Place attachment and the expression of thematic imageries in an urban kampung in Surakarta, Indonesia

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Abstract. Place attachment refers to the inherent strength that enhances the desirability and likability of a particular location among both residents and visitors, thereby leading to social and economic benefits while also increasing competitiveness. This research endeavor aims to explore and comprehend the positive emotional connection between individuals or communities and their surroundings by examining thematic mural images that are created and painted on the walls of urban settlements. Through the utilization of qualitative research methods such as field surveys, in-depth interviews, questionnaires, and mapping techniques in an Indonesian kampung, this study seeks to analyze the interplay between the artist's creativity, the depicted imageries, the social-cultural objectives, and the economic advantages associated with place attachment. The findings of this study highlight that the strong emotional bond between the community and the location is greatly influenced by factors such as shared identity, the distinctiveness of the place, and its appeal. This research significantly contributes to the ongoing discussions surrounding place-making, city branding, and the competitive advantage of cities.

1 Introduction

The term "place" refers to the subjective experience of human life as it is manifested in the physical world. It's a perplexing idea with a meaning that's simple to grasp yet tough to define. While place is an integrated notion, there is no systematic theory of place, according to their evaluation of the literature on place attachment, and many critics have since echoed their worries about the lack of conceptual coherence in research on place attachment. (Altman, 2012). According to another study, no systematic theory of place has evolved since the field of place research is made up of various research traditions that are based on extremely varied and frequently contradictory epistemological and philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality. Some features of study locations are better handled objectively, while others require qualitative techniques. They believe that their 'critical pluralist' framework provides comprehensive coherence to the field if researchers based on a person's research paradigm realize the boundaries of that paradigm and adopt an attitude of openness to different paradigms (Hidalgo, 2001).

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Previous generations of phenomenological scholars were particularly interested in connection to locations, as were current generations of phenomenology with a direct focus in environmental behavioral issues. Their study of people's emotional attachment to a wide range of places, with a focus on homes and sanctuaries, emphasizes people's unique emotional experiences and bonds with places. The phenomenological perspective, on the other hand, did not catch the attention of many environmental and behavioral researchers and designers until lately. Because positivist research philosophies dominated the study of environmental behavior in the past, phenomenological approaches that stress distinct subjective experiences, even in cultural and historical contexts, are not necessarily recognized as effective research strategies. However, as more eclectic and broader alternative approaches have gained popularity in recent years, phenomenological analysis has become increasingly essential in the study of environment and behavior. (Manzo, 2006). The analysis in question is illustrated as in figure 1 below:

![Diagram](image)

**Fig. 1.** Connection between People, Place and Culture. Source: Nursanty, 2021.

The concept of place attachment, according to the researchers, has an emotional or affective component. However, the concept of emotion is more difficult to grasp conceptually than that of putting, which has an easy-to-understand but difficult-to-define location attachment. In a single collection of article reviews, a study discovered a diversity of various definitions of place bonding. Place bonds are defined in this study as long-term affective attachments to a specific geographic region and the meaning associated with those bonds. When a person lives in a location for a long time, he or she develops feelings of fondness and a sense of belonging, or being in that place, to the point where the place becomes one of his identity's anchors. (Hay, 1998). The phrase "identity place" refers to the role of the physical environment in creating a person's sense of self. Place attachments are often viewed to permanent in early studies. While the attachment to the location is understood as timeless, it is also perceived as evolving over time, according to a recent dynamic view.

### 2 Method and material

The research method is carried out qualitatively by taking data using field surveys in Joho Surakarta thematic mural village, in-depth interviews, questioners and mapping. Qualitative analysis is done by finding relationships between various variables between various users of the place, and is sorted using the dimensions of time and expected functions. Measurement of success is done using qualitative analysis on the filling of the user and space connoisseur, expected to describe the state of the subject studied. The
determination of the subjects of this study is done purposively, which is an informant retrieval technique with certain considerations. Data collection is taken with in-depth interviews of Karangtaruna teenagers and some villagers, observations involved and searches for literature studies. This research method is carried out to explore the questions that I have the attachment of Thematic Village mural Joho Surakarta with local residents. The research question that arises in this study is what makes Kampung mural thematic Joho Surakarta a special place for the local community and why they have a race of interest in this place. The location of the study can be seen in figure 2 below.

![Fig. 2. Kp. Joho, Surakarta City, Central Java, Indonesia. Source: Nursanty, 2021 processed from google map.](image)

3 Discussion

Thematic Village Joho Surakarta is the name of one of the villages in Manahan village, Banjarsari subdistrict, Surakarta. This village is famous because there are various murals in various corners of the village. There are more than 30 mural points where the manufacturing process is done independently by an artist named Maryanto (74 years old). The murals include national figures, football supporters, puppet figures, education and murals of the first president, Soekarno to Jokowi all painted on the walls of Joho village buildings.

The mural was first made in the house of Mr. Maryanto himself who is on Prenjak V Surakarta street which is in front of the door and walls of his house with the theme of rama puppetry and shinta as well as pandhawamurals. Then over time the community asked him to make a mural on the wall of the walls of local people's homes, starting from prenjak V street, prenjak 1 road, prenjak IV street. Then spread to a campong that has 7 RT in 1 RW. The analysis in question is illustrated as in figure 3 below:
As a city known for its art and culture, thematic mural village Joho Surakarta puts forward the thematic concept in making murals as an embodiment of people's love with where they live. The mural depicts the social, cultural and environmental conditions in which he lives. This shows that the positive emotional bond between the community and the place in the research in Thematic Mural Village of Surakarta is strongly influenced by social, cultural and awareness factors to be part of each other. Awareness of this place is able to make a sense of attachment between the surrounding community and from outside the city with the mural village becomes stronger.

The thematic village mural Joho Surakarta is also commonly referred to by the name of Joho Kampoeng Hepi. This is to distinguish the entity id from other villages. Using characteristic ornaments in every alley of the village that is full of color and looks happy. Kampoeng Hepi uses the concept of unique selling preposition which means hepi village as a tourist destination that offers joy and happiness, visitors can interact with residents and explore every corner of the village. Joho tourist village ornaments are made up from organic ornaments such as ornamental plants and various flowers and non-organic such as handicrafts from bamboo, car tires and other used goods. In addition, community activities in this village also reflect the typical pillars of Javanese society in building cultural aspects both material and non-material. Joho Kampung Hepi is known as a child-friendly village, a village that facilitates the needs of citizens in the field of education and economy and is not left behind with the means to facilitate the communication process.

4 Result

Rapid urbanization and increased cultural mobility have resulted from globalization. Traditional Indonesian villages that used to cohabit with nature now face modernization concerns. Traditional towns were squeezed between commercial complexes as modern cities grew, resulting in the formation of separate settlements known as urban villages. Gentrification is often the outcome of poor urban development, resulting in slums and social inequality. This research examines how murals in Indonesian Java's urban villages have transformed slums into renowned locations. For nearly a decade, a trend in Java has been to decorate urban settlements with murals. Some urban villages have become tourist hotspots and integral parts of the city's identity. The study looked into how community murals are used to create place identities. This research will employ a variety of methodologies. The first visual ethnography was utilized to investigate local culture in one of Indonesia's urban villages. The second participatory approach will be utilized to investigate the process of creating a community mural and to consider how art may empower people.

The environment shapes civilization and can lead to the formation of many cultures over time. The natural environment shaped the identity of a place and culture in the past. Coconut palms, for example, have had a huge impact on traditional Balinese coastal...
culture, from creating gadgets to building houses. Banana trees are a common plant used in everyday life in traditional Balinese culture, and people who live closer to the mountain have diverse habitats. The environment continues to shape culture, transforming into a complicated public relations situation in which each location develops a distinct material culture. Checking people's environmental preferences, everyday activities, occupations, and local knowledge is the simplest approach to understand a place's identity. Because every social and cultural action, both intentionally and unconsciously, contains something from the past, a place's identity cannot be observed just from a contemporary perspective. Take, for example, a recipe that begins with our forefathers' idea to create it in a specific location with certain components. Cooking and eating styles that are linked to place and memory during specific stages of life have been passed down from generation to generation. In a nutshell, modern is a relic of the past. Identities do not exist in a static condition since they are always changing as long as material culture is generated and transformed over time and space. The physical setting of a place's environment and history is influenced by two factors: people's attitudes and their responses. It is vital to investigate the history of culture in connection to physical arrangements in order to comprehend people's perspectives. A place's uniqueness is shaped not just by its long-internalized history, but also by a network of social ties that intersect and intertwine specific loci. Each place is a unique meeting place established by a specific global crossroads, a territory without strict boundaries, in a globalized world with increased cultural mobility. Increased cultural mobility also sharpens the local imagination, altering perceptions of place identity and legacy. The identity of a place and its past is not usually seen as a monolithic culture established over time, but is carved by time and steeped in multiple dimensions. Technological advancements, globalization, and societal behaviors all shape a place's story. The study investigates how art, particularly mural art, plays a significant role in today's urban environments as depicted in figure 4 below.

![Diagram of the role of the mural as Narative Place in Kampung Mural, Surakarta. Source: Nursanty, 2021.](image)

**Fig. 4.** Diagram of the role of the mural as Narrative Place in Kampung Mural, Surakarta. Source: Nursanty, 2021.

Place attachment in Kampung Mural Joho Surakarta is an attachment of people or communities and places represented by culture in the form of materials, such as murals. This makes the awareness of the surrounding residents that Kampung Mural is a place that must be developed and maintained his identity. Residents around also began to realize the positive emotional bond between the community and Kampung Mural Surakarta which makes residents become more loving in their own village. Aside from the surrounding residents, Kampung Mural also attracts tourists from various corners to visit Kampung Mural to learn art, travel, and culinary.
Mursals are the embodiment of social-cultural aspirations in a place's environment and can define a narrative in a place. Murals and reliefs depicted tell history, short messages, and educational facilities to the wider community. Starting from abstract-shaped paintings to mask paintings made three-dimensional. In addition, there is also a mural of national figures, football supporters, puppet figures, to the first former President of Indonesia, Soekarno, to the 7th President who is also the former Mayor of Solo, Jokowi. Narrative in a place is the key to strengthening the identity of society and place as well as to advancing the economic competitiveness of society itself. Mural painting involves the idea of village youth and residents. In the alley entering the village there is also a writing of the business name of Joho residents ranging from culinary, rental house business (kos), to services. Such as meatballs, soto, satay, bakmi, chicken noodles, furniture, painters, dance arts and so on to introduce businesses in Joho Village to advance the economic competitiveness of the surrounding residents.

5 Conclusion

This study delved into the concept of place attachment and its impact on the desirability and likability of a particular location for both residents and visitors. Through an examination of thematic mural imageries in an urban kampung in Surakarta, Indonesia, we sought to understand the positive emotional bond between individuals or communities and their surroundings. Employing qualitative research methods such as field surveys, in-depth interviews, questionnaires, and mapping, we analyzed the relationship between the artist's creativity, the projected imageries, the social-cultural objectives, and the economic benefits associated with place attachment. The results showed that elements including a sense of shared belonging, the location's uniqueness, and its general attractiveness had a big impact on how strong the emotional tie was between the community and the area.

This study adds to the conversation about place-making, city branding, and the competitive advantage of cities by throwing light on these findings. Place connection can be promoted by the incorporation of thematic mural imagery, which has considerable social and economic advantages. It not only makes the area more desirable for locals and visitors, but it also makes the locals' sense of place stronger. This study emphasizes the value of place attachment as a beneficial characteristic for urban settlements. Policymakers, city planners, and artists may collaborate to build dynamic, distinctive, and engaging urban landscapes that promote social well-being, economic progress, and a competitive edge for the city by comprehending the positive emotional tie between people and places.

References

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