

Factors Influencing the Change in the Sense of Place of Markets in Urban Regeneration

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Abstract: The development of markets is essential in the growth of the urban economy and in strengthening the sense of place of the city. In the process of urban regeneration, some urban markets with tourism potentials have been redeveloped in order to upkeep with the city's modernization. The attempts to redevelop markets can either be successful or not, which consequently influence changes in the sense of place. Based on conducting a literature review on five urban market studies, this paper examines the factors that influenced the change in the sense of place of the markets, by comparing the successful regenerated markets with those which are not. This study found three key influencing factors. First, the interactions and relationships among the market's community can influence the strengthening or the weakening of the sense of place. Second, the physical setting influenced on how people view the market, whether it can fulfil their needs of activity or not. Third, the image represented by the market is important in reinforcing the unique culture of the market. This study concludes that the sense of place of urban markets is vital to be identified and understood to ensure that the market's operations continue to flourish after its regeneration.

Key words: Culture • Market • Sense of place • Tourism • Urban

INTRODUCTION

Urban markets can be described as a space where goods, merchandise or products of the local community are traded. Markets may be owned and operated by various types of organizations, such as the city government, vendor associations, community groups or private entities. It is a place where people interact with one another while doing business. Urban markets often have a strong rootedness to its local people. As such, the market is also a place where localness is shown by the community lifestyle, culture and heritage.

Globally, markets are the cities' oldest form of economic exchange. They are the nodes that spur the existence and growth of many towns [1]. From the market, the culture among the local community is built, as it is one of the most frequented urban places that people visit daily. The day-to-day living and activities of the vendors and visitors at market gradually cultivated the market's 'personality', which is its sense of place.

Today, urban market that have aged are vulnerable to the threats of gentrification and modernization. At some point in time, the markets eventually will be renovated or

redeveloped in parallel with the city growth and to support urban and cultural tourism. The process of regenerating markets should consider the components that make them special, as these components are the delicate characters that give each market its sense of place. The market's sense of place is important to be considered in urban regeneration as they make and form the exclusive culture of the market.

According to Weiss [2] (1988), the philosophy behind the operations and constructions of markets connects deeply with the historical and cultural contexts, societal meanings and experiences of its users. The local community experience, culture and people's relationship with urban markets are a significant part of regeneration. Kim [3] (2004) suggested that even though an area of a city had faced rapid development, the quality and characteristics of the place should still be there and preserved. However, over the course of urbanization and regeneration, some of the qualities that contribute to the market's sense of place are lost. Nevertheless, there are several urban markets that were able to sustain, or even enhance, their sense of place.

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With an interest to understand this phenomenon, this paper examines the factors that influenced the changes towards the sense of place of five urban markets, which have gone through the urban regeneration process.

Markets and Regeneration: Urban regeneration is an approach to revitalize the social, cultural and economic resources that are pertinent in the development of cities, particularly for tourism [4,5]. Through regeneration, strategies are formulated to rehabilitate and improve the physical, social and economic conditions of places that have significant values in the city, as parts of the cultural and heritage preservation ([5,6]. According to Roberts and Sykes [6] (2008), urban regeneration is a complex and dynamic process, which includes understanding the physical, social, environmental and economic needs of cities.

The regeneration of urban markets is essential in conserving the city's heritage values. Markets play a significant role as a 'place for commercial and cultural interchange' [7]. The market thrives in the first place because it serves the local community and has been a significant part of the local traditions that is rich with arts and cultural practices [8,9]. Urban market's localness and 'charm' inadvertently entice visitors from outside to come to the market, which gradually turn the marketplace into an urban tourist attraction.

The objectives of urban regeneration are to strengthen the sense of belonging, existing socioeconomic networks and community ownership among the urban dwellers. It also refers to a comprehensive approach that revitalizes urban areas by redeveloping and rehabilitating the city's physical structures, the local economy, the social fabric and the conservation of elements of cultural significance [10].

Sense of Place: Place can be described as where a measurement shaped by people's relationship with physical settings, individual and group activities, along with meanings. Place attachment, place image and identity and place dependence are the elements that defined the value of people's relationships with a place, which also known as sense of place. The concept of sense of place is to understand the human-place bonding, attachment and place meaning. Sense of place usually is defined as an main impression encompassing the overall ways in which people feel about places, senses it, assign concepts and values to it [11].

The market's community is the main component that contributes to the uniqueness of urban markets. Their lifestyles, experience and roles shape the market's

living culture, which eventually position the market as an urban and cultural tourist attraction. The sense of place that is present in the markets is vital in the discourse of urban regeneration and cultural sustainability. Sense of place is a pivotal component of the user experience, whether for the market's communities, the locals or the tourists [11,12].

The sense of place differentiates the traditional urban markets from the modern shopping complexes, where the bonding between the local community and the cultural heritage values are intertwined.

Sense of place is a bond between a place and people [13,14]. Sense of place has three components, which are place attachment, place image and identity and place dependency [14,15].

Place Attachment: Place attachment is the bond that people positively develops towards the specific place. The attachment is developed when a place is felt significant by the users, able to provide conditions to fulfil their functional needs and support their behavioural goals better than a known alternative [14,16].

The community of markets, such as in the traditional urban markets, has the tendency to be closely attached to the market because of the long relationship and history between them. The interactions among themselves created their own culture and lifestyle which strengthen their attachment to the place.

Place Image and Identity: Place image and identity is a belief that people have a relationship between him/her and that specific place, which consequently defined the individual's perceptions or reflections of their identity in relation to the physical environment of that place.

It refers to the identification of emotion and feelings to a particular place and the distinctive characteristics of the place where human-place bonding is developed [14,15,17,18].

For example, the people who conduct businesses in the market assumes the identity of 'the vendors'. The way they perceive the market reflect the place image of the market. While the image of a market may be construed from different perspectives, there would naturally be certain intangible or tangible aspects that would appear stronger than the others, which construct the place image.

Place Dependence: Place dependence refers to the 'behavioural exclusivity' of the place in relation to other places and the extent to which a place facilitates the achievement of important behavioural goals. The social and physical characteristics of a place influence the place

dependency because it provides the individual with a certain setting. It is an individual's perceived association (either positive or negative) between him or herself and a particular space [14,15].

Many locals depend on the urban markets as their main source of income and also a place where they socialize.

Regenerated Markets with Weakened Sense of Place:

This section discusses the studies that have been done on the markets that have gone through the regeneration process. However, these markets could not maintain much of their original culture, sense of place and previous conditions as before the regeneration process. The two markets are the Namdaemun Market in South Korea and the Yogyakarta Markets in Indonesia.

Namdaemun Market: The Namdaemun Market dates back to 1414, during the reign of King Taejong, as a government managed urban market. The market was revitalized alongside the city growth and development. The market was redeveloped as part of a large revitalization project conceived by the government. However, it did not seem to be regenerated or modernized [3, 19].

The market has limited its space between the vendors by placing them in the covered area. As a result, the spatial change had limited the interactions among the vendors. When the interactions were limited, the social bonding could not expand and thus, the market could not retain the similar social culture as in its previous state.

This physical change had weakened the sense of place of the market's community. The bond between the users in the market is not as strong as before and they did not feel attached to the market emotionally [3,19].

Yogyakarta Markets: The Yogyakarta Markets can be traced back to its roots in the old Majapahit reign and in the Mataram Kingdom. The markets were at their peak age until the economy crisis hit Indonesia in 1997. This event had led to the shrinking number of the traditional markets [20,21].

Modernization and competition between the modern malls and the markets have also decreased the number of traditional markets in Indonesia. More people were forced to make side income by doing business in the market, which caused the market spaces to be crowded and sparked a conflict between the vendors. The crowded space created an uncomfortable situation between the market's community.

Thus, it influenced the place dependency of the people there because the setting did not meet their behavioural needs. People avoided the crowded space and eventually decreased their interactions with the markets.

Regenerated Markets with Strengthened Sense of Place:

This section discusses the studies that have been done on the markets that have gone through the regeneration process, yet maintained their culture and most of the previous conditions before the process. The three markets are the Dongdaemun Market in South Korea, the Souq Mutrah market in Oman and the Pasar Siti Khadijah market in Malaysia.

Dongdaemun Market: The Dongdaemun is a 100-year-old market place that has gone through urban regeneration in the 1970s. The basic spatial features of the traditional urban market have been retained within the redeveloped building. The existing traditional market had an 'open' structure. Inside the modern, high-rise and closed buildings are open shops arranged in a linear manner, as how they were arranged in the traditional markets.

The Dongdaemun represents the combination of the old and the new. The open spatial arrangement allowed more interactions between the vendors and the customers, making the business easy and direct. When the interactions become smooth, people tend to feel more comfortable. These interactions created the market's own culture and lifestyle, which make the attachment to the place grow stronger [3,22].

Souq Mutrah: During the 1990's the Souq faced several issues, especially regarding safety and security. In 2001, more attention was given to the architectural, aesthetic and urban values of the Souq. During this redevelopment, the spaces in the markets were reconnected to allow a more effective user interactions.

The market space was zoned into three areas. One of the zones connected the Souq to the sea and fishing activities, which provided the views towards the vernacular architecture. Another zone served as the shopping environment and catered the movements and interactions in the spaces. In a different zone, the Souq was connected to the surrounding neighbourhoods, which enabled people to gather and socialize daily [23].

The Souq users feel safe and attached to the market because it provided them a secure environment and it represented the local culture and architecture of the city.

Pasar Siti Khadijah: Pasar Siti Khadijah is an urban market located in the state of Kelantan in Malaysia. Its vendors are predominantly female, which contributes to its uniqueness. It was renovated and renamed to suit the government's plan in making Kelantan an Islamic city in 1987.

The market has become one of the most favourite tourist attractions in the country since then. The image of Islam is dominant in this place. An attractive mosque is located adjacent to the market. The market spaces display some *du'a* (prayers or supplications) in Arabic words in different spots in the market. A translation of *hadith* concerning the importance of cleanliness can also be seen on the front wall of the buildings [24,25].

The image of Islam represented at the market makes the local people feel connected and bonded to the place. This unique image also becomes an attraction to tourists.

DISCUSSION

From the comparison of the five markets, the first factor that most influenced the sense of place of the market is the interactions among the market's community. The contributing factor that can make the sense of place values either strengthened or weakened is the relationship between the vendors and the visitors. The interactions among the people shaped the market's own special culture and lifestyle, which reinforced their attachment to the place.

As exemplified earlier, the Namdaemun Market was reorganized in a closed spatial arrangement, while the Dongdaemun Market retained the open concept. The spatial change affected the interactions between the vendors and customers, where the open concept provided more opportunities for people to socialize and connect with each other. As deliberated in the literature review, the physical and social characteristics of markets influence the place dependency because it offers the users with a certain setting [14].

The second factor that influenced the change in the sense of place is the physical setting of the redeveloped market. Markets that provide a well-organized setting gives people a secure and safe feeling in conducting their intended activities. For the vendors, the markets should be able to provide them with spaces conducive to their business and cultural needs.

For the visitors, the markets should offer them an opportunity to purchase the things they need and to engage in social activities. A well-organized shopping environment also allows people to move and interact in a

comfortable way, thus encouraging better interaction between the users of the market. Market which provided spaces that can allow many activities done there will make a strong sense of dependence for its users. A strong place dependence builds upon the sense of place.

The third factor that influenced the change in the sense of place is the cultural image of the market. People builds a relationship with a specific place, which also defined the individual's perceptions or reflections of their identity in relation to the physical environment of that place [15,17].

It refers to the identification of emotion and feelings to a particular place and the distinctive characteristics of the place in which human-place bonding is developed. For example, Pasar Siti Khadijah represents an image of Islam by displaying the translations of *hadith* and *du'a* through its signage inside the market and with the presence of the mosque built next to it.

Since the majority of the market's community there are Muslims, the image represented is reflective of the local people. A recognized and distinctive place image of the market contributes in strengthening the sense of place, which essentially is a vital quality of cultural attractions.

CONCLUSION

The degeneration of marketplace leads to the loss of a rich local culture and an important source of economic income for the market community. Without taking into account the cultural environment, the development of markets could fail to provide a broad-minded solution and end up being an urban pastiche. Therefore, it is critical to have a deep understanding on what makes the marketplace different and unique compared to other modern shopping complexes and supermarkets in order to formulate suitable regeneration strategies that will conserve and sustain the local cultural and economic richness.

The sense of place that is present in the traditional marketplace is vital in the discourse of urban regeneration and cultural sustainability because it is a pivotal component of the user experience, whether for the marketplace communities, locals and visitors. This differentiate the urban marketplace from any other modern mall, the bonding between the local community and the cultural heritage value there itself [3,11].

This paper concludes that sense of place is significant in sustaining the market's operations and living culture through urban regeneration. The factors

that have been identified from the market studies contribute in retaining and strengthening the sense of place of urban markets. Modifications in the physical environment and the subsequent shift in the users' perception continue to be translated into interventions that proved to have altered the urban fabric and disrupted its sense of place [3,6,11].

It is crucial to sustain the unique culture of a market because the market represents the ordinary, yet rich, culture of cities. In addition, the paper emphasizes the importance of the preservation of sense of place qualities, so that when the marketplace goes through urban and cultural regeneration process, it can still meet the needs of both locals and tourists and will sustain the local culture richness in the future.

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