superstitious belief, they continue to sell tusuk sate house because in their side, it is still considered as money. If for developer, tusuk sate house is still money make even though in selling tusuk sate house needs more time than the normal house. However, sometimes there will be no tusuk sate house sold in a complex because of the concept decoration; the developer might design it as a garden to avoid the tusuk sate house. If logically speaking, tusuk sate house will be sold cheaper in majority, however sometimes it just prices the same, depend on the area location. If tusuk sate house is sold, majority of tusuk sate houses are used to become the customers houses not their investment because they also know that tusuk sate house is harder to sell. Some of the customers who buy it are the people who do not believe the superstition of tusuk sate house. This becomes one of the tricks for the developer to sell tusuk sate house. Another trick is that tusuk sate house becomes the last alternative for the developer to offer; it also becomes the last order from the customer. The other trick for the developer to sell the tusuk sate house is to lower the price than sell it as a ready-stay-house which the developer might suggest to add on a garden in front of the house or something to block the so called “tusuk sate” design. In contrast, if they sell it to people who strongly believe tusuk sate house’s superstition, whatever they do for the promotion, the customer will not buy it.

Beside tusuk sate house, in housing property world, the house which faces east is the most favorite because people believe that morning sunshine is good for

them and will bring them a shiny day. Not all people like house which is located at the corner of the row because it is more expensive.

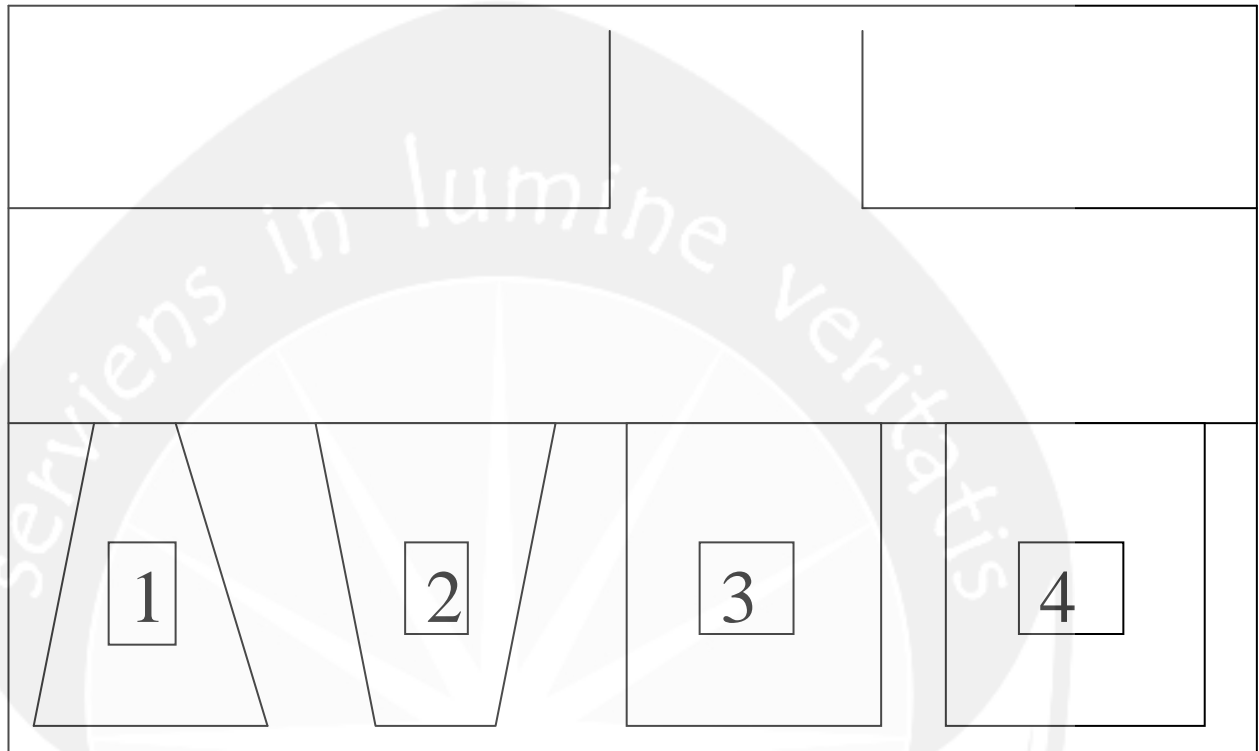


Figure 1.1: Typical of House Design

Source: Houseplans.com

According to the above figure, there are four examples of house design that usually offered by the developer and they are related to the superstitious belief issue. The number one design, it is more preferable than the second design. Even though the design is same unless one is rotated, design number one is more preferable because most people believe that if the shape of the house is broader at the front side, the luck of the owner will easily go out, while if the shape of the house is narrower at the front side, the luck of the owner which has been owned, will not easily go out. House design number three is what people called as tusuk sate house; the house which directly faces the road. People who believe with its

superstition content mostly prevent this type of house. Most people believe that tusuk sate house will bring the owner bad luck because all the bad luck directly come into the house. House design number four is the safest yet the normal house which people usually purchase.

#### **1.4 Problem Statement**

As the housing design wise cannot be prevented in most of the case, especially when the developer builds a vast complex of housing, superstition of housing model will appear in some corner of the complex. Property developer sometimes found difficulties in selling house which have superstitious belief in it. With this research the author wants to analyze whether or not marketing strategies can win upon the superstitious belief that people own towards property purchasement and in which condition the marketing strategies will overrule superstitious belief in purchasing property.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

This replication research is aiming to fulfill the above objectives and respond to these following research questions:

**RQ1:** Does superstitious belief have the impact towards the purchase intention of housing and property?

**RQ2:** Does marketing strategy have the impact towards the purchase intention of housing and property?

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

- Investigating people's superstitious belief in purchasing house and property.
- Investigating the impact of marketing strategy towards the purchase intention of house and property.
- The survey will take 7 informants from different background to be interviewed about their experiences and opinions about this research.

## **1.7 Aims and Benefits**

By conducting this replication research, the author aims to conclude the following objectives as follows:

1. To analyze the influence of marketing strategy towards superstitious belief in decision making of house and property purchase intention.
2. To determine Indonesian people's superstitious belief in purchasing house and property.
3. To determine when the marketing strategy can overrule the superstitious belief in purchasing property.

By achieving those aims, this research paper would also provide benefits for property industry in developing the house location design:

1. Give suggestion for property industry to develop houses that Indonesian people prefer with the best location and price offered.
2. Give recommendation for property industry in setting up the best price of property that contains superstitious belief therefore there will be a win-win



case for both the property industry to sell all the houses that they develop and Indonesian people to be satisfied purchasing property which have superstitious belief in it.

### **1.8 Structure**

#### **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

This chapter consists of the background of the current property industry, brief about superstitious belief in Indonesia, problem statement, scope of research, aims and benefits about this follow up research paper.

#### **CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FOUNDATION**

This chapter covers the fundamental theories, definitions, and relevant findings which will be used to support the research.

#### **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter analyzes the methodology used in the research, which the research model is adjusted by the author when conducting the research and list of questions. In this chapter, the author also discusses about research objectives, research questions, scope of study, research design, data collection method, survey research, and data analysis method.

#### CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

This chapter comprised of the results of the survey, which was evaluated manually by the author for the list of questions and for the analysis results.

#### CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The final chapter of this synthesis research summarizes the findings of the research and managerial implication for property industry in Indonesia.

