The Influence of Social Media on Use in Public Space (Case Study of Lapangan Merdeka Medan)

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Abstract. Interacting styles are constantly modified by new technologies, but life is shaped by common habits. Humans need to share and interact with each other even if the situation changed. The presence of Communication Information Technology (ICT) changed their lifestyle to come together and find out information that happened in the public space. This research aims to determine the effect of public space use due to social media presence. This type of research is quantitative descriptive by using two methods in collecting data. The primary method consists of observations and questionnaires, as well as secondary methods that rely on theory and previous research. The data was analyzed using interpretation analysis. The results of this research indicate that the presence of social media can determine the image of a public space and become a motivation for someone to be present and active in there. The planners are required to be able to develop new innovations so that Merdeka Walk remains interested by visitors.

1. Introduction

In the era of the only constant communication is change. Interacting styles are constantly modified by new technologies, but life is shaped by common habits. Humans need to share and interact with each other even if the situation changed. Humans enjoy a variety of experiences, and public space is a natural place to interact with each other. Public space is strengthened to raise social values such as respect, tolerance, compassion and empathy. In the digital era, social networking has become a social norm for many new generation societies. Communication technology allows people to overcome obstacles in space and time. More and more people are using social media to change the way they come together and interact in public spaces. Social media networks can also facilitate information about public spaces. Modern cities are strongly influenced by technological developments as well as the city of Medan. City development can be taken by experts by technology. So that social life changes, even though the quality of life is actually a face-to-face meeting. Social media should not prevent meetings that occur in public spaces but provide convenience for lifestyle. The use of public space at Merdeka Square shows the impact of technological developments. The positive impact of this technological development is to facilitate the dissemination of information about event organizers held in public spaces, to know the conditions and situations of Lapangan Merdeka, and to make it easier for people to communicate in order to meet one another. The negative impact is that people can access events that are taking place in public spaces through social media without having to go to Merdeka Square and the community can communicate easily without having to meet face to face, so that this situation can erode the social culture of the community.
2. Literature Review
Public space is a gathering place for socializing, freeing from the pressure of busyness and protecting from the hustle and bustle of traffic [1]. Public space is a microcosm of life, offering an attraction and a place to meet and spend time [2]. A city must have space for the placement of public buildings, meeting places, places for celebrations or ceremonies, venues, restaurants and cafes [3]. The square should function as a place for commercial activities, such as cultural activities, city halls, rinks, concert halls, cafes, and others [4]. If possible, the square in the city center can function for 24 hours. Public space plays a vital role in the social and economic life of society. Public spaces and meeting places are created into important social resources. If possible, the square in the city center can function for 24 hours. Public space plays a vital role in the social and economic life of society. Public spaces and meeting places are created into important social resources.

Communication is understood as a human process responding to symbolic behavior from other people [5]. Language, words, gestures, signs, are parts of symbols that humans use in defining something or conveying something to others. Elements that must be fulfilled so that the communication system is not interrupted, among others; sources, messages, and channels [6]. Social media is a communication tool used by users in social processes. Social media is a media platform that focuses on the existence of users who facilitate them in their activities and collaborations [7].

In the current era, social media networks are trying to reduce some of the challenges of interacting with others in public. this service uses mobile technology to facilitate the exchange of social information and facilitate users for face-to-face interactions. Mobile technology has changed urban metabolism by accelerating information exchange [8]. The cityscape functions can be taken by technology [9]. Social life has changed in different forms but the actual quality is face-to-face meetings. Social media does not prevent meetings in public spaces but provides flexibility for lifestyle. They are used as a secondary way to contact many people. Based on the study of theories about use of public space and social media, it manifested variables as research framework (Figure 1).

3. Research Methodology
Research about the influence of social media on use in public space is a descriptive research which is intended to collect information and create a description of the study case and used mix-method. The study was conducted on the function of public space and social media. Then, the researcher does analysis used mix-method, which combines quantitative methods with qualitative methods. The independent variable is (1) social activity; (2) political activity; (3) economy activity; (4) personal

Figure 1. Theoretical framework.
recreation activity (5) planned recreation activity. In the research the dependent variabel is (1) sosial media.

The population for this research is the people who live in Medan City and the tourists who visited Lapangan Merdeka. Samples were taken as many as 100 people. In this research, the sampling technique is accidental sampling technique. Data collection methods used are questionnaires (google form), observation (observing activities that occur), archives (books, and journals).

Lapangan Merdeka area is in the center of the city with an area of ± 5 Ha. Open space in the Lapangan Merdeka area uses about 60% of land. Lapangan Merdeka has an important role in the structure of the region and core of the city of Medan (Figure 2).

![Figure 2. Location of Lapangan Merdeka Medan.](image)

Lapangan Merdeka area can be categorized as a city public space. At Lapangan Merdeka the community can socialize, exercise, enjoy the atmosphere of the city and carry out government activities such as the holding of the August 17 ceremony. As well as a place of commercial activity marked by the establishment of Merdeka Walk. Lapangan Merdeka has several facilities that can support the activities that occur (Figure 3).
4. Findings
Base on the result of 100 respondent, obtained data that as 12% of respondents aged between 16-20 years, 49% of respondents aged between 21-25 years, 25% of respondents aged between 26-30 years, 8% respondents aged between 31-35 years, 3% of respondent aged between 36-40 years and 3% of respondents are over 40 years old. By age category, respondents who were most interested in visiting Lapangan Merdeka Medan were aged 21-25 years. So that visitors to Lapangan Merdeka are mostly under the age of 30 who belong to the Y generation. Generation Y is a generation born in 1980-1994 or called the millennial generation. This generation uses many instant communication technologies such as email, SMS, instant messaging and social media like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Lapangan Merdeka is more crowded during weekends. Most people in the city of Medan spend the weekend to eliminate saturation from their daily activities marked by the results of a questionnaire stating that 71% of respondents came to Lapangan Merdeka at the weekend, 15% during national holidays and 14% on weekdays. In general the people of Medan visited a place not alone, but they were accompanied by relatives, 53% of them invited 3-10 people, 38% invited 1-2 people, 4% invited more than 10 people and only 5% visited Lapangan Merdeka alone.

The age development made activities on Freedom Square begin to shift. In the Dutch colonial period and independence, political activities were more dominant but in the postmodern era Lapangan Merdeka was used as a place to gather with friends, attend events and buy things. Due to the

Figure 3. Location of Lapangan Merdeka Medan.
demonstration activities the demonstrators preferred to show their arguments in front government offices. Seen from several activities that took place at Lapangan Merdeka.

**Tabel 1. Activity in Lapangan Merdeka.**

| No. | Activity                              | Frequency of use |
|-----|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1   | Relax yourself                        | 32               |
| 2   | Gather with friends and relatives      | 58               |
| 3   | Following the demonstration           | 2                |
| 4   | Attend events                         | 36               |
| 5   | Buying food                           | 49               |

5. Discussion and Analysis

5.1. Effect of social media on visitor motivation

The presence of several events and the birth of communities shows that physical public space is still needed. People still need space to meet directly and personally so they can create visionary ideas in the future. Then, the effort to link the relationship between physical public space and virtual public space becomes important, where the presence of a space for dialogue on social media can enrich the discourse and the possibility of events that occur in physical space. The presence of social media can also provide information about the circumstances and activities that occur at Lapangan Merdeka. A lot of information can be obtained from social media whether it's an update of a person or a community. On Lapangan Merdeka, it was used as a place for gathering communities such as the Gowes Persahabatan Sumut and Medan Merdeka Runners (Figure 4). They make groups in instant messengers such as Line and Whatssup, but because of the limited distribution of this information is very minimal and can only be spread to group members. So that some of the community created an Instagram account to motivate people to be able to join the community. This community lists agenda meetings both in feeds and at the BIO (Figure 5).
Yayasan Jantung Indoseia (YJI), the main branch of North Sumatra, also made Instagram a medium for disseminating information. Almost every weekend YJI invites the community to do morning gymnastics in the Lapangan Merdeka area with the information that can motivate people to take part in morning gymnastics, especially in BIO, the @yjisumut (instagram) account is written as a SEHAT extension (Balance, Remove cigarettes Confront stress, monitor blood pressure, regularly exercise) make the motivation of the community to start a healthy life by exercising (Figure 6).

![Figure 6. Information in Account YJI (Instagram).](image)

5.2 Effects of Social Media on Characteristics of Activity
Activities that occur on Lapangan Merdeka can be categorized into several categories

5.2.1. Social Activity
Public space is a place to meet and spend time[2]. The public space is a gathering place for socializing [1]. Independent courts widely used visitor to meet with relatives, be it while enjoying the atmosphere, sitting in the cafe, as well as the community gathered together. Before they met most of them pass first communication to determine the relative position of existence, marked by the results of the questionnaire which stated 65.5% of them communicate through social media and 43.4% met without on purpose (Figure 7)

![Figure 7. Data communicates through social media.](image)
Based on observations, the society prefers areas for socializing in places or cafes that provide facilities such as wifi internet and electric plugs. So they prefer to sit in Starbucks, McDonald, and Coffee Crowd that have such facilities. While they were there they can spend hours and hours. But unfortunately with this facility they are busy with the virtual world, which can erode the social culture (Figure 8).

When they are there they can spend hours. They sit together with their relatives but can not be separated from their respective gadgets. The presence of social media and supporting facilities can make people more busy in their virtual world than in the real world. Sometimes they chat with relatives but still hold their gadgets (Figure 9).

5.2.2. Political activity
The presence of an open space of the city is largely determined by their true democracy developed by the inhabitants of that city [1]. As well as Freedom Square during the Dutch and independence more dominant activity is political activity. In Merdeka Square stands a monument that shows a lot of power in those days. But now the monument has been lost. Just behind the monument proclamation at the Merdeka Square. But the monument was not overly treated by the manager. As for the political activities that occur at the Merdeka Square at this point is (Table 2).
Table 2. Political activity in Merdeka Square.

| No. | Activity                | frequency Users |
|-----|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 1   | Attending government activities | 57              |
| 2   | The introduction of the party | 17              |
| 3   | Demonstrations          | 8               |

Respondents know their political activities through social media by 46.8%, through a friend 36.4% and 16.9% spontaneously or looking directly at the time of the activity (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Data is aware of a political activity.

5.2.3. Private recreational activities

The open space is a place to relax, play and exercise[10]. Based on the results of 89 respondents was wasting time for relaxation in Freedom Square, they are doing some activities, among others (Table 3).

Table 3. Private recreational activities at the Merdeka Square.

| No. | Activity                         | frequency Users |
|-----|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1   | Enjoy the atmosphere of outer space | 60              |
| 2   | Capture the moment               | 7               |
| 3   | Sport                            | 55              |
| 4   | Listening to music               | 1               |

Only a fraction of those who do it are pushed from seeing updates relatives. Around 12.1% said they were compelled to undertake activities at the Merdeka Square as viewed social media uploads. However, 87.9% motivated to do this on a whim recreational yourself. This shows that social media does not affect the person’s recreation to relax the mind from the bustle of city life. Society's activities encouraged as inner necessity not only to support life in the virtual world. But when they were in Merdeka some of them perpetuate what he did in Merdeka Square and posted to the social media account either doing exercise and enjoy the atmosphere (Figure 11).
A plus when the planners generate a new innovation that can attract the attention of visitors. As is the case in the west area of the field which was formerly used as a free parking area now turned into a pedestrian in a friendly design for pedestrians, available seating to enjoy the life of the city center and a short rest. There is also a statue of the ball to beautify the pedestrian path. So some people do Selfie in the area and mengaploadnya into account their social media (Figure 12 and Figure 13).

5.2.4. The recreational activities planned
Freedom Square is one of the public rooms almost every week to hold an event. Whether it's a big event as well as the concerts, lectures grand or small events such as events hosted by a community association. An event or events organized of the role of social media in spreading information. The results of the data states that 60% of respondents aware of the event through social media, 27.8% accidentally visiting Independence Square during the implementation of the event and 12% from a friend (Figure 14).
The existence of social media as a forum to convey information helps the community Medan to determine activities that take place at the Merdeka Square. In this case social media plays an active role in the success of an event. By posting advertising or social media activities at the event can attract someone to attend the event which took place at the Merdeka Square.

5.2.5. Economic activity
The public space should serve as a commercial activity [4]. It is noticeable that in Merdeka is now standing at Merdeka walk which serve as the commercial center offering a variety of culinary. In addition Merdeka Walk which is one of the tourist area in the city of Medan also has several retail selling various souvenirs typical of the city of Medan. In this case the influence of social media to provide information about what is traded in Merdeka Square neighborhood. There is a 64.4% (58 people) who know what is traded. However, 35.6% (32 people) do not know through social media (Table 5).

Table 5. Get information about economic activities from social media.

| Frequency | Percent | valid Percent |
|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Knowing   | 58      | 64.4          | 64.0          |
| Do not know | 32      | 35.6          | 36.0          |
| Total     | 90      | 100.0         | 100.0         |

The entrepreneur certainly vying to get consumers so that most of them offer a promo on some of the products offered. However, these conditions are not always promises consumers will buy merchandise. The average of the employers promote it via social media, but in reality only a large part...
of the city of Medan aware of any promotion through social media. Knowing of 51.6% and 48.4% who do not know (Table 6)

| Tabel 6. Get information about economic promotion from social media. |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Frequency** | **Percent** | **valid Percent** |
|----------------|-------------|------------------|
| Knowing        | 47          | 51.6             | 52.0 |
| Do not know    | 44          | 48.4             | 48.0 |
| Total          | 91          | 100.0            | 100.0 |

5.3 Feedback from the Use of Social Media

The function of the cityscape can be taken over by technology. Social life has changed in a different form but the actual quality is face to face meetings. Social media does not prevent the meeting in a public space but provides the flexibility to lifestyle [9]. As well as the opinion of the respondents stated that the presence of social media makes it easier to meet with relatives at the study site. (Table 7).

| Table 7. Ease meet with relatives in Freedom Square. |
|---------------------------------------------------|
| **Frequency** | **Percent** | **valid Percent** |
|----------------|-------------|------------------|
| Strongly agree once | 22 | 22.0 | 22.0 |
| Strongly agree    | 28 | 28.0 | 28.0 |
| Agree             | 49 | 49.0 | 49.0 |
| Disagree          | 0  | 0.0  | 0.0  |
| Strongly disagree | 1  | 1.0  | 1.0  |
| Total             | 100| 100.0| 100.0|

From the data of respondents in social media can provide convenience to meet with relatives. A total of 99% (99 people) said social media presence to help and really help them in knowing where their relatives were so they are easy to see. Therefore, social media can be seen as a medium (facilitator) online which strengthens the relationship between users at once a social bond.

Social media presence also makes it easy to get information about Lapangan Merdeka. Seen from the questionnaire respondents as many as 95% (95 people) of them stated that the presence of social media can provide information that occurs at the Lapangan Merdeka, both in terms of what activities are ongoing as well as the current condition of Lapangan Merdeka (Table 8). Social media is a media platform that focuses on the existence of the user which facilitate them in their activities and collaborate [7].

| Table 8. Obtaining information about Freedom Square. |
|----------------------------------------------------|
| **Frequency** | **Percent** | **valid Percent** |
|----------------|-------------|------------------|
| Strongly agree once | 23 | 23.0 | 23.0 |
| Strongly agree    | 28 | 28.0 | 28.0 |
| Agree             | 44 | 44.0 | 44.0 |
| Disagree          | 5  | 5.0  | 5.0  |
| Strongly disagree | 0  | 0.0  | 0.0  |
| Total             | 100| 100.0| 100.0|

The presence of social media provides feedback on Merdeka Square. With social media assistance, Merdeka Square has become a popular place for both residents of Medan and tourists. Basically, social media mutakir development of Internet-based technology that is easy for anyone to be able to communicate, participate, and each is shared[11]. It can be concluded that in the postmodern technological developments provide convenience in their daily activities and get various information
from social media. But social media presence also had a negative impact deployment issues that may be detrimental to the public. Social media has the power of social influence public opinion in the society [12]. Social media proved to be able to form opinions, attitudes and behavior of public or community. So social media can generate positive and negative impact. In this case, planners have to think how to generate an area that can attract visitors to attend the Merdeka Square. See what happens and changes in the future this technology will be easily exposed by the media.

6. Conclusions
Social media can be a motivation for people and tourists to come to Lapangan Merdeka. When a planner produces a new design, the results can attract the attention of visitors. With the update on the conditions and activities that took place at Lapangan Merdeka, it encouraged people to visit them. Social media can also help market economic activities that are intertwined at Lapangan Merdeka, especially towards Merdeka Walk. Besides the residents of Medan, most tourists know the Merdeka Walk from social media. Merdeka walk has now become one of the tourist destinations in the city of Medan. Almost all the webs, blogs and other social media accounts that tell about tourism in the city of Medan certainly review the existence of Merdeka Walk as one of the culinary centers in Medan. No wonder Merdeka Walk is visited by both Medan residents and tourists. The social media presence also affects someone in choosing a place. Most visitors come to places that can support social media activities. The choice of places that have wifi facilities and plugs is a choice, especially for young people belonging to the Y generation. In addition, visitors also choose locations for photography, when there is a new area, some visitors make it a place for photography, as well as pedestrians in the west area of Lapangan Merdeka which has a seating area with views of the city center and a ball statue as a place for take pictures and upload them to social media. The same is true when someone does sports and plays in the area of Lapangan Merdeka. They update their activities into their social media accounts to support a lifestyle in the virtual world. The social presence of media can also exacerbate the social traits that exist within humans. When visitors socialize or gather with relatives, they cannot be separated from their respective gadgets. In fact, sometimes inside a whole place holds the gadget so that the physical communication that occurs is very minimal. Though one of the functions of the public space itself is to accommodate the people to socialize with each other.

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