Place Identity and its informant parameters in Architectural studies

Ali Akbar Heidari[1*] and Shima Mirzaii[2]

1- Ph.D. Candidate in Architectural Department, Iran University of Science and Technology, Tehran, Iran
2- Master Of Architecture, Asalooieh International Payamnoor university, Asalooieh, Iran

Corresponding author: Ali Akbar Heidari

ABSTRACT: Research in the field of place identity, has been always with difficulties, due to the absence of an integrated definition about the subject and also lack of an integrated description of motivational, sensual and social processes comprising people's definition of place and Identity. This research will survey on concept of place identity, place identification levels and effective parameters on expression of place identification, and will study the influence of skeletal and cognitive parameters of the users on shaping the place identity; and in the end will present a model for demonstrating the circumstance of these parameters' impacts. For this purpose in this article it has been attempted to contain various definitions in this field in order to make a comprehensive image from totality of the subject for the readers, and at last derive a comprehensive and integrated definition so it can accelerate the process of future researches in this field. In order to perceive this paper, the reader should be familiar with basic philosophical concepts such as objectivity and subjectivity. The questions which are attempted to be answered in this paper are those bunches of subjects which pay attention to the definition of identity of a place and effective parameters on this identity.
Research queries:
- What is place identity?
- What are identification parameters?
What are identification levels?

Keywords: identity, place, place identity theories, identity parameters, identification levels.

INTRODUCTION

Creating the sense of identity in one place in one person, or in another word giving identity to a place by a person, will result in a specific sensual connection to that place or seeing that place as a part of self by the person. This viewpoint or sense will result in a manner that the person does more consideration and self-control in his/her behavior in that space (place) with no need of watcher force or safe guards. This circumstance can be used in shaping behavior patterns in different environments; in a way that the act of controlling an environment can be done more easily and less costly.

Hence, the necessity of attention to the subject of identifiability of space or place and its effective parameters will have specific importance in designing different architectural environments and spaces. Therefore, the need of having a comprehensive definition of place identity for evaluating its informant parameters is quite feeling. In continuance, it will deal with definitions of identity and place separately and the extant definitions in the field of place identity will be surveyed and various levels of identity will be stated in brief. Afterwards it will attend to informant and effective parameters in this field and will survey the circumstance of their influences. At the end it will present an integrated definition which comprises of existence and joint concepts of other definitions.

This paper is the result of study on various written sources in the field of identity psychology, behavioral sciences, anthropological science, and definitions in psychology science zone, anthropology, philosophy, and architecture; which tried to adjust and divide their authors' thoughts in the field of discussion; and in the end will

present a comprehensive and universal definition about the subject. Hence it will place in class of scientific promotional and analytic researches.

Identity

Identity is one of the most important and fundamental issues of anthropology field which was remarked by many of scholars and intellectuals throughout history. Identity is a process not a findable stuff and because of its existence, it can't be made and is not conscious. Search for finding identity can make us more sensitive about the environment and ourselves and the society which we live in. Throughout history significant intellectuals in various fields, have discussed a lot and theorized various theories about identity issue that some of them are in opposition with each other; which is an evident for the extant complexity and ambiguity in identity topic. For this reason it is called that the concept of identity is one of easy and impossible subjects. It is easy because in the meaning it seems sensible and apparent for everyone and impossible because in the Eric Erikson words (Erikson, 1994) the more it is written about the subject, it becomes more obscurant and more difficult.

Literal meaning of identity

"Moein dictionary has defined the word of identity this kind: substance, verity of thing. Whatever it will cause to recognizing a person and cause to distinguish one from another. Two things which are the same in substance and principle however they are different in some cases. Verity of object or person which is consisting its/his/her inherent traits" Summarization from (Moein, 2005). Identity in Dehkhoda Dictionary consists of recognition, and this meaning is reputed among philosophers and theologians (Dehkhoda, 1955).In Amid Dictionary, identity means verity of object or person which consists of its/his/her substantial traits. Identity in literal means: individuality, substance, objectivity and existence; and associated to Hova (Amid, 1984).Identity doesn't shape in vacuity, inevitably must be one ego and one other; otherwise identification doesn't mean Mirmoghtadayi, quoting from (Kardan, 2004). Oxford dictionary defines identity as who or what sb/sth is (Oxford, 2008).

Place

Place find potential of being defined on base of human presence and in another word without human presence this phrase will not have any meaning. Each place discerns form other places by its specific characters.

Literally meaning of place

In Oxford dictionary of Geography, the word place is defined a specific point on earth that is an identifiable location for a position which human values has been shaped and grew in that context. Webster's English dictionary in addition to geographical concept, mention to the state of peoples' positioning in society in specific locations (social dimension of space). Madanipour knows the place as a part of space and containing burden of value and meaning, and Afshar Naderi picture that as the result of interaction of three components: human behavior, Moayer believes geography literatures about place are often unperceivable, obscure and confusing. A part of this problem emanate from fact that geographers are trying to find an exact specialized definition for words relevant to place. The words which are used simultaneously by public too (Moayer, 2000). Place means a location which we belong to; it only becomes significant with the presence of me as a human and also human can only be significant with the place and among these there is a linkage which is called identity. Rappaport define place as one of four defining elements of space, which in combination with definition, time and relevance, shape the ma-made environment. Schulz believes: "existence of spaces is from places not the spaces themselves".

1-   Definitions in the field of Identity and place through experts' perspectives

In various documents, identity and place have been surveyed from different aspects that everyone had paid attention to a specific aspect of this discussion according to proportionate of studied topic. In the continuance of this writing it has been attempted to present these definitions in a way to shape a totality about the subject of place identity by making logical connection.

When it is expressed the discussion of place and place identity, the importance of human as the fundamental component becomes obvious; cause without human existence, the place can't be defined anymore. In another word, it is the human that with his/her presence in an environment, beget the place. Discussion of identity is also particular to human and shapes according to his/her perception from environs phenomena.

Being human means living in a world full of important places. Being human means owning place and having cognition about this ownership. As Martin Heidegger says: "place is the deep and complex aspect of human's experience from the world "(Afroogh, 1998).

Identity which is the outcome of human perception about a phenomenon is a specification that results in distinguishing two different species from each other. Stuart Hall knows the identity as a developing process which

is identification and recognition element (Ghotbi, 2008). Identity is the component of distinguishing a person form other persons, object form other objects and group from other groups. Charles Jencks believes: "identity is the classification of objects and persons, and linking ego with something or someone else" (Tajik, 2005). Cullen about identity says: we don't know anyone without name; we can't find any language and any culture which hadn't distinguished between itself and another; a kind of self-cognition which is always counting some sort of building, without attention to the fact that how much it feel like a discovery." (Mahmodi Nejhad et al., 2009)

In discussion about place identity, it is important to attention to the point that place like any other phenomenon; follows a perception from human. These phenomena are components which shape an identity structure; because various perceptions of these phenomena is their differentiation.

Each space and place is as a source of identity and identifies the groups that locate in there (Rabbani, 2002). A space should have one identity and one structure for residents (Fijalkow, 2003). Lynch simply identifies the place identity as: being unique from other places. His base for this identification is having separate essence (lynch, 1993).

Everyone's perception from environment and phenomena causes to forming an identity of that phenomenon for the person, if this phenomenon is dwelling place of the person; this perception is also effective in construction of his/her individual identity.

According to Harold Prohansky's theory: "place identity is a part of human's individual sub construction and is the outcome of his/her general cognitions about the physical universe which he/she lives in (Proshansky, 1976). It can be said: a part of everyone's existential character which makes his/her personal identity; is a place that he/she knows his/her self with and introduce to others.

Extant differences in skeletal construction of environments and places will result in various perceptions to that place or environment and make a specific identity for it. Walter Boor believes: the identity is those small and great differences which lead to recognition one place and environment's legibility; and makes the attachment sense to environment (Ghotbi, 2008). Canon emphasizes on the importance of every environment with other environments. He defines identity as attention to individual character of every environment and restrain from uniformity and similarity of urban environments; by showing exclusive characters of every environment. From Rappaport's perspective; identity is a characteristic of environment which doesn't changes in different conditions; or a characteristic which let the livings to distinguish and cognition one element from another. Christopher Alexander knows the identity as skeletal incarnation of anonymous qualities in buildings, qualities which are fundaments of life and spirit of every human, city, building or intact nature, but can't be named (Alexander, 2002).

Norberg Schulz in addition declared: identification also consists of aperture and being open to environment character; which in the past was narrated as "spirit of place". This spirit of place follows by "sense of place" which Fritz Steele in the book "sense of place" mentions to some of physical features in perception and sensation, such as "dimension of place, degree of enclosure, contrast, scale, color, smell and visual diversity". He knows sense of place a total phenomenon with constructional values which becomes possible in context of perception and directing in space.

In relevance to identity of place and place identity there has been stated various perspectives:

For example Gordon Cullen in book "The Concise Townscape" is presenting objective prospect, or for Kevin Lynch in urban book "The image of the City" what is important is analyze of subjective prospect, and Karl Kropf in the article "Urban Morphology, urban landscape and fringe belts" poses urban morphology. In his point or view morphology is the element of identifying one city from another one and this element indicates city's individuality and identity (Karbalaei Noori, 2006) quoting from (Varesi and Hamidreza, 2010).

Heidegger in the book "Building, Dwelling, Thinking" knows the perception of identity via accommodation and in relevance with conception of objects, and according to this, has a phenomenological approach to existence and place for identification, as he knows conception of phenomena (especially place), having fundamental role in retrieval of humanity identity and originality.

Claire Cooper's research according to derivative concepts of Carl Yong scripts about identity and environment shows that people choose a house that features the individual ego of them to the most possible extent. A house has private and public parts. Facade of a house is the public image which has the ability to show to society. The inner space of house indicates the inner essence of person. Cooper believes the public image of house often expand to inner space, in a way that reduces individual specifications of space to minimum. Sometimes it seems all the inner space of house is designed for public presentation (Lang, 2011).

Identity of every phenomenon is made of two fundamental objective and subjective parts. In cognition of urban identity should be studied both objectivity sides of the city, means: urban structure and framework, its economic function, public spaces and etc., and also subjective elements such as: inhabitant social groups, their level of perception, social sense, expectancy and demands, citizenship status, homogeneous groups and so on. For this

reason in a specific place, the sense of spectators will be different. Nevertheless in encounter of different people with place, there are basic and important parts which emanate from joint biological base of perception and cognition, joint specific experiences of real world and joint cultural norms (Sabri and Masharzadeh Mehrabi, 2006). If we know the urban identity as subjective reflex and reappearance of harmony of urban system with continent, culture and history of city, accommodation of urban design with behavioral construction and social interactions of residents; any type of inconsistency between listed complementary couples results in missing or hampering urban identity.

Norberg Schulz knows the human identification in making a meaningful linkage with the world consists of "objects", which is dependent to physical shape of place; as he knows the dual aspects of habitancy: identification and specifying location. These twofold architectural aspects in building place, coincidence with architectural functions: "incarnation" and "acceptance", so each place incarnates some conceptions while it accepts some functions in order to making them possible.

Inactive manner of urban spaces in time of utilizing which results in ruining the place spirit, place identity and place definition, in a multi thousand years period, made us think that this way of timeless making, have been forgotten with what nonchalance and neglecting, a timeless way which according to Alexander Christopher's statement, bring discipline from us ourselves and if we let, it occurs by itself. Placeless in nowadays urban construction has fundamental role in nonidentity in social structures, as "Mohsen Habibi" says: this is the nonidentity of place which leads to peoples say Tehrani, and not Tajrishi or Jannatabadi, to the question: "where are you from?", it means that it is the nonidentity in urban places which make the sense of nonidentity in personal structure and even social configuration. In fact this is the place identity which includes definition and memory of place; and it is identification which makes the city memorable and significant, and makes places containing sense of place and spirit of place.

Unsuitable and unpractical cognition of place can create meaningless and nonidentity spaces in architecture and urban construction, as Norberg Schulz mentions to the point that vast tendencies and procedures which make architecture, all have one joint point which is being in demand of significance. (Schulz, 2003) quoting from (Mahmodi Nejhad, 2009).

Identity Classification

It's been seen in occasions that the topic of identity has been mistaken with other topics such as nostalgia, in this paper it's been attempted to present a touchable definition of identity by simplifying it. To the aim of presenting a comprehensive definition of identity of place category, there is needed to a classification in this field. With this classification, the totality of the topic will be more conceivable.

As the identity matter only specifies to human, the entire topic is posed from his point of view but with attention to independency of his peripheral environment. Human defines one objectivity for his/herself according to the perception which he/she has from environment's verities or phenomena. Although he/she has an image from the phenomenon which he/she faces according to his/her individual and collective experiments from past and present. Identity here means coincidence of aforesaid objectivity with its image and tension of this coincidence in future (Ghasemi Isfahani, 2011). Wagner believes: time and place, human and act, make an inseparable identity; so significance and act are the intertwined elements that must be considered in perception of identity of place (Ghasemi Isfahani, 2006).

Identity as a sensational or conscious, actual or imaginary, existent or fake matter; is dependent to humans answer to who and what they are individually and collectively. As two major axes in identity topic, with "other cognition" and "self cognition" there are evaluated various standards consist of scientific or nonscientific, impartial or biased, emotional and shallow or consciously and deep. Individual and social psychology, sociology, diplomacy and other anthropological sciences have claimed for its description and specification (Maghsoudi, 2001).

With noticing the geography's definition: interrelation of human and environment; it is clear that relation between human and place is based on a reciprocal interaction and this is the action that in future will result in creation of memory and forming of place identity. Identity of place is a part of personal identity and grows by direct experience of physical environment, so it is a reflection of social and cultural aspects of place. The linkage that human has to his/her birth, growing and living location; is the main part of personal and collective identity. From viewpoint of Gabriel Marcel "person is not separate from his/her place, he/she is the place".

Proshansky believes: identity of place is subset of self identity. Person not only record environment in his/her mind but also extends his/her emotional and ideas about it, and communicate with his/her environment in the same way that his/her identity finds important. Therefore the place can be divided into two different aspects: inner and outer dimensions of place perception. Inner dimensions consist of: perception of place identity via belonging to group or specific community (social cognition dimension of place), and perception of place identity via similarity to

sb's self values (place as a reflection of self character). Outer dimension appears through distinction with other places (characteristic dimension of place, state of opposition with context).

Rappaport offers an intelligent solution in the field of identity and express public and personal identity; and believes that two types of identification must be distinguished from each other (Von Meiss, 2005).

Private identity: stabilizing identity for self and his/her kin and only experts can distinguish these aspects.

Public identity: aspects of this identification should be vivid, repetitious and recognized.

Having personal identity means out-group difference. Each identity has a boundary which separates it from out of itself and nonego. While the public identity means having intragroup similarity. So having identity needs to have simultaneously two qualities: difference and similarity of features; these features should be in a way that the body of city be in evolution and mutation while having continuity, and finally result in genesis of totality (Mir Moghtadaei, 2004).

In the upper definition, it has been mentioned meanwhile three scales of identity evaluation: distinction from others and similarity with ego, continuity and mutation and unity in multiplicity; which among them, the standard of distinction from others and similarity with ego is the fundamental principle and two other standards are its subgroups. And also between these two standards, the feature of continuity and mutation are more expressed about the architecture of building, consideration to this feature unify the city which is the result of multiplicity of its different elements and so the feature of unity in multiplicity becomes true. In his opinion environment identity expressed in two ways: 1) stable identity: which shows the belonging of a person to a group or a collection and is consist of inner solidarity. This identity is often expressed optionally and through specific treatment with physical environment and can be used as identification tool in person inside group and society. (This is pursuant to intra-dimensions in Proshansky's classification). Inspirational identity: distinguishes from other persons or stranger groups by environmental components and elements of group and specific society. This kind of environmental identity expresses a form of boundary between us and them. The second kind of identifying elements unlike the first kind operate the difference between groups and various societies by issuance of distinct signs (Daneshpour, 2000). (It is pursuant to outer dimension of Proshansky's classification).

According to the principle that identity of each phenomenon requires human perception of that phenomenon, and also identity of place is influenced by human perception in addition to, skeletal specifications of place; Each person's experiences and assumptions is also effective to his/her perception of place. Edward Ralph in the book "place and placeless", defines three main dimensions for "place Identity". He states: "skeletal specifications, activities and definition make the main components of place identity. This classification is clearly perceivable. For example, the city can be seen like a collection of buildings and its inner skeletal elements, as it is seen by aerial image. A spectator who has objective attendance in this city can see the activities in skeletal field. But a person who experiences these buildings and activities, see more than that, which are perceived: ugly- nice, efficient-useless, house, factory, pleasurable, strange, familiar and in general significant." (Ralf, 1976).

The influence of skeletal and skeletal design in making one place's identity is not direct but also it is as a perceivable element that affects them in result of accordance of this objectivity with subjective images of users and also creating interactions and state of function in user's activities. (Falahat, 2005).
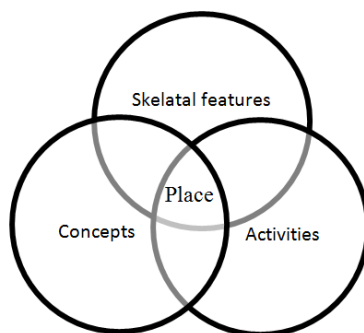

Figure 1. place and its components; from Canter's point of view (Canter, 1971, quoting from Falahat, Mohammad Sadegh, 2005)

Ralph defines identity of place in having separate addresses. Without explaining how this individuality is recognizable. Because for him such changes are personal and formal or conceptual words that can't be understood easily. However it shouldn't be assumed that identity of place is located in these three components; but it is the human interaction with these three components that makes the sense of place (Ralph, 1976). Also in John Panter's

model with the name "sense of place model", urban environment is as a place consists of three intertwined dimensions: skeleton, activity and imagination (Golkar, 2001). These three elements are the raw materials of place identity and the dialectic between them is structural relevancies of this identity (Afroogh, 1998).

According to Fritz Steele statement: the relevance of human and place is interactional, it means that: people give positive and negative things to the environment and then get them back from it. The image of place is not only skeletal but also is spiritual or interactional and sense of place as an experience generates from composition of place- behavior and what the human gives to it, in other words some of the things that human create in a place, doesn't engender independent from him (Steele, 1981) quoting from (Falahat, 2005).

Montgomery says: "the point that why a place is successful and how a success can be created is very difficult. While the definitions of place, have root in skeletal features and its dependent activities, but it doesn't make the skeletal features of place; but it is human aims and experiences that make the place features. So what the environment presents, is the function that is shaped by our valuable act (Montgomery, 1988).

In completion of Ralph's and Montgomery's work, Canter defines place consists of activities, skeletal features and Significances of environment. Often in place definitions the importance of skeletal features is exaggerated, while the activities and significances often have more important effect in creating the sense of place.

In Ralph opinion however scientific recognition of different places is necessary for human, but this recognition is rather artificial and is dependent of distinct functions which are places combined of human and environmental elements, or cultural appearances and natural displays, each place has its own discipline and landscape which distinguishes it form other places. It means that each place has its own essence. Place is not only a specific situation but also it is consist of location or content which it has been positioned in (Afroogh, 1998). Each space has exclusive features that distinguish it from other spaces, (Olivier Dollfus, 1995).

Every space which doesn't have any harmony between its functions and human needs is a nonidentity space. Answering to different social and economical needs; requires creation of spaces in order to answer human needs (Yari, 2006). So another element which has fundamental role in city identification is attendance to human needs. Any location that can't obviate minimum primary human needs doesn't form any identity for its residents. However needs are almost similar but place and spatial differences and diversities, causes these needs to appear with different shapes, such as: residence types and settlements' textures in different weather conditions.

Humans do some effects on environment and then they get some results back from it, this represent a relationship between human and place. Environment make identification from two aspects: one is perceptional-cognitive aspect which comes back to the memory topic, and the second is skeletal aspect which necessitates sense of attachment to a particular location, so places make different senses in different people and role of peoples' character and experiences is also effective in this perception. (Menaam, 2007). "Low and (Altaman, 1992) define place identity as a unique structure: "a unique concept … not combination of parts, components, dimensions or separated or independent elements".

(Proshansk, 1978) defined it as a complex and multidimensional construct comprising "those dimensions of the self that define the individual's personal identity in relation to the physical environment by means of a complex pattern of conscious and unconscious ideas, beliefs, preferences, feelings, values, goals.behavioral tendencies and skills"

A city as a complex of combination of natural and social elements and known environments to human, where inhabitant population is concentrated, has a specific identity (Shieha, 2006). The identity distinguishes the city from other cities and gives meaning to its inhabitant population. This particular character and identity, defines and describes by different components. These components which somehow form the natural structure of city vary from one city to another city. Through acceptance the fact that human is influenced by his manmade phenomena (external environment), cities with their identity variety, influence variously on citizens' communal life (Kord Daronkolaee and Askard Raberi, 2006).

Table 1. Dimensions of place identity.

Dimensions of place identity	
Canter, In completion of Ralph's and Montgomery's work	Skeletal features
	Activities
	Significances of environment
Jon Panter	Skeleton
	Activities
	Imaginations
Montgomery	Skeletal features
	Activities
	Human aims and experiences
Although the third instances in three viewpoints, (Significances of environment, Imaginations, Human aims and experiences) are somehow different from each other, but in totality they comprise of a unique topic, which is the concept that shapes in the mind of person from the place	

Dimensions of place identity

Identity that is equivalent to sense of attachment, self-esteem and self‑actualization in Maslow's Model, is creation of cognition for person and determining his role in society.

Place identity forms in four main levels for people: self-extension (place experiences as a part of self), environmental fit (mental sense of being suitable in environment or being a part of physical environment), self-congruity (reflecting the idea that place is somehow similar, or equivalent, or compatible with person) and emotional attachment; and what these four imaginations have in joint with each other is that each of them is related to a sensation; and so it can be said person has identification with a particular place. In a more precise state: a person can be related to these as dimensions of "place identity".

Components of definition of place identity

In viewpoint of theory there are two extensive groups of components for determination of people's identification from places:

Personal motivations and needs

Identity process theory of (Breakwell, 1988), proposes that identity processes are guided by four principles: self esteem, continuity, distinctiveness and efficacy. According to this theory, these "identity principles" have one motivational or need-like specification: when the sense of self esteem, continuity, distinctiveness or efficacy is not accessible, this makes a "threat" to identity.

(Vignoles et al., 2006) has extended the identity process theory with this suggestion that motivations for self esteem, continuity, distinctiveness, efficacy, attachments and significance are required to construct individual, relational and communal identities.

Some other motivations for defining place identity:
Quality of relationship with neighbors (Bonaiuto et al., 1999)

Places which produce control and security (Deci et al., 2000 and Maslow, 1970).
Places which produce peoples' aesthetical needs (Maslow, 1996), (Averill and Stanat More, 1998).

Symbolical and social links of places

Six ways of Low (1992) in linkage of persons and communities with places in a social or symbolic way: These are genealogical links (e.g., links to family, places of origin); loss or destruction of community (e.g., places that were lost due to migration or catastrophes); economic linkage (e.g., owning property, workspaces); cosmological links through religious, spiritual or mythological relationship (e.g., sacred spaces like Machu Picchu, religious temples, or Stonehenge); pilgrimage and celebratory cultural events (e.g., Mecca, or even stadiums or concert halls such as Earl's court or Wembley arena in London); and finally narrative linkage through storytelling and place naming (e.g., mediated narratives about New York city, Tolkien's Middle-Earth and so forth).

Table 2. Theories of identity process

Theories of identity process	
Maslow	Sense of attachment
	Self esteem
	Self-Actualization
Breakwell	Self esteem
	Continuity
	Distinctiveness
	Efficacy
Vignoles et al.	Self esteem
	Continuity
	Distinctiveness
	Efficacy
	Attachments
	Significance

CONCULSION

Identity of place or place identification means coincidence of to some extent conscious mental image of person from mentioned place, with the existence objectivity of place and space; which put person in an internal connection with environment and space.

According to different aspects, there are three main informant components of place identity: "skeletal features" of place which is independent from human, and "activities" and "concepts" which are dependent to person's perception. In some definitions it's been used terms such as "significances" or "imaginations" instead of "concepts". What is deduced from totality of discussion is that activities and concepts have more important effect in creation of place identity, but it doesn't mean that these two components can make a dissonant structure identifiable. In this case, place is consist of location and content which it has been situated in.
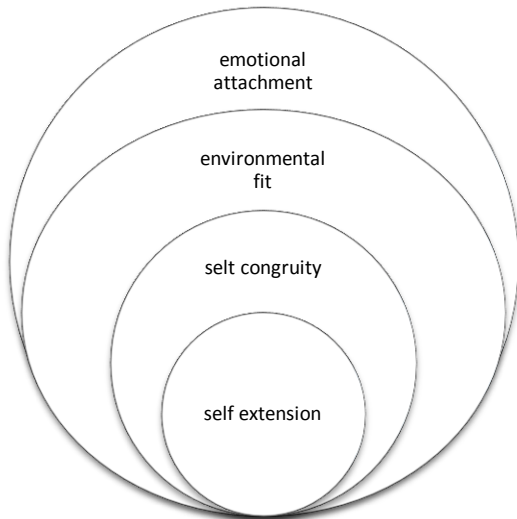
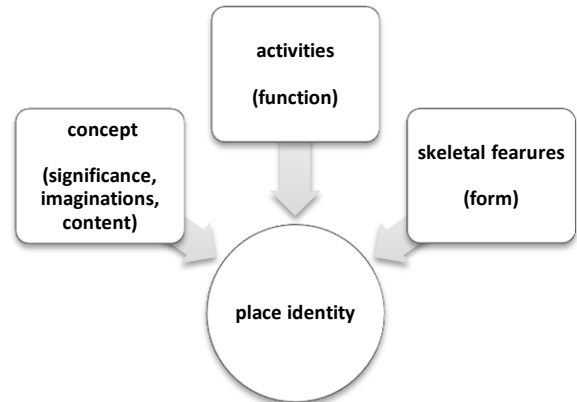Figure 3. different levels of place identity

Figure 2. informant components of place identity

When a place has conditions for getting identification, this identification forms in four levels in person; self-extension, environmental fit, self-congruity and emotional attachment. In each of these conditions, person feels identity about the place.

It is in one of these conditions which human finds the environment (place) valuable and tries for its conservation and preservation, and instead the place also provides the base for his emotional and sentimental growth by creating the sense of identity in person.

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