

# URBAN COMMUNITY RESPONSES TO VISUAL APPROPRIATE THEMATIC DESIGN, SUPER HERO PARK BANDUNG

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Dian Duhita\*, Eka Viridianti

Department of Architecture, Faculty of civil and planning engineering  
National Institute of Technology, Bandung, Indonesia

**Abstract.** Park is one of city public area that is allocated as a communal place for city community. On another perspective, park is an architectural media that is designed with an aesthetic element. Since a few years ago, Bandung makes improvements in various sectors, especially in the public space. Through the slogan 'Creative City', Bandung City Government revived community's part of the citizens by providing place for activities, creation and production. Thematic Parks became one of the alternative approaches responsive design as part of creative cities development. The purpose of research is to analyze the response of communities to design a thematic park, with the case of Super Hero Park. The study was conducted with a qualitative approach through participation observation method. The scope of the research included visual appropriate and city community response. This research found that the visual appropriate is in accordance with the theme of the park. Furthermore, the community was able to respond well, particularly on the identity of Super Hero Park with its visual appropriate design.

**Keywords:** Thematic Design; Community response; Super Hero Park; Visual Appropriate

**[Judul: Respon Komunitas Kota Terhadap Desain Tematik Taman Super Hero Bandung]** Taman merupakan suatu area publik kota yang berfungsi sebagai ruang komunal komunitas kota. Dari sudut pandang lain, taman merupakan rancangan arsitektur yang didisain dengan elemen/fitur estetika sehingga memiliki daya tarik. Kota Bandung, sejak beberapa tahun ini sedang melakukan pembenahan, khususnya pada taman sebagai ruang publik melalui tematik desain. Melalui slogan kota kreatif Pemerintah Kota Bandung menghidupkan komunitas-komunitas bagian dari warga kota dengan memberikan tempat untuk berkegiatan. Taman tematik menjadi salah satu alternatif pendekatan disain responsif sebagai bagian pengembangan kota kreatif. Obyek studi penelitian adalah Taman Super Hero yang mengangkat tema komunitas anak. Tujuan penelitian adalah untuk menganalisis desain visual yang tepat dan menganalisis respon komunitas terhadap rancangan tematik taman. Penelitian dilakukan dengan pendekatan kualitatif melalui metoda observasi-partisipasi dan analisis deskriptif. Lingkup penelitian meliputi rancangan visual dan respon komunitas kota. Simpulan didapatkan Taman Super Hero memiliki elemen visual yang sesuai dengan identitas taman dan direspon dengan baik oleh komunitas kota. Taman ini telah didisain dengan mempertimbangkan kriteria dari desain kota kreatif.

Kata Kunci: Rancangan Tematik, Respon, Komunitas Kota, Taman Super Hero, Visual Appropriate

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Urban design, providing a benefit value in increasing creativity. Parks can provide benefits for the city community welfare, balancing the microclimate, physical and mental regeneration as well as providing an alternative in recreation (Bulkova, 2014). As successful places support and facilitate activities, the design of urban spaces should be informed by an awareness of how people use them (Carmona, Tiesdell, Heath, & Oc, 2010). The essence of place theory in spatial design lies in understanding the cultural and human characteristics of physical space (Trancik, 1986). According to Shirvani (1985), activity support includes all functions and activities that strengthen the public space.

In period 2014, Bandung began renovating some park with the thematic design. Preceding, the park's

design wasn't very interesting; it caused the parks became a passive area. The local government wanted to create the park which can be stimulated the active activism, creativity and productivity from the urban community (RPJMD, 2014). Base on that aim, the thematic approach taken by the government to make a difference in design. As information, Bandung became part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) as a city of design (Miftah, 2015; Satari & Larasati, 2016). So it was a challenge for the government to maintain that title. By providing a new design, the parks in Bandung

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\*Email: [dian.duhita@gmail.com](mailto:dian.duhita@gmail.com)

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became a public space and successfully invited visitors. Currently visiting the park in Bandung is part of the lifestyle of the urban community.

So if Bandung promotes itself as a creative city. Then what is the creative city?. How we can planning the city to be creative?. The creative city being a place that, through its diverse and vibrant activities and opportunities is extremely live able and welcoming (Borchart et al., 2015). That's statement reaffirmed by Jacobs (1962) writes that cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when they created by everybody. There is three categories of creative city comprised People, Place, and Identity. People responses place and place responses the identity then conversely. They are shaping collaborative to make a better design to lead up creative cities.

We know that features/elements of physique can shape individual perception (people) and made quick responses about the identity of place. A feature of the place can be anything, but it's important to attract a community. In the term of community design, there is a criterion which can successfully create a design based community. One of the criteria is something that reflects the identity; it is a dominant feature (Rosa & Weiland, 2013). In landscape theory for the general visual element of the park for dominant features be classified by hard scape and soft scape. Hardscape is the man-made features include spaces, patios, benches, proportion and among others. While soft scape is a soft material known as plants, the pattern of plantations, flowers and among others. Usually, hardscape is hard surface elements such as rock, while soft scape is the living elements in landscape design which can be permanents such as trees and shrubs. It also can become temporary such as seasonal plants that appreciate for its character such as fruit, flowers which give color to the landscape designs (Hardscape versus soft scape, n,d,-online, in Shahli and Hussain (2015)). Hardscape element is the keys to a shape response community in thematic parks.

In theory, a place that plays an important role in the promotion of place attachment is activities and interaction between human-place and human-human interactions. In fact, these cases rooted in

individual interaction with a social and physical place in the form of meaning, behavioral and emotional and cognitive interactions result in place attachment, in turn, place activities results in place meaning and finally place meaning cause place attachment. (Hashemnezhad, Heidari, & Mohammad Hoseini, 2013), So the park must be promoting the activities for the multicultural community if it was designed to the urban community. Or at least supporting the specific activity for the particular community. Park activities created as a response to feature designed.

The fact, theme park design in Bandung has features dominant, which has specifically and characteristic which can define. It attracted visitors to come to the parks. Bandung has the aimed of the parks, but only one of three objectives can be filled. It was objected for active activism (Viridianti, 2015). We found the visitors as an urban community went to the parks for free recreation. In several parks, the dominant features weren't related to the theme which namely with a community. That's identified by our study, in the case at Lansing Park (elderly park). According to our study, that park isn't related to the theme. The feature and design don't reflect the elderly communities as identify by name. But it designed inclusively and focused on innovation (Viridianti & Duhita, 2016). To develop our study, we spread the object for study in other Bandung park which designed by thematic.

Super Hero park is one renovated park in Bandung. Namely with children community. Before the year of 2014, it's called Angrek park which only design by element soft cape and it didn't make an active place. After renovated, it giving big differences, especially affect to visitor number. Why can it happen? It should be something that can attract people to an urban community to this park. We think this park has visual appropriate that easily responses by urban communities. This study aimed to analyze visual appropriate in Super Hero park and the response of urban communities to park thematic design.

## 2. THE RESEARCH METHOD

The object of study is the Super Hero Park. Its an interesting place caused namely by the something children community imagination object. That park

can appear the curiosity a lot of visitors, particularly in a weekend. The study used a qualitative approach with methods, observer-participation. The scope of research is one of the criterion responsive designs that is visually appropriate. Data collected in 1 week (7 days) including five weekdays (Monday-Friday) and the weekends (Saturday-Sunday). The time of observations was at 11:00 to 14:00 on the weekdays and the weekends, the observation were twice a day: at 08:00 to 10:00 and 15:00 to 16.00 which is a peak time in the park. We targeted five sample visitors during each day. They were selected by purposive sampling, meaning that the participants were selected randomly by the researchers. The observation data were collected through field survey, aided documentation in identifying features as visual appropriate. To knowing respondent's assessment, we distribute question and the interviewer. The questionnaire collected information about perception, assessment, satisfaction visitors as respondent about park-related thematic. The collected data were analysed using the described method.

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Super Hero Park located in Jalan Anggrek, Bandung with area +1.700 m<sup>2</sup> by Map Bandung city (see in figure 2). The land use around the park is residential, commercial services and education. Super Hero park, before 2014 previously a regular park, only design by dominant elements soft scape

likely big tree and shrub form. After renovated at 2014 namely with Super Hero thematic. The park design has been changing, it's become more attractive, colorful performed by hard scape elements. From the observation, we identified, there are four zones as we can see in figure 1, namely: (a) Play zone, this area is equipped with special children to play equipment with colorful finishing. Kinds of games children like swings, seesaw, slide, and others. (B) Mini Sports Zone is an area with pavement overlays which are equipped with identical field lines for volley sport and badminton. (C) Super Hero Zone, this zone there is a superhero icon (sculpture) that becomes a point of the physical design of the park. (D) Green Zone, there are dominant by soft scape elements which spread to several zones. There's some sitting area, but it were grouping and placed in each area



Figure 1. Super Hero Park Zone



Figure 2. Location Super Hero Park. Source: Google map, 2016





*Visual Appropriate Design.* Elements of the park are a visual icon to represent the park's identity. The Super Hero park, with that title we can predict easily what elements must be designed on the area. As forementioned in the previous section that visual side of parks can be categorized as hard scape and soft scape. Base on observation, these parks hasn't uniquely soft shape elements. The characterize that elements like generally other parks design, there is visual appropriated including big old trees and colorful shrubs (see in figure 3)

Hard scape elements as see in figure 4 at Super Hero park designed by attractive and colorful features which are playing features that use by children like a seesaw; swings, slides, e.tc are finished by striking color. A park bench identified by variety design, but there one design which can invite a visual visitor because of simple and colorful design. Sculpture in

the Park are presented iconic superhero; that's the main point visual appropriated of these parks. With that sculpture, Super Hero parks invited an urban community particularly children community, and they will be known easily the related of title which represents theme and design park.

Regarding visual appropriate, this park namely children community has provided visual elements which related to the tittle, it's represented in hard scape elements by super hero sculpture. To inviting a visitor, the park finished by striking color and the largest area is play zone. It's designed by the object for children which can stimulate their activities. Whereas the soft scape, we identified, there was no visual appropriate which related to the theme. However, the color selection of this elements is more colorful than the other parks.



**Figure 3.** *SoftScape Element Visual Appropriate*



**Figure 4.** *Hardscape Element Visual Appropriate*

**Activities.** The observations were made during a week with same time intervals each day on weekdays, except on weekends, we did twice because it was usually a peak time for the park. It is important to investigate the visitors of the park including their activities for their response to the design of the park. According to our data, the visitors as an urban community of this park can be grouped according to their ages. As seen in Table 1, there four groups of the visitors: (1) children (0-12 yo), (2) teens (12-21 yo), (3) adults (21-40 yo), (4) elderly (40-60 yo).

That data are showing urban community response to Super Hero park design. It is successfully if we see in some visitors. According to table 1, a number of visitors quietly consistent, meaning this park very inviting the visitors. The peak time is in weekend, particularly in Sunday. We founded the active segmentation is children, it related to the tittle of the park. The adults are dominant too because they accompanied their children. We see in the park area there's a school which giving an increasing number of visitors in teen segmentation. The observation in this study was also focused on the most common activities and the most favorite zones. It means we investigated what activities were commonly done in the park, suitability function and which zone was the most visited by the park users. This data helped the researchers to identify the visitor's responses (see Table 2)

The result showed that common activities by the urban community as a visitor were dominated by playing, sitting and chatting. Base on field observation, playing activities has done by children segmentation. Otherwise sitting and chatting activities were doing by other segmentation.

**Urban Community Responses.** We investigating the urban communities by interviewing and survey, containing the dominant activities and relevance assessment. From these questions will answer responses urban community to the park personally. The terms of purpose and expectation of relevance design and theme from respondents can see in figure 5. The results of the assessment found that 67% of respondents answered the purpose activity is playing. It describes that the design is stimulated the visitors related to the theme. Expectation

respondent of relevance design and theme by 64%, it defined that design is provide something that related to the theme, according to our analysis there is design by a visual appropriate.

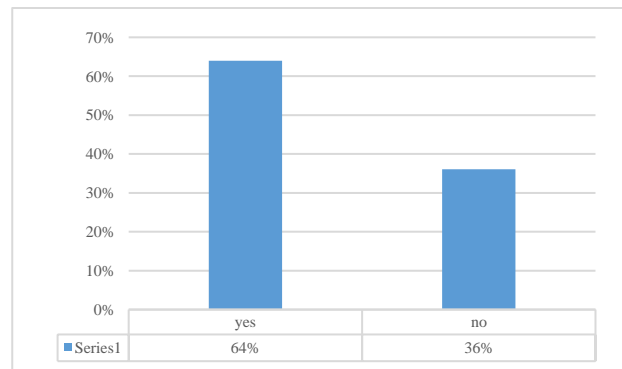
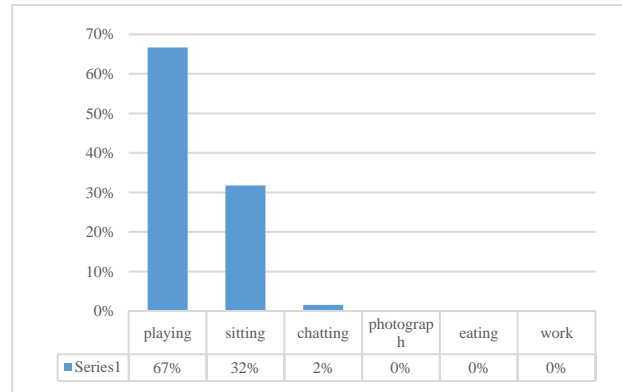


Figure 5. Purpose and Relevance Assesment

The observation containing the location of residence, destination in the park, the intensity and the respondent's positive and negative assessment of the park. This observation to knowing where the urban community comes from, visiting intensity and the assessment response.

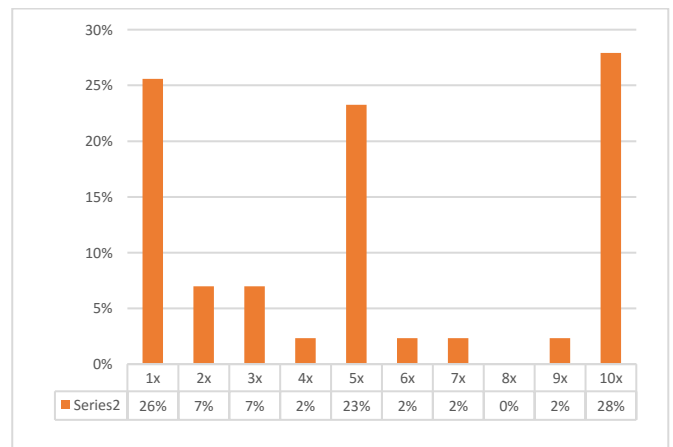


Figure 6. Intensity of Visit

**Table 1.**  
Number of Visitors

No	Date of Observation	Time (wib)	Number Visitor				Total visitor	Active Segmentation			
			0-12 yo	12-21 yo	21-40 yo	40-60 yo		0-12 yo	12-21 yo	21-40 yo	40-60 yo
1	July 26, 2016	12.35	8	7	15	5	35	x			
2	July 27, 2016	11.19	11	6	6	6	29	x			
3	July 28, 2016	13.45	8	4	6	3	21	x			
4	July 29, 2016	11.18	5	2	10	3	20	x			
5	July 30, 2016 (morning)	10.55	13	2	13	6	34	x			
6	July 30, 2016 (afternoon)	16.45	14	7	10	2	33	x			
7	July 31, 2016 (morning)	10.15	40	10	30	11	91	x			
8	July 31, 2016 (afternoon)	16.12	9	3	13	2	27	x			
9	August 1, 2016	16.05	4	12	8	0	24	x			

**Table 2.**  
Activities, Conformity Function, Favorite Area

No	Date of Observation	Time	Activities									Suitability function		Favorite Area	
			Playing	Music play	Sitting	Study	Chatting	Taking photo	the internet	Work	Exercise	picnic	yes		no
1	July 26, 2016	12.35	x		x		x						x		Playground
2	July 27, 2016	11.19	x		x								x		Playground
3	July 28, 2016	13.45	x		x		x					x	x		Playground
4	July 29, 2016	11.18	x		x		x								Playground
5	July 30, 2016 (morning)	10.55	x		x								x		Playground,
6	July 30, 2016 (afternoon)	16.45	x		x								x		Playground
7	July 31, 2016 (morning)	10.15	x		x								x		Playground
8	July 31, 2016 (afternoon)	16.12	x		x		x		x				x		Playground
9	August 1, 2016	16.05	x		x		x		x				x		Bench Park area

The observation location residence by interviewed are very diverse with a range of 2-5 km from the park, and there are no respondents who reside in the near area. It describes that park is a public space; it didn't belong to urban community although the area is small. The intensity of visit supports it is very high on average 2-3 times per respondent (see figure 6).

We identified personal assessment to know what the urban community feels about the parks by their positive and negative assessment. This observation will help the government as superintendent of the

park to define what the urban community needed in parks. For Super Hero parks, this collected as a simple feedback for park management.

In figure 7, the urban community responses that the positive assessment in the Super Hero park is feeling comfortable, it provides a comfortable because it might provide a soft scape element with title dense tree and green zones which spread in several areas. So they made the microclimate at that place. The second is about the design, we analysis this park containing visual appropriate related to the theme. It's represented by the



hardscape elements likely superhero sculpture, colorful bench, and playground object. Those elements might attract the visitor, specially invited the child's community. With both of the opinion, the Super Hero park has been well designed as an active park, public space, and thematic design. The negative assessment is dominated by a lack of maintaining. It was a feedback for the government to care more about maintenance. If a place wasn't well maintained, probably the number visitor will increase significantly.

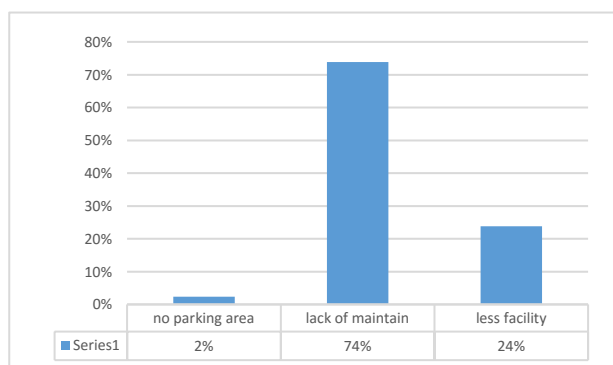
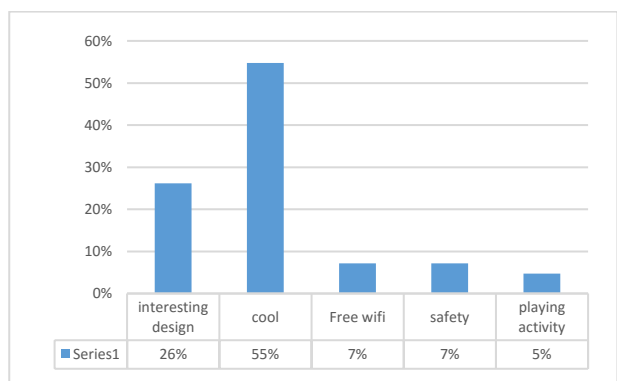


Figure 7. Positive and Negative Assessment

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The results of this study give us a conclusion that The Super Hero parks are one of the thematic park in Bandung which designed exclusively related to the theme. The features/elements of the design represent good visual appropriate. In a simple way the visitors can easily identify the theme of the park by seeing the features. The result of our observation showed that park stimulated the urban community as a visitor by related activities and it's dominated by children's activities which are playing. In the perspective visitors. From observation, the Super Hero parks have a good response of three

components of the creative city. People as an urban community responds well a placard which perform related identity of the theme of the place. The park represents the simple collaborative between the component of creativity. It's surprising that the visitors don't not come from neighbourhood and intensity to visit is more than twice, that fact might indicate that urban community needs parks. Within an optimistic think, it might be an inclination of our needed of the parks, which it is our third place. These interpretations, however, need further investigation

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