

AN INTEGRATED PUBLIC ART IN PUTRAJAYA URBAN LANDSCAPE

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ABSTRACT

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The art found in public space represents a local social and cultural situation, as well as the artistic and aesthetic tendencies. There is a close relationship between the public art and the city landscape. Public art is part of the broader visual environment of buildings, landscapes, and infrastructure. It can promote a sense of place, contribute to legibility or wayfinding, and support efforts to quality urban design. It can be in the form of sculpture, street furniture, mural, and even fountain structure. This research focuses on the user's perception and appreciation of integrated public art in the Putrajaya urban landscape. Data was collected using qualitative and quantitative methods. The case study data collections were conducted through a survey, observation, and distribution of questionnaires. The case study was carried out in the Putrajaya urban landscape. Putrajaya was selected as a case study because it is the new administrative capital of Malaysia that has seen the need to be distinctively outstanding in both its characteristics and development. Putrajaya has revealed the influence of public art in enforcing and strengthening the identity of the city. Subsequently, the recommendation has been made to enhance the planning process and management system by the local authority in the Putrajaya urban landscape. Therefore, this research will help to generate the social awareness and understanding of the effort of integrating public art into the Malaysian urban landscape.

Keywords: Putrajaya, planning, public art, sense of place, urban landscape

INTRODUCTION

Public Art is a purposefully found space for effective action that ties the relationship between art, architecture, and society. Public art encompasses integrated works of art such as an artist's designed street furniture, artist-made architectural details, lighting, and landscape design and involved temporary installations of artwork in public space (Ronald, 2007). Usually, the impact of public art in the community is invaluable. Public art can enhance the quality of urban living environment, which celebrates its community, emphasizes memories, and event boosts up the economic impact of a city (Landi, 2012). However, there is a lack of understanding and appreciation of public art among society in Malaysia (Mustafa *et al.*, 2013). The development of public art has created a richer appreciation for the value it represents as it rarely commemorates events, symbolizes accomplishments and goals. It appears to function as a community symbol or as a tool for place-making (Ronald, 2007). Public art not only has commercial value but also enhances its settings culturally and aesthetically (Willet, 1984). It is also often achieved with the employment of a wide variety of images, forms, and elements, including materials and techniques, from everyday life, and notably popular culture. Public art has promoted not only the transformation of a setting, but also the appreciation for the artwork (Kroiz, 2018). Therefore, it is observed that there is a high potential for integrating public art into the Malaysian urban landscape. It could provide a transparent image of a city's soul and improve the quality of the living environment in the country.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Public art in a generic sense is an art placed in public space and has existed since ancient times. It has deep historical roots and traditions in different cultures and periods. Its art always closely linked to political, economic and religious powers and its functions and uses have changed with time (Senie, 2003). The art in public space indicated the present social and cultural situation, as well as the artistic and aesthetic tendencies. The concept of art has evolved and extended its forms and functions, both in the fields it performs and the possible placing. Public art affects the physical environment of the human (Yılmaz, Özgüner, & Mumcu, 2018) and the interaction between the social, psychological and physical context (Willet, 1984). It is integrated into the public spaces in all ways. In general, there are various definitions based on different approaches and points of view of public art. Painter and Beckman (2010) explained that art is an expression of the creative spirit. Hall and Robertson (2001) said that public art could help develop senses of identity and place, contribute to civic identity, address community needs, tackle social exclusion, possess educational value and promote social change. In addition, public art is not merely art set outside but is an art, which has its goal as a desire to engage with its audiences (Sharp, Pollock, & Paddison, 2005). It is also using specific criteria to create spaces, for examples its material, virtual or imagined image, where people can identify themselves. Furthermore, Green (2012) stressed that public art is creating works that are part of the general experience of built and natural environments. It can include that sculpture, environmental art, the integration of art and architectural design, and more temporary or ephemeral works such as installations, lighting works, new media and outdoor are categorized as public art images. This broad scope of public art has provided many opportunities for its implementation, and public art is more than merely sculpture in the open air (Selwood, 1995).

According to Fleming (2007), public arts include monuments, sculpture, performance art, living statues, fountain, land art, building architecture, and posters. While the locations of public art are the various, consist of integrated, semi-integrated, discrete, community art and ephemeral art. Consideration for the position of artworks will depend on whether the work is part of the architectural fabric or is to place concerning internal or external architectural spaces or sites independently in an urban context. From the moment in which the architect plans the presence of public art in the area, the aesthetic or strategic value will have had to be considered with their implications for the environment (Phillips, 2003). The line maintained between the public art and architecture is frequently very close in the sense that the artist's performances are placed in the spaces created by architects. The integration of public art depends on the interaction with the environment and the physical and ambiance perception (Phillips, 2003). The aspects of the context, which affect people, depend on the social and cultural variables, as well as the nature of the scene and man's physiological and psychological features. The interaction of public art and the climate go closely linked with that of the man - considering the individual in society - and the environment. It takes us to the triangle defined by public art, the environment, and man. Thus, public art will be an essential part of the urban development strategy. There are various functions of public arts include as an aesthetical value (Hall, 2003), promoting the sense of community (Hall & Robertson, 2001), celebrating the sense or meaning of place (Himid, 1994), addressing community needs (Miller, Berlo, Wolf, & Roberts, 2018; Peto, 1992), social implication (Blaney, 1989), and educational value (CBDC, 2001).

The integrated public art located in the capital city will enhance the image and visual quality of the surrounding area and at the same time can create a strong "sense of place." The public art design concept also should be related to the notion of the capital city itself. Their public art has combined with lighting, water system, and mechanisms to spin the public art. Their public art has been developed to a high degree of complexity. Furthermore, most of the interactive public art is permanent. Integrated with interactive public art in the urban environment will upgrade the image of the capital city to be more energetic and exciting. Successful public art is the work that resonates with the site and context, creates an opportunity for the range of people using the site. It can contribute to urban regeneration and can benefit adjacent buildings from both a local character/image perspective. Regarding added value, it can bring benefits financially to the community and the environment (Bryson, 2017).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The identity and image of a city's soul can be reflected and shown by public art (Chang, 2008). In Malaysia, however, the situation of public art differs from the way it should be. The understanding of the public art among the society and related professions is still low. There are several critical issues of the public art, which are happening internationally and locally, as well as the reasons for the lack of public art in Malaysia. In addition, the public is understood as being the principal viewer of the genre, and the artworks intervene in public places, there is limited systematic knowledge about the public's perception of the genre or its perception of individual pieces. It is still unclear whether the public supports the creation of public art (Burton, Jackson, & Willsdon, 2016). Likewise, it is not known if the public views such artworks as conferring any benefits.

Nevertheless, in many modern cities in Malaysia, the local government spends considerable quantities of tax revenue to integrate a lot of public art in Malaysian urban landscape, mainly based on the belief that public art may benefit community development (Vandenabeele, Ritz, & Neumann, 2017). So far, it is the technocrats, art administrators, artists, and some academic theorists who have assumed that benefits will accumulate from public art projects and who have proclaimed the success of such works. These advocates stress that the status of public art has shifted from that of artwork to be exhibited in public space to artistic statement actively engaging with and contributing to public affairs. As sound as this new definition of public art may seem, such claims have yet to be supported by any solid research findings.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

This research aims to identify the roles and values of integrating public art in urban landscape long with formulating the best strategies to strengthen Putrajaya identity as the administrative capital of Malaysia. The objectives are to study the functional, values and advantages of public art in the urban landscape by identifying the issues regarding public art in term of implementation faced by local authorities. Finally, is to provide the best criteria of the public art that give maximum impact to the physical, social, economic and environmental.

METHODOLOGY

Data was collected using qualitative and quantitative methods. The case study data collections were conducted through a survey, observation, and distribution of questionnaires. The case study was carried out in the Putrajaya urban landscape.

Case Study Area

Putrajaya is located about 25km from the centre of Kuala Lumpur and 20km from the Kuala Lumpur International Airport, Sepang in the south. Putrajaya public spaces at Precinct 1 (Perdana Putra) until Precinct 4 (the government areas) were selected as the case study areas. Putrajaya is the administrative capital of Malaysia and the first Intelligent Garden City that has a sophisticated information network. In Putrajaya, public art is used as part of the urban enhancement, which plays a vital role in making the image of the city and making it livelier to the environment (John, 2005). The design of Putrajaya city has adopted its urban form to suit its topography, local climate, and cultural norms. The urban creation is related to its cityscape, scenic panoramic views, local flora promotion, the network of open space creation, and finally the incorporation of intelligent buildings and infrastructural features.

Procedure

The collection of primary data from the survey and questionnaire was conducted in a week (days sample included weekends and weekdays). It started at 8.00 am until 6.00 pm, stationed at public open spaces in Precinct 1–4, Putrajaya. The asking questions are about general knowledge and perception of visitors towards public art that located in the central and administrative zones of Putrajaya. The public art element includes monument and sculpture, the art of planting design, mural and wall Painting, interactive public art and architecture. Pre-visit questionnaires were used to explore visitors' environmental awareness, interest, and motives of public art in the Putrajaya landscape. The aims of the research were briefly outlined, and visitors and the community were invited to complete the questionnaire during their visit to the case study areas.

Participants

In this study, the samples were selected based on various levels of adult visitor groups either living within or related directly or indirectly to the study area. This research focused on the public art pieces at a micro scale (a city). A questionnaire consisted of both structured and open-ended questions, which were developed and employed as an instrument for collecting data from the public. The data found are information from the respondent's views, opinion, and recommendations about integrating public art in the Putrajaya urban landscape. 156 respondents completed the questionnaires by using the random sampling technique. The majority of the respondents were aged between 31 and 50 years old (51%), and female (60%). They were the permanent residents of Putrajaya (62%), with excellent educational backgrounds either a bachelor degree or diploma (62%), and 28% finished their local secondary and high school. Most of them work in government agencies (37%) and private (23%) sectors. Almost all respondents were Malay and Muslim (96%).

Data Analysis

All data that have been collected were analysed by SPSS Statistic version 19.0, and some of the data were converted to the Microsoft Excel 13.0. This primary data was examined and classified based on its value and features, and furthermore to be translated into the simple diagrams. The analysis data obtained is essential to relate to the study topics and issues in integrating public art into the urban landscape of Putrajaya. Understanding and referencing to other related information in secondary data are necessary to produce a good outcome or output.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

The Federal Territory of Putrajaya is the best area to represent the recent growth and interests in public art practices and provide samples of different styles in public art development. Putrajaya was created as a city with a memorable design by giving identity and structure to its public realm. These results examine the role of public art in the urban environment and explore the integrating of public art in Putrajaya. The majorities (95%) of the respondents are aware and know what the Public Art is. The most famous definition of public art among respondents is; "Public art is a creative form and reflects on the circumstances, freedoms, and constraints of the spaces we think public." Therefore, they know the necessary information regarding public art, and this shows that they are alert to the changes and developments around them. There are five types of public arts located in the study areas. Table 1 demonstrates that interactive public art is the most favoured type of public art among the respondent (35%).

Table 1: The most favoured type of public arts in Putrajaya

| Types of Public Art | Frequencies | Percentage (%) | Ranks |
|------------------------|-------------|----------------|-------|
| Monument and Sculpture | 30 | 19 | 2 |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|---|
| Art of Planting Design | 25 | 16 | 3 |
| Mural and Wall Painting | 20 | 13 | 5 |
| Interactive Public Art | 54 | 35 | 1 |
| Architecture | 24 | 15 | 4 |
| Others | 3 | 2 | 6 |
| Total | 156 | 100 | 6 |

In the globalization era, interactive public art is becoming a prevalent type of public art among the urban community. This kind of public art was integrated with sophisticated elements such as lighting, water fountain, and mechanical system. All of these elements will make the public art more dynamic, energetic and contemporary. Thus, interactive public art will make the community and visitors interact with them. Meanwhile, monument and sculpture, art and planting design and architecture type of public art represent 19, 16 and 15% respectively also are favourable.

Moreover, the majority of respondents stated that the primary value of the public art in Putrajaya is the aesthetic value (53%) as shown in Figure 1. The result demonstrated that not many people understand in detail what the broader meaning of public art is. They think that public art is something formed with a beautiful element, attractiveness and looks good. On the other hand, most of the respondents (56%) agreed that public art in Putrajaya offers them "sense of belonging." The design aspect of public art in Putrajaya itself contributes the "sense of belonging" to the community and visitors because the designs are distinctive and unique because it is integrated with the Islamic and Malaysian identity.

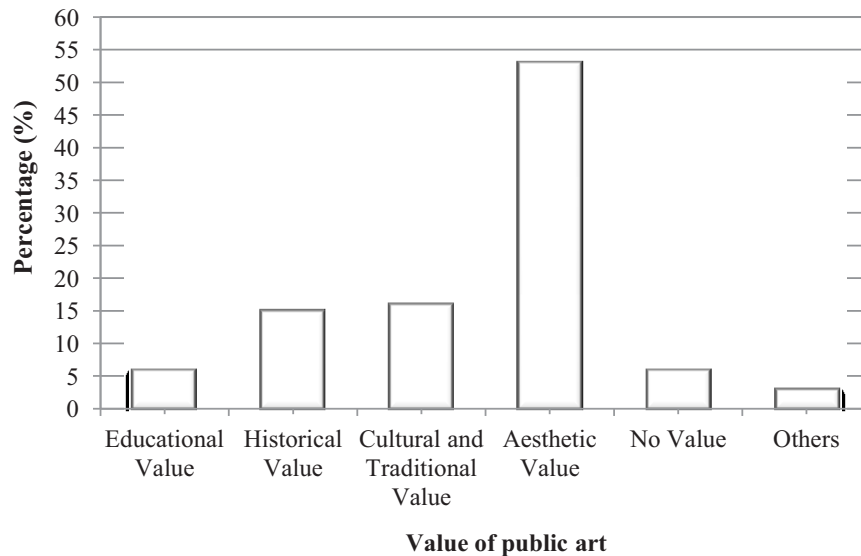


Figure 1: Value categories of the public art in Putrajaya

Regarding the benefit of the public art, 65% of respondents believed that the public art in Putrajaya celebrates our culture and community. Most of the public art concept in Putrajaya has an Islamic-Malay identity, at the same time; most of them are from the Malay population as well. 27% of them agreed that public art in Putrajaya also promotes a sense of community, while the rest 8% believed that, it could support educational value. Moreover, the majority of the respondents (71%) were very interested in the permanent public art. The permanent public art consists of sculpture, monument, and the water fountain is integrated with street furniture. 29% of them appreciated temporary public art. Furthermore, the issue of placement of public art in Putrajaya is crucial. Most of the public arts are done to fill the empty spaces. Placement plays a significant role in highlighting the existence of the public art in the public arena. Placement can be categorized into two categories. The first type of placement is in the scope of physical location while the second category is more to the

placement within the public sphere. 54% of the respondents stated that the area of public art in Putrajaya is an inappropriate place, but the rest 46% responded that the placement of public art is not in the appropriate areas. They experienced that it is hard to find the principal public art in Putrajaya. Moreover, most of the respondents (61%) declared that the quality of public arts in Putrajaya is good. The materials that have been used to build the public arts are in high quality because most of the public art materials were made from stainless steel, aluminium, and wood. Besides, these materials are hardy, durable and long lasting. On the other hand, 32% of respondent stated that the qualities of public art in Putrajaya are average. Public art in the public spaces used as a focal point was built with high-quality material, but the public art that is found in an isolated area is just built from the medium quality of materials.

The majority (65%) of the respondents agreed that the current public art in Putrajaya has enhanced the image quality/visual quality and given identity to the city. Public art is employed to display between actual and wished for the character, a vision of ideal urban space. Public art and monuments that are incorporated into the Putrajaya's built environment is inappropriate, established, and create a unique identity of the city. The whole images are legitimizing the political and cultural atmosphere.

Subsequently, Table 2 listed that the majority of the community and visitors (40%) in the Putrajaya commercial area wants to integrate more public arts. The commercial landscape area is specifically allocated for business purposes. The primary use of the land can be in manufacturing, products, offices, restaurants, shopping malls or even service stations. Besides, the commercial area has a lot of public space for the community gathering. This area has the power to energize public spaces, arouse creative thoughts and transform the places they live, work, and play in more welcoming, interactive and beautiful environments.

Table 2: Urban landscape areas in Putrajaya need more public art

| Urban Landscape Areas | Frequencies | Percentages (%) | Ranks |
|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------|-------|
| Government Area | 48 | 31 | 2 |
| Residential Area | 10 | 06 | 4 |
| Commercial Area | 63 | 40 | 1 |
| Park and Open Space | 33 | 21 | 3 |
| Others | 02 | 01 | 5 |
| Total | 156 | 100 | 5 |

Figure 2 illustrates that interactive and sophisticated public art concepts are the favorite of most respondents. In the era which met with the fantastic technology, Putrajaya did not miss the opportunity to integrate with the interactive public art to become a more vibrant and energetic city. Some forms of public arts are designed to encourage audience participation in a hands-on way. The mechanical system in the public arts such as a combination of lighting and water fountain will make it more dynamic and full of life, and the community and visitor seem to like to interact with it.

The impact of public art goes beyond the social value and identity. Public art in Putrajaya also contributes towards economic benefits. The phrase that "economic benefits of the arts" has gained currency in the art sectors around the world, as a result of new economic rationalism in public policy. As with all areas of public policy, arts and cultural policies have come under the scrutiny of economics. Most of the respondents (77%) declared that public art in Putrajaya could generate local economic potential.

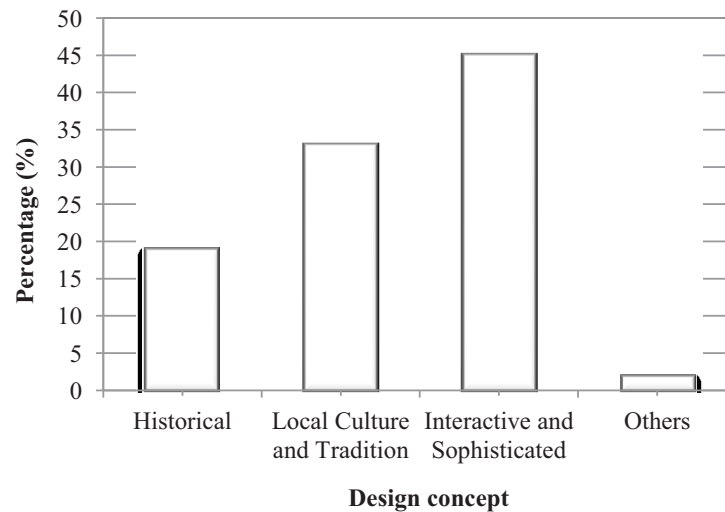


Figure 2: The best public art design concept in Putrajaya

Putrajaya has created a high-quality open environment, which has a significant impact on the economic life of the urban centre to attract investment. The presence of functional parks, squares, public art and public spaces become a vital business and marketing tool. These well designed and managed of public places can attract investors, customers, employees, and services. For the public arts funding, 46% of the respondents agree to shell out their assessment tax paid to the local authority (Putrajaya Corporation) allocated for the public art project (Table 3). A tax assessment is a levy on property that the owner is required to pay. Besides, 50% of the respondents agreed with a local authority in partnership with Non-Government Organization (NGO) and other departments. Public Art Programs may augment limited budgets by collaborating with Planning, Engineering, and Parks and Recreation Departments. Planning Department funds can assist the development of public art plans.

Table 3: Public arts funding sources

| Type of fund | Frequencies | Percentage (%) | Ranks |
|--|-------------|----------------|-------|
| Assessment Tax | 73 | 46 | 2 |
| Partnership with Non-Government Organization (NGO) and other departments | 77 | 50 | 1 |
| Others | 6 | 4 | 3 |
| Total | 156 | 100 | 3 |

Public art programs are charged with administering the development and management of public art in their communities. The methods used to build and sustain a public art program are in the purchasing artwork for permanent or temporary display, placing artists on project design teams, and creating an artist in residence opportunities. This existing public art program was approved by the respondents in Putrajaya, which represent 58%. The rest of 41% of the respondents preferred to open competition of public art. Open competitions are democratic and may encourage younger artists. Open competitions can be time-consuming, advertising is costly, and they require communication with many people and lots of staff and selection panel time to review proposals.

Regarding the issues and problems of the public in Putrajaya, the foremost crucial questions are lack of understanding of the public arts in the society (28%) as shown in Table 4. The understanding of the public arts between the community and related professions is still small. While the appreciator of public art is also lacking in society. As a result, it will diminish the role of the public arts in the whole country. The level of awareness, knowledge, and understanding of the public art is a priority criterion for the success of the public art. However, almost all (94%) of the respondents want to upgrade planning and management process in integrating the public art by the local authority for reducing the current issues and problems towards public art in Putrajaya.

Table 4: Major issue and problem about public art

| Public Art Issues | Frequencies | Percentages (%) | Ranks |
|---|-------------|-----------------|-------|
| Lack of understanding of public art in the society | 43 | 28 | 1 |
| Situated in inappropriate areas | 27 | 17 | 3 |
| Vandalism | 03 | 02 | 7 |
| Lack of quality | 18 | 12 | 6 |
| Lack of maintenance | 03 | 02 | 8 |
| Neglected artist's function | 15 | 10 | 4 |
| Lack of pertinent memories and identity in the public art | 16 | 10 | 5 |
| Lack of community participation | 31 | 20 | 2 |
| Total | 156 | 100 | 8 |

Results

In line with the garden city concept, more than a third of the total area (39.7%) of Putrajaya development is preserved as open space (Putrajaya Local Plan, 2013). A large proportion of the city area is designed as parks and open spaces, ranging from metropolitan parks to local neighbourhood playgrounds. On the other hand, reinforcing and highlighting the identity of urban features such as landmarks, squares, plazas, and bridges that form part of the cityscape, provide a broad range of spatial experiences that can enhance the spatial quality of the city. It is also a city with a clear identity and character rooted in the local culture and tradition as evidenced by its local architecture and urban design including the public art. It is shown that how the ideas of garden city and intelligent city are translated into various of public arts on the ground as shown in Figure 3. Putrajaya is an excellent showcase for a town for an administrative centre that integrated with a lot of art for the new millennium.

Based on the analyses, most of the public art in Putrajaya is monumental planting design in structure form such as topiary trees. In fact, the public art, which integrated with street furniture and other unique objects in the public right-of-way, including the pedestrian amenities, are essential elements that can create an active, safe, and an attractive public realm (Figure 3). Examples of street furniture include benches, litter and recycling receptacles, bike racks, multiple publications modular newsstands, water fountains, pedestrian-scaled lighting, bollards, and planters. Public art may include art installations that have a functional or aesthetic component, and both can be owned and maintained by a private or public entity. The current public art that combined with street furniture is inadequate. The design of public art that integrated with street furniture also is less attractive and interactive. Therefore, the community and visitors should acquire a reasonable number of street furniture, as well as practical and multiple functions of public art.

The issue of placement of the public art is common in Putrajaya. Public art in this area is mostly done to fill the empty spaces in the open space, which contradicts with the valid objectives of public art as public objects. Several public arts in this area are situated at segregated places, whereby it leads to vandalism and less public interaction. Moreover, most of the chosen sites do not reflect the site concept and other human factors. Placement plays a significant role in highlighting the existence of the public art in the public arena. Therefore, the current Putrajaya's public art erections in the public spaces do not eventually mould chemistry with the public. These findings suggest that the right placement of the public art in the public spaces may welcome an extraordinary impact. In Putrajaya, only the Department of Landscape and Park of Putrajaya Corporation conduct all the planning and management of public art. The Landscape and Planning Control Unit covers all the planning and administration aspects of the public arts in Putrajaya including the offering of tender, collecting funds, collaborating, and doing maintenance. Furthermore, the public arts should have other committees to handle and facilitate the management of the public arts such as public art programs, gathering the artist and so forth. To have the smooth progress of planning and administration of the public arts by the local authorities, it needed to be partnerships and collaborated with various departments and Non-

Government Organization (NGO). These recommendations entirely provide for a local authority in Putrajaya, to make plans and management system more organized and efficient.

Most of the public arts in Putrajaya are found only in a monumental form and landscape design. Currently, Putrajaya Corporation does not provide much of interactive public arts. It is just used when Putrajaya conducts any event and holds a celebration and this type of public arts are temporary. Towards the era that deals with technology in every aspect, Putrajaya should install interactive public arts. Putrajaya is a well-planned city, and as the new administrative capital of Malaysia, it needs to be distinctively outstanding in both its characteristics and development. Putrajaya faces the problems of the lack of community's participation in the public art commission. The public must be involved in the process of developing the public art right from the beginning. The Putrajaya Corporation nowadays does not put full effort into bringing the community in the process of public art commission. Community involvement is a must in any future public art project in Putrajaya to make sure the quality for every project is in excellent condition and fulfils public requirements and interest. Besides that, in Putrajaya, the majority of the public art projects have shown the neglect of artists' functions. It is important to set out their particular approach to integrating the public arts with capital projects. The principles and objectives of the public art should be the emphasis on local identity and make it relevant to the local circumstances and expectations. Hence, the Putrajaya Corporation should have a special committee to decide the best criteria for the public arts that can also be used as a planning guideline in the Malaysian urban landscape.



Figure 3: Examples of the urban landscape in Putrajaya, integrated with a variety of public arts in the forms of monument, land art, and street furniture

The purpose of including the public arts within the development areas in Putrajaya is to contribute towards the positive social growth, develop a cultural identity and ensure the economic value of each precinct. On the other hand, public arts in the urban landscape are used to shape the places where community lives and works. Public art is a process of engaging artists' creative ideas in the public realm. Moreover, a significant amount of the public arts in Putrajaya is commissioned via the planning system. At a time when the standardized approaches to design and development have been widespread, it is acknowledged that public art has a significant role when creating successful places and helping to establish efficient and vibrant communities. The design has become not only stressful on material considerations, but also in visually sensitive areas. Finally, the sustainable planning and management in integrating the public arts into Putrajaya urban landscape meeting the needs of the present without compromising the needs of the future generations.

CONCLUSION

Putrajaya is one of the successful and well-planned cities in Malaysia. The development concept of Putrajaya is "city in the garden" and "intelligent city." The theme and concept of the public arts in Putrajaya are related to the development concept of Putrajaya. Public art in Putrajaya is expected to play a role in building and facilitating social harmony. The users acknowledge that public art as a genre positively contributes to the community of Putrajaya. Beyond the physical space where it was installed, public art can affect other aspects of social life too. It is thought that artworks have done much to ameliorate community environmental problems by strengthening place attachment, enhancing the quality of the environment, providing social/environmental education, and generating local economic potential. The ability of the public arts to meet the needs of social objectives for an inclusive society also highly depends on the quality of the built environment. In the case of Putrajaya, public art helps break the rigidity of building complexes and the formal outlook of its urban landscape. In general, it improves the physical environment to benefit the residents and visitors. It also helps to humanize public spaces and creates meaningful places where people feel comfortable and relaxed.

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