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# **LEISURE PREFERENCE FOR PEOPLE PLACE AT SHOPPING MALLS IN KUALA LUMPUR AND PETALING JAYA, MALAYSIA.**

**SUFIAN BIN HAMAT**

**UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA**

**2012**



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**LEISURE PREFERENCE FOR PEOPLE PLACE AT  
SHOPPING MALLS IN KUALA LUMPUR AND  
PETALING JAYA, MALAYSIA.**

**by**

**SUFIAN BIN HAMAT**

**Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy**

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## ABSTRAK

Pusat membeli-belah sekarang ini adalah tempat yang menyediakan persekitaran pelbagai fungsi dan merupakan destinasi popular untuk membeli-belah, dan aktiviti masa lapang. Melihat kepada banyak usaha yang telah diterapkan dalam membentuk persekitaran yang sesuai untuk aktiviti-aktiviti tersebut, penilaian operasi pusat membeli-belah juga bergantung kepada keberkesanan kemudahan-kemudahan yang disediakan. Tumpuan kajian ini adalah ke atas kemudahan tempat untuk orang ramai berehat dan menjalankan aktiviti-aktiviti awam dan masa lapang yang dikenalpastikan sebagai tempat orang ramai (people place). Ini adalah berdasarkan jangkaan yang fungsinya adalah salah satu faktor penyumbang kepada keadaan semasa pusat membeli-belah sebagai tempat untuk masa lapang. Kajian ini cuba untuk mencapai tiga objektif. Objektif yang pertama ialah untuk mengetahui kehendak orang ramai ke atas keperluan menyediakan tempat awam di pusat membeli-belah. Objektif yang kedua ialah untuk mengenalpasti kaedah-kaedah perancangan dan rekabentuk pilihan orang ramai di tempat awam sedia ada di pusat membeli-belah sekarang. Objektif ke tiga pula ialah untuk mengenalpasti kaedah-kaedah perancangan dan rekabentuk pilihan orang ramai untuk pembangunan kemudahan tersebut di masa hadapan.

Kajian ini telah mengenalpasti 4 pusat membeli-belah dengan tempat awam yang bersesuaian sebagai "Case Study" dan telah memilih pendekatan kuantitatif menerusi kaedah bancian secara lisan berdasarkan penggunaan "questionnaire". Seramai 404 orang telah terlibat di dalam bancian ini dan data-data di analisa menggunakan program "SPSS" (Statistical Package for social Science) untuk mengupas pendapat, persepsi, dan juga kehendak orang ramai. Keputusan untuk objektif 1 menyatakan bahawa kebanyakan orang ramai ingin tempat awam disediakan di pusat membeli-belah khususnya sebagai tempat untuk berehat dan

...a lapang. Keputusan untuk objektif 2 pula menyatakan yang rekabentuk tempat orang ramai sediada yang digemari adalah berkenaan dengan rekabentuk yang mudah dikenalpasti sebagai tempat awam, kecantikan secara keseluruhan dan tahap kecerahan yang tinggi. Akhir sekali, keputusan bagi objektif 3 pula menyatakan bahwa kaedah perancangan dan rekabentuk yang paling dikehendaki untuk di pertimbangkan di dalam pembangunan tempat orang ramai di masa hadapan adalah berkaitan dengan penerapan aspek keselamatan, perancangan sirkulasi secara langsung dan keupayaan kemudahan melindungi dari cuaca yang buruk. Tempat orang ramai di Suria, KLCC telah dikenalpasti sebagai paling digemari dan patut dijadikan rujukan "best practice" untuk pembangunan tempat orang ramai (people place) di masa hadapan. Sebagai penutup, keputusan kajian ini secara keseluruhannya telah menghasilkan penemuan yang boleh meningkatkan lagi fungsi tempat orang ramai dan juga membantu pelbagai keputusan berkenaan dengan pembangunan kemudahan tersebut oleh pihak-pihak berkenaan seperti pemaju pusat membeli-belah, arkitek dan pereka dan juga pihak berkuasa tempatan..



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## PEOPLE PLACE AT SHOPPING MALLS IN KUALA AND PETALING JAYA, MALAYSIA.

### ABSTRACT

Shopping mall at present is a place of multifunctional environment and a popular venue for shopping and leisure. In view of much effort implemented to create conducive shopping and leisure environment, the performance of shopping mall also depends on the efficiency of its facilities. For that matter, this research has focused on the facility for people to relax and engage in leisure activities termed as "People Place" determined based on anticipation that its function is one of the contributing factors to the present state of shopping mall. The research attempted to achieve three objectives: The first objective seek for people's conviction on the needs to provide a people place at shopping mall. The second objective wanted to identify people's preferred planning and design measures implemented in the existing people place and the third objective wanted to identify people's preferred planning and design measures for future development of the facility.

The research identified 4 shopping malls with suitable people place as case studies and adopted the quantitative approach with the use of survey interview method based on questionnaires. A total of 404 people had participated in the survey and the data were analyzed with the use of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science Software) aiming to uncover opinions and preference of the people. The results for objective 1 indicated that most people had preferred the provision of people place for people to rest and conduct leisure related activities. The results for objective 2 indicated the top preferred measures in the design of the existing people place were the easy recognition of the facility as public space, the overall aesthetics appearance and the high level of brightness of the place. Finally, the results for objective 3 indicated high preferences for measures pertaining to the aspects of safety, direct circulation planning to the facility and the ability of the facility to protect from extremes of



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CLCC was identified the best by the people and shall be used as development of the facility. In conclusion, the overall results posed significance findings which may improve the performance of the facility and facilitate decisions pertaining to its development by several related parties namely the developer, the architects and designer, the professional body and the local authority.

### 1.1 Research Background

Victor Gruen (1973), the founder of modern shopping mall design believed that shopping mall could serve as an urban oasis: a place where people seek for comfort, entertainment and leisure. Gruen's view has influenced many researchers to conduct research on shopping malls with findings describing the place as such. Sirpal and Peng (1995) from their study stressed on the importance of entertainment and good facilities to enhance people's visits to the place and Ahmed et al (2007) believed that shopping mall is a place to socialize and for recreation and Terblance (1999) said now people are visiting shopping mall for various purposes ranging from shopping to leisure.

Indeed, shopping mall now has become a place as visionized by Gruen where, according to Pride and Ferrell (1983) apart from activity of shopping, shopping mall has also provided variety of other services in order to meet people's expectation. Kowinski (1985) has mentioned that shopping mall has more than financial significance but has becoming a way of life in the city multifunctional environment, which provides distinct setting for recreational, cultural, amusement and leisure activities. Fabijancic (1999) mentioned that ever since the design of the place based on the very first intention of the invention of an enclosed mall to provide the bourgeois and upper class society with a clean and safe place to shop, the activities at shopping mall have expanded significantly to include activities like entertainment and leisure related in forms of "experience", "lifestyle", or "themed" shopping in a new and renovated centres to the traditional mix of shopping components as described by Kilmer (2004).

a destination frequented by many levels and age group of people during leisure time and weekend. In supports of the view there have been many previous researches specifically discussed or mentioned on the different user groups at shopping malls. For example, Ahmed et al (2007) conducted research concerning consumer behaviour in regards to shopping mall and found that young adults or post-secondary students were the most frequent and long-staying visitors at shopping mall. Whereas, Balazs (1995) as appeared in the article "Malls Missing out by Ignoring Seniors" (USA Today, May 1995) has emphasized the needs to address the needs of senior citizens at shopping mall as highly potential customers with strong buying power and Campbell (1997) rationalized the appeal of shopping and going to shopping mall was higher among the females than the males.

In addition to that, shopping mall welcomes people who have other intention than shopping as means for leisure and entertainment. While the goal is to draw a wider range of people to come and experience all other activities apart from the conventional retail and eventually entice them to spend more time and money on each visit, such effort also help to create a new destination for people to seek for leisure and entertainment. Eddie Wang as quoted by Doubilet (1999, Architectural Record), has a view pertaining to all these effort of what he calls an establishment of a "town center" atmosphere, whereby the mall is not only a place to shop but is also offering people of all ages a place to socialize. A study by Moustafa (1999) on the trend of how shopping mall is beginning to substitute public places as a locus to host public life revealed that the place referred as invented private place has become a popular new destination for public activities with reasons that shopping mall is hospitable, stimulating and

f activities at shopping mall has also affected the physical setting of the place to accommodate the changes. The configuration and design of the place has since become more challenging, massive and complex to facilitate broader range of activities from shopping to leisure, entertainment and public related activities.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

With regards to the present state of shopping mall as a new public place for people to shop for necessities and experiencing leisure, several problems had been identified and needed to be properly addressed in the future development of the place in order to improve its function as a place of leisure. The problems are as stated below.

- i. Most shopping malls at present are lacking the right facilities to facilitate leisure activities at the place.
- ii. The facility to facilitate shopping and leisure related activity at shopping malls is mostly confined to a space designed as a place to seat.
- iii. The design of the facility for the people to experience leisure has not considered the needs and preference of the people.
- iv. The design of most shopping malls in general and the leisure facility in particular does not allow ample contact with the world outside world which has raised concerns if the place will be conducive for the people to conduct and construct activities leisure activities.

### 1.2.1 Shopping Mall Issue

The identification of the problems as stated above is based on the rationalization of several pertinent issues regarding the role of the shopping mall as a place of leisure

integral part of the nature of people's life particularly in the urban area. The issues encompassed aspects which concern on measures to safeguard people's interest and provide satisfaction to them, inculcate a fitting a design approach for the development of a place for leisure and assure of positive impacts and contribution to the development of society. However the focus of this research will be more related to the first two issues and therefore will be discussed in further details.

#### **A. People's interest and satisfaction**

Moustafa (1999) and Rafsanjani (1993) explored the potential of shopping malls for recreational use in their respective researches. Based on studies of previous researchers, it is anticipated that the place befits the character of an ideal leisure venue and is supported by the facts that shopping mall is highly and easily accessible as the decision to go there is always spontaneous and casual and the place is always at a convenient distance. As many researches have either directly or indirectly regarded shopping mall as the new place of leisure, it is believed that the performance evaluation of shopping mall must not solely be based on the retail environment but also be based on the efficiency of the support facilities in facilitating the activities and the needs of the people. Facilities play an important role in sustaining the crowd in the mall, as the tendency of people to linger and getting familiar with the place is higher with and when all conveniences are in place and within reach just as mentioned by Bodkin and Lord (1997) that the main reason of people visiting shopping mall is because of the facilities.

The nature of activities in the mall is about movement continuously from one section store to another. The perception on the nature of the activity was so relevant



and a research focusing on the floor plan design of shopping mall that will create a shopping environment that is comfortable, encourage exploration and facilitate ease of movement. With the role of the place has evolved where other activities other than shopping are provided as mentioned earlier by Pride and Ferrell (1983), a visit to shopping mall may not just be about buying things but also to engage in many other forms of activities ranging from leisure and public to business related. Badarulzaman (1999) has come out with a list of activities based on inventory works conducted on shopping malls in her research about the trend of retail development in the state of Penang, Malaysia. The list has included activities related to leisure and entertainment and even work as among the activities conducted at the mall.

Therefore, with regards to the present stance of shopping mall, the planning and design of the place will require considerations on good and effective facilities as necessities to facilitate the different activities of the people. Good location and ample seating areas for places to stop and rest from constant movement and good location and clear direction to nurseries to cater to the anticipate capacity of people depending on the size of the mall are instances of common facilities provided to facilitate the needs of the people at the mall. The efficiency and effectiveness of the facilities based on people's experience and perception may affect the determination on the standard of the place with repercussions effects of people extending their stay at the place or made repeat visits to the mall in the future, a chain-effect situation that will greatly benefit the retailers and the image of the mall in general. Considering on the significance and importance of facilities at shopping mall, it is necessary not to overlook its planning during the initial stage of the shopping mall development. The

ould not become an after-thought solution due to demand and pressure from the people as it will give a detrimental effect on the performance of the place and may not be as effective, affect the interior or exterior design and feature of the mall and incur high cost in the refurbishment work. Therefore, particular emphasis is necessary in the planning of the facilities and should be integrated into the design of shopping mall right from the early stage.



*Plate 1.1: Shopping mall as a place of leisure (Personal Photo shoot at local shopping malls)*

## **B. Fitting Design (as a place for leisure)**

The culture specific places, in likes of quaint village streets or boulevard lines with stores or squares bustling with café life are always favorite destinations for leisure seekers. Such places exhibit human mobility at a slow pace, as every stretch of the place is attractive and meant to be experienced. At places where these kinds of scene are not common perhaps due to the climate, shopping mall has become the best alternative to encounter similar type of scenes. At the mall, the convergence of elements of culture, lifestyle, aesthetic and social needs as mentioned by Lim (2004) are made possible through extensive efforts involved in the development of the mall with

space transformed into display of series of small outlets in different designs against the backdrop of creative fusion of lights, colors and forms.

The attractions at the shopping mall combined with bustling sound of music and mix activities to complement and attract consumer to the goods and services available there is deafening to what is happening outside. Such outlook is quite common at most shopping mall at present as the design does not allow ample connections to the outside world. In the mall, people are easily drifted in the excitement of leisure activities and lose contact with the outside. Guterson (1993) has substantiated the view where he described his experience at the largest shopping mall in United States, The Mall of America as a feeling of getting lost in the space with no relation to time and outside contexts. This description of being lost in space is parallel to the characteristic of non-place or placelessness as defined by Relph (1976) and Tomlinson (1999), as place with no sense of connectedness. The issue of shopping mall traps and distracts people from the life in the real world is supported by Fabijancic (1999) where he has compared the design of shopping mall with its compact stores on each side of hallway to the layout of a prison. He further elaborated that the essence of such intention remains the same that is to be in control of subject incarcerated regardless of difference experience of both places. The measure to control is further enhanced through installation of hidden surveillance cameras at strategic corners in both places.



Plate 1.2: Comparison of Shopping mall to A Prison (Source: Personal Photo and Internet)

A research by Holland et al (2005) has informed that people enjoys going to public places and experiencing for themselves the social differences that they offer and similarly in the case of shopping malls many people are frequenting this reinvented public place as termed by Moustafa (1999) for perhaps the same reasons. Holland et al (2005) elaborated further that people of all ages wanted to feel secure and not intimidated and sterile and over-regulated environment are not the most conducive to urban vibrancy and integration. The same type of environment persists at the mall presently. The regulated and controlled indoor and outdoor area of the place has raised concerns if it will be conducive to fulfill people's needs for leisure satisfaction. So, if leisure is about feeling unrestricted and free to act then the condition of the mall should be living up to the status of shopping mall as leisure destination. However, the efforts should not trapped people but allow them to be in control of themselves and constantly in context and aware of the development outside.

The determination of research objectives for this research was based on rationalization from the discussion of inter-related issues pertaining to the new perception of shopping mall as an increasingly popular public place of leisure. The discussion led to the justification for the significance of people place as a fitting multifunctional space for leisure and public related activities.

The objectives identified in this research are:

1. To examine people's preference for the development of people place as facility that will accommodate various spatial needs of leisure activities at shopping malls.
2. To determine the outlook of people's preferred planning and design measures implemented in the current design of the existing people place at shopping malls in enhancing the function of the place as a place of leisure.
3. To examine the people's preferred planning and design measures in enhancing the design of people place at shopping malls towards facilitating the performance of the shopping mall as a place of leisure.

### **1.3.1 Rationalization of Research Objectives**

Many researches had justified the new role of shopping mall as a place of leisure. The acceptance and preference of the mall as the new public place for leisure in all its artificiality is due to its being so accessible and a trade for comfort and safety the place has to offer just as mentioned by Gaventa (2006) that those factors are the key ingredients in designing public. The new status had seen the function of shopping mall expanded to include many different forms of leisure activities besides shopping. The presence of a variety of activities at the present mall has added liveliness and brought

...e activities become the tempting persuasion for people to  
linger longer and experience all the excitements. Some other attributes concern with  
possible attractions of its spatial configurations, specific contents of the interior,  
maintenance level, and opportunities for exploration, recreation, and socialization were  
found to influence preferences for shopping mall as the new public place. The  
attractions and attributes mentioned have transformed the shopping mall into a very  
attractive, comfortable and protected environment for the people.

The presence of many different activities at the shopping mall posed significant  
needs for better facilities to facilitate the technical and spatial needs of the activities.  
People place was identified as one of the fitting facility with its flexible function that  
can be adjusted and magnified according to the nature of the activity. Considering on  
the potential of people place, the development of the facility at the shopping mall is  
perhaps a necessity now. Adjaye as quoted by Allison (2006) mentioned that it is  
imperative in the development of a place designated as place for the people to consider  
measures where the implementation will make people feel most comfortable and  
uninhibited. Based on the view, the people place at the mall may become the measure  
implemented for people to relax and engage in activities based on their interest. The  
presence of people place with abilities to provide platforms for creating different types  
of experience enable people to share diverse range of activities and stimulate interest  
and engagement between different groups of people.

Gaventa (2006) mentioned, that the recent trend in designing public space  
focuses on concept to reduce crime and vandalism, attract diverse cultural communities,  
or make the visitors feel socially included has even enhanced the idea of developing a

ed environment of a shopping mall. She even defined a good public space as one that is full of people, a place that tempts people to slow down, stop to chat, or simply watch the world go by, a place that enriches the lives of those who use it. Her definition is shared by Moore (2006) who said that the success of public spaces is always calibrated by the number of people occupying it, rather than any more subtle consideration of emotions and perceptions they permit. Both views seems befitting the situation at shopping mall with influx of high number of frequenting the place on daily basis. The convergence of elements of culture, lifestyle, aesthetic and social needs at the mall are very much alike with most successful public place like the market place as pictured by Watson and Studdert (2005). The provision of people place gives the opportunity for shopping mall to emulate the ambience of those places.

The provision of the people place expands option of leisure activities like socializing, meeting and observing and facilitate needs for a comfortable relaxing place after lengthy shopping hours at the mall. The proposition of this multi usage place at the mall has lots of potential to be come a premiere facility based on consideration that the function of the place can be justified and magnified through creative planning and design to a level where it will become an important measures to fulfill various technical needs of some activities and element of features that will have a significant and extensive impact on the mall interior or exterior development. Ryan (2004) mentioned that some temporary interventions can permanently alter our perceptions of public space through creative design ideas which orchestrate environments in which visitors are immersed, whether on a literally physical level through built structures or more viscerally through movement, sound, and light in a performance. In addition to the

In addition, the design of people place should also look into aspects of aesthetic in order to attract people and give them good experience and improve the interior or exterior feature of the mall.

Schaule (1991) mentioned in his research that the mall provides controlled public space, which caters to the people's desire for protection from the hostile environment, which may be referred to the likes of bad weather conditions outside. Hence, the people place can be used as temperature transition zone between the outside and the inside of the mall where the place may appear in many forms in contrast to the situation outside. So, in view of that, a proposal of public spaces in form of a specific designated area within the mall tailored to accommodate leisure and public activities may be most appropriate as means to improve the facilities at the mall.

The literature search in the previous chapter and the discussion above have stressed on the needs and demands for leisure, explained how shopping mall has developed into an important venue hosting not only shopping but leisure and public related activities as well and lastly rationalized the importance of people place as a facility and a component in facilitating shopping and leisure related activities at the mall. Therefore, based on the discussion and rationalization of the issues as mentioned above, the research has aimed at exploring the importance of people place facility from another angle concerning the view of the people as users. The aim is to achieve a strong conviction on the needs to provide the facility at shopping mall for better shopping and leisure experience at the place. For that matter, the research wants to uncover people's preference on the needs to provide a people place at shopping mall and identified their



ing and design measures of the place. With that as consideration, the research has identified three (3) objectives to be achieved.

### 1.3.2 Research Questions

Each objective was looked at critically to unfold a list of possible research questions.

#### 1.3.2.1 Objective 1

This is the main objective of the research and the aim is to look into the outlook of people's preference for the people place facility at a shopping mall. The expectation was to uncover people's view as users and get their conviction on the matter which shall become another important aspect of considerations in the development of a new shopping mall. The people's preference was examined based on the rationalization of two aspects as stated below.

- i. Preference based on people's experience with shopping mall.
- ii. Preference based on the present activities of the people at a shopping mall.

Prior to that, the research highlighted the actual situation pertaining to the overall interest in shopping mall among the people as indication on the significance of shopping mall as a place of leisure.

#### **A. Preference based on experience with shopping mall.**

The decision to provide a place for the people to relax or engage in leisure or public related activities lies in the hand of the developer based on intention to provide

over the confirmation on the viability of the facility on the other hand may be achieved based on the testimony of the people with experience with shopping mall referring to those who have visited shopping mall and therefore are familiar with the place. The effort is rather democratic in determining selective effective measures to facilitate people's needs at the mall. A decision of providing the place for the people based on collective opinion among the people with experience may ensure practical and optimum use of the facility for people's comfort at the mall.

#### **B. Preference based on present activities at shopping mall**

There are three (3) categories of activities at shopping mall as identified from the previous studies particularly by Badarulzaman (1999). The activities are shopping, leisure and public related and work related. Based on the present situation where shopping mall has become a venue for the activities mentioned, the perception on the performance of the place depends on how best it accommodates the conduct of those activities. Many shopping malls have implemented measures in form of places that will facilitate the activities at the premise.

With regards to the significant function of people place based on experts' analytical view as rationalized in the literature and previous research on shopping mall and related public places, the consideration and provision of the facility at the shopping mall has become a necessity. The proposition may be adopted theoretically, however it is hypothetical to assume the same consideration is universally applicable practically as the conclusive findings in previous research were based on different demographic, physical and psychological factors concerning the samplings of the research. For that

explored to the actual demographic context of the people or respondents will be most appropriate to determine the practical importance of the People place in the development of shopping mall in the area.

In view of the rationales above, there is a need to examine the outlook of the people's opinion on the preference for people place to facilitate different categories of activities as mentioned above.

### **Research questions**

There are a number of research questions posed in order to achieve the objective. The pertinent questions are as stated below.

#### **1. What is the outlook on people's interest in shopping mall?**

The role of shopping mall as a new public place where people would go for leisure has been widely discussed above and even more detail in the chapter of literature review. However, the information obtained were more about the situations in international context which are appropriate as reference for highlights on the perception of the people on the actual state of shopping mall's function at present. With reference to that, this research has seized the opportunity to substantiate the perception with actual data explaining the situation of people's interest in shopping mall in the local context.

#### **2. What is the outlook on people's experience with shopping mall?**

Experience is a practical know-how knowledge achieved through actual encounter with certain condition, situation or object. The knowledge from the experience will enable a person to feel the effect and impact of the encounter, which

like decision, sense of perception and feel for expectation.

Actual visit to shopping mall will provide knowledge about the place concerning the physical traits and features of the interior and exterior of the place, character and behavior of people and options of activities available.

### **3. What is the outlook on the situation of activities at shopping mall?**

It is assumed that shopping would be the most engaged activity based on the main function of shopping mall as a place for shopping. However it is informative to see the situation now based on the new function of the place as leisure venue with activities encompassing shopping, social and public and work related activities.

The question also seeks to identify the pattern of engagement in each activity based on time factor. The finding will reveal indication of reception and emphasis for each activity at the mall. The answers to the questions will be used as reference later in parts when assessing the importance of people place in facilitating activities at the mall perhaps according to priority based on the outlook on the time duration of each activity.

### **4. What is the outlook on preference for a people place at shopping mall?**

The people place is one of the measures implemented to facilitate different actions attributed to the main activities at the mall. The ingenuity in the planning and design of the facility to make it creatively practical for people's action at a shopping mall becomes one of the salient points which may affect the experience of the people and influence their overall perception of the shopping mall. The experience with shopping mall with knowledge on the activities and facilities provided at the place will enable people to rationalize the needs of the people place at the premise. The

importance of the facility by the people may suffice list of effective measures to facilitate activities at the shopping mall.

## **5. What is the outlook on preferred function of people place in facilitating activities at the mall?**

The function of people place is flexible as it allows freedom for people to construct and conduct their actions based on their intention of visits and the prevailing situations according to the spur of needs at the moment while engaging in certain activities at the mall. It is imperative to clearly understand the function of people place in order to deliver viable view on the needs for the place at shopping malls.

There are three (3) groups of activities identified at the mall and each activity has its differences in terms of measures for its conduct and set up with each yields different experiences when engaged. The nature of each activity affiliates with several related actions, which depict different scenes of conduct by the people at the mall and the provision of people place at the mall is meant to facilitate the spatial needs of all activities. The flexibility of function of people place provides many options for people to venture in selective actions that will satisfy their needs based on the intention of going to the mall. The availability of the place readily able to facilitate will help people to perform activities with ease and may lead to a meaningful experience at the mall.

### **1.3.2.2 Objective 2**

The objective was decided based on consideration that collective views of people are viable views when it concerns specific facility for people. The task had focused on determining the situation and performance of the existing people place in

at the mall based on their view on the performance of architectural planning and design measures determined based on experts' opinion.

### **Research Questions**

Several research questions need to be addressed in order to achieve the objective. The questions are as stated below.

**1. What is the outlook on people's preferred architectural planning and design measures implemented in the design of the existing people place at shopping malls?**

Assessment on factors concerning relevant aspects of planning and design such as access and location, form and features and practical function is very necessary as it shall provide evidence and justification for rationalizing the performance of the place in facilitating the needs of the activities and people at the shopping mall.

**2. What are the most and least preferred architectural planning and design measures of the existing People Place at shopping malls?**

Many shopping malls seem to have provided the place for people to relax, gather and enjoy passive enjoyment. However the emphasis on the planning and design of the place varies from mall to mall depending on the intention and overall concept of the mall development. The analytical assessment on the people's perceptions of the planning and design measures shall identify both favorable and non-favorable and measures among the people.

**3. Which people place exhibits best results as best practice reference for future development of people place facility?**

most preferred people place shall be used as best practice reference for future development of the facility at shopping malls.

### 1.3.2.3 Objective 3

The findings of the second objective informed about how people perceived the existing people place at selected shopping malls. The information sufficed knowledge on successful selected measures implemented in the design of the existing people place preferred by the people. While all of the information could be used for rectification or upgrading of the place accordingly, the results were short of meeting the expectations of the people as people as users were not involved in determining what and how the people place should be in the first place. All inquiries pertaining to the architectural planning and design were mostly technical matters determined based on research and guided assumptions on what and how best for a place to function and facilitate people at large. In some cases, the inquiries were merely just about aesthetics based on evidence that some of the present people places at some shopping mall were later additions in the upgrading works of the places to stay competitive in the market.

Therefore, the third objective that is to identify people's preferred planning and design measures was very important for the reason that the findings will fill the gap in the design process of a people place where the insights and opinions of the people shall be considered. The task of the objective focused on means to elicit people's preferences in the development of people place at a shopping mall. The findings when implemented shall eliminate subjective arguments on the appropriateness of the place to the people as the planning and design of the place has considered views of the people themselves.

**1. What is the outlook on people's preferred architectural planning and design measures for consideration in the planning and design of people place at shopping malls?**

The objective intended to uncover measures preferred by the people in the planning and design of People place. There are many factors involved and considered in the task of planning and design of a place for the people. The task will require consideration of both factors concerning aspects of aesthetics and technical. Both aspects have their own merits with aspect of aesthetic concerns about the ability of the place to attract people, whereas the technical aspect will concern about practical function and use of the place to facilitate people's needs and actions. The outlook on the people's preferred measures of both aspects shall be examined and the result shall identify variation of preferences by different group of people.

**2. What are the most and least important measures preferred by the people for consideration in the planning and design of People place?**

The determination of people's most and least preferred planning and design measures shall facilitate considerations for direction in the development of people friendly people place at shopping malls. The selective emphasis on certain aspects may help in the design process as basis for determination of design direction and formation of design concept of the people place.

**3. What is the outlook on the strength of measures of each aspects of Architectural planning and design of people place?**



variation of strength of measures in each aspects of architectural planning and design of people place (Design and Comfort, Accessibility, Identity and Function) shall provide options of selective implementation in the design and development of people place facility at shopping malls based on direction or limitation posed in the development of the facility at the shopping malls.

#### **1.4 Significance of Research**

In consideration of the significance of shopping mall development as an increasingly important place of leisure, this research has looked into the issue of people place as one of the facilities provided to facilitate activities at the mall. The scope was determined based on justification that the leisure status of shopping mall must be supported by active performance of certain entity in delivering what was expected and preferred by the people. The flexible function of people place which can be magnified according to different needs of both shopping mall as a place of leisure and the people seeking for leisure satisfaction is fitting the picture of the active entity at the mall.

The significance of the findings of this research is as follows.

1. The findings shall provide justifications on the potentials of people place in enhancing the function of shopping mall as a place for shopping and leisure. The provision of people place shall facilitate the needs of activities at shopping mall and comfort to the people. In addition to that, the findings may also contribute towards the improvement of the mall's physical interior or exterior appearances as well.

facilitate design ideas of creating a form of culture specific place as point of attraction. The flexible function and creative design of people place may provide opportunities for creating a special and lively place for the people.

3. The findings may help creating a more welcoming shopping mall with a rather friendly people place facility through implementation of preferred architectural planning and design measures of the people.
4. The findings may enhance people's experience and expand their activities at the mall as the people place allows for broader considerations of more diverse activities that will directly or indirectly benefit the mall retailers and developers.
5. The finding will be a democratic way of determining a fitting design for a place for people as it allows people's participation in the development of the facility where their preference as users shall be considered.

## **1.5 Scope of Research**

In view of the expansion of function of shopping mall from a mere place for shopping to the inclusion of leisure and public related activities and the issues regarding the ease of executing all related activities, it is important to note that the performance evaluation of shopping mall in providing memorable experience must not solely be based on the retail environment, but also consider the efficiency of the facilities in facilitating the activities and the needs of the people. There are several types of facilities at a shopping mall. The main facility is in forms of selected activities which describe the function and features of the place. The set up of these facilities are aimed

of the place. The most common of this type of facility presently are activities of shopping, eating and entertainment and lifestyle related. All of these activities are leisure related and set up creatively through proper planning and design to generate lively environment to satisfy people's needs and expectations.

Another type of facility concerns elements that are provided purposely for supports and convenient for people in dire situations during engagement in certain activities at the shopping mall. A family with a baby may need to use a nursery for the mom to change and feed the little one, Moslem adults will need to go to "Surau" to exercise their obligation and many shoppers may need to get to ATM machine nearby to withdraw more money for their shopping activities. The provision of the facility will help to sustain the momentum in each activity and may prolong the duration of time spent in the mall, which at the end will benefit the retailers. The function of most elements of this group of facilities is rather fixed with a specific use. Examples of elements with fixed function are "Surau" and nursery as they are always placed at areas which are not directly visible to the public except through signages.

In addition to that, there are other facilities which may be flexible based on creativity in its planning and design. The flexible use of some of this type of facility can be used as measures to enhance the mall in ways where it may improve for instance the interior or exterior or even the activities at the mall. Designated areas for facilities like public phone or ATM machine may have some flexibility in terms of its design and location but it is perhaps rather limited in terms of the extend the management would go in the implementation based on considerations of its function. However, the people place as spaces for people to sit and relax after shopping and engaged in public

ty with the most flexibility with big potentials to improve many things about the mall. Form and Features of both interior and exterior and Experience in Shopping, Leisure and Work Related activities. Therefore, based on the anticipation of its function, the research has decided to focus on the importance of people place facility at the shopping malls.

The focus on people place was based on rationalization from the literature search on the needs of a practical facility to facilitate the present function of shopping mall as a place of leisure. The flexibility of people place where the function of the place can be planned and design tailored to accommodate different activities may fulfill spatial needs of shopping and leisure and public related activities at the mall. The practical use of the people place facility may have extensive potentials towards enhancing the function of the mall when the function is looked objectively and magnified through creative planning and design to a level where it may become a significant feature at the mall. Little words as people place may not be little in function as it can actually do so much for the betterment of the place. So perhaps, the selection of the people place facility as the focus of this PhD research may be appropriate or even quite timely considering on its potential in the development of shopping mall.

## **1.6 Methodological Framework**

The framework of how this research is conducted is based on the flowchart below.

Framework

