The Effect of Sense of Place Towards Social Capital on Millennials in A Semi-Urban City (A Case Study in Padang, West Sumatera - Indonesia)

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ABSTRACT: The millennials, as other generations, has their own characteristics that can be seen from their traits, habits, lifestyle, and nature which due to those attributes can lead to different expectations from others. This research aims to understand and analyse the effect of sense of place towards social capital on millenials in a semi-urban city. The population of this study is the Millennial generation in Padang aged 19 to 38 years with a total population of 425,053 people. The number of samples was determined using the formulation proposed by Slovin (1960), namely 400 respondents from various backgrounds, ages, education, domicile, profession, and income were involved. Based on the result of hypothesis testing, it was found that sense of place has a positive and significant influence towards social capital. This research is expected to carry a positive contribution to the dynamics, issues, and problems of millennials related to sense of place and social capital, especially in a semi-urban city in developing countries.

Keywords: Millennials, Sense of Place, Social Capital, Urban City, Case Study

INTRODUCTION

Due to its large numbers, the millennial generation is considered as a vital part of Indonesia's future asset. Indonesia, including Padang, is preparing to face a demographic bonus of millennials or the also known as Generation Y. Millennials are characterized by their inclination to always seek for unique and entertaining things and to work, live, and relax in an area that could offer unforgettable experiences. Particularly, millennials crave for a city with ideal public places; an inclusive, healthy, inimitable town, complete with sport facilities and recreational access, all of which could support them to socialize and achieve a work-life balance. When someone has lived in the same place for a long period of time, he will develop *sense of place* – where he feels secure and belongs to the place that has been the root of his identity (Shmuel et al., 2018). Several prior studies have shown that physical attributes, activities, and an importance of a place have contributed to form a sense of place.

(Timmerman, 2015) studies how to understand the needs of millennial generation in their environment. Millennials do not usually shadow their parents' footsteps. (Timmerman, 2015)

found that millennials have a big desire to live in urban areas. Urban areas, though, can sometimes be susceptible for several deteriorating factors such as rapid and unplanned industrial development, environmental degradation, lack of job opportunity and natural resources (Mpanje et al., 2018). Literatures on social capital and its significance for rural and urban areas have mushroomed (Debertin & Goetz, 2013). In rural and urban areas, social capital refers to a mechanism of a group in which residents connect and interact with one another to solve problems for common good (Debertin & Goetz, 2013).

According to (Fistola, 2011)), social capital represents all personal relationship, a sense of belonging to an organization or a place, solidarity among individuals, good intentions, personal commitment, and participation; all of which is central for a complex organization like a city to operate. Social capital believed to construct not only a strong sense of belonging to a place, but also a desire to take care of the place by spontaneously creating a public space control. A lesser amount or even loss of social capital triggers 'individualism' in urban society. Empirical evidence reveal that there is a positive and significant correlation between the national sense of place and social capital (Azizi & Shekari, 2018). This affirmative association between sense of place and social capital has been previously investigated in the environmental psychology literature (Dale et al., 2008). Therefore, to increase the society's social capital, urban planners should give a special attention to the physical and social bond to a place or city (Azizi & Shekari, 2018).

(Moayedi & Kheiruddin, 2014) assert that the definition and analysis of social capital, together with its elements, could create an exclusive capacity in cities, and if used properly, it could provide a basis for cities' sustainability. Future humanitarian crises most likely emerge in urban areas. The challenges of millennial generation and urban areas are likely to grow, given the proportion of world population living in urban areas is projected to continuously developing. The urban population in low income countries has proliferated and they live in the slums (Mpanje et al., 2018). Building social capital is expected to fortify local structures and resolve urban issues to prepare semi-urban cities that will sooner or later become urban cities and be inhabited by millennials today.

Sense of Place

The theory of sense of place first appeared in the 1970s (Deutsch et al., 2013), and has been intensively studied in the past forty years (Acedo et al., 2018). The term 'sense of place' has broad and myriad implications in the scientific, sociological, cultural, and psychological research (Hashemnezhad et al., 2013). (Najafi & Shariff, 2011) view sense of place as an emotional relationship between people and place. (Kopec, 2012)), an environmental psychology researcher, defines sense of place as the development of level of comfort and security related to a place. A place has a profound value for an individual because their personal and social identity are established in their surroundings.

According to (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001), sense of place generally refers to a significance tied to spatial settings of a person or a group. Tuan (1979), who proposed a number of definitions frequently cited by many researchers, affirms that a place is the centre of meaning or a sphere that emphasizes emotions and human relations. Hence, sense of place is not imbued in the physical

arrangement itself, but is in the human interpretations of that arrangement or the physical state (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001). (Masterson et al., 2017) reveals that sense of place is formed not only with in an individual but also social experiences. (Tuan, 1975) further accentuates that sense of place is obtained from one or a series of experiences in a place and is built through the use of all senses which are then developed over time.

A place has a vital role in human life (Gustafson, 2001), and each place has its own distinctive characteristic, which is deemed as an important issue in social science (Najafi & Shariff, 2011). Based on the consideration of the characteristic and suitability of the research to be investigated, the variables of 'sense of place' uses dimension and indicators from (Azizi & Shekari, 2018), namely place attachment, place identity, place dependence, place satisfaction, layout of physical features, and social bond.

Social Capital

The concept of social capital has a substantial history in social science (Smith et al., 2002). (Fukuyama, 1999) asserts that the term *social capital* was first used by an American political reformer, Lyda Hanifan, in 1916 in a research that describes community centres of villages (Fukuyama, 1999) (Putnam, 2000) that were then frequently studied in the beginning of the 20th century (Putnam, 2000). According to (Glenane-Antoniadis, Whitwell, Bell, & Menguc, 2003), social capital is a theoretical umbrella which links such concepts as relationship, trust, social resources, social exchanges, informal organizations, culture, networking between companies, social networking, relational contract, and social support. Social capital is a relatively contemporary theory, proposed by Pierre Bourdieuin 1985. The popularity of social capital has rapidly increased and has been adopted in various disciplines such as economics, political science, and organizational theory (Glenane-Antoniadis et al., 2003).

(Woolcock & Narayan, 2000) believe that intuitively the basic supports of social capital are family, friends, and colleagues who are considered as important assets because their availability to be called upon during critical incidents. Theoretically, social capital is a factual and intangible source for organisations to use properly. It is related to how far people share information and are concerned with sources embedded in linkages of a network (Wang & Ho, 2017) (Zheng, Wu, & Xie, 2017). In the economic mainstream, the so-called "New growth theory" pays more attention to social structure (externality of human resources) than to the conventional neoclassical models (Putnam, 1994). Robert Lucas, the founder of economics "Rational Expectation", acknowledges that the accumulation of human capital is a fundamental social activity, involving a group of people in a way that is incomparable to the accumulation of physical capital. The social capital approach could help to formulate new strategies for development (Putnam, 1994).

The topic of social capital has attracted academics and practitioners for decades and is still relevant today – proven by its implementation in various disciplines and subject areas (Ishak et al., 2017). As stated by (Kapucu, 2011), the idea of social capital has become popular in a variety of disciplines. Social capital involves a multifaceted concept, which has been referred and illustrated with various descriptions and significance in copious literature. The social capital can be elucidated through changes in a relationship among people facilitating the action (Coleman, 1988). The social

capital is relatively less tangible and observable contrasted to physical and human capitals, inferring that social capital's realization involves more relationships between individuals (Coleman, 1988). (Putnam, 1994) conveys that social capital allows people to overcome their dilemmas with collective actions. Social capital shares such as trust, norms, and network tend to be self-strengthening and cumulative. Despite of numerous descriptions of social capital, it is generally agreed that social capital is a good intention prompted by social relations and could be mobilized to facilitate actions (Adler & Kwon, 2002).

A number of studies have been conducted to investigate social capital. However, there is no agreement yet related to the definition, dimension, and indicators to measure social capital. The determining factors of social capital or the use of definition, dimension, and indicators seem to depend on the focus of a particular study. Defining a social capital requires its underlying theories and dimensions. Much research on social capital has been carried out resulting in different conclusions. The scope of social capital is very broad, covering all aspects, including economics. Each researcher could determine from what aspects social capital is examined. Based on the characteristics and suitability of research to be investigated, then the variables in this research used the dimensions and indicators proposed by (Hamdan, Yusof, & Marzukhi, 2014); they were group and networks, trust, collective action and cooperation, social cohesion and inclusion. In addition, the dimension and indicator suggested by (Azizi & Shekari, 2018), that was the 'norm' was also adopted, and finally the 'tolerance' indicator from (Lebedeva, Osipova, & Cherkasova, 2013) was also applied.

The purpose of this study is to determine and analyze the effect of sense of place on social capital in the millennial generation in a semi-urban city. It is hoped that the results of this study can provide benefits for the city government in making policies related to the importance of the role of sense of place and social capital for the millennial generation in the city. Furthermore, the results of this study are also expected to provide benefits for academic interests, especially future researchers who are interested in the topics, variables, and objects in this study.

METHOD

This type of research is exploratory research, using quantitative methods through surveys using questionnaire instruments, with Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis. In this study there are two variables, namely sense of place (X) as an exogenous variable and social capital (Y) as an endogenous variable. Exogenous and endogenous variables are latent variables (structural model), which are measured through several indicators reflectively. PLS-SEM analysis is carried out by analyzing the outer model (validity and reliability), inner model analysis (structural model analysis), hypothesis testing (Hair et al., 2017), and mediation effects, using SmartPLS 3 software for Windows.

This research describes and explains the effect of sense of place towards social capital. The object of the research was the millennial generation in Padang –a semi-urban city. According to (Setyobudi, 2001), cities in Indonesia, to some extent, still have similarities to villages. This suggests

that the concept of the city is still "Pseudo" (the term semi-urban is used in this research). The population of this research was the Millennial generation in Padang, aged 19 to 38 years old, with total population of 425.053 people (Padang, 2018). The number of samples were determined using the formulation proposed by Slovin (1960). Thus, 400 respondents from various backgrounds, age, education, domicile, profession, and income were involved. A purposive sampling method was used to adjust the research variables, dimension, and indicators with the respondents' characteristics and criteria. The followings were the criteria used to determine the sample :

1. The minimum education level of high school or equivalent
2. Have been living in Padang for at least one year or more

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The highest proportion of respondents by gender was male, amounting to 201 people (50.20%), whereas the total of female was 199 people (49.80%). In terms of age, it was dominated by those aged 20 to 24 years old, totaling 123 people (30.75%). Meanwhile, the least age group of respondents was the age of 19, with a total of 21 people (5.25%). On average, as many as 71.75% millennials in Padang were in college, while high school graduates or equivalent was only 28.25%.

The value of AVE of sense of place was 0.588 and social capital was 0.503. The cronbach alpha's value (>0,600) for sense of place was 0.981 and 0.958 for social capital. The composite reliability value (>0,700) of sense of place was 0.981 and 0.956 for social capital. It thus can be concluded that those two variables were valid and reliable. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination or R Square (R^2) of social capital was 0.865, denoting that the influence of sense of place to social capital was 86.5%. The probability value of the influence of sense of place on social capital was 0.000, which is smaller than the Sig. value of 0.05. The statistical t value of 66.547 is bigger than the t table; that was 1.645. It can be concluded that sense of place has a positive and significant effect on social capital.

Table 1. Research Results

Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	t-statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Sense of Place → Social Capital	0.930	0.934	0.014	60,670	0.000

Source: Processed data, 2019

The result of hypothesis testing shows that sense of place has a positive and significant impact on social capital of millennials in a semi-urban city like Padang. The better sense of place, the more social capital increases, and vice versa. A weak sense of place could decrease the social capital. This research results are consistent with previous research that also explore the link between those two variables. (Azizi & Shekari, 2018), for instance, found a positive and significant correlation between sense of place and social capital. A study by (Acedo, Painho, & Casteleyn, 2017) presented a formal

conceptualization and initial theoretical framework that explicitly describe the concept and correlation between sense of place and social capital in a city from a spatial point of view. Next, (Baum & Palmer, 2002) discovered that social capital wasindeed affect ed by the characteristics of a place where one lives.

Based on the sense of place perspective, it can be perceived that millennials have a sense of belonging and fondness towards the city they live in, including its culture and other aspects. Therefore, the government is expected to afford qualified, comfortable, safe, active, and useful public spaces for the millennial generation. Sense of place is a vital part to establish a relationship between individuals and their physical environment. While social capital refers to the relationship between individuals in which the relation could generate trust, norm, and network to be benefitted to overcome shared problems. Those two aspects (i.e. sense of place and social capital) have actually become a culture uphold for a long time in Indonesia, including Padang, which is manifested through mutual cooperation culture.

The correlation between sense of place and social capital could obviously be seen in the millennial generation in Padang in the last couple of years, indicated by the emergence of numerous social movements. The social movements initiate various communities that could become social capital for millennials in Padang, which characterizes the complex relation between them and environment, exploring various issues, preferences, access to resources, meaning and culture in using the resources so to rise participation to build a semi-urban city. The results of respondent identity description of this study show that 289 people (72.2%) had lived more than 10 years in Padang. Only 13 people (3.2%) were found to stay for a year or less. According to (Hausmann, Slotow, Burns, & Di Minin, 2016), the longer someone stays in a place, the higher the level of attachment to that place.

Furthermore, according to (Putra, Taifur, Games, & Handra, 2022)), Padang is known for its strong Minangkabau customs and culture, whose values automatically become social capital for the community. This can be seen from literary works that are part of the philosophy of life. Written in words or sentences that can be a provision in social life. For example, "*Barek samo dipikua, ringan samo dijinjiang*" (heavy is carried together, light is carried together). This means that everything is much easier when done together.

(Zheng et al., 2017) reveal that social capital is a factual intangible source for the society. The millennial generation in Padang enjoys the city and feels proud to be a part of it. According to (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000), the basic ideas of supports of social capital are family, friends, and colleagues, who can be called upon during a critical situation. Not only could social capital generate outputs that positively influence social issues but is also valuable in social, political, and economical realm so that enabling us to solve various urban problems. It needs the authorities' support – especially government – to realize the implementation of social capital for a better future in Padang.

Urban areas are vulnerable because of rapid and unplanned industrial development, environmental degradation, lack of job opportunities and resources, and other factors that could deteriorate the

situation with all systemic complexities existed almost in all cities around the world. This challenge is likely to continue given the great proportion of world population living in urban areas is projected to rise. Academics and policy makers suggest that the solution for society's need must come from the society itself – as a local response – to build social capital and strengthening local organization. Indonesia, as well as Padang, is preparing to face a demographic bonus of millennials. Thus, the millennial generation should be ready and prepared to face it. Otherwise, it could be a demographic disaster.

CONCLUSION

Sense of place brings positive and significant influences on social capital of the millennial generation in a semi-urban city. Favorite spots with compelling physical identity drives people to linger longer and interact with one another so as to form social capital. The government is expected to create physical or infrastructure development policies that could reinforce the emergence of sense of place of millennial generation in Padang. In this way, it creates more diverse chances to build social capital so that impelling a sustainable society development, helping to overcome urban problems, and transforming semi-urban cities to urban cities.

This research can have some implications for future studies. The research results could be an alternative theory for other studies and add to the scientific literature in social science. Furthermore, it can also carry an implication for millennial generation behavior in a semi-urban city. Millennials become aware of the importance of maintaining emotional relation with people around them like family, neighbors, friends, and colleagues, as well as the environment. The diversity and great number of millennials should be a concern for government because they carry a power to develop a city and a nation.

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