

# Evaluate Place Qualities of Waterfront and Users' Well-being: A Comparative Study of East Coast Park Precinct and Kwun Tong Promenade

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## Research Background

- Well-being of residents has long been a significant concern, and it should be the top priority for Hong Kong society
- Waterfronts have been recognized as valuable public assets that provide a leisure and recreational hub for local residents
- Various scholarly literature has demonstrated that waterfronts have a significant impact on users' well-being in both subjective and objective aspects
- It is necessary to assess the relationship between waterfronts' place qualities and users' well-being by evaluating a list of important place qualities

## Research Significance

- Fill the research gap of generating a comprehensive assessment framework of waterfront place qualities in the Hong Kong context
- Provide a reference for planners to enhance the design of future waterfronts and improve users' experience and well-being

## Research Objectives

To evaluate the place qualities of waterfronts and relationship with users' well-being in East Coast Park Precinct and Kwun Tong Promenade

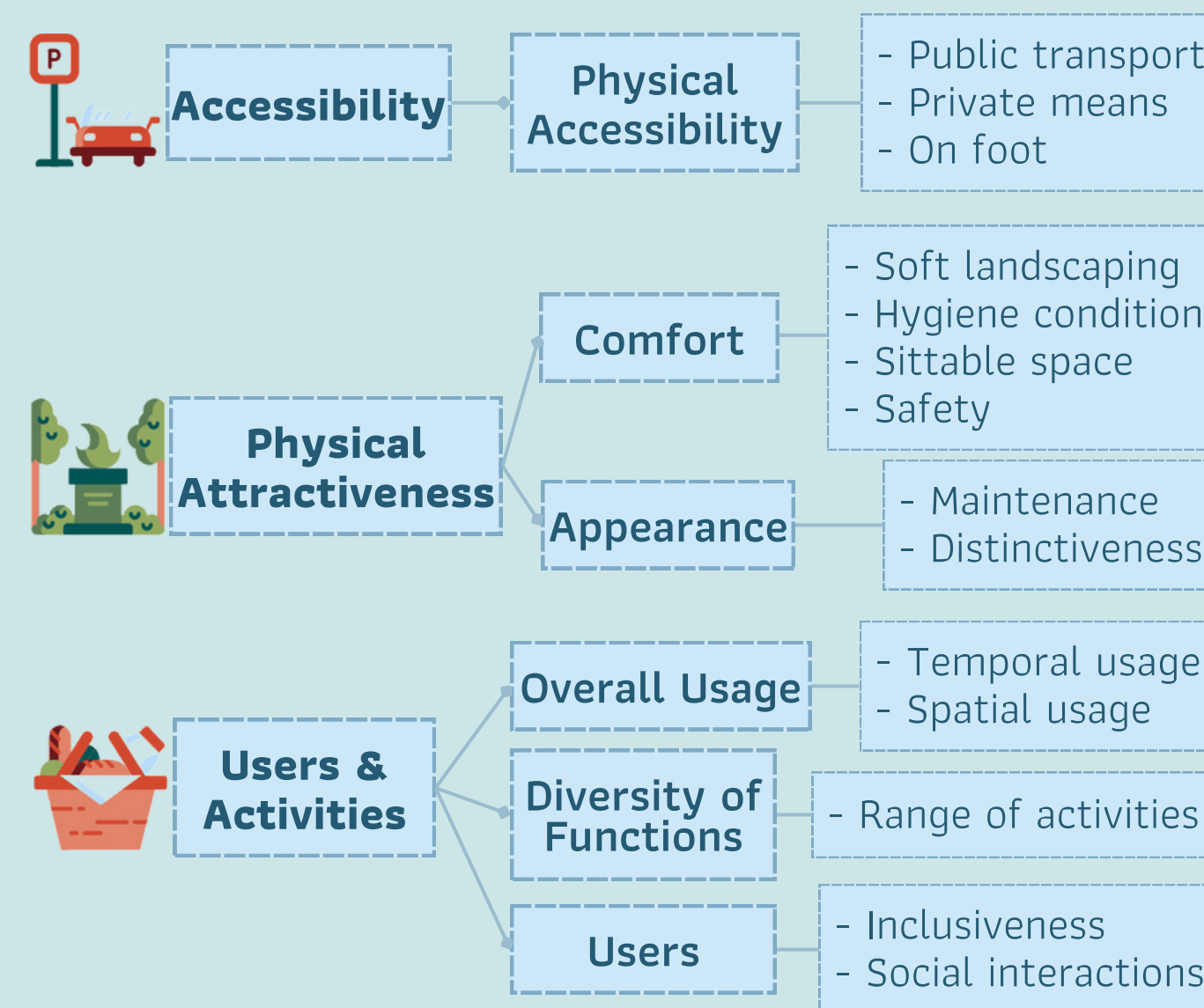
- To identify important place qualities of waterfront suitable for Hong Kong and formulate an assessment framework
- To evaluate and compare the place qualities of the two waterfronts under the formulated assessment framework
- To explore the levels of users' well-being of the two waterfronts
- To investigate the factors of place qualities of the two waterfronts affecting users' well-being
- To propose recommendations on future waterfront planning in Hong Kong

## Research Questions

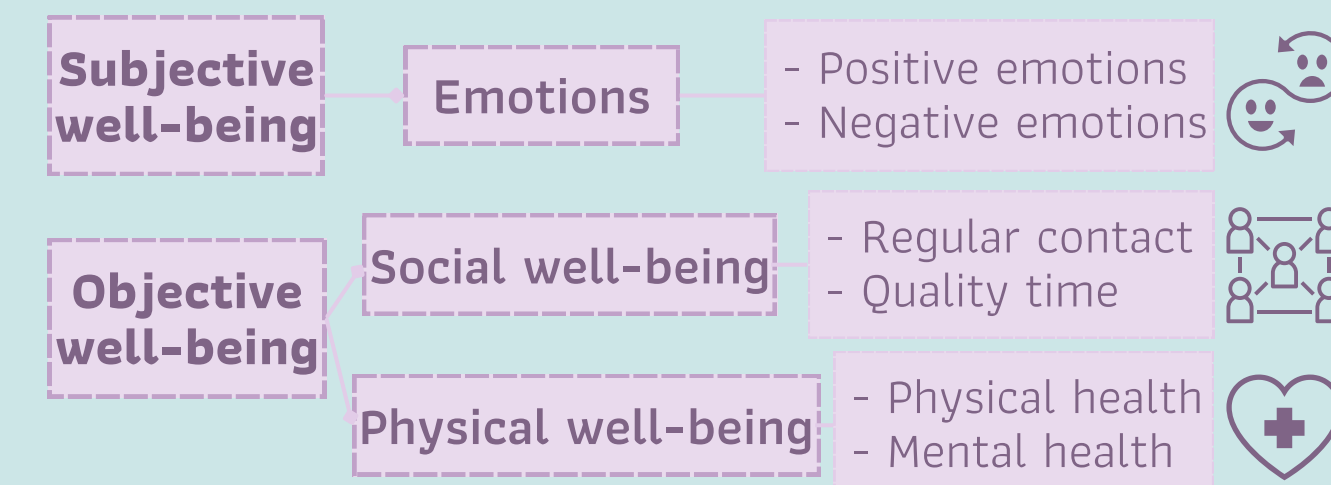
What is the relationship between place qualities of waterfronts and the users' well-being in East Coast Park Precinct and Kwun Tong Promenade?

- What are the important place qualities of the waterfronts in Hong Kong?
- Is there any locational difference among the place qualities of the two waterfronts?
- What are the levels of well-being among the users of the two waterfronts respectively?
- How do the place qualities of waterfronts affect and correlate with the users' well-being in the two waterfronts respectively?
- What place qualities should be considered in Hong Kong's future waterfront planning to enhance users' well-being?

## Assessment Framework of Waterfronts' Place Qualities



## Assessment Framework of Users' Well-being



## Methodology

### Questionnaire

259 responses  
[users of the 2 waterfronts] on site & social media

### Field Assessment

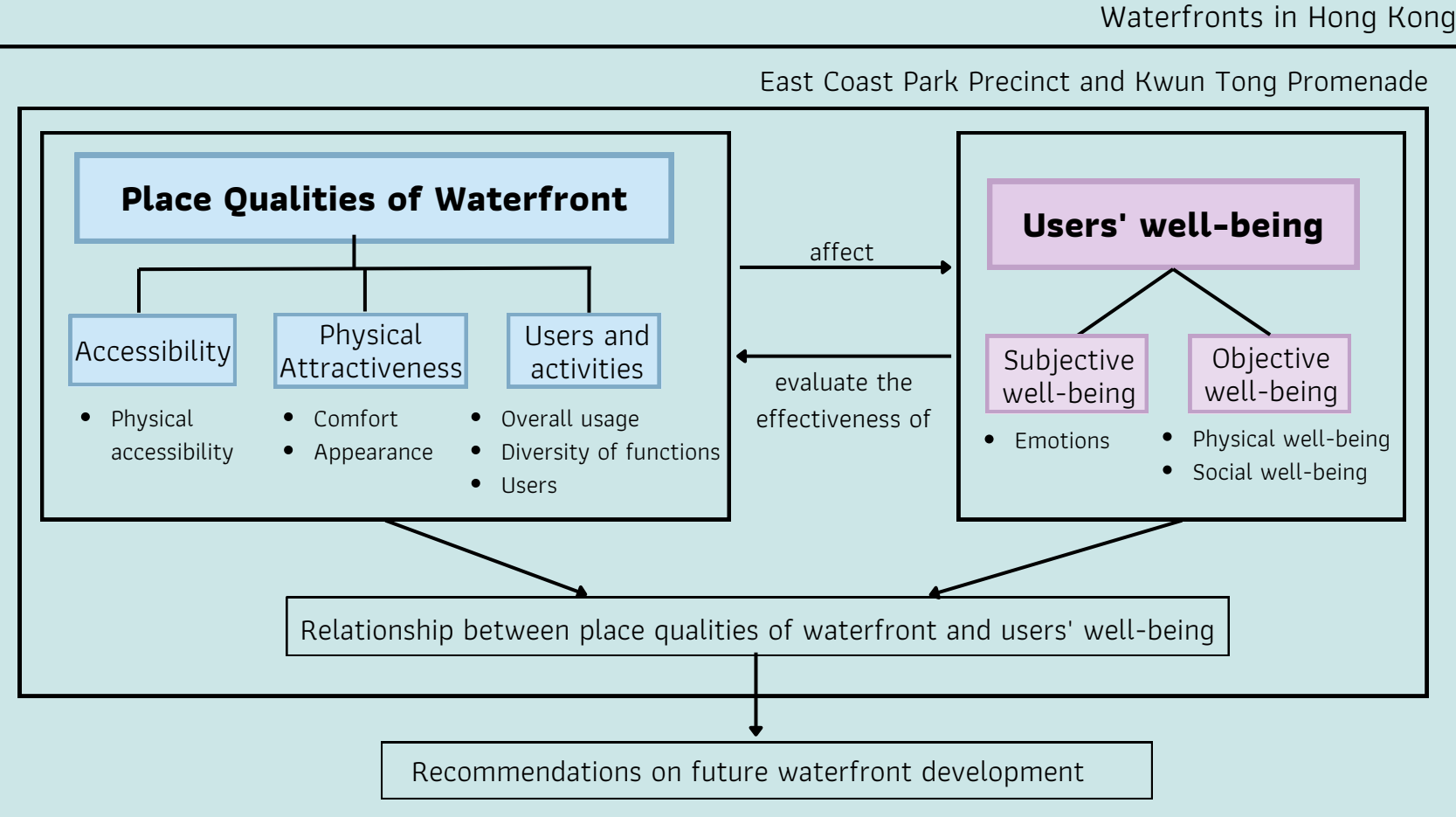
Field audit sheet, photo-taking

### Secondary data

Academic journals, gov reports, websites



## Conceptual Framework



## Major Findings

### Performance of Place Qualities

Questionnaire respondents' ratings:

5: strongly agree  
1: strongly disagree

	East Coast Park Precinct	Kwun Tong Promenade
Physical Accessibility	3.92	3.80
Information signage	3.32	3.29
Soft landscaping	2.53	3.24
Hygiene	3.75	3.48
Sittable spaces	3.58	3.76
Safety	3.75	3.58
Maintenance	3.79	3.26
Distinctiveness	3.90	3.44
Diversity of functions	3.86	3.84
Users	4.04	4.06

→ share similar results with field assessment

### Users' well-being

5: strongly agree  
1: strongly disagree

Relatively high in all 3 aspects

	East Coast Park Precinct	Kwun Tong Promenade
Subjective well-being	3.85	3.93
Social well-being	3.55	3.55
Physical well-being	3.82	3.80

Two attributes with lowest well-being levels:  
 x broaden social circle [meet new friends]  
 x encourage users to do more sports activities

## 2 Significant Correlations with Users' Well-being

### 1 Users & Activities

Explanations of the correlation:

#### 1. Gathering places for friends & family

- stimulate users' positive emotions
- develop close & intimate relationships
- receive social support & release stress levels



#### 2. Place for walking pets and increased social interactions with strangers

- motivate pet owners to do more physical activity
- meet new friends with interest in pets
- facilitate casual conversation



#### 3. Place for a wide range of activities to meet the diverse needs of users

- improve physical & mental health
- build a sense of achievement
- expand social network with others having common interest



### 2 Distinctiveness

[Aesthetically well-designed waterfront]

Explanations of the correlation:

#### 1. Landmarks representing local history and public design competitions

- foster users' sense of place
- preserve users' cultural identity
- positive effects on emotions, mental health



#### 2. Aesthetic waterfronts with natural environment

- establish restorative environment
- speed up stress recovery and improve mental health



#### 3. Increased inclusiveness of waterfronts & social interactions

- attract more visitors from other districts & tourists
- foster social connections with other users



## Recommendations

### Enhancing 'Users & Activities'

#### Create pet-friendly waterfronts

- Provide pet-related facilities: e.g. off-leash zones & bird perch
- Organize pet events & carnivals: e.g. workshops, market



#### Create culturally vibrant waterfronts

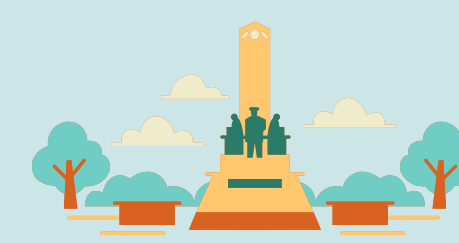
- Offer venues: e.g. stage, amphitheatres
- Organize cultural events: e.g. performances, exhibitions, students' work showcase



### Enhancing 'Distinctiveness'

#### More landmarks representing local history

- Place more landmarks, artifacts, public arts
- Representing the local history / cultural experiences
- Build collective memory



#### More public involvement in planning and design

- Public engagement
- Involve public needs in waterfront planning
- Organize public design competition



### Spearman Correlation Analysis

Moderate correlation [0.4-0.6] could be found among the following attributes:

	East Coast Park Precinct & Subjective well-being	
Perceived safety	0.443	
Users & activities	0.550, 0.440	
Distinctiveness	0.590, 0.564, 0.565	
	Kwun Tong Promenade & Physical well-being	
Location	0.521	
Amount of plants	0.410	
Perceived safety	0.423	
Distinctiveness	0.511, 0.467	
Users & activities	0.561, 0.440, 0.423	

- Users & Activities
- Distinctiveness



All 3 aspects of well-being [subjective, social, physical]