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DIMENSIONS UNDERLYING PLACE IDENTITY FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Jenny Ernawati

University of Brawijaya, Malang, Indonesia

jenny_ernawati@ub.ac.id

Abstract

In the last thirty years, the identity of a place (place identity) has become an important issue in urban planning and design. In line with the global movement to protect places which has a significant cultural heritage, then concerns about the loss of individuality and distinctiveness between one place and another as the impact of globalization increased. This paper, therefore, meant to present the results of research intended to explore dimensions underpinning people's evaluations of place identity. This study used a quantitative approach by applying the survey research method. The town of Malang chosen as the research locus. The instrument used to collect the data is a self-administered questionnaire using a Likert scale. A total of 240 respondents were selected randomly from the list of residents of Malang phonebook. The concept of place identity is evaluated based on five aspects: familiarity, attachment, commitment, continuity, and external evaluation. Dimensions that underlying place identity, based on community's assessments, are revealed through factor analysis. Results of the study show there are three dimensions underlying community's evaluations of place identity, i.e., Personal Relationship, Physical Environment, and Commitment. Further research is needed to elaborate the three underlying dimensions of the place identity.

Keywords

Place Identity, Urban Design, Sustainable Development, Malang-Indonesia

1. Introduction

The city's future depends on urban competitiveness. In response to the need of city competitiveness, questions arise about how to achieve an integrated city development. The most significant challenge in making a comprehensive city development is how to incorporate place identity, urban sustainability, and globalization (Sepe, 2012).

From the existing literature, Sepe (2010, 2012) concludes that the sustainability of a place depends on some factors that support its livability, quality, and identity. Degradation of the appeal of cultural and historic sites can happen because of the globalization impact. Cultural globalization in recent times has raised a concern about the loss of individuality and distinctiveness between one place to another. With the mixing of different elements of the city as well as the changing perceptions of the people, the image of a city can disappear. This situation cause place identity become an essential issue in city planning and design (Wikipedia, 2009). In response to this case, there are global movements to protect places that have significant cultural heritage. Therefore, place identity becomes an essential concept in the process of sustainable urban development.

The concept of place identity refers to the relationship between place and identity. It points out the quality of a site and reveals a complicated relationship between all factors in the location. This complicated relationship covers the relation between factors on the site itself as well as their interaction with the elements outside the place (Muminovic, 2017). It emphasizes the meaning and significance of an area for the users. It is considered as an essential concept in various fields such as geography, urban planning, urban design, landscape architecture, and so on. Fundamentally the idea of place identity reviews how our locality (including geographical location, cultural tradition, cultural heritage, etc.) affects our lives. The identity of a place that well maintained can make us feel comfortable and secure in our living environment.

Therefore, there is a critical relations between a living environment and place identity (Moshaver et al., 2015). Some studies have been made in recent years to conceptualize the identity of a place. Some critical research findings include research on place identity (such as Proshansky, 1978; Proshansky et al., 1983; Sepe, 2017); place dependence and sense of place

or rootedness (e.g. Stokols & Shumaker, 1981; Qazimi, 2014), and place attachment (such as Gerson et al., 1977; Ujang and Zakariya, 2014). The studies reveal that the relationship between a person and his surrounding physical environment is mainly dependent on the personal experiences. Through such a connection an environment derives its symbolic value significantly with the social, emotional and action of a person (Lalli, 1992). This notion suggests that studies in the field of environmental psychology and environmental design such as urban planning, urban design, and architecture cover a broad spatial scale. The studies in those areas concentrate on the micro-local and macro-spatial processes surrounding the dwelling (e.g., Dovey, 1985; Graumann, 1988), neighborhood, and other parts of the city (e.g., Schneider, 1986; Yuen, 2005; Jaśkiewicz, 2015). There are also some studies of place identity within the scale of an entire town (e.g., Gospodini, 2004; Hull IV et al., 1994; Lalli, 1992; Proshansky, 1978; Saleh, 1998; Ujang & Zakariya, 2015). The extent of the spatial aspects of the place brings consequences to the fact that research about place identity still lacks to better explain the concept of place identity more clearly at different spatial levels. Moreover, most of this limited number of studies are conducted in Western countries (e.g., Bernardo & Palma, 2005; Goodman, 2004; Lalli, 1992) and very little is done in Indonesia. Therefore, this study is intended to fill the gap. The research results presented in this paper show the underlying dimensions of urban place identity based on community's evaluations. It is expected that the findings of this study can provide meaningful understanding as a theoretical basis for planning and designing cities for sustainable urban development.

The Place itself is a complex concept to analyze. However, based on the literature there is widely understood that place is a space that has a particular meaning for residents or users. The concept of place is based on the interaction between a person, physical settings, and activities that occur at that location (Ruback et al., 2008; Smaldone et al., 2005). Some places are considered more important than other areas because of the attributes it has and because of the types of activities that occur in that location. There are several different approaches to understand the relationship between place and identity. However, there is still no clear explanation as a consensus on the relationship between the two concepts (Bernardo & Palma, 2005).

In the context of social psychology, Breakwell (1992; 1993; 2015) developed the model of identity process. The model of Breakwell posits four principles of identity: self-esteem, self-

efficacy, distinctiveness, and continuity. In that context, it shows that the environment plays a role in the dynamics of identity. The four principles are related to a place, and those different tenets seem to be treated differently by every individual. Self-esteem is defined as a confident self or group evaluation with which someone identifies. Several studies have shown that personal assessment of the local environment and positive appraisal of an environment by local people produce pride, and thereby contribute to self-esteem. Devine-Wright & Lyons (1997) and Lalli (1992) indicate the importance of life or residing in historical places in forming self-esteem. Self-efficacy in Breakwell model is defined as a person's ability to function appropriately within the physical environment and the particular social situation associated with the human need for controlling the environment (Belk, 1992).

Another principle in the Breakwell concept of identity is the distinctiveness, which is the desire to nurture different from others. Distinctiveness relates to the perception of the uniqueness of a place compared to other areas of the city (Lalli, 1992). This distinctiveness quality causes a person to have a special relationship between himself and his residential environment, which is distinctly different from any other kind of relationship (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). Such identity with certain territories causes identification of someone with other people living in the same space.

Identity also requires a need for sustainability. This sustainability refers to the principle of continuity within the context of time and situation. Twigger-Ross & Uzzell (1996) posited two forms of continuity in connection with the environment, namely: the place-referent continuity, i.e., when a place serves as a reference of the past and action to generate a relationship between past identity with current identity. The second is the place-congruent continuity, i.e., the incompatibility between environment and desire as well as the values of the local community.

The identity principles of Breakwell are in line with Lalli's (1992) opinion. Lalli (1992) suggests five aspects of the identity of a place in an urban context, namely: Sustainability with one's past; Attachment; Familiarity; Commitment; and External evaluation. The principle of sustainability with one's history garnered significance urban environment for a sense of personal temporal sustainability. This situation reflects the possible relationship between his biographies with the city, the private symbolization experience. This aspect is in line with the principle of continuity in the Breakwell model. The second important thing that is

the attachment to a place reflects a feeling at home in the city, a sense of belonging or rootedness as is depicted in various literature. A person is bound to an area through a process that reflects their behavior, cognitive and emotional experiences in a social and physical environment (Bernardo, 2005). This place attachment involves bonding experience positively, sometimes without consciousness, which grows throughout a time of the behavioral, affective, and cognitive bonds between a person or group with their social and physical environment (Brown & Perkins, 1992). Identity process model of Breakwell, in essence, is also used to understand the importance of place attachment to support or to develop an identity (Devine-Wright & Lyons, 1997; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). The third principle in forming place identity according to Lalli (1992) is the perception of familiarity. This knowledge is the impact of everyday experience in urban areas. Familiarity is assumed as the result of one's actions in an urban environment, which in this case is an expression of one's cognitive orientation. The last point is about the commitment that is a commitment to stay in the city. This aspect refers to the significance of the city as perceived by someone for his future. This determination is an essential concept of the self because it shows the stability of the person, which is emphasized in various theories in environmental and social psychology. The four aspects proposed by Lalli (1992) are more emphasis on the side of one's self. Nevertheless, environmental factors outside of the person also have a significant role in the establishment of place identity. Lalli (1992) refers to this aspect as an External evaluation. The external evaluation shows an evaluative comparison between a place in the city with another city, with unique characters owned by a place, and the city's uniqueness as perceived by its inhabitants. These five aspects of urban-related identity, i.e., continuity, attachment, familiarity, commitment, and external evaluations are used in this study to explore the underlying dimensions of place identity.

2. Methods

This research is a descriptive research, which applying survey research method. The locus of the study is the historic city of Malang. The town of Malang is rich with colonial artifacts and historic buildings as a result of Dutch colonization era. The study area covers five districts, i.e., Kedungkandang, Sukun, Klojen, Blimbing, and Lowokwaru.

The population of this study is the entire community of Malang. Participants of the study were selected by applying simple random sampling selection method from the most recent city telephone directory using research randomizer tool. The city telephone book in

Indonesia has arranged alphabetically for the entire city inhabitants. This situation is different compared to the Western countries whose phone book composition is divided by area, and the alphabetical name of the population arranged for each area. In Indonesia, the whole telephone directory already covers the entire area of the city, so it is adequate as a sampling frame without having to divide it into sub areas. However, not all of the city inhabitants have fix line phone. Of the 807,136 population in the city of Malang, there are only 111,846 people who have fix line telephone connections which constitute the population of this study, with a family as a unit of analysis. The study selected 240 samples. This number satisfied about 93.5% confidence level. The selected respondents were 23 people from Kedungkandang district, 48 people from Sukun district, 38 people from Klojen district, 53 people from Blimbing district, and 78 people from Lowokwaru district.

2.1 Instruments and Variables

This study used a self-administered questionnaire consists of two parts as a research instrument. The first section is intended to explore socio-demographic data such as gender, age, socio-economic level, education and employment, and the residential status such as home ownership, place of birth and duration of stay in Malang. This aspect is considered in this research because the previous studies revealed the relevance of social-demographic variables on the view pattern of the people in conducting the evaluation. The second part of the questionnaire is intended to explore community's evaluation of place identity in urban areas. Respondents were asked to evaluate the place identity based on five aspects mention previously, i.e., (1) Familiarity; (2) Attachment; (3) Commitment; (4) Continuity; (5) External Evaluation (developed from Bernardo & Palma, 2005; Breakwell, 1992, 1993, 2015; Lalli, 1992). These five aspects are spelled out into several variables, which expressed in the form of statements. Those statements were then assessed by respondents using a seven-Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" (value "1") to "strongly agree" (value "7"). Respondents are only requested to circle one number on the scale for each statement according to their opinion. There were 20 variables to be evaluated by the community, which can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Place Identity Variables

Number	Aspects	Variables
1	Familiarity	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Familiarity to the place2. The significance of the place for daily life3. Daily experience4. Relations to the place
2	Attachment	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Personal attachment2. Behavioral attachment3. Social attachment4. Sense of belonging
3	Commitment	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The commitment to stay2. Concern about future development3. The role of place for personal plan4. The role of place in private life
4	Continuity	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Memory to the past2. The possibility of living in any other place3. Good experience4. Place recognition
5	External Evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Uniqueness2. Distinctiveness3. Specific character4. Tourism potential

Source: Developed from Bernardo & Palma, 2005; Lalli, 1992.

A preliminary analysis was applied before conducting a factor analysis. The initial investigation conducted to those twenty variables found four variables have no relevancy to forming place identity, i.e., personal attachment, social attachment, daily experience, and place recognition. Then, those variables were excluded from the analysis. Therefore, there are only 16 variables included in this study as can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2: Place Identity Variables of the Study

Number	Aspects	Variables
1	Familiarity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Familiarity to the place 2. The significance of the place for daily life 3. Relations to the place
2	Attachment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Behavioral attachment 2. Sense of belonging
3	Commitment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The commitment to stay 2. Concern about future development 3. The role of place for personal plan 4. The role of place in private life
4	Continuity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Memory to the past 2. The possibility of living in any other place 3. Good experience
5	External Evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Uniqueness 2. Distinctiveness 3. Specific character 4. Tourism potential

2.2 Procedure

Data collection in this research begins with 240 respondent's selection process randomly. After selected, each respondent was approached one by one at home. Respondents are required to complete the questionnaire that consists of social-demographic data, residential status, and evaluations of the place identity according to their opinion. Place identity assessment was applying a Likert scale with seven scales. People were merely circling one of the numbers that ranging from number 1 (strongly disagree) to number 7 (strongly agree) according to their opinion. To avoid confusion, researchers and surveyor accompanying respondents when respondents filled out the questionnaire. When respondent did not understand the question, researchers or surveyor were ready to help. After all The data survey collected then goes to the next stage of examination of data and coding or provide specific codes for each variable. Then go into data entry stage and data analysis.

2.3 Analysis Technique

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the socio-demographic and home ownership status data. Furthermore, factor analysis is done to the 16 variables of place identity to reveal dimensions underlying people's evaluations of place identity. From this study, it can also know

how much variance that can be explained by the evaluative factors of place identity. The overall analysis in this research is done using the SPSS statistics program.

3. Results and Discussions

Most of the respondents are the owner of the house (74.17%), and most of them were born in Malang (67.50%). Respondents in this study vary in their residency in Malang city. The length of stay in the town of Malang covers those who just moved in and those who have lived in Malang more than 60 years. However, the majority of respondents (64.58%) have lived in Malang City for more than 25 years; even 45% of them have lived in Malang for more than 35 years. These conditions provide a picture that from the respondents' length of stay, they have been living in Malang for a long time so that their evaluation and emotional bond to Malang is sufficient.

To know the factors or dimensions that underlie the public's assessment of place identity then factor analysis to 16 variables was conducted. Principal axis factoring with oblique rotation (direct oblimin) is performed on the 16 place identity variables. The results show three factors are underlying the community's assessment to the concept of place identity in the urban environment in which they live. Table 3 shows that the first dimension consists of eight variables with the reliability test of Cronbach's Alpha 0.90. Those variables include familiarity with the place, memory to the past, behavioral attachment, relationship with the place, the possibility of living in any other place, good experience, sense of belonging, and the significance of the place. In general, this first factor refers to the personal relationship with the environment where he lives. Therefore, the first dimension is called Personal Relations. The second factor consists of four items with the reliability test of Cronbach's Alpha 0.81. This aspect includes specific character, distinctiveness, uniqueness, and tourism potential. This dimension refers to the evaluation of the physical environment in forming an identity, so it can be called the Physical Environment. The third factor consists of four items with reliability test of Cronbach's Alpha 0.80. This dimension includes the role of the place for people personal plan, the role of the area in their private life, the commitment to stay, and concern for future development. This third factor refers to the city's significance to one's future so that this dimension can be named as the Commitment factor. In overall all three factors explains 63% of the variance in society. In other words, 63% of the population provides the same assessment of the place identity determined by the three dimensions.

Table 3: Dimensions Underlying Place Identity

	Factor		
	1	2	3
Familiarity to the place	.82	.19	-.23
Memory to the past	.82	-.06	.07
Behavioral attachment	.74	.08	-.06
Relation to the place	.69	-.18	.24
The possibility of living in any other place	.59	.16	.05
Good experience	.56	.13	.13
Sense of belonging	.46	.03	.24
The significance of the place for daily life	.40	.21	.23
Specific character	.15	.75	-.04
Distinctiveness	-.01	.73	.10
Uniqueness	.19	.49	.13
Tourism potential	.10	.44	.22
The role of place for future plan	-5.96E-5	.21	.65
The role of place for personal life	-.02	.30	.61
The commitment to stay	.23	-.08	.60
Concern to future development	.17	.13	.42
Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 14 iterations.			

Of the three factors forming the identity of a place, it appears that the most influential factor is Personal Relations. This result indicates that the identity of an area is determined by the personal relationships between users or residents and their physical and social environment. Someone is bound to a place through a process that reflects their behavior, cognitive and emotional experiences in the social and physical environment (Bernardo & Palma, 2005). Personal relationships covering familiarity, continuity and attachment involve bonding experiences positively, sometimes occurs without consciousness, which grows over time from the interrelated behavior, affective and cognitive bonds of individuals and groups with their social and physical environment (Brown & Perkins, 1992). But in understanding this phenomenon, it is important to remember that the suitability of space also plays an essential

role in place identity. Through the two components of conformity, namely the transformation of action (behavioral components) and identification (symbolic elements), a person or a group transforming space and giving them individual or social significance. In this metaphorical interaction, a person and a group recognize themselves in the environment and by going through their categorization process, they use environmental quality as part of their identity (Bernardo & Palma, 2005). The research results indicate that the identity of a place is more determined by the self-factor of man.

However, according to community evaluation, the second factor that influences the formation of a place identity is the Physical Environment, which, according to Lalli (1992), is called External Evaluation factor. Furthermore, the results of this study indicate that the elements of the physical Environment that have a significant role to place identity is mainly the quality of particular character possessed by the city and the quality of the city's distinctiveness against other cities. This condition indicates that the results of this study are in line with thoughts of Breakwell (1992; 1993; 2015) and Lalli (1992). They argued that distinctiveness refers to the physical environment outside of a person has an essential role in the formation of place identity. It is proved that this happened both according to Western society and Indonesian community. Although the uniqueness and potential of the city for tourism is also considered as elements of the Physical Environment that plays an essential role in establishing place identity, the position is not as significant as the quality of particular character and distinctiveness as indicated by the factor loading of the items in Table 3.1.

One of the most dominant factors of Physical Environment in the establishment of place identity that widely expressed in the literature is a historic area or cultural heritage. The importance of built heritage as elements in forming place identity, which in this study in the context of the urban area, has been overwhelming proposed by some authors (e.g., Harvey, 2000, Herbert, 1995; Hewison, 1987; Lowenthal, 1985). Proshansky et al. (1983) also reveal the importance of the historic area in the formation of city identity. All aspects of identity always have implications referring to a place (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). Buildings, artifacts, and other cultural objects often tell a particular history of an area or city which gives its memories for society (Zerubavel, 1996).

Human perception and cognition have been widely expressed in the field of psychology (Coeterier, 2002; Koch, 1969) and architecture (Alexander, 1979). Experts such as Lynch

(1972), Lowenthal (1985) and Schama (1995) also stress the importance of historical values for human life. On previous studies, historical values were identified both directly and indirectly as a crucial environmental quality for society. Historic building and artifacts can indirectly play a significant role in shaping environmental characteristics such as coherence, identifiability or legibility, complexity and mystery (Kaplan & Wendt, 1972). The value of cultural heritage such as historic buildings and artifacts is considered as one of the eight fundamental qualities in the environmental perception as identified in Dutch studies (e.g. Coeterier, 1996; Coeterier, 2002). However, it does not mean that the elements of the contemporary city development have no role in the establishment of a place identity. This situation may be due to a limitation of the number of studies that can reveal the meaning of the new elements of the city for the formation of the identity of a place.

The thing to remember is that in the context of the Physical Environment factor, the identity of the city is not purely formed objectively (Lalli, 1992). The character of a place is always developed based on people, individual or group, evaluations to the objects within the city. Therefore, the identity of a city is the result of the assessment of the meaning of the city's elements that attached by individuals and communities. Ultimately, the Personal Relations and Physical Environment factors will contribute to the Commitment of the people to remain in their city, which also found as a factor forming place identity. The correlation analyzes conducted among the three factors indicate that the three dimensions of place identity are interrelated ($p < 0.05$).

4. Conclusions

Study results found there are three dimensions that underlying people's evaluation of the identity of a place, i.e., Personal Relations, Physical Environment, and Commitment. The research findings are in line with the previous studies (such as Breakwell, 1992; and Lalli, 1992). The three evaluative aspects of the place identity explain 63% of the variance in the community.

However, the three underlying dimensions of the place identity need to elaborate further. Further exploration is also necessary to find out what aspects of the physical environment that influence the formation of place identity. New research is also required to reveal demographic factors that affect people's evaluation of place identity in urban areas.

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