



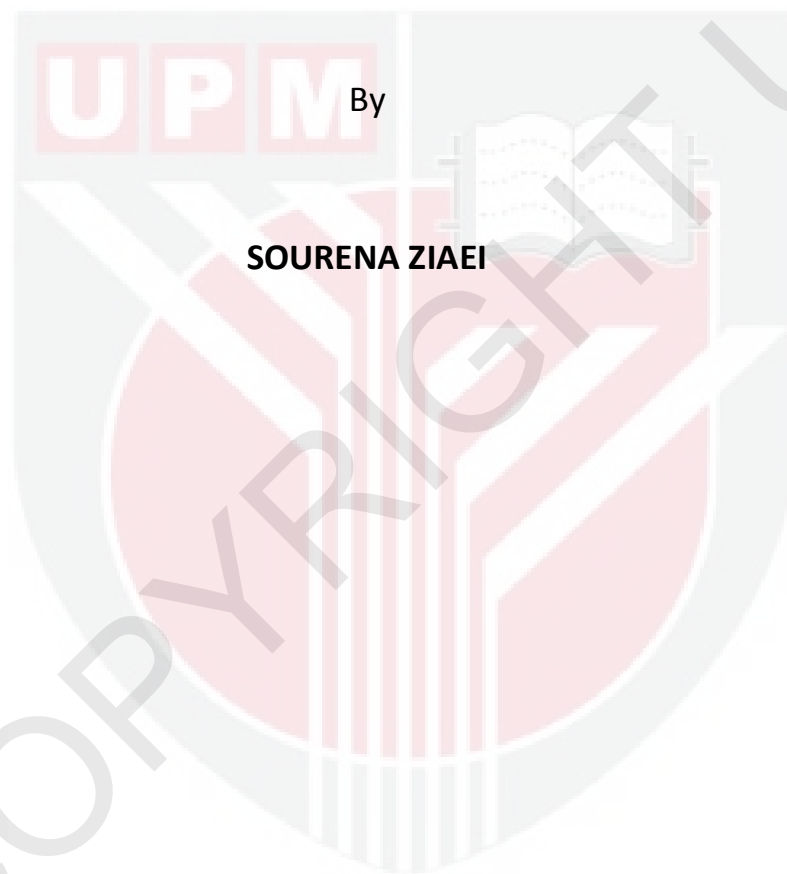
**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

***URBAN LANDMARKS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH PLACE  
ATTACHMENT***

**SOURENA ZIAEI**

**FRSB 2014 8**

**URBAN LANDMARKS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH PLACE ATTACHMENT**



**January 2014**

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## **DEDICATION**

In the Name of Allah, I generally dedicate this thesis to everyone who deserves to live in a better city and society that we love. Truly specially, I dedicate this thesis to my parents who always love and support me since my childhood.



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

**URBAN LANDMARKS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH PLACE  
ATTACHMENT**

By

**SOURENA ZIAEI**

**January 2014**

**Chairman: Norsidah binti Ujang, PhD**

**Faculty: Design and Architecture**

Place is a physical location which is formed through individual's relationship with physical environments, activities and meanings. In its essence, Place Attachment (PA) is a theory, which can describe the quality of the relationship between human and place. It is defined as the affective ties that people set up with particular settings, exactly where they desire to remain being along with as well as where they can experience safety and comfort.

Based on the KL Structure Plan of 2020, rapid development has left the city of Kuala Lumpur rather lacking in its legibility and identity. It is claimed that people are more attached to activities in the city rather than the physical characteristics and natural elements of the places. Due to the ongoing issues on disharmony in the development which affects major landmarks, it is assumed that place attachment to the places is also decreasing. Attraction to landmark places can be affected by the weakening of place identity.

Despite the fact that the significant roles of landmarks on people's sense and attachment is mentioned by many scholars, there is still a gap in these researches about attachment to landmarks which act as external point-references to the observers that contribute to making a city legible. Previous studies mostly have focused on perception of landmark between different users. For example, Lynch (1960) studied on the five physical components that influence imageability. However, the study did not examine the psychological effects of experiencing such places.

This study examines the psychological aspects of the place by examining place attachment, which provides a more comprehensive assessment on place. It focuses on the people's level of attachment to different types of landmarks and examines their influences on two existing landmark places in Kuala Lumpur city. It is assumed that urban landmarks contribute to the people's sense of attachment and the quality and types of engagement with the places they experience.

This study seeks to identify the characteristics of the selected landmarks and the factors that strongly influenced place attachment. A questionnaire survey was conducted with 300 respondents who were engaged in Dataran Merdeka and Kuala Lumpur City Center Park (KLCC Park). These two places are important landmarks of Kuala Lumpur, which play influential roles in attracting both tourists and locals to the city.

The study clarifies that both selected open space landmarks contain all four essential characteristics to prove place values to act as landmarks and discovers that there was a significant relationship between characteristics of the urban landmarks and the development of place attachment in the context. Additionally, in terms the influence on functional attachment, Singularity and Special Prominence found to be the most effective characteristics of landmarks while Singularity and Meaning are those ones whom affect emotional attachment. Moreover, individuals developed stronger emotional bonds to both selected landmarks in comparison to the functional ties while in KLCC Park the functional attachment was greater than the square and in contrast, Merdeka is where people are attached to more emotionally compare to the park.

The findings will assist city authorities, planners and designers to provide people with landmarks, which are responsive to user's need and therefore support continuous attachment either functionally or emotionally. These shall result in their persistent engagement with the places and increase in frequency of visit particularly to landmarks within tourism places in the metropolitan city of Kuala Lumpur.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**MERCUTANDA-MERCUTANDA BANDAR DAN HUBUNGAN MEREKA  
DENGAN IKATAN TEMPAT**

Oleh

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Tempat adalah lokasi fizikal yang dibentuk hasil darihubungan di antara individu dengan persekitaran fizikal, aktiviti dan makna. Pada dasarnya, Ikatan Tempat (Place Attachment) adalah satu teori yang menggambarkan kualiti hubungan di antara manusia dan tempat. Ia didefinisikan sebagai suatu hubungan efektif yang dijalin oleh manusia dengan ciri tertentu sesuatu tempat yang menarik mereka untuk tinggal secara kekal dan juga memberi mereka keselamatan dan keselesaan.

Berdasarkan Pelan Struktur Kuala Lumpur 2020, pembangunan yang pesat telah mengurangkan kejelasan imej (imageability) dan identiti Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur. Dinyatakan bahawa pengguna lebih terikat dengan aktiviti di sekitar bandaraya berbanding dengan ikatannya terhadap ciri fizikal dan unsur semula jadi tempat tersebut. Kesan daripada isu- ketidakharmonian yang sentiasa berterusan yang memberi kesan kepada mercutanda utama, diandaikan bahawa ikatan kepada sesuatu tempat juga akan menjadi semakin lemah. Justeru, tarikan terhadap sesuatu mercutanda boleh terjejas oleh kelemahan identiti tempat tersebut.

Walaupun ramai ahli akademik mengutarakan fakta mengenai peranan penting mercutanda terhadap rasa dan ikatan seseorang, namun masih terdapat jurang dalam kajian tersebut iaitu berkaitan ikatan kepada mercutanda yang bertindak sebagai elemen rujukan dari kawasan luar sesebuah bandar yang menyumbang kepada kejelasan imejnya. Kebanyakan kajian terdahulu memberi tumpuan kepada persepsi mercutanda terhadap pengguna yang berbeza. Sebagai contoh, Lynch (1960) mengkaji lima komponen fizikal yang mempengaruhi sesuatu gambaran imej. Bagaimanapun, kajian tersebut tidak melihat kepada kesan psikologi pengguna berdasarkan pengalamannya di tempat tersebut.

Kajian ini meneliti aspek psikologi sesebuah tempat dengan mengkaji ikatan tempat yang memberi hasil penilaian yang lebih menyeluruh kepada tempat tersebut. Kajian ini memberi penekanan kepada penelitian tahap ikatan pengguna terhadap pelbagai jenis mercutanda dan pengaruhnya terhadap dua lokasi mercutanda sedia ada di Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur. Boleh dikatakan bahawa mercutanda bandar menyumbang kepada tahap hubungan pengguna pada sesebuah tempat dan kualiti serta jenis pertalian dengan tempat yang telah mereka alami.

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti ciri mercutanda yang dipilih dan faktor yang mempengaruhi ikatan tempatnya. Tinjauan soal selidik telah dilakukan dengan 300 responden yang terdapat di Dataran Merdeka dan Taman KLCC. Kedua-dua tempat ini merupakan mercutanda yang penting di Kuala Lumpur yang berpengaruh dalam menarik pelancong dan penduduk tempatan ke Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur.

Kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa kedua-dua mercutanda di kawasan terbuka yang dipilih mengandungi ke empat-empat ciri penting untuk membuktikan nilai sesuatu tempat sebagai mercutanda. Kajian ini juga mendapati bahawa terdapat hubungan yang signifikan di antara ciri mercutanda bandar dan ikatan tempat di sekitar lokasi tersebut. Selain itu, dari segi pengaruh ke atas fungsi ikatan, ciri ketunggalan (singularity) dan menonjol (special prominence) didapati paling berkesan untuk mercutanda manakala ketunggalan (singularity) dan makna (meaning) memberi kesan kepada ikatan emosi. Di samping itu, pengguna didapati telah membentuk ikatan emosi yang kuat terhadap kedua-dua mercutanda yang terpilih berbanding dengan ikatan fungsi (functional attachment). Namun begitu, didapati ikatan fungsi (functional attachment) di Taman KLCC adalah lebih kuat jika dibandingkan dengan ikatan fungsi di Dataran Merdeka. Sebaliknya, Dataran Merdeka pula merupakan tempat di mana pengguna lebih terikat secara emosinya berbanding dengan Taman KLCC.

Hasil kajian ini akan membantu ahli majlis perbandaran, perancang dan pereka untuk menyediakan pengguna dengan mercu tanda yang responsif untuk keperluan mereka yang membantu mengekalkan ikatan fungsi (functional attachment) atau ikatan emosi (emotional attachment). Ianya akan menyumbang kepada keterikatan pengguna yang berterusan terhadap tempat tersebut dan sekaligus meningkatkan kekerapan kunjungan terutamanya ke mercutanda di tempat pelancongan di Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur.



### **APPROVAL**

I certify that an Examination Committee has met on ..... to conduct the final examination of Sourena Ziaei on her Master of Science entitled “Kuala Lumpur urban landmarks and their influences on place attachment” in accordance with Universiti Putra Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulation 1981. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the degree of Master of Science.

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

KLCC	Kuala Lumpur City Center
SPSS	Statistics Package for Social Science
PA	Place Attachment
JPBD	Jabatan Perancangan Bandar Dan Desa Negeri
DBKL	Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur



# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

People develop a relationship with places they have interaction with. In recent years, scholars' interests for looking deeper into the feelings and emotions of people about places have been increasing. Previous researchers who studied on this relationship have identified this as "place attachment". Place attachment has been described in a number of fields such as Psychology, Geography and Urban Design, nevertheless it has not yet quite fully explored in studies on urban landmarks.

Place attachment represents the connection between individuals and the places they feel safe and comfortable, or in the other words, the connection that individuals develop with a particular place. According to previous research on this subject, various attachment models and dimensions have been established and they consist of the first two basic dimensions pertaining to emotional and functional attachment (Hammit, Kyle, & Oh, 2009). As for this study, the explorations and measurements have formed based on a conventional attachment model made up the two aforementioned dimensions proposed by Williams, Patterson, Roggenbuck, and Watson (1992).

Individuals, activity and characteristics of a particular place may influence the emotional and functional attachment people establish to such a place. Often a research on a place focuses on the city itself and the human activities and behaviors within it. One of the significant activities in a city is the human orientation which is influenced by the structure and characteristics of physical elements forming its urban environment.

Landmarks are one of the physical elements of the city that influence imageability and sense of orientation of the the users. Lynch (1960a) argued that these elements can influence a sense of place. He focused on the elements that affected how people structure a city in their mental image. Extending the aspects explored by Lynch (1960), this study aims to explore the influence of the characteristics of landmarks on users' attachment to two major landmarks of Kuala Lumpur namely the KLCC Park and the Merdeka Square.

This study is important to clarify the influential factors that affect the degree of attachment toward the landmarks. It may reveal whether the designs of such places are effective to support user's emotional and functional needs and potential for their enhancement. It will indicate how urban landmarks affect the psychological sense of place in the context of Kuala Lumpur.

Place attachment concept, has been explored by previous researchers in social psychology, sociology, environment, anthropology and human geography. (Pruneau, Chouinard, Arsenault, & Breau, 1999). Fried first introduced a study of place attachment, into the scientific literatures in 1963. Since then studies on this topic have started to progress from the sense of place by human geographers such as Tuan (1974), Relph (1976b), Steele (1981) and Low and Altman (1992). These seminal

studies presented a very extensive description of the value of place attachment in the use of personal and public spaces. These primary attempts have generally emphasized on the inter-connection of emotions, attitudes and behaviors. It is observed that literature on people-place interaction focused on different topics of conceptualization, terminology, theory, and developmental context (Inglis, Deery, & Whitelaw, 2008). Therefore, with respect to human history, various views, theories and concepts have been discovered to explain the influences of attachment to places (Inglis et al., 2008).

Landmark was first identified in several studies of image of the cities. City images or environmental image is a concept first proposed by psychologists in 1948 that worked on achievement of spatial knowledge. This process is described as the formation of an internal representation of space, as the requirement that allows communication with the external world. This process can be related to an internal representation called “cognitive map” or “mind map” (Fattahi & Kobayashi, 2009; Tolman, 1948).

In the context of urban design, the focus of researches on spatial orientation was paralleled to the psychological efforts done by Tolman, while Kevin Lynch’s study can be accounted as the most influential one (Fattahi & Kobayashi, 2009). Lynch has identified five essential elements in the construction of the cognitive map of an urban environment. This cognitive map is through which people described their home and cities using some references and relationships between five basic categories of features namely paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks. These elements are hypothesized as the elements contributing to imageability of the city that serve as aids in orientation and way finding; and landmarks are introduced as one of the very important ones (Fattahi & Kobayashi, 2009; Lamit, 2004).

In the first step, Lynch in his seminal work, *Image of the City* has recognized and defined the role of landmarks in enhancing the legibility and imageability of the cities; and characterized the landmarks in architecture and urban design. Lynch theory is based on Shannon’s information theory and has been used as the basis for other recent works beyond urban design in many different fields and sciences (Fattahi & Kobayashi, 2009; Lynch, 1960b; Shannon & Weaver, 1948; Sorrows & Hirtle, 1999).

After Lynch’s research on landmarks and other four elements of the city, Appleyard (1969) used imageability, the concept that Lynch’s proposed to evaluate distinctive form of regular remembered buildings perceived as landmarks. Other researches after Lynch, such as Appleyard (1969), Rosch (1975) and Sadalla, Burroughs, and Staplin (1980) have examined some of the operational definitions of reference points and landmarks. These studies have examined some of the potential characteristics in the landmarks of the physical space.

It is noted that Lynch defined landmarks by their features and others followed similar description with some modifications (Sorrows, 2004). A study by Siegel and White (1975) indicated that knowledge on landmark is the first stage of spatial knowledge that individuals create through their relationship with a new setting, achieved before any creation of route or network knowledge. This study supported Lynch’s hypothesis about the important usage of landmarks in way finding and human

communication about routes because of prominent role they play in human mental representations of space (Duckham, Winter, & Robinson, 2010; Siegel & White, 1975) . This study further extends the role of landmarks in influencing the psychological sense of place, which is reflected in place attachment.

Recent study by Dougherty (2006) have applied landmarks and the four elements of the city with the key ability of enhancing the city`s identity and place attachment. This study proposed a design of an area that can ensure users to have strong place attachment if they use and live in this area. There is also another study on developmental plan of the city of Hasting in United States on issues faced by this city in 1990 that resulted in people facing lack of sense of place in their hometown. In this study the mayor of the city, policy makers and officials generated a guideline for development of places, image and identity of the city. They proposed a plan for some long-term milestones and placing some new essential local landmarks with special design and characteristics in several locations of the city, and improvement of the existing landmarks to make them more dominant in the city. It is essential to mention that in both of these recent studies, parks and squares were defined as landmarks of the city, which require due consideration and measurements about their image and functional qualities.

A review of previous studies revealed that most studies in the area of place attachment were largely focused on the factors, which influenced place attachment; and the influential power of its dimensions. Some others explored a relationship between involvement behavior and place attachment (Wu, Zhang, Zhang, & Song, 2012). Previous attempts have also been on various scales of place itself, ranging from the scale of a city to a small scale neighborhood and home(Scannell & Gifford, 2010). Studies on some open spaces in the city like parks and squares were also conducted, for these open spaces affected the characteristics of the place itself. These include investigation of other factors that have both positive and negative effects on place attachment that people have for a place. Nevertheless previous studies of places have not really focused on characteristics of landmarks that can affect place attachment.

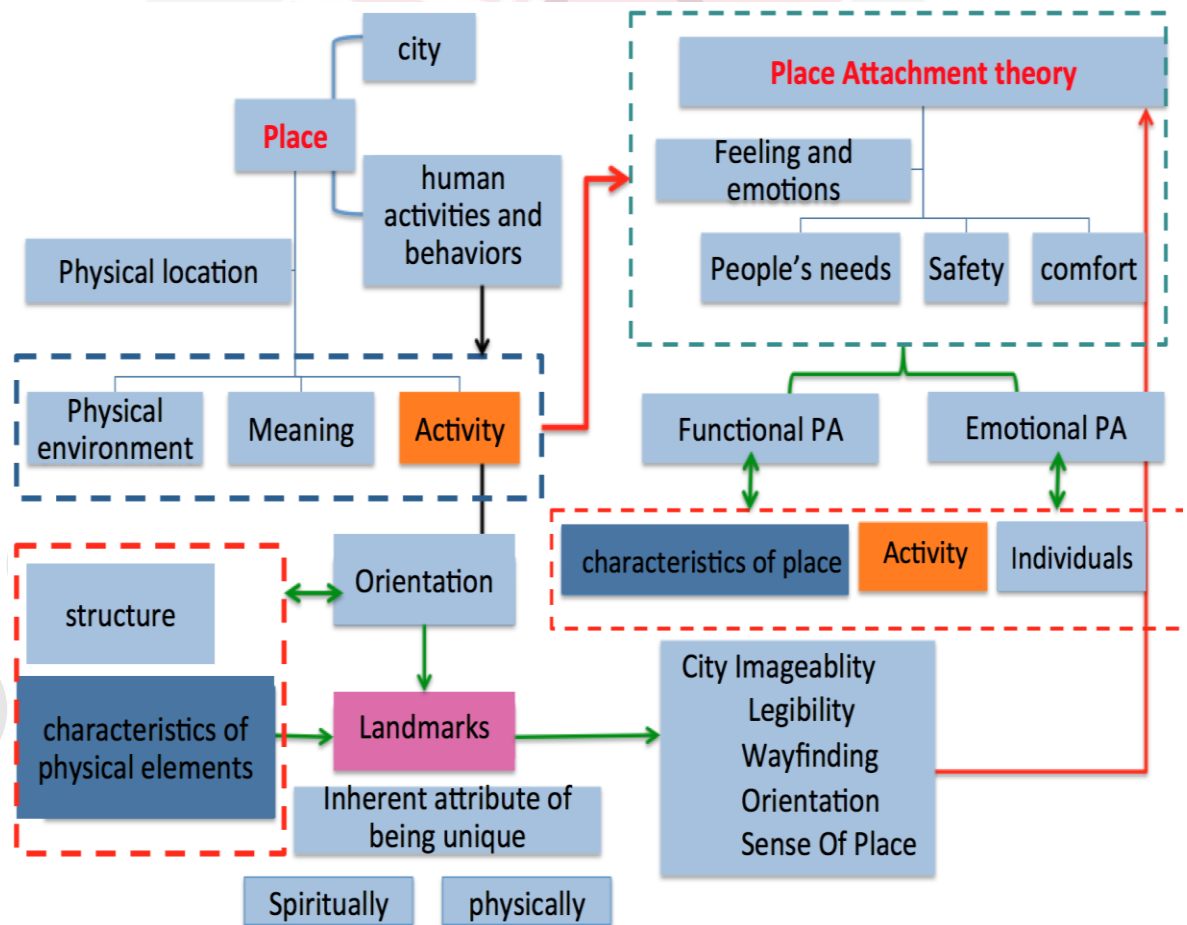
It is perceived that in Malaysian cities, the way people use spaces and places are distinct from other cities elsewhere. The relationship may be culturally or psychologically orientated. Therefore it is essential to explore the factors that would influence place attachment in the city of Kuala Lumpur as an Asian city. In line with Lynch insistence on the role of landmarks to enhance ‘sense of place’, this study is to find out the effects of the major landmarks and its characteristics on people’s attachment to the city.

The hypotheses for the present study were derived from literature studies by Lynch (1960b),Steele (1981), Stedman (2008), Ujang (2008b) and Najafi and Mohd Shariff (2011) and Najafi and Mohd Shariff (2011) who claimed and discovered that factors contributed to the formation of the sense of place are broke down into two multiple clusters of the cognitive and perceptual factors; as well as the physical characteristics of a physical setting. Consequently, sense of place is not merely assumed as a sense of affection with the settings. Hence, the emotional bonding of sense of place is created after cognition between people and the settings developed. Therefore various

senses exist among diversity of people and their experiences, motivations and backgrounds.

The characteristics of physical settings affect a sense of place as claimed in several studies (Inglis et al., 2008; Low & Altman, 1992; Williams & Roggenbuck, 1989). The physical characteristics and attributes of a setting defined the kind of that environment, and contributed to the perceived meanings. In this regard, Najafi and Mohd Shariff (2011) noted that physical features and attributes of a place are the elements judged by individuals before any other aspects in any particular settings. She also concluded that the physical setting with its characteristics and attributes might influence whether people develop an attachment for it or not. In another study by Stedman (2008) claimed that physical environment and its characteristics did contribute to the construction of sense of place, whereby the physical characteristics strengthen both place attachment and satisfaction.

According to the reviewed literatures and theories, it is concluded that physical features influence users' attachment, emotionally and functionally. These features are related to the hypotheses of this study pertaining to the effects of landmarks' characteristics on place attachment, which can be considered as new exploration in place attachment studies. Consequently the following figure prepared based on the existing literature and shows how the place attachment is affected through landmark characteristics.



**Figure 0-1: Introduction on the Relationship of Landmark and Place Attachment**

Source: Summary of Literatures



## 1.2 Problem Statement

Since the post-industrial age, many cities around the world are experiencing challenges of changes and transformations. Many scholars argued that this phenomenon is the cause to the process of urban decline (Crow Hurst & Henry, 1987). Strong pressures on cities to develop within the existing urban fabric put enormous strain on the resources, quality of the urban environment and impact the value of overall aesthetics (Ngiom, 1997). In the process of development, most cities go through changes in their urban characteristics and qualities such as familiarity, tranquility and beauty are being compromised. These qualities are what the public experience in their daily environment and are vanishing rapidly as the city develop (Krupat, 1985; Lamit, 2003).

Wheeler (2004) argued that poor connection of rapid development, urban regeneration, economic globalization, standardized products and generic urban environment with the regional ecosystem, landscape and local history, culture and community, have left the cities with lack of meaning, legibility and identity. At the same time, lack of important information for urban designers and decision makers from public's perception, needs and desires to be considered in designing process, has lead cities to be more inappropriate for the users (Ismail, Suriana, Sulaiman, & Shamsuddin, 2008; Lamit, 2003; Lang, 2005; Sulaiman, 2000).

The failure to protect unique places with special features and qualities, have destructive impact on the current physical image and the spatial stability as well as the sense of identity embedded in individual's experience of the place (Ujang, 2008b). As a result, place attachment to the cities has been slowly decreasing. it is presumed that existing urban development tend to reduce attachment to place and weaken the strength of place meaning (Arefi, 1999; Relph, 1976b; Shamsuddin & Ujang, 2008)

In the context of Malaysia, the government vision to develop the entire country into a fully industrialized nation by 2020, and placing 70% of the population in urban areas has transformed the capital city of Kuala Lumpur through fast urbanization and development of new areas (Hall, 2003). It was also claimed in the National Physical Plan reported by JPBD (2005, 2006) and in the 9<sup>th</sup> Malaysian Plans that rapid urban developments have caused inappropriate physical changes which led to changes in the meaning of local places, disassociation with the local culture and people's way of life. (Ismail et al., 2008). These transformations have led the city experience to be disjointed and lacking in visual and physical coherence (Hall, 2003).

Consequently it has been observed that the conditions have reduced city legibility and identity that resulted in the weakening of place attachment (Ujang, 2008b). Another stark reality is the difference in the perception of the Asian and Westerners pertaining to desirability of changes in the city, which largely based on the Western standards. This was revealed through face-to-face in-depth interviews with the officials and urban specialists in DBKL's office in 2012. The interviews revealed that, the conditions are associated with the Malaysian's cultural orientation and exclusive nature of people's behavior that influence their preference towards more inter individual-oriented activities and communications; rather than those involving

large groups even in public open spaces. For example, Malaysians tend to enjoy open spaces such as Petaling Street to fulfill their daily activities and needs, rather than gathering in one place in large groupings to have social interaction and communication.

Public places must provide users with a sense of identity and attachment both emotionally and physically. In order to be successful, vital parts of the city should be created to encourage people to meet thus will enhance social ties and bonds between people and place (Dougherty, 2006). The identity of a place connects it to the user and the city. Unfamiliarity and disengagement is also observed in landmark places, which include public open spaces and squares that often remain under-use in the city center of Kuala Lumpur.

A report from the Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan 2020 has predicted that the population of Malaysia including youths would be increased. Hence, this situation needs to be managed to ensure that the needs of different groups in terms of the facilities receive enough attention (KLCH, 2003).

The KL Structure report also highlighted that users' needs have not been well provided in recreational areas including open spaces and sport facilities, especially within the city center (KLCH, 2003). These are the needs that if properly addressed could make people more functionally attached to the cities and the public open spaces within it, as their need from the spaces would have been met. Moreover, it can be concluded that the diminishing sense of place and identity can be seen in people's lack of interest to frequent the public places; and, consequently landmark places become less meaningful to the younger generation. This scenario has already been observed in Kuala Lumpur (Ismail & Harun).

Anthony Clerici and Izabela Mironowicz (2009) argued that one of the most essential elements of affective urban transformation is the great quality of landmarks. These elements are showing the sense of place as they have great primary values in both the economic development and public involvement. Moreover, landmarks are the only elements that enable us to recognize places as they touch our minds (Anthony Clerici, 2009).

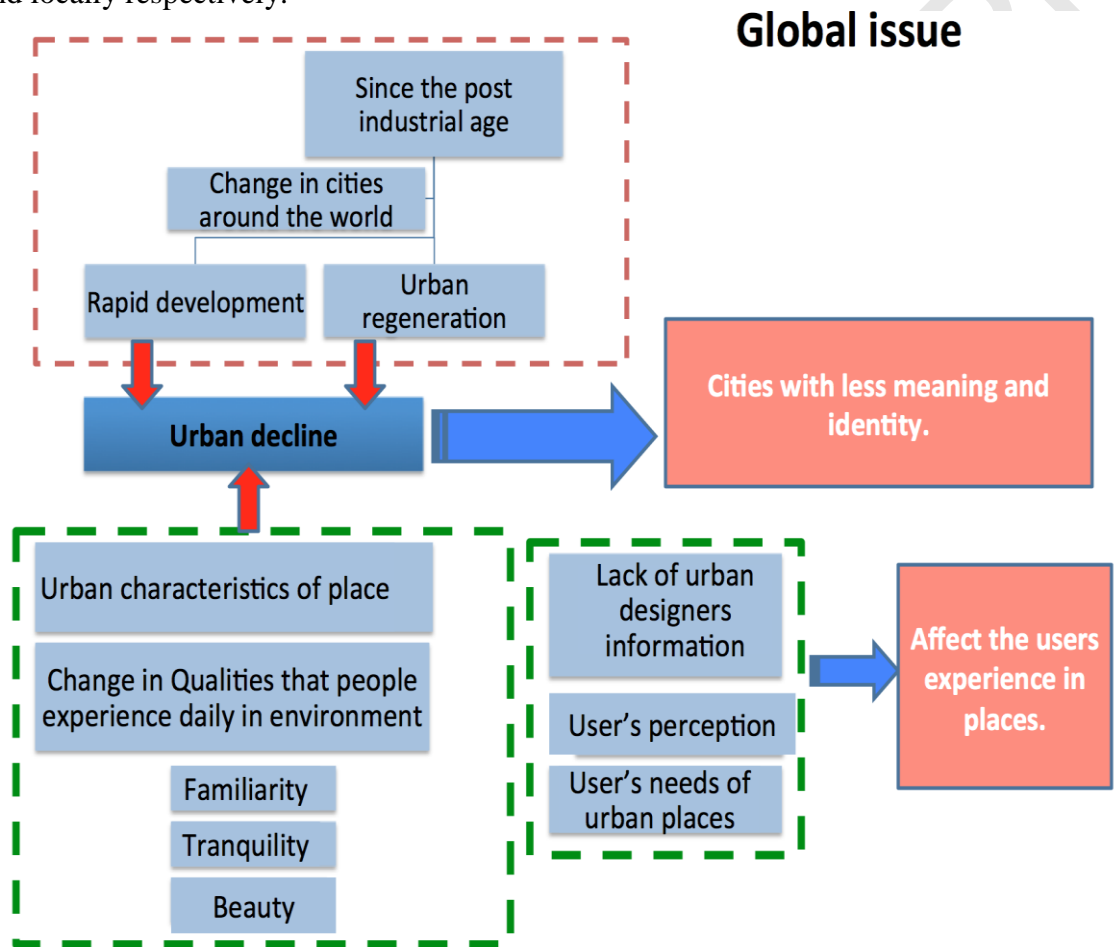
Some scholars such as Lynch and Sorrow stated that landmarks add imageability to the environment. The effective role of landmark is in enhancing the city legibility by evoking an image for users at strategic scale as well as creating a distinct identity for the city which foster sense of place. Therefore their role is also considerable when they provide human communities with more visually memorable images of places they inhabit (Dougherty, 2006; Moughtin, Oc, & Tiesdell, 1999). The use of landmarks offers designers opportunities to embellish human communities with appropriate and regionally critical designs (Cheng, 2009; Moughtin et al., 1999). It is argued that highly imagable cities offer vividly identifiable, powerfully structured, and extremely useful mental images of the environment; and a positive valuable environmental image would definitely donate its possessor a very significant sense of emotional security (Lynch, 1960b).

The review of the fundamental and influencing roles that these elements play in the city and their great effects in building place attachment is highly significant. It is

exclusively essential to pay attention to these fundamentals and their characteristics, which justify the reason to study them.

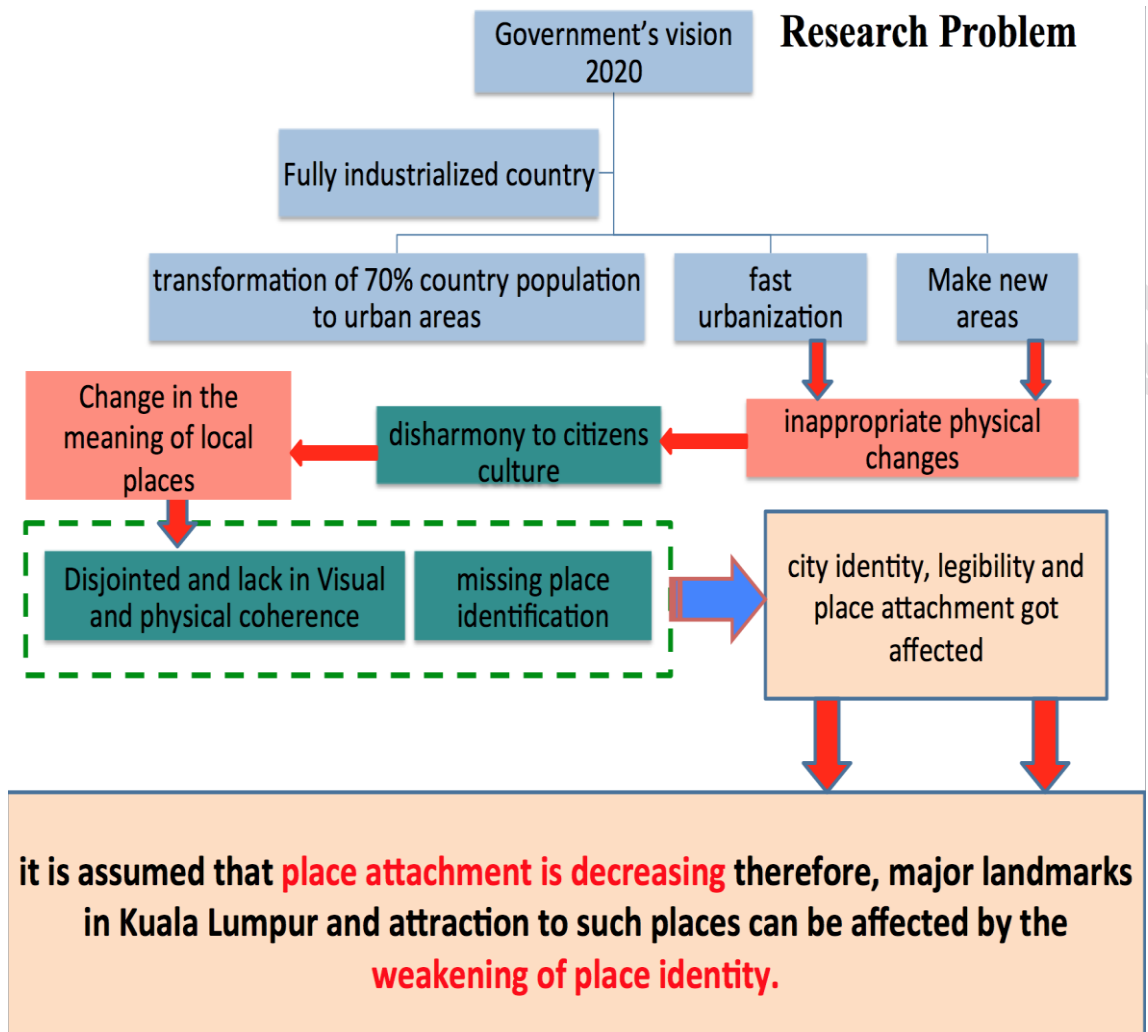
According to the previous study of Lamit, who categorized the urban landmarks to four types of Buildings, Towers, Special urban furniture and Open Spaces, this study is focusing on two main open space landmarks` characteristics and their relationship to attachment. R. C. Stedman (2003) claimed that the physical characteristics of the setting would strongly support place attachment as well as the place satisfaction. The results will be helpful to emphasize the importance of landmark characteristics in developing people attachment to their settings.

The following figures show the process, which place attachment threatened globally and locally respectively.



**Figure 0-2: Global Issues threatening Place Attachment**

Source: Summery of Literatures



**Figure 0-3: Local Issues in Malaysia threatening Place Attachment**

Source: Summery of Literatures

### 1.3 Research Questions

#### 1.3.1 Main Research Question

What types and characteristics of landmarks strongly influence people's attachment to landmark places in the city of Kuala Lumpur?

#### 1.3.2 Specific Research Questions

1. What are the types and characteristics of landmarks?
2. What factors contribute to place attachment?
3. Which characteristics of landmarks influence user's emotional attachment to the KLCC Park and Merdeka Square?
4. Which characteristics of landmarks influence users' functional attachment to the KLCC Park and Merdeka Square?

### 1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- a) To identify the characteristics of the KLCC Park and Merdeka Square as landmark places
- b) To identify the types and characteristics of the landmarks that influence users' emotional and functional attachment to the places.

### **1.5 Research Hypotheses**

With the research questions, objectives and review of previous studies, it was concluded that this study should include two main theories of Low and Altman (1992), which claimed that the characteristics of physical space do influence place attachment; and that of Lynch (1960a) on significant roles of landmarks in enhancing the sense of place.

The hypotheses of this study are:

H1: characteristics of landmarks influence users' emotional attachment.

H2: characteristics of landmarks influence users' functional attachment.

### **1.6 The Study Areas**

This study was conducted in two different contexts of open space as landmarks, which are the KLCC Park and the Merdeka Square. These areas were selected due to their dominant roles in the city's urban life. The Merdeka Square represents the history and culture of Malaysia and the city of Kuala Lumpur, while the KLCC Park symbolizes new development of Kuala Lumpur and Malaysia in recent years. Both sites are counted as major tourist attractions and well known to both locals and foreign tourists.

### **1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

This present study is scoped around user's attachment to the two aforementioned landmarks of public open spaces of Kuala Lumpur, the capital city of Malaysia. The definition of landmarks in this study is per the Lamit (2004) category which contains four typologies. The measurements of people attachment toward this type of landmarks focus exclusively on the parks and square aforementioned. To be more specific, the key concepts related to place and place attachments are defined accordingly as follows:

#### **a) Place**

Physical space is assumed as a place if it contains three main components such as physical features, meaning and activity. The current study has been applied mainly to two open space landmarks of the KLCC Park and Merdeka Square. The KLCC Park was selected due to the dominancy of its location and the existence of the Petronas Twin Towers, which make it very well known in Kuala Lumpur and the most famous of landmarks for both locals and foreign tourists. The Merdeka Square is well known as a historical site for many visitors local and international who are interested in the

history of the country. Both of these places are easily accessible through the public transportation. Hence, these two landmarks became primary choices for the study.

#### **b) Place Attachment**

In order to study place attachment it was necessary to choose one out of the four existing models of place attachment dimensions proposed by different scholars. This study applied the two dimensional Place Attachment (PA) model defined by Williams et al. (1992). The applied model consists of functional and emotional dimensions and the two selected areas are examined in relation to these aspects.

#### **c) Characteristics Of Landmarks**

Lynch (1960a) proposed four characteristics of landmarks` groups of physical places such as Singularity, Spatial Prominence, Meaning and Prototypicality. This study assumed that characteristics of landmarks as places contributed to people attachment and influence emotional and functional attachment.

#### **D) The Users**

Unlike many studies in the area, this study included both local and international participants in those places to figure out if there were any differences between the degrees of attachment that they establish in these places.

### **1.8 Significance of the Study**

This study is assumed to be the first one, which explores the relationship of the characteristics of landmark places and place attachment in Malaysia. This study shall make an important contribution due to its uniqueness as it provides the explanation to the relationship between the physical characteristics of landmarks and place attachment. It signifies the importance of preserving the characteristics that influence people's attachment to sustain continuing interest and attraction. This concerns the issues of the presumed diminishing sense of attachment to places of interest due to insensitive developments in the city. The relationship between the characteristics of landmarks and people's sense of attachment may increase the knowledge on how to enhance these elements in the city.

This study indicates how people's experiences are influenced, and how their experiences are affected by being in different landmark areas of the city. The study reveals the level of people's satisfaction of the landmarks and the differences between men and women, local and international's attachment to the area. By considering the results from the survey analysis on the current condition of the city, the weakness points of the current plan have specified and the suggestions for improvement of this condition is revealed.

Furthermore, urban designers and planers may benefit from the findings in planning for future layouts of the city prior to construction and contriving decisions on a current landmark or prospective landmark. For designers it is essential to know how

to create a meaningful place for people, how the needs of the people can be fulfilled during their experience of being in a particular place.

Application of the findings of the study will bring more satisfaction to the users of the places and lead to an increase of people's participation and activities in open spaces of the city they live or visited. The improvement on the physical settings shall help by increasing place attachment and strengthening the city identity.



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