

Functional Attachment in Kuching Riverfront Promenade, Sarawak - Malaysia

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Abstract. The relationship between people and certain places can stimulate the sense of place, this process is recognized as place attachment. Place attachment also indicates the relationship between physical image and its function, through this process the sense of a place can be established. These concepts focus on the physical elements and activities together with the user-influenced meanings that will create the identity and the meaning of the place. Allowing for this issue, the research examines the functional attachment which will affect the level of attachment in Kuching Riverfront Promenade (KRP), a popular public space among local people. By using indirect method to simplify common patterns and human-specific patterns of the place, this research covers subject of place attachment. Questionnaire survey was carried out at several areas at the promenade with an overall of 165 respondents and 18 stall operators were interviewed. The findings point out that the respondents have strong association with the local environment and designate the importance of place as economics dependence and recreational place. The level of functional attachment to KRP is between level 1 to level 4. Measuring at level 4 involves a higher commitment in loyalty, goals and responsibility to the environment.

Keywords: place attachment, functional attachment, sense of place

1. Introduction

A place cannot be understood without taking into account the three components i.e. physical features or forms; activities and functions; and meanings or symbols [1]. It explains that a place consists of physical form, activity and meaning. Canter [2] has similar opinion that a place is a combination of three aspects consisting of the activities, the concept of place and the physical environment. The strong relationship that exists between emotional (affective) and functional in such space or relationship between people and certain places can stimulate the sense of place, this process is recognized as place attachment [3]. Place attachment in this study indicates the relationship between physical image and its function or relationship between the user and a particular place. Through this process the meaning of a place can be developed. This research argues that the consequences of inappropriate physical change may affect the meaning of the place and the attachment of the place will be gradually reduced. The research investigates this issue by using place-based concepts and principles. These concepts and principles focus on the physical elements and activities together with the meanings possessed by the users that will generate the identity of the city and the meaning of the place. Within this framework, the study focuses on the dimension of place attachment in examining the psychological aspects of the place and its relation to

