

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**MULTI-DIMENSIONAL HUMAN
INTERACTION IN OPEN SPACES
FOR SHAH ALAM CITY, SELANGOR,
MALAYSIA**

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ABSTRACT

Due to rapid urban development, open spaces have changed drastically over the decades and generations have been struggling with its consequences. There are various studies on how open spaces provide positive reaction to human. Apparently, in relation to open spaces, Malaysia has received very little attention from researchers. Given this scenario, this study investigates the human interaction experienced in the open spaces and how it relates to the city sustainability. The aim of this research is to evaluate the multi-dimensional human interaction experienced in the open spaces and develop the ranking of human interaction in relation to the typological of open spaces. The analysis in this study addresses human-human interaction and human-nature interaction in five selected open spaces of Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia namely Section 2 Urban Park, Section 7 Local Park, Section 18 Neighbourhood Park, Section 8 Playing Field, and Section 4 Playground. This research adopted mixed methodology after taking into consideration the nature of the research topic, structure and composition of the population, the type of information sought and the availability of the resource. In this research, a mixed methodology is employed using a combination of questionnaire surveys, semi-structured interviews, multiple case studies and behaviour mapping. For the questionnaire survey, the stratified random sampling was used where 861 sample were distributed with a response rate of 95% confidence level. After the sample size had been determined, the samples were then stratified based on the percentage of areas of the study areas. As for the expert interviews, this research applied a semi-structured interview. For the method of data analysis, this research is based on the convergence of data obtained from both quantitative and qualitative sources. For the quantitative data, the statistical test selected for the analyses are descriptive analysis, chi-square analysis, and regression analysis. The findings show that all four research domains namely socio-demographic domain, the human-human interactions in open spaces domain, the human-nature interactions in open spaces domain and perceived benefits domain significantly influence the human interactions in the Shah Alam open spaces area. The findings of this study also show the sub domains that reflect human-human and human-nature interaction namely contact with nature domain, aesthetic preference domain, recreation and play domain, social interaction domain, citizen participation domain and sense of community domain. The domain are then link to the hierarchy of open spaces which in tandem with the multi-dimensional human interaction of open spaces.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to familiarise readers with the subject and the purpose of the research. It provides an overview of the subject area of the research and outlines its structure. The main purpose and the significance of this research are also highlighted. Finally, this chapter concludes with an organisation of the thesis.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

This research has been produced in an effort to study multi-dimensional human interaction towards open spaces in a sustainable city. Keywords, such as human interactions, open spaces, and sustainable city have been identified and form the spine of this study. In addition, sub areas are also deliberated and elaborated.

Allah had mentioned in the Quran:

“Our Lord is He who gave to everything its form and nature, and further, gave it guidance” (Taha: 50)

“Lo! We have placed all that is in the earth as an ornament thereof that we may try them: which of them is best in conduct” (Al-Kahf: 7)

From the verses above, evidently, when Allah creates anything, He places within it its powers of laws of behaviour whereby it will fit with the rest of the universe. The laws of nature are to be learned by the vicegerents and exploit the universe for the mutual benefit of human and environment. Allah had explained how He had spread the world before our eyes in Al- Kahf. He had designed the world and its creation in due proportion and measure in certain ways as to fit and balance each other and human are to use them wisely.

Thus, when changes are proposed on a land, it must take into consideration the environmental health along with the development of mankind because, changing the *Sunatullah* of a matter will in the end cause the environment to have an imbalance state.

Hence, the idea of sustainability is developed then. The word *sustainability* is derived from the Latin word whereby it means the ability to endure. In the context of today, the term basically brings out the meaning of the society and the world to endure