

Understanding Elderly's Place Attachment in Urban Parks Setting

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Abstract

Urban designers, planners and policy-makers are working together to meet the emerging demands as cities in the developed countries are growing at an increased speed and intensity. Therefore, a socio-economic conception is needed to be conceived and more deliberately assimilated in terms of urban planning and in regards to designing urban areas in order to develop cities sustainably so they are planned well. Since parks are public space they have a great importance in creating a social environment for people, particularly for those who live in cities. This is in addition to the, physical and ecological impacts of parks. Those who live in the city spend a little time in the edge of everyday life with their friends and families and, as such, they are distracted from social life. This situation adversely affects the elderly who need the most care in our busy daily life. This article seeks to address the gap in the field by exploring the phenomenon of the bonding between elderly people and place in urban parks in an analytical context and focuses on the core concept of place attachment which has gained traction over the past three decades because of the role it plays in explaining the consequences of the connection between people and place in term of predicting behaviors. This article aims to explore how elderly people who have exposed themselves to an environment develop place satisfaction and place attachment in the urban parks and to create more sustainable, civic and environmentally conscientious communities. Based on literature reviewed, this study proposes a conceptual framework of elderly's source, dimension of place attachment in urban parks. It is anticipated that place satisfaction and place attachment contribute to elderly behavior and might improve their behavior in the urban park environment. This article further evaluates the affective and cognitive views as well as the commitment of the elderly to sustainable development.

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Keywords

Place Attachment; Place Satisfaction; Elderly; Urban Park

1. Introduction

The urban space is a place for the public where thought emerges and revitalizes; it is the most significant hub of human development for communities, serving social and individual's needs (Sadri, 2006). Firstly, the current green areas are part of urban open space from the other side, these are mentioned as potential areas for people's social development by a wide variety of users (Bahman Poor & Salajegheh, 2008). In this situation, urban parks are public resting areas and people can access them to use these areas (Saeidinia, 2000). These spaces can be used by all social groups. Thus, the creation of appropriate and desirable spaces for everyone and different age groups, particularly the elderly, is considered as an important part of urban planning. Despite an increase in the number of older people, the lack of urban open areas and environments or their inadequate condition remains one of the major issues for elderly people. By changing individual ability levels over time, their requirements and their places can become undesirable and unavailable to them the same way they were in use some time ago. The goal of the article was to explore the needs and preferences of the elderly in public open areas. The responsible of architects, landscape designers, and

urban developers are at the core of creating a place. In terms of this article, the early study indicates that positive emotional connections between individuals or communities, places or place attachments are an important part of the connection between people and place and these connections are of vital significance as they relate to the task of planners and designers.

Fostering positive emotional connections between elderly people and their environment has been emphasized as one of the most significant environmental design objectives. Nevertheless, this phenomenon and the effects it has in terms of the architecture and planning literature have not been studied sufficiently. In the context of the urban public park, this phenomenon is discussed, where local areas are generally developed with low priorities, where the advantages and benefits of the open area have still not been thoroughly studied for the elderly so more discussions on the validity of open area development are needed.

Furthermore, urban spaces are rapidly becoming urbanised, adapted and mitigated, so it is necessary to implement an operable sustainable development paradigm that takes decisions to achieve a balance in terms of the natural, cultural, social, and economic aspects. Far too often, many urban sustainability projects dilute the inclusion of the social and cultural factors and concentrate on the relatively predictable results of the tangible evidence that can easily be explained through the economic and environmental aspects. Place attachment, a social dimension that should be taken into account, has gained traction over the past three decades because of the role it plays in explaining the consequences of the connection between people and place as it relates to the effect it has on the prediction of behaviours. It also enables communities to be resilient and sustainable to mitigate potential risks, economic factors and social pressures. Meanwhile, the economic, environmental and social concerns of sustainable growth should have equal attention. Social sustainability as the frequently ignored dimension of sustainability, is “a process for creating sustainable successful places that promote wellbeing, by understanding what people need from the places they live and work. Social sustainability combines the design of the physical realm with the design of the social world as– infrastructure to support social and cultural life, social amenities, systems for citizen engagement, and space for people and places to evolve” (Bacon & Arendar, 2014). Sustainable development is established based on ethical factors and contributes to determining the establishment of social sustainability quotients and differences between various nations, cultures, and also between individuals.

Based on a review of the literature the evidence shows that a deep attachment with our environment can be a source of affection (Tuan, 1974). The relation between people and their significant environment is referred to as place attachment (Scannell & Gifford, 2010a, 2010b). These relationships develop over time through repeated experiences with an environment (Oh et al., 2012), and remind us of our sense of belonging, bring meaning to life, build communities and influence our behavior (Manzo & Devine-Wright, 2013). The majority of the latest literature on place attachment is devoted to place attachment predictors (Lewicka, 2011). Although certain place attachment predictors are yet to be discovered, the research shows that close social relations (Lewicka, 2010, 2011) and a considerable amount of time spent in a place is one of the most prominent predictors of place attachment (Oh et al., 2012). The identification of place attachment predictors is not the same as the identification of the place attachment process (Lewicka, 2010, 2011). Even though place attachment predictors can help to guide the identification of potential place attachment processes, they do not clarify how individuals become attached to places. In terms of the research on place attachment, less time has been spent on the development and process and more research is needed to understand how place attachment is formed (Lewicka, 2011), (Quinn & Halfacre, 2014), (Williams & Vaske, 2003).

Place attachment has been integrated into a variety of “decision-making models”, based on the theory of human attachment (Bowlby, 1969). It was perceived to be an outcome variable for the satisfaction of the people (Halpenny, 2006), (Petrick et al., 1999) or factors predicting the satisfaction of people, (Ramkissoon, Graham Smith, et al., 2013; Ramkissoon, Smith, et al., 2013; Veasna et al., 2013). Both the satisfaction of people (Crilley et al., 2012) and place attachment (Ramkissoon, Graham Smith, et al., 2013; Ramkissoon, Smith, et al., 2013) are explored in the literature.

This article further explored the link between place satisfaction, and behavior to create more sustainable, civic and environmentally conscientious communities. It proposes that place attachment (with dimensions of place identity and dependence) mediates the relationship between place satisfaction and behavior. This article has intended to address the gap in this field by exploring the phenomenon between people and place bonding at urban parks empirically.

Place attachment as an antecedent to behavioral intentions was proposed by (Ramkissoon & Mavondo, 2015; Veasna et al., 2013). This article indicates that behavior is one of the main mediators between place attachment and place satisfaction. Understanding the relationship between place attachment and place satisfaction as it relates to the elderly, would allow decision-makers, planners, designers, and resource managers to improve their efforts in planning, designing, and managing the outdoor spaces. The expectation is that this article will lead to development of urban open areas that meet the physical and psychological needs of the elderly, foster various social experiences, establish a distinguished place identity and evoke a strong identification with the meanings attributed to the environment. Therefore, it can develop a positive emotional connection between the elderly and open space, foster a strong sense of belonging and improve the quality of community life.

A common thread arising from a review of the literature is a conceptual approach that underlines the significant comprehension of the “cognitive origins, affective nature, and conative implication” phenomenon that is connected to the place. To move forward, a conceptual framework is proposed to capture these various dimensions and to the process of place examination. This could contribute to a more robust inquiry to the phenomenon through distinguishing between what kind of emotional place attachment ultimately encompasses, the root of place attachment, how attachment forms, the impacts, as well as the effects of place attachment.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Why do the elderly need parks?

Parks, as valuable assets for communities, offer leisure facilities and social interactions and provide urban residents with a natural respite. Parks can benefit older adults, in particular, those at risk for “social isolation”. The World Health Organization lists the overall characteristics of the “Age-friendly” cognitive origins, the affective nature, and conativity” (the cognitive aspects) of cities in terms of “transportation, outdoor spaces and buildings, community supports and health services, communication and information, civic participation and employment, and social inclusion, social participation, and housing, including parks and open areas”.



Figure 1: “Age-friendly city elements”.

“World Health Organization, 2007”

Parks decrease the prevailing “social isolation” and offer inter-generational connection opportunities and build attachment. Parks provide more than just an outdoor place. These settings give an opportunity for elders to interact with other elderly people, exercise or connect with their families. People are emotionally attached to places other than their home often called “third places” (Garvin et al., 2013). Older adults have long been in a particular place and therefore seem to be more attached to it than younger adults (Rowles, 1983). When parks and other open areas for community elders became part of their third space, they may help them connect with their surroundings and become part of their community.

At the same time, the relationship between humans and nature is a strong bond that has been connected to healing processes for thousands of years (Ulrich et al., 1991). Nature's healing power extends to mental and physical health. Hospitals have found that less stressed people healed more quickly (Broadbent et al., 2003). The brain releases cortisol if people are under stress. High levels of cortisol in elderly people can lead to decreased memory and learning and increases the possibility of dementia and other cognitive problems (Kiraly, 2011). Nature exposure can reduce stress and therefore enhance cognitive function and performance (Pappas, A., 2009). Since the elderly are at the greatest risk for these disorders, it is vital to have areas such as parks and greenery to help them relax and reduce stress. The elderly represent the most inactive part of the population despite the strong connection between physical activity and wellbeing. Even the oldest and most frail elders will benefit from physical activity tailored to participants' needs (Pahor et al., 2006). The aging process may even be slowed by a tailored physical activity regime (Sun et al., 2010). It is therefore important to ensure that parks are established as safe and welcoming places for the elderly.

2.2. Why does it matter to get outside?

Elderly people's independence must be preserved to allow them to live as long as possible in their own homes. Current research shows that staying in a familiar home and neighborhood is increasingly important as people age. If an elderly person stays at home, he or she will require a larger environment, including their local neighborhood, to be able to continue to use them and go out, otherwise, they will essentially be isolated.

In terms of independence, the outdoor environment is important as well as influencing the daily experience of the elderly. Any commitment to the ability and wellbeing of individuals should take into consideration the emotional, physical, and psychological effects and obstacles that impact their quality of life in the environment (Price & Stoneham, 2001).

The physical, sociological, and psychological advantages for the elderly involve getting outside. The main factor involved in illness and impairment is physical inactivity (WHO, 2003). Despite ample scientific findings of numerous physical fitness advantages and lifestyle approaches, most elderly people were not adequately active to stay healthy. As physical inactivity prevents risk, it has proved one of the most important health initiatives to help people to maintain their active lifestyle and it has been shown that to be outdoors is indeed the best option to stay healthy. An outdoor environment that is supportive and easy to use for older people will lead to a more active way of life and is related to the satisfaction and health of older people (Sugiyama & Thompson, 2007).

The benefits of being outside includes getting to the shops or the post office, visiting friends, and having informal contact with neighbors, which are all of the social advantages of getting outdoors. Open space activities are related to increasing community engagement and strengthened neighbourhood community networks (Coley et al., 1997) and less fear or crime (Kweon et al., 1998). An exploration of the psychological effects of outdoor activities reveals that the outdoor environment reduces mental fatigue and thus helps regain attention (R. Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; S. Kaplan, 1995), relieve stress through positive emotional conditions (Ulrich et al., 1991) and support other factors, such as, contemplation, especially as the favorite places of people are often natural environments (K. Korpela & Hartig, 1996).

2.3. The Outdoor environment and Place Attachment

The outdoor environment has advantages by serving numerous important functions. Outdoor spaces could influence the surroundings, landscape-oriented outdoor environments can provide recreational opportunities for their users as relief from crowds and a friendly environment which can improve health. The enhanced psychological performance of each elderly person as a result of their contacts with nature may produce healthier social patterns, such as, better relations with those in the community, and improved psychological ability to deal with life (Kuo, 2001).

The outdoor environments that are properly designed can be attractive to the elderly in terms of urban public parks and therefore enhance the utilization of outside areas and the interaction between people will increase the informal surveillance, control over the outdoor environment as well as foster social ties and the satisfaction of people with the community (Coley et al., 1997). Moreover, (Feldman & Westphal, 1992) suggested that an intensive community-oriented outdoor space helps build a strong sense of community.

Nevertheless, there's, a concern about the current prospect of the research related to the outdoor environment and practices that tends to view these spaces as consumer goods, which are merely the number of features and attributes that are interchangeable or reproducible experienced by various people and which overlooks the importance of the place's significance since the quality is seldom reduced to tangible characteristics or activities (Williams et al., 1992). In this regard, the research task is restricted to identifying the conditions necessary to support certain activities or experiences for older people. Further, (Williams et al., 1992) mentioned that the correlation between the significance of the place and the replacement ability of the place is not positive, but negative. That is what it means he or she is less likely to replace a different place if an individual had a greater attachment to a place.

The instrumental perspective was criticized by researchers in terms of the relationship between the people-environment since they see the physical environment as an instrument to attain only the behavioral and economic objectives. Therefore, (Stokols, 1990) claimed the environmental quality of its psycho-social aspects should also be evaluated by the criteria of convenience, security, and performance. The research task is therefore to determine the identification in terms of the physical and social characteristics which may contribute to the spiritual enrichment of elderly people's experience.

The sense of being closely linked with a place, for example place attachment which could transcend the sense of place immediately, was constantly underlined as one of the most important psychological structures in the research, as it relates to the spiritual enrichment experiences, such as, feelings of appreciation, independence, rehabilitation, and belonging. As for the other types of outdoor environments, the outside space is not only a physical entity consisting of the specific design functionalities, equipment, and the recreational functionality is also an environment full of the perceptions of people, and their experiences, assessments, thoughts, and feelings. In other words, the open area in the urban public park is one of the best places for people to develop attachments throughout their lives. This includes young and old, and it includes the elderly.

Therefore, in the process of the routine experiences of older people in these settings in their everyday life, it is claimed that the nearby outdoor space in an urban public park can be transformed and regarded as an important place where people do appreciate the physical and social environment characteristics, and they also recognize the embedded meaning of these spaces. In regards to the interaction between people and place, elderly people can develop an attachment, a positive emotional connection, to this setting. Even so, as (Keller, 1968) has stated, in fact, elder people only occasionally relate to this outdoor environment, have a special feeling for a certain place, and while they feel the pride of living near there, it is still possible to foster a sense of attachment that transcends physical or social discomfort. Therefore, understanding the attachment of elder people to nearby outdoor spaces is relevant and important.

2.4. Outdoor Environment

The older people have great physical opportunities, to have contact with nature, and meet with friends and neighbors in the outdoor environment. There are also different barriers preventing them from going outside. In their study (Shumway-Cook et al., 2003) mentioned that external activities are often the activities that the elderly find difficult to do because of their increased fragility due to their age and obstacles in the environment. The resulting sedentary lifestyle is often seen as a serious risk to the health of the elderly (WHO, 2003). This means that an outdoor environment that makes it easier for the elderly is important for enhancing wellbeing in their later years. Some studies have discussed the "mobility" of older people in the outdoor setting and its impact on their well-being (Metz, 2000; Mollenkopf et al., n.d.).

2.4.1. Urban Park

The cities are especially important as they have become the home for many peoples and majority of the world's population live in cities and will for years to come. The well-designed and planned urban park at the broadest level is vital terms of enhancing the quality of life for urban populations as they help to enhance the health and well-being, and the general living environment and help people achieve full life satisfaction. Parks in the urban environment are

beneficial for people and for the city as well. Urban nature plays a significant part in contributing to the sustainability of a city by improving the well-being of its population, according to (Chiesura, 2004).

An urban park or open area as it is generally known is defined as a public space that can be used for leisure activities that is free of charge, and may be evaluated daily by the public (Town and Regional Planning Department, 2000). The psychological advantages that are gained by people, include a feeling of open space, scenery changes, and a place to escape from their busy life, (Ulrich & Addoms, 1981). In their study, (Teal et al., 1998) claim that stresses that correlate with the environmental quality, may be due to the chronic problem of urban poverty. In the study by (Bakar et al., 2016) they states that recreational time in the park is important for city dwellers, particularly in terms of their psychosocial well-being. An urban park is an ideal place for the elderly to remain socially involved, contact nature, and meets friends and neighbors. Therefore, an urban park that makes it easy for the elderly is important to maintain and enhance their quality of life in their later years.

2.4.2. The benefits outdoor environment of the urban park for the elderly

The literature reveals various types of involvement with the outdoor environment that are benefit to elderly people. As they engage in their physical outdoor activity, they are exposed to the natural features of the place, and they have social interactions with friends and with those in the community (Bowling et al., 2003; Nezelek et al., 2002). The following section briefly examines how outdoor environments contribute to wellbeing for those of an older age.

Benefits from physical activities. Daily involvement in moderate exercise has significant health benefits for the elderly. According to (Singh, 2002) a physical, active lifestyle reduces the age-related physiological changes and can avert or prevent the development of common chronic conditions. In their review, (Keysor & Jette, 2001) have also demonstrated that the physical activity of the elderly improves their fitness, muscle strength, including their aerobic ability, equilibrium, and flexibility. These improvements are known to aid in decreasing the risk of falling, which is an important cause of elderly disability (Skelton, 2001).

Regular physical activity offers psychological benefits for seniors besides the health benefits. A study has identified that to decrease the risk of depression, physical activity is helpful, for example walking for a long period of time (Moore-Colyer & Scott, 2005), (Strawbridge et al., 2002). Physical activities have also shown to benefit cognitive functioning. A study by (Weuve et al., 2004) showed that cognitive performance and older women's memory are related to greater physical activity, such as, walking, is effective if done more than half an hour in a week.

Benefits contact with nature. The restorative impacts of the natural environment were proven in extensive research (S. Kaplan, 1995). A 10-minute video of the natural environment by (Ulrich et al., 1991) in his study (with stressful films viewed) shows that the stress recovery was more rapid and complete compared with the video of urban environments of the same length. In their study (Grahn & Stigsdotter, 2003) have discovered that spending on open green spaces is related to a lower risk for those with diseases associated with stress. Likewise in their study (Hartig et al., 2003) pointed out that walkers who walk through natural settings have more positive impacts and less anger compared to those who walk in built-up urban settings.

Various researches studies have investigated the health consequences that result from the green spaces of the neighborhood. The association of the longevity of older people with the presence of nearby green spaces that are easily accessible was researched in a longitudinal study in Japan (Takano et al., 2002). The authors demonstrated the proportion of older persons living in a green space for five years is much higher than those who live without those areas. A study in the Netherlands by (de Vries et al., 2003) has shown that green areas in a neighborhood are related positively to the health of the elderly by the number of recent diseases. The authors mentioned that green areas have a greater effect on the health of elderly people, who have a greater chance to have restricted outdoor exposure to their environments.

Benefits from social interaction. The outdoor environments provide social interaction. The green area in an open space has been shown to encourage more people to use the space more frequently and strengthen the social links between them (Coley et al., 1997). The planning and design has an affect on people's informal interactions in outdoor spaces, the quantity or quality of the informal and social relations between people have significant environmental impacts (Coley et al., 1997).

The benefits of social interaction benefits for elderly people is well documented. The fact that fewer social connections in later life is connected with a reduction in physical health and pose a risk to their life is shown in a study by (Bennett, 2002). In terms of social relations and social involvement, diversity is a protection against the beginning of mobility impairment (Avlund et al., 2004). However, this kind of social interaction is significant for the elderly as they probably spend more time in their living area. Indeed, in a UK study, older people were found to believe that good neighborhood relations are a major component of their quality of life (Bowling et al., 2003).

2.4.3. What makes a Community sustainable?

Sustainable development is a common concept that has been particularly important in recent years in housing, environment and in terms of policy. Discussions on sustainability not only regard sustainability as a environmental issue, they also consider the economic and social aspects. While there is wide acceptance for the social element of sustainability, precisely what it implies was not established or agreed upon very clearly. The connection between urban formation and social sustainability is examined and the sustainability of the community itself is the key aspect of social sustainability. It is claimed that sustainable urban design and development seek to dissolve the physical and political dichotomy, to enable communities to become environmentally sustainable, socially equal and economically stable, and to help people react better to social and environment changes. In recent decades several projects and planning researchers in the field of urban open-space revitalization have depreciated centralised plans and a planned community and have proposed a more decentralised community planning approach (Handler, 1990). In the growth of the community, the representation of a community as a "decision maker" operates in relation to the setting as an entity a "decision recipient" and inspires the community (Freire, 1985). The development of social capital and a community-based governance structure is more sustainable for communities and it is more effective, this is recognised by many planners. While, various researchers have proposed a criteria for the development of sustainable communities in various ways, they all focus on achieving the contextually complex objectives of the main foundations of sustainability, social, environment and economy. The goal is to emphasise the advantages of contextually nuanced solutions for the development of sustainable environments and communities as it relates to the urban open space.

2.5 Place Attachment and its Nature

There are two different dimensions of place attachment that is "place identity" and "place dependence" both of which functionally and emotionally / symbolically include the significance that attributes the people-place concept (Kaltenborn, 1997; Moore & Graefe, 1994; Schreyer et al., 1981; Williams et al., 1992). These are the dimension that are highly focused and are recognized as one of the most important and relevant dimensions of the nature of place attachment. In empirical studies in different contexts of the research, their validity and reliability have been systematically reviewed and examined.

2.5.1. Place Dependence

Place dependence was described as "the subjective characteristics of the connection between the people and the places" and "the perceived strength of an occupant's connection with certain places" (Stokols & Shumaker, 1981). By mentioning place dependence, it is a kind of emotional feeling that is linked to a specific place's potential to satisfy the requirements and objectives of a person through comparison with the previous place, which is called comparison level (CL), using a reference to a study by (Thibaut & Kelly, 1986) that researched comparison level for alternative models (Stokols & Shumaker, 1981) and evaluating the comparison of the present place with other existing settings which may meet the same requirements that are, the comparison level of the alternatives (CL_{alt}), meaning the place dependence degree of a place is the result of comparisons between the current place and the previous place and the current place against the current viable alternative places, which determines how well those places have met their needs in terms of how they are being treated (Shumaker & Taylor, 1983). Their suggestion was that the CL and CL_{alt} could be influenced by the number and the scale of needs within the present context that are met by features like the quality of prior places and the resource quality within the current environment, and the extent to which needs are met, thus to which extent a person depends on a particular place (Shumaker & Taylor, 1983).

However, factors that cause a person to depend on a specific place instead of an attachment model that (Stokols & Shumaker, 1981) have suggested in their research is mentioned by (Shumaker & Taylor, 1983) in their study. In the first instance, dependence on the place can be negatively distinguished to the degree that a place limits the valued results based on the comparison between place dependence and attachment, and secondly, the social actor's "strength of the relationship" with the environment can be based on the particular behavioral objectives instead of the general impact (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001). This means that an individual probably could develop negative places because the present place is better than the previous place, but greater or better than the last one, yet could not meet his requirements and there are no viable compensation alternatives. This person can therefore be conceived as place dependent. However, the fundamental dimension of the attachment concept has no positive effect on the environment according to a study by (Shumaker & Taylor, 1983).

2.5.2. Place Identity

Place identity is a notion developed through the conception of selected problems about the cognitive links between the environment and people. The theory from self-identity development included a broader range of analyses that includes the social and environmental aspects of self-identity in which such development takes place (Proshansky, 1978; Proshansky et al., 1983). "The dimensions of oneself that define the personal identity of the person with regards to the physical environment are represented by a complex pattern of conscious and unconscious thoughts, beliefs, preferences, emotions, values, aims and behavior tendencies and competencies relevant to that environment" (Proshansky, 1978) are also described as "a substructure of the individual's self-identity which consists, widely conceived, of cognitions of the physical world in which the person lives" (Proshansky et al., 1983). This is why the feeling of self-subjectivity is described and manifested through the relationship with others, but also through the relationships with the various physical conditions, which define and organize everyday life (Proshansky et al., 1983).

The place offers a significant framework to build identity, and is maintained and transformed by place identity and local people and it is filled with personal, cultural, and social significations (Cuba & Hummon, 1993). To regulate social interactions, the environment is not only a mediator, it is a means to create and support oneself. The individual's physical environment is important in this sense (Korpela, 1989). Therefore, the feeling of attachment experienced by people goes over and above the utility of a specific place or environment for a specific activity (Proshansky et al., 1983). A place can also be considered as an important part of oneself - conceiving, and leading to a strong emotional relationship with places other than as an aid in achieving our intentional behavioral or experiential objectives (Kyle et al., 2003). Thus the creation of a sense of belonging and identity is one of the principal functions of place (Sime, 1986). As regards the role of "place identity", it has a range of intrinsic functions, including expressing, controlling, personalizing, meaning, defending, and anxiety reduction. Briefly, it helps us to organize our experiences with the different physical environments. The place identity functions are expressed in two broad aspects which have been summarized by (Cuba & Hummon, 1993) in their study.

Place identity as an exposition, refers to the way a person utilizes places to convey the self-quality to oneself or others, and puts place identity as an affiliation, meaning how they make use of places to build an attachment or a home. This means that places not only can serve as tools for differentiating the self from others, they provide opportunities for expressing and affirming the identity of the individuals (Kyle et al., 2003). However, emotional links between oneself and significant localities may also help to catalyze the links. Functional significances relate to opportunities the environment offers in terms of special needs for activities while the emotional/symbolic significance is related to the importance an individual has for a place as the situation it represents and symbolizes reminds them of an affiliation they have for the place. The meanings of both seem to be comparable to the concepts of place identity and place dependence, as (Williams & Roggenbuck, 1989) pointed out in their study.

2.5.3. Place Satisfaction and Place Attachment

The concept of "place attachment" and "place satisfaction" in general has been distinguished by past research. According to a study by (Giuliani, 2003), attachment varies with satisfaction by an indispensable existence. He pointed out, "what qualifies attachment is not the positive valence of effects, but that it is perceived as a bond, with

an enduring quality, directed toward a specific target, not interchangeable with another with the same functional quality.” (p. 148)

According to a study by (Guest & Lee, 1983), their interpretation, that an evaluation or satisfaction of the group will arise from the congruence of needs and requirements, is a specific place-based assessment and place-based feelings, while the meaning is not so much of a logical analysis but is a reversal of a social-emotional nature. For instance, they found that people-interaction or human-interactive facilities contribute greatly to sentiment, and better evaluation predictors were factors, such as, safety that are more centered on basic needs in a community. Besides, sentiments were strongly linked to the use of local areas, which encourages connection, and satisfaction was linked to specific factors, which indicate the entire overall comfort with the environment. Also, sentiments appeared to have a more important effect on human behavioral actions than evaluations. These findings indicate the sentiment is not as universal as the satisfaction.

In the context of the connection of “place satisfaction” and “place attachment”, a few studies proposed that “place satisfaction” could influence “place attachment”. In their analysis of the factors of place attachment, for instance, (Mesch & Manor, 1998) found that both social relations and environmental satisfaction are connected to the evolution of place attachment. The degree of satisfaction of a person with the physical and social qualities of their environment was positively linked to their degree of attachment to place (p. 514).

There are also varying views in previous studies on the connection between “place satisfaction” and “place attachment”. In a study by (Stedman, 2003) it was pointed out that the quality of a place can be satisfied, even if the person is unattached to it. Besides, one may be really dissatisfied with a place and yet still be strongly attached to it. In his study, (Kaltenborn, 1998) found that a sense of place appears to be better in predicting impact responses and less able to predict environmental conditions perceptions, as measured by the degree to which respondents agree to statements on the status of the natural settings. The result may therefore be part of a causal connection in the study by (Kaltenborn, 1998) between “the sense of place” and the assessment on the environmental quality, as the present study argues that individual evaluations of environmental characteristics of a place should not be seen as the results of a sense of place rather as potential contributions to the development of the place.

In general, “place satisfaction” and “place attachment” must be differentiated conceptually and its measurement must be operationalized differently. The connection between “place satisfaction” and “place attachment” to the place and their various effects on behaviors also require further investigation.

2.5.4. Place Characteristics and Place Attachment

The physical aspects of an environment are related to the notion of place concept, as discussed in the literature review. Some have expressed concern that the current studies on people place attachment are usually treated only as the product of common behavior and experimental learning while they overlook the importance of the physical surroundings (Hidalgo & Hernández, 2001; Stedman, 2003).

In a study by (Stedman, 2003) it investigates the impact on the development of place attachments and on the other place-related constructs of the characteristics of the physical environment. However, in Stedman's study, only the physical environment characteristics of the research setting were objectively evaluated. Previous surveys have shown that the objective characteristics of the environment and people's perception of the environmental quality of life are imperfectly matched (Mesch & Manor, 1998). Thus, individual cognition in the same area can differ greatly.

The perception of the qualities of the outdoor environment depends on the objective environment but is far from it, as stated in a study by (Marans & Rodgers, 1975). Objective environmental measures can therefore not be sufficient indicators of environmental quality, and objective measures may only take on human meaning and provide accurate guidelines for public policy through an appreciation of their relationship to the subjective indicators (Ladewig & McCann, 1980). Likewise in a study by (Guest & Lee, 1983) it stated the personal perception of the environment by individuals is determined by rational circumstances and environmental perceptions; thus “the objective conditions will take on a variety of meanings to individuals depending on what types of expectations they hold” (p. 172).

Therefore, in the evaluation of their impact on the assessment related to place and feeling, Guest and Lee differentiated between the subjective perception of the individual and the actual objective conditions of the environment.

In the past four decades, for example, substantial empirical data emerges from landscape perception research that indicates that various landscapes cause diverse reactions through various group of people, and qualitative and quantitative analysis can contribute to explaining how different types of landscapes and landscape characteristics have been viewed by people (R. Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Zube et al., 1982). Research on the landscape can therefore provide a chance to discover how the cognitive orientation of individuals of their physical environments can impact their effective responses to that place and how landscapes and place can be designed, planned, and managed.

In the current research, it is argued that the psychological results of place attachment derive from individual understanding, perception, experience, and belief of the place. The preference for a particular kind of landscape in a place can therefore be believed to be a tendency to support past experiences or perceived perceptions on how this type of landscape reflects or signifies significance to individuals and communities. The landscape preference may therefore contribute rather than the other way around to the development of the place attachment. This implies that it may influence developing place attachment by the perceived attractiveness of the particular types of the local landscape, as it can have an impact on the significance of the landscape. Therefore, landscape preferences need to be analyzed rather than the results of the people-place bonds of place attachment.

In summary, the relations between place attachment and its major element need to be explored in terms of the physical environment characteristics that are perceived by the individual. It was mentioned that, the perceived physical environment characteristics should be used to analyses the possible relationships between the perception of the environmental features and place-based assessment and condition, such as, the “place satisfaction” and “place attachment”, and the effects of environmental expectations on behaviors instead of the “objective” features of the physical setting as reflected in several previous research studies.

2.5.5. Impact of Place Attachment

Studies revealed that the degree of attachment of people has a considerable impact on their attitudes towards the management of the environment and its subsequent behavior and action. Place attachment between various people in groups can be a result of different influences and can mean there will be various opinions and views regarding or related to a place's environment. Some, therefore, suggested that emotional attachment should be integrated into the management of natural resources and the public land as a significant approach to understanding the importance of personal attribute to the environment and how different strategies of the environment can affect or improve the bonding between people and place (Eisenhauer et al., 2000; Williams & Stewart, 1998). For instance, in a study by (Williams et al., 1992) it noted that attached visitors can be environmentally sensitive to environmental effects, for example, litter and the loss of vegetation.

In research by (Guest & Lee, 1983) they discovered that the independence and impressiveness influence on activities such as movements of political action and propensity show the degree of satisfaction with the environment. There has been a feeling of the sentiments on both the thoughts of movement and the willingness to remain in that place. The more sentiment one has, the more likely the need to respond to the problems facing the community and in a study by (Vorkinn & Riese, 2001) they found that a much more important predictor for the community in the area, that could be affected by the development of hydropower to their approach to the proposal compared with the other socio-demographic variables. They, therefore, suggested that place attachment as an important factor should be taken into consideration in conducting public studies and providing answers to a specific area-related environmental questions.

2.5.6. Place Attachment Dimensionality

A literary review has shown the most recognized and examined aspect of place attachment include place dependence and place identity. Scholars believed “place dependence” and “place identity” implies place attachment from the “appraisal of the congruence between physical and psychological needs and characteristics of the environment” (Giuliani, 2003). Some will however ask “Are they the only salient and meaningful dimensions?” The lack of empirical research and theoretical discussion to examine other possible dimensions of attachment has already been

raised and the need to rigorously consider the hypothesized dimension of place attachment across a broader number of places and contexts (Williams & Vaske, 2003). This is to develop “new dimensions” and “new models” of place attachment to be constructed. Besides, others claim, place forms a meaningful connection, so an attachment that socially derived links should be taken into account. In some research, however, a dimension of social bonding has been proposed to highlight the psychological dimension of place attachment (G. Kyle et al., 2005; G. T. Kyle et al., 2004). Therefore, in previous research, this dimension was not good, and more empirical evidence is required to confirm its validity. The questionable theoretical basis is even more worrying. The current study has indicated that social bonding is a greater source of place attachment rather than a sub-dimension. This is consistent with past studies (Hidalgo & Hernández, 2001; Mesch & Manor, 1998), that have shown strong social participation can lead to feelings of attachment. In other words, one can more thoroughly consider social bonding or social tie as an indicator of attachment, rather than as a fundamental feature of attachment.

Research from the past shows that persons who have a deep attachment to a place can be very careful and concerned with that place, and these feelings are at the heart of people who are implying place dependence and place identity dimensions and are going beyond its functional and symbolic meaning. For example, in a study by (Relph, 1976) it has observed that attachment forms the root of our place, and “the familiarity that this involves is not just a detailed knowledge, but a sense of deep care and concern for that place” (p. 37). This means place attachment can indicate an awareness of that place. Relph thought that “fields of care” are the places we are attached to. For him, care for a place does not only mean concerns for a place based on previous experience and future aspirations, it represents “a real responsibility and respect for that place both for itself and for what it is to yourself and others” (p. 38). According to a study by (Carr et al., 1992) the importance of places is that they “resonate with people’s lives and evoke patterns of use that create bonds with space” (p. 188) and “evoke strong feelings of concern, affiliation, and caring” (p. 189).

Furthermore, (Kyle et al., 2004), explained that “identifying with a setting may further inspire curiosity about its prior history” (p. 451). Therefore, individuals who are attached effectively to the place can be interested in knowing all about the place. Besides, (Shamai, 1991) states that identification with a place, means “there is a devotion, allegiance, and loyalty to a place” (p. 350) are those who meet the objective of the place. A greater degree of sense of place follows the identification of a place marked by participation in community as it relates to that place because of their involvement to the place. The willingness of people to contribute their skills, time or money, in local activities or organizations is reflected in this. (Relph, 1976) noted, place attachment is “a complete commitment to that place, a commitment that is as profound as any that a person can make, for caretaking is true ‘the basis of man’s relation to the world’.” (p. 38)

Therefore, it has been stated that with a strong thought to understand the past, the condition, and the future of the place, positive responsibilities, and determination and to devote oneself to the place can be a matter of deep interest and caring about the condition of the place. The connection between people and place isn't just a reflection toward which he or she develops an emotional link, it is also a predictor of the behavioral intentions of the place deliberately held by persons. The effectiveness and esteem of the aspect of place satisfaction and place attachment must be tested, and other attachment dimensions and other factors related to the prediction of the other predictive variables and their behavioral consequences could be examined as well.

Secondly, the essential structural factors must be differentiated from the factors, such as, place experience, place satisfaction, and to the theorizing of the causal relations among them, including the socioeconomic aspects, the people and the physical characteristics of the place. The causal connections between them must be theorized accordingly.

Finally, the effect of place attachment on the behaviors of the person related to the place needs to be explored. In summary, the literary review indicates that place attachment research has to be structured more consistently and comprehensively to enable us to better understand what the essence of attachment is, its source and development, and how it can influence the Theoretical Framework of Place Attachment and to determines the level of elderly place attachment and the degree of place satisfaction.

2.5.7. A Conceptual Framework for Understanding Elderly’s Place Attachment in Urban Parks Setting

A conceptual framework (Figure 2) on place attachment is proposed to lead the existing research by reviewing the place literature and research needs. The phenomenon of place attachment, according to this framework, comprise three closely-associated components: the affective, cognitive, and behavioral components, which correspond to the relationship between and environment. The concern with the affective component, in particular, the aspect of the nature of the place attachment is manifest in the effects, and the emotions, and feelings it has. The cognitive component concerns the potential sources of place attachment as well as the structural factor that is exogenous, such as, the physical characteristics of the place. The knowledge, satisfaction, thought and belief that is manifested and in connection with the place result from the interaction of people and place, and the behavioral component affects the resulting impact and is manifested via the place attachment that is in place and the - related behaviors and action.

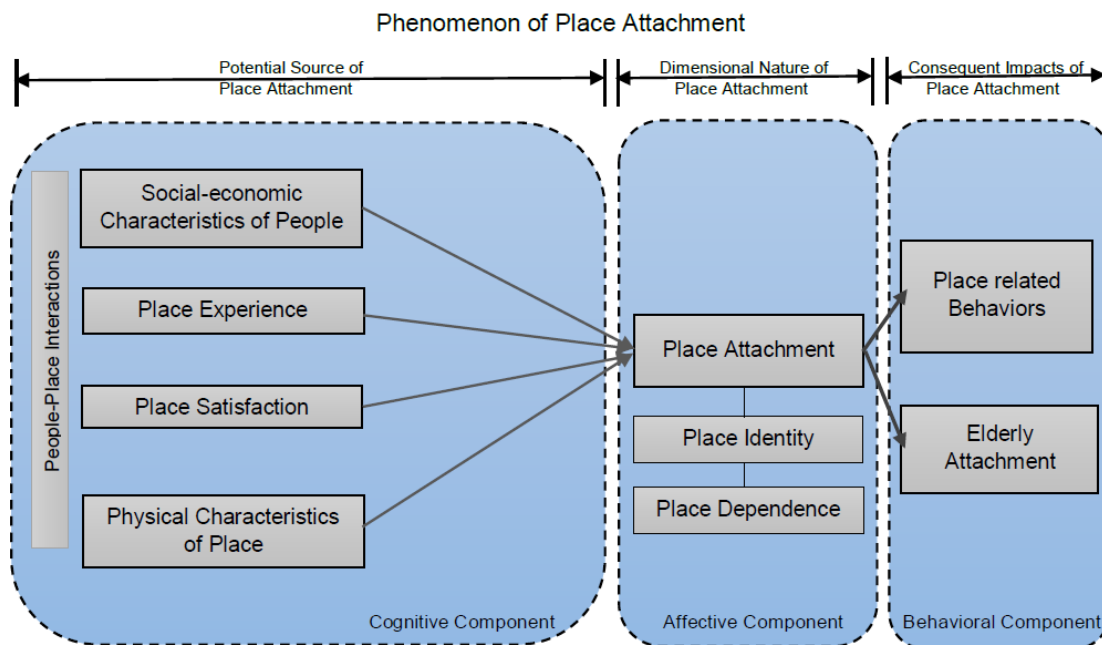


Figure 2 : A Conceptual Framework of Place Attachment and Elderly’s Behaviors

The framework highlights that the integration of exploration in its nature, sources, and impacts allows for a thorough comprehension of place attachment. Exploring the people-place relationship phenomena “move beyond quasi-poetic statements” (Stedman, 2000) and the internal structure, external origins, and subsequent effects are addressed coherently to allow for the systematic analysis of the dimension of the attachment to the position and by understanding the causes and processes behind its development mechanism and the behavioral effects.

From the review, we synthesize, the place attachment is defined according to this conceptual framework as an emotionally positive relationship that creates a space for the elderly and a geographic locality as a consequence of identifying with the significance attributed to that spatial context, in both the physical and social-cultural aspects, deriving from the experiences, the physical characteristics of a place and the identification with place satisfaction. In addition to strong self-identity as regards place (place identity) and the continuous functional reliance on place (place dependence), and it also has significant implications for the place-related behaviors associated with the settings.

3. Conclusions

This can be seen as the first step in the development of a conceptual framework that helps us to understand how elderly experiences are shaped by environmental psychological constructs. It develops and proposes a conceptual framework that extends the conceptual relationships between place satisfaction, place attachment (identity and dependence), and behavior among the elderly. The conceptual framework provides a solid foundation with a hope

place attachment, a phenomenon based on “place meaning, indeed contribute to all attachment dimensions strongly and significantly, and also mediates, either partially or completely, the impact of other predictor variables of place attachment, so it highlights the importance of understanding the responses of people to the meanings of a place to understand their attachment to the place. Furthermore, to foster higher levels of place attachment and behavior, open space creators must give more importance to elderly leisure, and to the need to preserve and reinforce their attachment to outdoor spaces. This enables elderly people to develop deeper emotional relationships with their natural environments. To be more effective in fostering place attachment, it is necessary to involve the elderly in creating open spaces in urban parks and to the utility of the study of place attachment in this process. It is proposed that an effective way of strengthening the emotional bond between elderly people and urban parks is by their direct involvement in designing and managing the community garden activities.

In addition, social sustainability is not only recognized as a condition for central government to reform its operating style, it is also as a general order for more stakeholders to be involved in urban development. Finally, a way of investigating the link between sustainability and placement, it can form the basis for stewardship strategies by developing and focusing on the attachment that people experience in specific places.

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