

# e-Proceedings v-GOGREEN2021<sup>29-30</sup>

VIRTUAL GO GREEN: CONFERENCE AND PUBLICATION "Rethinking Built Environment: Towards a Sustainable Future"

> Organiser: Research, Industrial Linkages, Community & Alumni Network (PJIM&A)

Co-organiser: Department of Built Environment Studies & Technology (JABT), Faculty of Architecture, Planning & Surveying (FSPU)

PUBLICATION DATE: 1st JUNE 2022

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# Attributes Influencing Place Attachment on Public Space: A Review

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#### Abstract

Place attachment in recent environmental-psychology based research has emerged as one important concept in the agenda to alleviate the risks of rapid urbanization in developing countries. Due to the broad name, definition and interpretation of the concept, the immensity and complexity of place attachment on public space literature are often difficult to navigate and wearisome. For that reason, this paper was set out to enquire into the existing literature on the place-based researches specifically for the attributes influencing place attachment on public space. Guided by a systematic review protocol, ninety-four (94) documents were identified from the Scopus and Web of Science databases searches and only eighteen (18) related studies were methodically selected for analysis. Further review of the documents had resulted in three main themes of place attachment attributes on public space. They were Theme 1: physical attributes, Theme 2: activities attributes and Theme 3: image attributes. These themes provide further reflection on the place attachment archetype that could diversify the values of public places into a responsive environmental psychology.

Keywords: Environmental Psychology; Place Attachment; Attributes; Open Public Space

# 1.0 Background

The discussion of place attachment is usually related to the function of place and the way people emotionally create the meaning of the place (Karsono & Wahid, 2015). By examining the attributes that embodied place attachment, it is paramount to discuss this area in relation to the perception of the user. On this note, the general aspect usually focuses on the identity of the place, the physical environment and characteristics of the place. It is arguably acceptable to condone that every place has different attributes and character, analysing those components are vital to determine how the attributes influence the level of place attachment. Gieryn (2000) highlighted that users feel distinct differents and significance when it comes to different settings, mainly due to each setting having different attributes and characteristics.

Lynch (1960) stated that the characteristics of a place could be memorable, unique, different, outstanding, distinct, dominant and identifiable. It is dynamic and transformable (Ujang, 2008). On that notion, several authors took the path by looking at the influence and importance of the attributes and characteristics of the place, specifically on the sense of place and place attachment (William et. al., 1992; Gieryn, 2000; Steadman, 2003). The importance of assessing and understanding the attributes or characteristics become noteworthy, due to the fact that the qualities are reflected through the place character. Furthermore, affection to a place or place attachment is influenced by the place's character

and identity, mainly on physical, social and cultural (Bott, 2003). As Steele (1981) ascertained that, the concept of place is encompassed by physical and psychological aspects, the attributes and characteristics in some such way influence the feeling, emotion and behaviour. By way of explanation, the physical and socio-cultural aspect motivates the determination of a successful place (Ujang, 2008). Due to the increasing interest among researchers on this subject, the study area started to shift to a different type of area or place. The attributes and characteristics have expanded beyond different places and contexts. Note that not all of the literature explores the aspect of place attachment, but it is important to incorporate them in order to understand the attributes and characteristics that have been in the spotlight. Despite abundant literature on place attachment, the current literature is more theoretical, where it can be applied in a general manner with few tests on a specific place. Efforts to review place attachment for open public space systematically are still lacking. Therefore, this paper attempts to construct a relevant systematic literature review guided by a systematic review protocol and analyse the prevalent place attachment attributes for open public space.

# 2.0 Systematic Review Protocol Methods

This paper integrates the systematic review protocol to retrieve articles related to the place attachment and open public space. The systematic review protocol involves a Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta Analyses (PRISMA) as a guideline to help authors in preparing protocols for planned systematic reviews. In research from Parums (2021), the protocol intended to provide the rationale for the review and the pre-planned methodological and analytical approaches before the review.

This guideline helped in defining clear research questions that permitted a systematic research. In addition, it identified inclusion and exclusion criteria that examined large databases of scientific literature in a distinct time. *Figure 1* displays the systematic review protocol incorporated in the research.



Figure 1 Su

#### Figure 1. Systematic Review Procedures

# 2.1 Identification Phase

The first protocol is the identification. A search string that allows a systematic search from the established publication database conducted the identification of related topics or terms related to place attachment and open public space. A search string is the blend of all context, numbers and symbols entered by a researcher into a search engine in the database to identify the desired literature. For this research, the search string incorporates keywords search as shown in Table 1.

Table	1. A	search	string
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No.	Database	Search string				
1	Web of Science	ALL=(Place attachment) AND (attributes) AND (Open Space OR Public Space) NOT (Place identity OR Sense of Place OR Place dependence) Timespan: 1970-2021. Document type: Articles				
		Open   Access:   "Title", "Authors", "Corporate   Authors", "Editors", "Book     Editors", "Source   Title", "Publication   Date", "Publication     Year", "Volume", "Issue", "Part Number", "Supplement", "Special Issue", "Beginning     Page", "Ending   Page", "Article   Number", "DOI", "Conference				
		Date", "Total   Citations", "Average   per     Year", "1970", "1971", "1972", "1973", "1974", "1975", "1976", "1977", "1978", "1979", "1980", "1981", "1982", "1983", "1984", "1985", "1986", "1987", "1988", "1989", "1999", "1991", "1992", "1993", "1994", "1995", "1996", "1997", "1998", "1999", "2000", "2001", "2002", "2003", "2004", "2005", "2006", "2007", "2008", "2009", "2010", "2011", "2012", "2013", "2014", "2015", "2016", "2017", "2018", "2019", "2020", "2021"				
2	Scopus	place AND attachment AND NOT place AND identity AND NOT sense AND of AND place AND NOT place AND dependence AND open AND public AND space AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBSTAGE, "final")) AND (LIMIT-TO (OA, "all")) AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2021) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2020) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2019) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2018) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2017) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2016) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2015)) AND (LIMIT-TO (DUBYEAR, 2016) OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "SOCI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "PSYC")) AND (LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD, "Human") OR LIMIT-TO ( EXACTKEYWORD, "Humans")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, "English" )) AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE, "i"))				

(Source: Authors' Research, 2021)

Justified by the large abstracts and citation database of peer-reviewed publications, the authors conducted the search string in Web of Science and Scopus databases (Shaffril et al., 2018). At this phase, related published papers were sought from these two databases search engines. Publication records through Scopus searching is 66, while Web of Science is 28, the total is 94 publication records.

# 2.2 Screening Phase

The identified publication commenced the next systematic protocol that is the screening phase. To suit the place attachment of open public space, three (3) publications were taken out because of duplication found in both databases such as similar authors, similar research titles and other out of context research areas. Another seventy (70) publications were also taken out after the screening protocol. This is because the publications are from review papers, book series, chapter in book, conference proceedings. The remaining 21 literature will go to the next systematic protocol.

# 2.3 Eligibility Phase

At this phase, the remaining twenty one (21) literature were reviewed thoroughly and four (4) literature were removed. The removed literature did not have the information on place attachment attributes specific to the open public space. The remaining eighteen (18) relevant literature were analysed and abstracted for review findings.

# 2.4 Abstraction and Analysis

The remaining articles were assessed and analysed. Efforts were concentrated on the specific studies that responded to the formulated question. The data was extracted by reading the abstracts first, then the full articles in-depth to identify appropriate themes and sub-themes.

By using thematic content analysis, the attributes related to place attachment in open public space were identified for discussion in subtopic 3.0.

# 3.0 Discussion

The systematic review protocol resulted in 18 prevalent literature, which were related to place attributes for open public space. The attributes are shown in *Table 2*.

Table 2. Recent Literatures on Place Attributes						
No	Literature	Study Location	Attributes			
1	Place Attachment and Continuity of Urban Place Identity (Ujang, 2012)	Shopping Streets in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	PHYSICAL ELEMENT: Accessibility; Legibility ACTIVITY: Vitality; Diversity/Choice; Transaction IMAGE: Legibility; Distinctiveness; Comfort; Safety/Security			
2	The effects of physical and social attributes of place on place attachment (Ozkan & Yilmaz, 2019)	Urban Squares in Trazbon, Turkey	PHYSICAL ELEMENT/PREDICTORS: Physical continuity; Functional continuity; Favorable activities; Accessibility; Vitality; Diversity; Legibility; Comfort; Unique form; Physical security; Climate; Size SOCIAL ELEMENT/PREDICTORS: Involvement in informal social activities; Sense of security; Number of friends; Social relation; Popularity of place; Informal meetings; Physical personalization; Collective behaviour			
3	Integrating Place Attachment into Management Frameworks: Exploring Place Attachment Across the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (Wynveen et. al., 2020)	Recreation Opportunity Spectrum in USA, Austria and Germany	Experience; Remoteness; Size; Human Criteria; Social Setting; Managerial			
4	Factors of Good Public Space Use (Gomes, 2012)	-	POSSIBILITY: Physical; Visual; Symbolic; Density; Diversity MOTIVATION: Density, Diversity; Concentration of activities; Accessibility; Circulation; Passive Engagement; Active Engagement; Variety in orientation; Variety of Exposure; Sociability OPPORTUNITY: Connectivity; Permeability; Transparency Climate; Condition; Security and Safety; Visual interest and diversity			
5	An Investigation of Physical Attributes Relevant to the Informal Street Hawking in the Urban Spaces of Dhaka City (Israt & Adam, 2017)	Informal Street Hawking in the Urban Spaces of Dhaka City	Sociability; Uses and activities; access and linkage; Physical safety; Comfort; Image			
6	Typology Of Open Public Spaces In The Structure Of A University Campus (Talgatovna & Dzhuparbekovna, 2020)	University Campus Open Public Space in USA and Australia	Climate; Materials; Seasonality; Landscape; Architecture and planning organization			
7	An Observational Study of Park Attributes and Physical Activity in Neighborhood Parks of Shanghai, China (Wang & Wu, 2020)	Neighborhood Parks of Shanghai, China	Physical form; Behaviour; Architecture; Accessibility; Settings; Diversity of natural and manmade elements			
8	Serial Mediation of Environmental Preference and Place Attachment in the Relationship between Perceived Street Walkability and Mood of the Elderly (Chen et. al., 2020)	Streets in Guangzhou, China	PERCEIVED STREET WALKABILITY: Land use mix-access; Street connectivity; Infrastructure; Aesthetics; Safety   MOOD:     Positive-affect   item; Negative-affect   item     ENVIRONMENTAL   PREFERENCES:   Coherence; Legibility; Complexity; Mystery			
			ENVIRONMENTAL PREFERENC			

Table 2	. Recent	Literatures	on Place	Attributes
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9	Healthy campus by open space design: Approaches and guidelines (Lau et. al., 2014)	Various Campuses ranging from Hong Kong, USA, Singapore,	Concentrated on the landscape aspect Architecture simulation; Green Building and ecosystems; Sensation; Function; Spatial design; Circulation; Privacy; Green design; Microclimate
10	Understanding Aesthetic Experiences of Architectural Students in Vertical and Horizontal Campuses: A Comprehensive Approach (Bostanci et. al., 2020)	Vertical and Horizontal campuses in Turkey	Visual perception; Image stimulation; Physical condition; Ambience; Monumental; Function; Comfort; Spatial relationship; Aesthetics; Experience; Activity-based places(place dependency); Safety and security; Green landscape
11	Attributes and Characteristics of Place Attachment (Karsono & Wahid, 2015)	Kuching Riverfront Promenade, Malaysia	Physical; Visual urban character; user's activities; Accessibility; Familiarity
12	Study on Relationship between Roles of Public Open Spaces and Pedestrians Inside Campus: Case Studies from Universities in Thailand and Hungary (Kongphunphin et. al., 2020)	Universities in Thailand and Hungary	Connectivity; Linkage; Infrastructure; Type of space (form & function); safety; accessibility; size (scale and proportion); Design element
13	Open public spaces and physical activity facilities: study of systematic observation of the environment (Manta et. al., 2019)	Open public spaces in City of Florianopolis, Brazil	Presence/quantity of facilities; Comfort item; Incivility items
14	Context, contribution and characteristics of public spaces for place making in contemporary knowledge and Innovation spaces. Observations from Brisbane, Australia (Pancholi et. al., 2017)	Knowledge and Innovation spaces in Brisbane, Australia	Contextual character; Compact development; Presence of axis; Central public / open space; Interconnected public space; Visual vistas; Human- scale; Pedestrian environment; Engaging lower floors
15	Attributes of Urban Green Infrastructure (UGI) and its Use by Young Adults in Kuala Lumpur City (Mansor et. al., 2020)	Urban Green Infrastructure (UGI) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	Safety; Natural elements; cleanliness; Facilities; Universal design; Good lighting; Accessibility; Attractive design; Variety of activity; Gathering spaces; Clear directory / signage; Flexibility in design; Space for learning & creativity; Extreme activities; Reachability / nearby
16	Green spaces and heterogeneous social groups in the U.S. (Ahn et. al., 2020)	Green spaces in the U.S.	Access; Amenities and Facilities; Ecological benefits; Visual aesthetics; Sociability; Safety
17	Open Space as Meaningful Place for Students in ITB Campus (Hanan, 2013)	Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB) campus in Indonesia	Physical design; Visual / Environmental / Image enhancement; Climatic factors; Spatial layout & configuration; Material & construction
18	More meaningful, more restorative? Linking local landscape characteristics and place attachment to restorative perceptions of urban park visitors (Liu et. al., 2020)	Urban Parks in the Cities of Macau and Fuzhou, China	Familiarity; Environmental type; Style of Design (local or non-local); Feasibility
-	Authors' Research 2021)		

(Source: Authors' Research, 2021)

Further review resulted in five (5) main themes. They are coded in the following orders; Theme 1: Physical attributes, Theme 2: Activities attributes, Theme 3: Image attributes, Theme 4: Social attributes, and lastly Theme 5: Climatic Attributes.

No	Article / Year of Publication	o =- ;	t i	n م م	. <u></u> 22	m t
1	Ujang (2012)	/	/	/		
2	Ozkan & Yilmaz (2019)	/	/	/	/	/
3	Wynveen et. al. (2020)	/	/		/	
4	Gomes (2012)	/	/	/		
5	Israt & Adam (2017)	/	/	/	/	
6	Talgatovna & Dzhuparbekovna (2020)	/	/	/		/
7	Wang & Wu (2020)	/	/	/		
8	Chen et. al. (2020)	/	/	/		
9	Lau et. al. (2014)	/	/	/		/
10	Bostanci et. al. (2020)	/	/	/		
11	Karsono & Wahid (2015)	/	/	/		
12	Kongphunphin et. Al. (2020)	/		/		
13	Manta et. al., (2019)	/	/			
14	Pancholi et. al. (2017)	/	/	/		
15	Mansor et. al. (2020)	/	/	/		
16	Ahn et. al. (2020)	/	/	/	/	
17	Hanan (2013)	/	/	/		/
18	Liu et. al. (2020)	/	/	/		

(Source: Authors' Research, 2021)

In order to inquire the most common attributes discussed in the field of study, *Table 3* delineates the attributes related to the literature analysed. T1, T2 and T3 are the most discussed and analysed attributes. Thus, attributes of T4 and T5 were discarded for the purpose of further discussion in later sections.

# 4.0 Theme 1: Physical Attributes

Karsono & Wahid (2015) pointed out accessibility and familiarity as the attributes in their study of Kuching Riverfront Promenade, Malaysia. As reviewing the urban character assessment of the place, the authors had determined the dependent variables of physical elements to unfold the attributes and characteristics that contribute to place attachment of the users. As mentioned earlier, accessibility and familiarity were analysed in a mixed method approach. The authors argued that it is suitable for the study as the study of urban areas is a multifaceted aspect. Eventually, the study suggested that physical characteristics have a huge impact on the degree of attachment. Taking the notion of place attachment transmits a good and positive emotion bonding between people and place (Bonnes & Secchiarolli, 1995), physical appearance somehow plays and important part in affecting the sense of place. It can be seen in the findings when most of the respondents expressed their attachment to a place physically, mainly on the proximity to other places, activities held at the place and images of the place conveyed.

Study conducted by Ozkan and Yilmaz (2019) concentrated on the effect of physical and social attributes that influence Place Attachment. Similar to Karsono & Wahid (2015), the place of study is a public space in Trabzon Urban Squares, Turkey. The research examining the physical predictors: Physical continuity; Functional continuity; Favorable activities; Accessibility; Vitality; Diversity; Legibility; Comfort; Unique form; Physical security; Climate; Size, and the social element/predictors: Involvement in informal social activities; Sense of security; Number of friends; Social relation; Popularity of place; Informal meetings; Physical personalization; Collective behaviour. The study found a significant increasing positive trend towards the influence of physical attributes in relation to place attachment. The level of place dependence increases if the physical attributes are successful (Ozkan & Yilmaz, 2019).

A good condition of the physical environment not only can contribute to a more profound place attachment, it can promote a better and healthy living. Wang and Wu (2020) observed the influence of physical attributes of the neighbourhood parks in Shanghai, China in relation to physical activities. They found that certain place characteristics promote people to engage in physical activities. Based on the study, the influence of physical attributes is prevalent when people are physically active at the plaza (Wang & Wu, 2020). Compared to other settings, it shows a lower degree of activity. On the other hand, study by Manta et. al. (2019) focuses on physical activity facilities which set out presence/quantity of facilities, comfort item and Incivility items as the evaluation item. The study finds that good physical activity facilities promote a more frequent visitation to the place (Manta et. al., 2019).

Every place holds their own distinct characteristics compared to one another. It manifests different meanings and symbols (Creswell, 2004). A study by Pancholi et. al. (2017) on contemporary knowledge and innovation spaces in Australia, examine multi-layered physical attributes of the place. With a very descriptive space or place type, the study constantly explores the environment settings that purposely for the integration of business, people, place and governance climate (Pancholi et. al., 2017). Pancholi et. al. (2017) listed two dimensions of the study in terms of physical attributes: Character that refers to the environment, character, scale and climate, and connectedness, which refers to spatial and virtual connectivity. As the place of the study targeted for the young generation, the unique experience and sense of place portray it as a "medium for lubricating the flow of ideas" (Pancholi et. al., 2017).

# 5.0 Theme 2: Activities Attributes

Built environment is formed on the purpose to suit and cater the needs of the users. In the functional aspect of place attachment, the foundation of place dependence pointed by Stokols and Shumaker (1981) refers to people's perception of a place is highly influenced on how the place is able to cater to the people's needs. As a place holds its own identity and meaning, the activities will be reflected by it. At some point, the character of the place will define the activities of the place. People will adapt with the place merely based on the physical values. As people are attracted to a place, they tend to stay longer and engage with activities (Jacob, 1999). Even though the construct of the activities determine the functionality of a space, the influence of the physical attributes is highly imperative. Ozkan et. al., (2019) argued that the satisfaction of a user in public space was determined by an ideally social and physical environment. The satisfaction of the user will lead to the development of attachment to the place (Ozkan, 2019). On this notion, the activities attributes correlated to the physical attributes will affect the level of place dependence of people to place.

#### 6.0 Theme 3: Image Attributes

The image attributes are rather similar to the physical attributes. Place comprises various built environments that differ in settings, scale, characteristic and features. The initial perception of a place usually starts with the visual images impression. The distinct physical character of place influences the cognitive or intellectual construct to the place, the mental image (Scannel & Gifford, 2014).

Based on the literature reviewed earlier, most of them focus on the image attributes. For example, the study from Bostanci et. al., (2020) examine the visual perception of the student on vertical and

horizontal universities in Turkey. The study is comparing the image stimuli manifest in a similar place context but contrasting in terms of the physical settings.

# 7.0 Conclusion

Place attachment is an interesting concept that has a broad environment-psychology and human relationship that is defined in many dimensional approaches. A systematic review protocol on the place attachment attributes specifically to the open public space helps to form the theoretical framework for later in-depth analysis. This systematic review protocol has highlighted the relevant place attachment attributes specifically for open public space. Based on the review findings, authors have categorized the attributes into three themes namely the physical, activities and image.

For future study, it seems relevant to consider a systematic review on the other dimensions of place attachment such as factors that influence human-place relationship or psychological dimensions of place attachment and methods to measure the place attachment to open public spaces.

# Acknowledgement

The authors thank the anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments and suggestions that have strengthened the paper.

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