

Public space as a tourism object: the existence of Pakui Sayang Park in Makassar City

Ruang Publik Sebagai Objek Wisata: Keberadaan Taman Pakui Sayang di Kota Makassar

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ABSTRACT

The existence of city parks today does not only serve as an icon of adding beauty, but has become a public space and a tourist attraction that is busy with people. Visitors who take advantage of city parks are not only local residents, but also residents from other regions or parties who happen to be visiting a city for certain interests. This article examines one of the public spaces that has become a tourist attraction in Makassar City, namely Taman Pakui Sayang. This park is always crowded with visitors, especially in the afternoon, on Sundays and other holidays. In terms of public space criteria, Pakui Sayang Park fulfills these requirements, namely providing good quality service to users, high levels of visitor activity, giving a variety of meanings and significance to the audience, and being very accessible because it is located on the side of the main road in the city center. The results of the study show that Pakui Sayang Park as a public space functions as: sports facilities, such as gymnastics, jogging tracks, tennis, and others; entertainment facilities, such as live music and various events; a place to hang out supported by seats under shady trees; and culinary tours that provide various special menus.

Keywords: Public space; tourism object; Pakui Sayang Park; Makassar City

ABSTRAK

Eksistensi taman kota sekarang ini tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai ikon penambah keindahan, akan tetapi telah menjelma menjadi ruang publik serta obyek wisata yang ramai dikunjungi orang. Para pengunjung yang memanfaatkan taman kota tidak hanya penduduk setempat, tetapi juga penduduk dari daerah lain atau pihak-pihak yang kebetulan sedang berkunjung di suatu kota untuk kepentingan tertentu. Artikel ini mengkaji ruang publik Taman Pakui Sayang sebagai obyek wisata di kota Makassar. Taman ini setiap hari selalu ramai dikunjungi terutama di sore hari, hari Minggu dan hari libur lainnya. Dari segi kriteria ruang publik, Taman Pakui Sayang memenuhi syarat tersebut yakni memberikan kualitas pelayanan yang baik kepada pengguna, tingginya tingkat aktivitas pengunjung, memberi ragam makna serta arti penting bagi para penikmatnya, serta sangat mudah di akses karena berada di sisi jalan utama pada pusat kota. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan Taman Pakui Sayang sebagai ruang publik berfungsi sebagai: sarana olahraga, seperti senam, *jogging track*, tennis, dan lainnya; sarana hiburan, seperti *live music* dan aneka event; tempat nongkrong yang didukung oleh tempat-tempat duduk di bawah pohon-pohon rindang; dan wisata kuliner yang menyediakan aneka menu khas.

Kata kunci: Ruang publik; Taman Pakui Sayang; obyek wisata; Kota Makassar

1. INTRODUCTION

City life (Rybczynski, 2014), which is characterized by people with a high level of activity and busy daily activities, certainly requires various entertainment facilities that provide a recreational atmosphere. One of the strategic spaces to unwind after workday or weekday is public spaces. The reason, among other things, is that workers or business activists who are active indoors need a new atmosphere in open spaces which provides a comfortable atmosphere for the tired thinking heart and brain. To meet the needs of urban society (Miller & Nicholls, 2013) for public space as a place for relaxation and recreation, the government should ideally provide these supporting facilities. What does this public space mean, what is the reference for its creation and management process? This question is interesting as a pre-discourse in analyzing the function of urban parks as public spaces and tourist facilities.

Conceptually, public space has various meanings and ambiguous meanings, especially when it comes to epistemological assumptions about their nature (Zhang & He, 2020). In an article titled "The Concept of Public Space and Its Democratic Manifestations", which is the result of various literature studies on the term public space according to each discipline, this is explained (Hanzl, 2013). Nonetheless, the public space that is now imagined as a cliché, is explained not solely as an intellectual agenda of geography, urban studies, cultural studies, or other scientific disciplines. However, it is actually a public discourse agenda related to the nature of citizenship (A. Ahmadin et al., 2023). Thus, the process of creating and managing public space refers to three important aspects, namely the nature, role, and significance of space for urban development. In addition, public space is also envisioned as a means of overcoming tensions and creating urbanism to encourage social integration and tolerance (Velthuis et al., 2021).

Based on the needs of urban communities for public space as a means of entertainment and recreation, the government in various cities in Indonesia in recent years has been actively developing public spaces in the form of parks and providing support for the establishment of cafes. One of the cities taking part in the process of developing public spaces in the form of parks is Makassar, as the capital of South Sulawesi Province. In its development, this city with a population of 1,508 million (Karim et al., 2022) has produced various public spaces with various shapes and varied atmospheres.

Pakui Park, which is used as the unit of analysis in this study, is only one of the many urban parks or public spaces in Makassar City. The choice of this location as the object of study was motivated by two main reasons: first, Pakui Park is a manifestation of the creativity of the government which has succeeded in converting an abandoned land into a beautiful garden and offering a cool atmosphere with trees growing in that place. Second, the city park which is located on the west side of Jalan A.P. Pettarani is always crowded with visitors every day, especially when there are certain events.

There are several focuses of study in this paper, namely: the profile of Pakui Sayang Park including the background of its development and the public facilities provided, the functions of public space as a means of entertainment and tourism, as well as the forms of comfort provided so as to make it a coveted space for visitors.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a descriptive spatial sociology study using qualitative data. The types and sources of research data are the opinion data of visitors as users of this public space, documents, and written sources that can be obtained by various related parties. The data collection techniques were carried out through participatory observation, interviews, and documentation (M. Ahmadin, 2022). Observations were made by mingling with visitors and enjoying the atmosphere of Pakui Park while observing the behavior of visitors directly and the forms of activity that took place in this place (Wildemuth, 2016). What was observed were the forms and ways visitors used the various facilities in this public space.

The interview process was carried out with purposively selected parties, namely visitors who were active, such as: sitting relaxed, exercising, and other activities. The reason is because the data needed is their view of the comfortable atmosphere and the representativeness of this park area as a public space. The number of informants in the research was 10 people, five women and five men each. This is intended to compare ways of perceiving public space and its use. The documentation is done by studying a number of supporting documents regarding the development of this city park. The types of documents used in this research are those related to the development process of this park as well as documents from the provincial government regarding its public use.

Data analysis is carried out not separately from research activities, namely in conjunction with the process of implementing research activities at the data collection stage, that is, every time data is obtained, a series of analyzes are carried out at the same time, both in the form of data analysis, elaboration and comparison.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that Taman Pakui is a public space in the form of a city park located on A.P. Pettarani road. The interesting thing about the procurement of this public space is that it started with the governor of South Sulawesi's concern about the condition of the unkempt land in the Public Works Office area in Makassar City which was then arranged to create a pleasant place.

1. Result

Taman Pakui Sayang is a public facility in the center of Makassar city which is located in the area of the South Sulawesi Province (Arfanda et al., 2023) Public Works (or PU) Office, Jalan A.P. Pettarani. This 1 hectare park was inaugurated by the Governor of South Sulawesi, Dr. H. Syahrul Yasin Limpo, SH, M.Si, M.H., 3 February 2017. The construction of this park was carried out through the use of funds sourced from the 2016 Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (or APBD) of 4.6 billion (Adiaksa, 2018). Many people often ask what does PAKUI mean? It turns out that this name stands for Prayer, Attitude, Commitment, Tenacious, and Inspirational. This name is considered by many to be unique because it is a combination of English and Indonesian, but what is certain is that this name, which is an abbreviation, is very easy to remember.

As a representative public space, Taman Pakui offers a cool atmosphere with a comfortable air. The reason is because in this area grow tall, lush trees and in various corners of the garden also grow ornamental plants and various beautiful flowers. This cool atmosphere due to natural construction makes Pakui Park an alternative choice for many people to relax in this place with family, friends, co-workers, and maybe even a lover.

The idea for the development of the Pakui Sayang Park public space originated from the Governor of South Sulawesi, Syahrul Yasin Limpo's (Limpo, 2023) concern about the condition of the Public Works complex area. The area that currently looks beautiful was previously a pool of water and the condition of the garden was not maintained. It was on this basis that the idea emerged to build a city park whose planning process was completed in 2015, so that it became a public space that is favored by Makassar city residents and migrants from other areas.

Initially the park, which was built with a budget of 4.6 billion, had 2 tennis courts and one green open space that served as a football field, ceremonial field, as well as a place for Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha prayers. Other facilities are a 860 meter jogging track area (Adiaksa, 2018), a 600 square meter grandstand and there is also a playroom for children. At the bottom of the stands there are canteen and cafeteria facilities. The construction of this city park is also considered as a manifestation of the real work of the South Sulawesi Provincial Land and Housing Agency.

2. Discussion

Based on observations and research finding data, it shows that Pakui Sayang Park from the aspect of its function offers two things, namely as a public space and a tourist object. Ecologically, the Pakui Park public space, which is characterized by a green area (Száráz, 2014), is a place that can function as a neutralizer for the hot climate in Makassar City. A garden with a cool atmosphere is able to create a sense of fun for visitors and they can even use it for a long time either in the morning, afternoon or evening. Likewise, the beautiful environment with beautiful photo spots is one of the main attractions for visitors to use this park as a place to hang out.

A research result in Beijing, China is interesting as learning material related to the importance of parks as green areas in urban areas. The results of this study indicate that the park is cooler than the surrounding urban environment. It was explained that the difference in average air temperature between the park and the surrounding area ranged from 0.6-2.8 degrees Celsius for different times, with a maximum of 4.8 degrees Celsius at midnight. This shows that the existence of parks functions as a cooler for urban areas (Yan et al., 2018). From the aspect of its function as a cool and pleasant place, Taman Pakui meets the criteria of a public space as described by Carr, namely responsive, democratic and meaningful (Linde & Peters, 2020).

The attractiveness and significance of city parks as public spaces is also largely determined by creative ideas and innovation from the government. In relation to Taman Pakui, this public space has in fact been designed as artistically and creatively as possible through the provision of various supporting facilities. Therefore, visitors to Pakui Park are not only for the needs of sports activities, but also for many people who just want to take a walk and enjoy the cool atmosphere in this place. Don't forget that the available entertainment facilities and cafes are also the main attraction that complements the main functions of this public space. As an inspiration and comparison, the results of research in urban and regional studies (Krehl & Weck, 2020) explain the pattern of use of public open spaces such as Taman Pakui, which are always adjusted between a combination of tensions in people's behavior with innovative techniques and spatial visualization. The results of his research prove that the value of the methodology in the process of disclosing the relationship between design and use is always based on empirical evidence so that it can be useful for design practitioners in the future.

Pakui Park, which has a 860-meter jogging track area as well as football, tennis and other fields, makes this place representative for fulfilling the community's need for exercise. The reason is because many people prefer to do sports activities in open spaces. A research result revealed that one of the open spaces which is a strategic choice for the people of Makassar City to exercise is Taman Pakui (Arfanda et al. 2023). In addition, facilities in the form of a 600-square-meter grandstand and a playroom for children can meet the community's needs for holding various events and the ecological conditions of this public space are also classified as child-friendly, where there are needs for them in this place.

Pakui Sayang Park has several important functions, namely: (1) an ecological function that is characterized by a very large park area, shady trees that grow on the side of the path, and accessibility which is very easy for visitors to reach; (2) social functions, namely various social activities (interaction, relations, communication, socialization) that are created in this public space; (3) the aesthetic function, namely the architecture of Pakui Park which is designed as artistically as possible, a beautiful garden, maintained cleanliness, and is one of the icons of the city of Makassar.

4. CONCLUSION

Pakui Sayang Park, which is currently known as a public space in the form of a city park, was previously unkempt land within the office area of the Public Works Department (or PU). However, at the initiative of the governor of South Sulawesi province, Syahrul Yasin Limpo, it was then rearranged to create a representative public space for various community activities. As for the function of Pakui Park as a public space and tourist object, namely sports facilities

(gymnastics, jogging, football, tennis, and others); places to relax (sitting under the trees, hanging out in cafes), entertainment facilities (live music and various events). The visitors to Pakui Park are not only people in Makassar City, but also many of them come from other areas around this city. The comfortable atmosphere given by this city park makes it a public space that is always crowded with people.

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