



Recognizing Level of Place Attachment in Malacca Riverfront Promenade

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ABSTRACT

Background: The present city development tends to be disintegrating and decreasing the quality of its attachment and meaning. It is important to recognize the level of place attachment in existing locality, to understanding the significance of place attachment in influencing the identities. **Objectives:** This paper intends to determine the importance of level of functional and emotional attachment in Malacca Riverfront Promenade (MRP) from users who involved in it. **Results:** Score average 2.70 as result of functional attachment and score average 2.48 of emotional attachment measurement, indicate that respondents have strong level of attachment to the functional and emotional of open space and streets in MRP. **Conclusion:** Most of respondents consider that they feel more attached to MRP caused by the significance of MRP for their life. Attachment emerged from the role of MRP as an environment to determine the reason of respondent to attached and gain the experience in MRP.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the phenomena of urbanization and globalization, physical environment of cities in Malaysia are constantly influenced by new features with modern image that will continuously affect the quality of identity of place [1]. The identity of a place can be faded off due to the impact of economic globalization, standardization of products and urban environment without consisting values of locals' landscape, ecosystems, history, culture and communities [2]. Loss of identity can be affecting by *placelessness* and a space without significant meaning [3, 4]. This scenario has led the place to be meaningless which will separates the user from its local culture and way of life. Therefore the issue consequently emerges, i.e. the present city development tends to be disintegrating and decreasing the quality of its attachment and meaning. Responding to the issue, the respect to local wisdom and ideas need to be re-emerging [5] as the reinforcement of the importance of traditional values and identities [6]. To understanding the significance of place attachment in influencing the identities, it is important to recognize the level of place attachment in existing locality. Place attachment is greatly correlated with quality of users experience to the place. This study intends to determine the importance of level of functional and emotional attachment in MRP from users who involved in it.

Methodology:

This research conducted to recognize the level of functional and emotional attachment in MRP that effect place attachment. Research use mixed method technique as research method. Questionnaire, in depth interview, observation and relationship analysis were used to describe the level of attachment. 165 respondents were contributed through questionnaire that covered of the mobile users (82) and static users (83). Mobile users are people which involve to the place regularly, such as: visitors, and local residents who came to visit MRP. Otherwise, Static users are people which occupy to MRP almost every day, such as: shops-owner, shops-keeper and street vendors. In-depth interview were also conducted to 18 (eighteen) selected respondents in the study area. Observation is carried out in MRP as a balancing method to create a more complete data in the case study area. In this method, the researchers implemented as outside observers and collecting the data were done by photographic and written documents. In the analysis, the outcome of study is reached through triangulation of the data i.e. questionnaire, interview and observation.

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Fig. 1: Malacca Riverfront Promenade: a popular urban space among locals people in Malaysia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of functional attachment:

Score 2.70 as result of measurement value (as summarized in Table 1.0) is over than average value. This score indicate that respondents have strong attachment to the function of open space and streets in MRP. Respondents agreed that open space in MRP is the best place to achieve their needs, feeling comfort to be there and satisfy with upgraded physical quality in area. Positive response described from the higher percentage score of the respondent's opinion about the quality of MRP that has been stated. Such as: the statement 01 (*There is no other location is as good as this location*) further showed that the level of functional attachment was high (score: 2.69). Respondents have been asked to give the response to such statements that indicate their functional attachment to MRP. The results point out that positive reactions have been collected from most of respondents in the MRP. They impress that the role and function of open space in MRP were satisfying their needs, and they also feel very comfortable to be there compared to any other places in Malacca.

Table 1: Level of functional attachment in MRP base on average value.

ELEMENTS	STATEMENT	MRP	
		Mean	Std.Dev
FUNCTIONAL ATTACHMENT N=165	01 There is no other location is as good as this location (best place)	2.69	.675
	02 I feel more comfortable being in this location (Comfortable)	2.75	.681
	03 This place is the best location to fulfill my needs (Needs)	2.92	.534
	04 This location is very important for me (Important)	2.45	.702
<i>Response format : 1= strongly disagree , 4= strongly agree</i>		Average Value	2.70

Level of emotional attachment:

Score 2.63 of statement 6th (*I am feel positive to this place*) as shown in Table 2.0, indicate that the emotional attachment of respondents to the P-TSM is strong. The highest score 2.84 is got to the statement 4th (*I am very attached to the place/location*), this suggests that respondents are very attached to the MRP. Feeling attached, positive impression and satisfaction are majority marked by the respondent. MRP is also considered as a fun and meaningful place. Respondents consider that visiting MRP can fulfill their needs. Cross analysis to the observation, almost all opinion from respondents occurs caused by the influence of leisure and shopping activities as the main attraction in MRP.

Table 2: Level of emotional attachment in MRP base on average value.

ELEMENT	STATEMENT	MRP	
		Mean	STD. DEV
EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT N=165	01 I feel very happy to be here than any other place. (Happiness)	2.59	.680
	02 I feel safety in this place (Safety)	2.44	.705
	03 Being here helps me to forget my problems (Refresh)	2.17	.881
	04 I am very attached to the place / location (Attached)	2.84	.511
	05 It gives meaning to me (Meaning)	2.61	.681
	06 I respond positively to this place (Positive)	2.63	.676
	07 It gives me satisfaction (satisfaction)	2.54	.700
	08 If I can, I want to be here any longer (Spent time)	2.32	.759
<i>Response format : 1= strongly disagree , 4= strongly agree</i>		Average Value	2.48

The functional and emotional response from the respondents in open spaces and promenades are described in the following:

- "This place is important because the place for aunty to earn money"
(Respondent 01: Hawkers vendor, 15 years engagement) MRP
- "I'm attached to this place because it is easy to get money and a better life"
(Respondent 07: Hawkers vendor, 5 years of engagement) MRP
- "This place is special because it attracts a lot of different people from any other place ..."
(Respondent 13: Visitors, 3 years of engagement) MRP

Conclusion:

Most of respondents consider that they feel more attached to MRP caused by the significance of MRP for their life. Attachment emerged from the role of MRP as an environment to determine the reason of respondent to attached and gain the experience in MRP. This is illustrated by their personal, social and cultural integration to MRP. It is indicate that the open spaces and promenades are interconnected to provide good quality as a place to earn money or income, a positive continuity of cultural diversity and the meeting point for social and cultural interaction.

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