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Assessing the Provision of Public Open Spaces and Urban Design. 
Case Study: Dataran Kemerdekaan and Dataran Shah Alam, Section 14, Shah Alam City

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Abstract: The design of public open space, especially in current urban areas are facing many problems due to factors such as unavailability of proper monitoring and management system to identify the level and trend of consumerism of public parks. The impact of technological growth on people’s life and our society is remarkable, inevitable and also worrying. The excessive influence of technology in individuals’ lives has caused our community to change towards more privatisation and secluded life. The aim of this study is to evaluate the delivery of public open space and provision of the urban design aspect in Dataran Shah Alam and Dataran Kemerdekaan, Section 14, Shah Alam city. This study employed mixed method research involving qualitative and quantitative approach through observation, questionnaire and interview with experts. There is still a lack of policies and guidelines on the urban design to ensure the liveability of the open space are adopted. Suggestion for improvement are made for public benefited in providing more opportunity for the public to engage in these liveable spaces.

Keywords: liveability, public open space, sustainability, urban design

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INTRODUCTION

Public open space can be defined as any designed outdoor area that is assigned for the public use, which infers that access to such places is conceded to all individuals for an assortment of activities. Likewise, such places can be controlled and run by the government for the benefit of their communities (Malek et al., 2018). The design of public open space, especially in urban areas, is facing many problems due to factors such as unavailability of proper monitoring and management system to identify the level and trend consumerism of public parks (Sabrina et. al., 2017). With rapid urbanisation, access to urban amenities like open space has become vital for improving the urban quality of life (Rojas et al., 2016, Nasution and Zahrah, 2012). The role of open spaces has become more prominent and significant. Equitable access to safe and inclusive open space for people of various age groups, gender, and physical capabilities is an essential aspect of a sustainable and inclusive city (Divya and Jana, 2018). There is a knowledge gap in understanding the implications of urban design on the feasibility of access and parks utilisation (Wang et al., 2016a), especially catering towards the needs of the elderly. In addition, to accomplish a comprehensive and universally accessible open space, it has various practical concerns in implication including questions of decency and urban design approach to help cater the majority population’s needs (Bianchin and Heylighen, 2018; Clarkson et al., 2015).

CASE STUDY AND METHODOLOGY

The research selected two (2) public open spaces as a case study which are Dataran Kemerdekaan and Dataran Shah Alam, Section 14, Shah Alam city. Both are located in the city centre of Shah Alam which has three (3) districts which functions the area and identified as Administrative District, Commercial District and Green District. Landmark is an external feature for a location used by an individual to better understand and navigate the built environment. Related to the study area, the major landmarks are the Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Mosque, Muzium Sultan Alam Shah, Theatre Building, Grand Blue Wave hotel, SACC Mall and MBSA. The strategic location which showcases the traditional architecture building and green space with preserve environment encourages the public to use the space.
ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the analysis are important in formulating and determining the recommendations to be implemented in solving the issues. Based on the analysis of the current situation in the study area, there are several issues which need to be considered as follows:

Table 1: List of issues

<table>
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<th>No.</th>
<th>Dataran Kemerdekan</th>
<th>Dataran Shah Alam</th>
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<td>a)</td>
<td>Public Facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>Limited parking especially when there is road closure.</td>
<td>No proper parking dedicated for this Dataran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>No OKU friendly facilities provided</td>
<td>No OKU friendly facilities provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii.</td>
<td>The public toilet is not well maintained, dirty and smelly.</td>
<td>No public toilet and surau provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv.</td>
<td>Playground equipment is limited for certain age with no proper rubber flooring as part of the safety aspect</td>
<td>Guardhouse is redundant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
v. Reflexology facilities are outdated and not maintained.

vi. No surau and kiosk provided.

vii. Museum display seems to be redundant.

b) Urban Design

i. No covered pedestrian walkway and not linkage

ii. Bicycle track is not continuity. No proper sense of welcoming

iii. No sufficient light during night time No sufficient light during night time

iv. Minimum safety measures Minimum safety measures

v. Bus stop is redundant and not a bus route Bus stop design is not interesting

vi. Green area will be muddy after raining Lack of activities can be done

vii. The improper drainage system at Padang C Lack of traffic calming

c) Landscape (Hardscape)

i. The LED screen is not clear: Daytime LED screen is not clear: Daytime

ii. Street light design is not standardised Street light design is not standardised

iii. Stage structure and material dirty with moss. Stage structure and material dirty with moss.

iv. Water stagnant at fountain area which may cause dengue. Fountain not preserved and only functioning during night time

v. Pavement finish is not consistent The clock tower is not functioning

vi. Lack of maintenance on soft scape and hardscape Lack of maintenance on soft scape and hardscape

vii. Trash bin design is exposed to vandalism No trash bin provided

viii. Seating material is not long lasting Gateway is not welcoming

Note: The planning and urban design aspect need to be improved and upgraded in order to meet the user needs.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that both studies area has a great potential to develop and undergoing enhancement to be an iconic area in Shah Alam. Due to space constraint, Dataran Shah Alam has a limitation compared to Dataran Kemerdekaan. Hence, it is important to adapt public open spaces to offer good quality, efficient and attractive features. Therefore, the challenge of designing and transforming already existing parks in such a way as to minimise the negative effects, while at the same time will not diminishing the attractiveness is very crucial.

REFERENCES

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