

Place Attachment in Public Space Case Study: Hiraq Square Lhokseumawe, Aceh – Indonesia

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Abstract

Concerning to the issue of place attachment, the research tends to observe the functional attachment which will affect the level of attachment in Hiraq Square Lhokseumawe (HSL), a renowned public space among local people in the city of Lhokseumawe, Aceh, Indonesia. Place attachment is known as a process to unite people and specific space that can encourage the sense of place. It is also indicating the interrelation between physical features and its function, by this process the sense of a place can be emerged. These concepts concentrate on the physical features and activities together with the meanings affected by users that will establish the meaning and the identity of the place. The research is conducted by applying indirect method to simplify ordinary patterns and people-particular patterns of the place. Overall, 120 respondents at certain area of HSL were questioned through questionnaire survey and 10 kiosk operators were questioned. The findings indicate that the people have a robust relationship with the local environment and appoint the significance of place as economics' dependence and recreational place. The level of functional attachment to HSL is range from level 1 to level 3, whereas level 3 implicates a higher engagement in loyalty, goals and obedience to the environment.

Keywords: place attachment, public space, sense of place

1. Introduction

Robust relation that occurs between emotional and functional in particular space or interrelation between people and particular places can arouse the sense of place, this occurrence is acknowledged as place attachment [1]. According to Relph [2], three components are needed taking into account to understanding a certain place, i.e. physical elements; activities and functions; and meanings or symbols. It clarifies that a particular place is contains of physical features, activity and meaning. Canter [3] also has alike judgment that a certain place is a mixture of three features involving of the activities, the concept of place and the environment. In this study, place attachment designates the relationship between physical elements and its function also relationship among the people and a specific place, hence the meaning of a particular place can be emerged [4]. This study assumes that the effect of unsuitable physical modification may distress the meaning and the attachment to the place will be slowly diminished. Place-based concepts and principles is used to examines this issue and focuses to the physical elements, activities and the meanings gripped by the people is the strength to deliver the identity and the meaning of the place. The research stresses on the elements of place attachment in investigating the relationship between psychological aspects and physical features of particular place. Consequently, this research is designated to distinguish place attachment in the Hiraq Square as public space that is renowned among local people in Lhokseumawe, Aceh, Indonesia.

Hiraq Square Lhokseumawe (HSL) was chosen as a case study, a popular public open space located in the center of Lhokseumawe, a city in the Northern Aceh, Indonesia. Lhokseumawe is known as the second largest city in Aceh Province after Banda Aceh. Lhokseumawe itself covers an area of 181.06 square kilometers, and consist of 180,200 people as a recent number of population inside the city. Being in between Banda Aceh and Medan, Lhokseumawe change become a significant regional center for the economy of Aceh Province. The HSL itself covers an area of approximately 14,904 M², its main function actually is as public space and located next to Islamic Center Grand Mosque of Lhokseumawe. HSL well known by local people as a place for relax with family and became the most visited place during school holidays. Lots of playgrounds and other facilities with improper arrangement can be found there starting from afternoon until midnight. This research focus to identify the particular functional and emotional attachment of people in HSL. This study is significant in recognizing the localities within particular place in the city as a local character and expressive among the people.