

IDENTIFICATION OF PUBLIC PLACE ATTRIBUTES USING MEAN-END
CHAIN RESEARCH MODEL

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Identification of Public Place Attributes Using mean-End Chain Research Model

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I hereby thank my truly honorable Father,

My lovely Mother,

My kindhearted brothers,

and those who love nature and their motherland

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ABSTRACT

In this study, criteria to recognize successful public places' attributes have been studied from different theoretical perspectives. In great public places, the social and economic exchanges take place, friends run into each other, and cultures mix. When such places work well, they serve as a stage for our public lives. In this study, we investigated the influence of users' value on public place design. We studied motivational factors as determinants of stated preferences for public space attributes. Moreover, the relationship between these factors has been studied from the means-end theory perspective. This research sets out to examine findings reported in the literature that PPS mentioned as four attributes of successful public spaces. PPS have worked over 2,500 communities in 40 countries and all 50 US states. A semi-structured interviewing technique called laddering is used to measure means-end chains and to analyze laddering as a technique of qualitative research and emphasizing the procedures for data collection, analysis and interpretation. "Laddering refers to an in-depth interviewing technique used to develop an understanding of how users translate the attributes of place into meaningful associations with respect to self, following means-end theory" (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988, p. 12). The critical literature review shows that laddering is useful in studies on human behavior, especially those related to the Means-End Chain (MEC) model. Our results are based on a stratified sample of eleven students with different nationality in UTM. The students took apart in an one-hour interview and they were asked about their preferences over public places' attributes for various types of public places. The results of evaluating MEC model on public space design confirm the PPS four key qualities for successful public places. The results show that person-environment congruence can support users' values and their expectations in successful public place design.

ABSTRAK

Dalam kajian ini, criteria untuk mengiktiraf atribut kejayaan sesuatu tempat awam telah dikaji melalui perspektif teoritikal yang berbeza. Dalam tempat umum yang baik, perubahan social dan ekonomik mengambil tempat, kawan-kawan berlari kearah satu sama lain, dan budaya-budaya bercampuran. Apabila sesuatu tempat bergerak dengan baik, ia berkhidmat sebagai pentas untuk orang awam berkehidupan. Dalam kajian ini, kami menyiasat pengaruh nilai pengguna terhadap rekabentuk tempat awam. Kami mengkaji faktor-faktor motivasi sebagai penentuan untuk menyatakan keutamaan kepada atribut tempat awam. Tambahan lagi, hubungan antara faktor-faktor ini telah dikaji daripada perspektif teori min-akhir. Kajian ini dilakukan untuk memeriksa penemuan-penemuan yang dilaporkan dalam literatur bahawa PPS mengatakan 4 atribut kejayaan sesuatu tempat umum itu. PPS telah bekerja bersama 2,500 komuniti dalam 40 buah negara dan keseluruhan 50 negeri di US. Satu teknik semi-struktur temubual yang dipanggil sebagai “laddering” digunakan untuk mengukur “Means-End Chain (MEC)” dan untuk menganalisa “laddering” sebagai teknik kualitatif penelitian dan menekankan prosedur-prosedur dalam pengumpulan data, analisis dan tafsiran. “laddering” merujuk kepada teknik temuduga mendalam yang digunakan untuk membangunkan kefahaman bagaimana pengguna menterjemahkan atribut-atribut sesuatu tempat kepada asosiasi bermakna sehubungan dengan diri sendiri, mengikut teori “Means-end” (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988, p. 12). Imbasan kepada literatur yang kritikal menunjukkan bahawa “laddering” adalah berguna dalam kajian-kajian terhadap sikap manusia, terutamanya perkara yang berkaitan dengan model “Means-End Chain (MEC)”. Hasil kajian kami adalah berdasarkan kepada sampel berperingkat iaitu 11 pelajar UTM yang berbeza nasionalitinya. Pelajar-pelajar itu mengambil bahagian dalam 1 jam sesi temubual dan mereka disoal tentang keutamaan mereka terhadap atribut beberapa jenis tempat awam. Hasil daripada penilaian model MEC terhadap rekabentuk tempat awam megesahkan 4 kunci kualiti tempat awam yang berjaya. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa penyesuaian individu-persekitaran boleh menyokong nilai-nilai pengguna dan tanggapan-tanggapan mereka terhadap kejayaan rekabentuk tempat awam.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the overall structure of the research and framework in which the results of the enquiry are presented. First the research background and problem statement will be discussed. The second section outlines the scope of the research. The next section presents the relevance of this research. And overall structure of the thesis will be presented in the final section.

1.2 Problem Statement

When we look at the most beautiful towns and cities of the past, we are always impressed by a feeling that they are somehow organic. This feeling of “organization “is not vague feeling of relationship with biological forms. Each of

those towns grew as a whole under its own low of wholeness and we can feel this wholeness (Alexander, 1987). This feel-good effect has no reason except congruence between living environment and people expectations and their value. It means there is an invisible shadow of satisfaction after all (Hutchison, 2010). Today we live in an urban world which this quality does not exist. Responsive spaces are those that are designed and manage to serve the need of their users. The primary needs that people seek to satisfy in public space are those for comfort, relaxation, active and passive engagement and discovery. Public space can also be a setting for physically and mentally rewarding activity, such as exercise, gardening or conversation (Ulrich, 1979, 1984). When outdoor areas are of poor quality, only strictly necessary activities occur. When outdoor areas are of high quality, necessary activities take place with approximately the same frequency – though they clearly tend to take a longer time, because the physical conditions are better (Matthew Carmona, 2007, p. 146).

The quality of the places we live in has an impact on all aspects of life. How well they are designed will influence how safe we feel, how easy it is to walk round, whether we have shops, community facilities and schools nearby, whether our children have safe places to play. It will also affect whether there is good access to public transport and a good choice of homes in which to live. It is essential that the places we create and improve embody the principles of good urban design. Good public space design is essential to deliver places which are sustainable on all counts: places that create social, environmental and economic value. Ensuring that places are well designed should be a priority of everyone involved in shaping and maintaining the built environment (Llewelyn-Davies).

To solve formidable urban problems, there is the need not only for the usual coterie of experts—city planners, architects, engineers of all types, economists, law enforcement specialists, traffic and transportation experts, educators, lawyers, social workers, and political scientists—but for a number of new experts. Psychologists,

anthropologists are seldom, if ever, prominently featured as permanent members of city planning departments but they should be. Because the nature of human being which need more attention in today's modern town and cities. Planner, architecture, engineers and ... work more with the physical and visual aspect of built environment however we should think more about people behavior, need, value, culture and their design expectations in their living environment. User's design expectations have been seen as directly influencing the physical modification of living environment.

The first we should discuss the importance of meaning which rightly stresses is not in environments or things themselves but in people. Environments, as Professor Rapoport would agree, have no meaning in themselves - without people. Environments maker should centers on people's behavior in living environment related user's values. People living and spending their time in the towns are the most important member of living environment so, great attention to their need, culture, believe and value should be consider. Based on findings they posit that values are one of the determinants toward a more suitable living environment.

As Rokeach said Objectives and values play an important part in the behavior of people in general. They directs the everyday activities not only in small scale (at house) but also in large scale (in public). There are the vast range of activities that every day takes place in different part of town and city. One of the main parts is public space in towns which are the place of people gathering and various activities happen. People believe everyday activities to be the primary means to achieve life values. We are looking for a relationship between public spaces attributes and values are considered to be mainly indirect with everyday activities as the intervening factors. The aim of this research is prove the beliefs and values underlie people's evaluations of public urban spaces attributes.

As an extension to the research, the application of MEC model can be tested in public urban spaces toward a more suitable living environment. Currently, there are no defined good criteria for designing urban spaces, but it is agreed that success spaces are that satisfies the user's needs at a given stage of development. Lack of designers attention to urban places attributes and providing user's need is main problem of this research. The succesibility and degree of acceptable of public urban designing by people depends on whether the space meets the user needs in term of life cycle change and life style.

1.3 Scope of Research

Scope of study is a general outline of what the study will cover. The critical literature review shows that laddering is useful in studies on human behavior, especially those related to the Means-End Chain (MEC) model. . A semi-structured interviewing technique called laddering is used to measure means-end chains and to analyze laddering as a technique of qualitative research and emphasizing the procedures for data collection, analysis and interpretation. Our results are based on a stratified sample of eleven students with different nationality (Iranian, Malay, and Chinese) in UTM. The students took apart in a one-hour interview and they were asked about their preferences over public places' attributes for various types of public places in UTM. These places include lake area of university, Agoura and FAB square.

1.4 Method

Preferences for housing attributes have been studied from different theoretical perspectives and with a great variety of methodological approaches. Coolen and

Hoekstra's (2001) pilot study on housing preference. Their research centers on people's behavior in choosing living environment by relating unit's attribute with user's value. Based on the findings, they posit that values are one of the determinants in housing selection. Mahmud (2007) has experimented the research model in housing research to explore people's behavior in changing their living environments (housing-personalization).

But in urban design science it is unfamiliar. So this context pursues people's value in urban places. The relationships between such motivational factors as values and goals on the one hand and preferences for public space attributes on the other are considered from the perspective of means-end theory. The aim of this research is to apply MEC in urban design science to investigate motivational factors in public open spaces project.

The research model was found to be appropriate for built-environment researches based on the fact that built-environments are also expressed in terms of their attribute where the relevance of the attribute is judged by value system of the users. The model is potentially useful in identifying user's personal design preferences.

1.5 Research Aim

The aim of this research is to make comparison between attribute of successful public space and collected attribute through PEC research model in this pilot project in public spaces in UTM in order to support person environment congruence (PEC) in urban design science.

1.6 Research objective

- 1) To link public spaces attributes with user values in UTM
- 2) To identify user values which determine the design of public space
- 3) To identify the attributes which influence user's preference
- 4) To establish design consideration for urban public spaces based on user-value associations with public spaces attribute

1.7 Research question

The key research question of this thesis is:

How does user's expectation influence the design of public urban spaces?

How can user's value influence the public urban spaces attribute?

1.8 Structure of Thesis

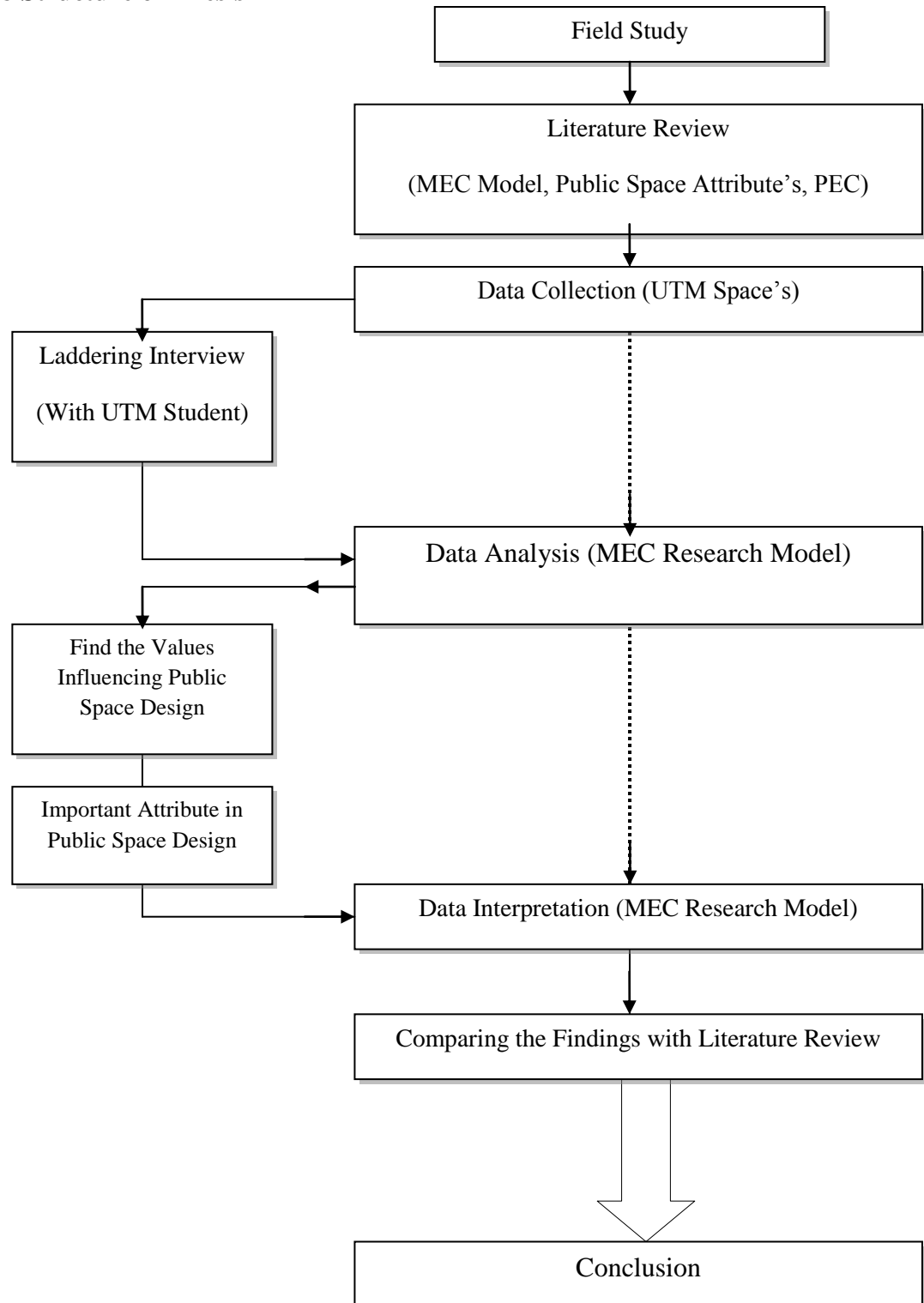


Figure 1.1 The Structure of Thesis

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