

# INVESTIGATING THE THEME, CULTURE-LIFE STYLE AND INNOVATION OF THE INTEGRATED DESIGN OF THE LANSIA PARK

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**Abstract:** Some parks in Bandung have changed their designs and identities based on their thematic names, including the Lansia park. This study aimed to analyze the integrated design based on theme, culture-life style and innovation of the Lansia park, as well as to investigate the public response to the new design of the park and their satisfaction level. The research approach used in this study was qualitative applying participatory observation. The scope of the research was focused on the integrated design of the park with an emphasis on dominant features, users and activities, and community assessment. The results showed that the park design is integrated with the existence of the retention lake that is a part of the innovation. The design is more directed towards potential exploration of retention lake by providing attractive features such as bridges, wooden cantilevers and stairs around the lake. The theme of park was named for elderly but the design not representing identity of that community. The other side, the Lansia park was designed inclusively, it promoting the old sundanese culture and create a new life-style. Which Regarding the public response, they stated that they had seen the connection between the theme and the design implementation of the park. Additionally, they also claimed to feel satisfied with the design of the Lansia park.

**Keywords:** *Design, Integration, Theme, Culture-Life style, Innovation*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Multi-cultural diversity is an asset of a city. However, to express the needs of the diversity requires a community. We know that the community is formed with a specific purpose. In a community there can be a variety of ages, cultures, and habits. As stated by Irvine (2013), “*community grows when people feel the sense of belonging within the group in a place with a distinctive sense of place, among friends who look out for them, stimulate them and come to review their rescue in time of need*”. Therefore, architectural design should contribute to revive facilitate for activity or interaction between communities.

Design criteria to develop a creative city consider the relationship between elements of people, identity and place (Borchard *et al*, 2015). The creative city gives impact to the increase of the index of productivity and urban community happiness. Public areas help develop creativity because they allow people to interact beyond their boundaries. Parks, as parts of public space, can stimulate establishment of a community, creativity and a liveable city.

Every community has a different quality, places and needs. By giving the name of theme parks based on a specific community will have a specificity effect in the design and arose positive public response. Rationalization of thematic park design should be responsive so that not only the park will provide a positive stimulus for the community of the city (especially the community promoted in theme), but also it will have an adaptive-sustainable design.

Bandung has proclaimed itself as a creative city, which has required parks to play roles as the creativity facilitators. Currently, there are 18 thematic parks built in 2015 according to Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah (RPJM) (Bandungjuara, 2016). Lansia park is one of the thematic parks which was renovated and named Lansia (elderly). Even though its name seems to correspond with the elderly community, its design is questionable whether it accommodates the needs of the elderly community specifically, or it is inclusive in order to accommodate the diversity of the city. The purposes of this research are: (1) Analyzing the integrated design of the Lansia

Park based on theme, culture-lifestyle and innovation. (2) Investigating the public response to the design as well as their satisfaction level.

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In a simple way, public space can be described as a communal place where people come together as friends, neighbors and citizens. The place shared together is a primary site for human interaction, upon which the communities, economy, democracy and society depend. A public space provides a joy of seeing as one can see and experience different types of activities going around the place. The activities within that space create an environment which communicates with the people. (Bhatia, 2015)

One of the communication modes in Architecture is the design features of a place. These features are the media of interaction between the identity (theme), the place (design), and the people (as seen in Figure 1). As stated by Marcos (2012), A planner/Architect uses a palette of different but uniquely different from the spatial organization of the elements, including the design of axial, hierarchy, the transition elements, the *dominant features* and a sense of enclosure to create a successful community. Therefore, when the mayor of Bandung decided a name of the park by using a certain community in Bandung, in this case Lansia (elderly), there should have been features that represent the community itself.

What does exactly constitute a creative city? The subject of creativity is complex, and indeed elicits a wide change of description. Some have argued that creativity is not all about something new, but can be in a form of a change of the old ones. One of the attributes of a creative city according to Borchard et al (2015), is the identity of the place (see Fig. 1). This identity can be formed by providing a theme of the place and is represented by the dominant features of the place.

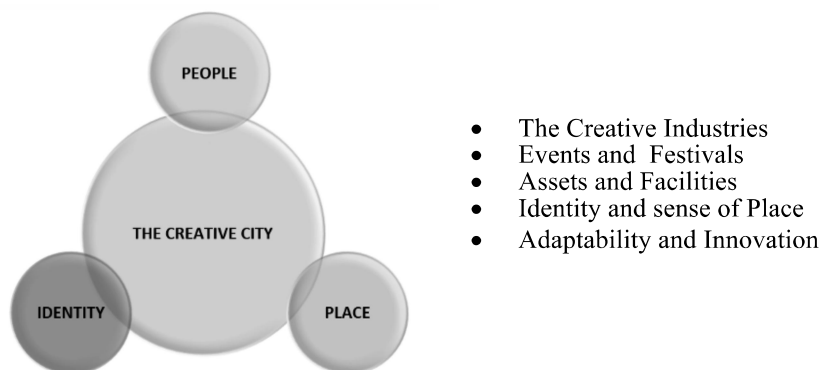


Figure 4 the category of creative city attributes

Source: Borchard, et al, 2015

In terms of architectural sense, when a place was designed specifically for a certain community, it meets specific needs for the community by providing the features. Since the Lansia park was named after the elderly, it is expected to have features that create an environment providing mutual care bond (as illustrated in Figure 2 below) (Irvine L, 2012/2013)

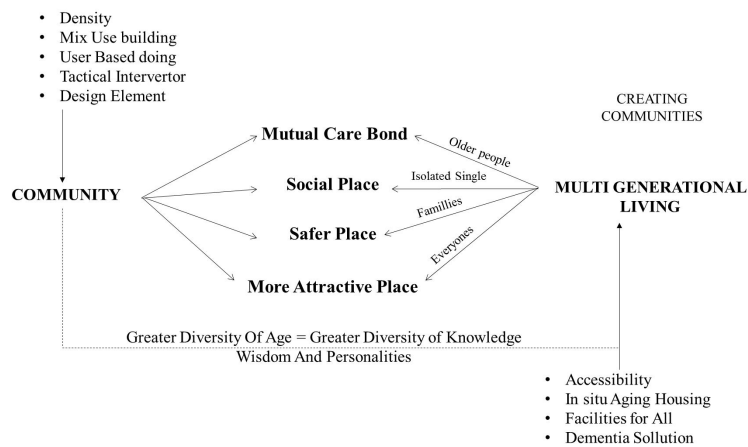


Figure 2 concept of creating successful multi-generational communities  
 Source: Irvine, L,2012/2013

In regard to the literature review in this topic, based on our knowledge there is no study found to date. Therefore, this study would be one amongst the first investigating the thematic parks, particularly in Bandung, based on their theme, life-style, and innovation.

### 3. THE RESEARCH METHOD

There were two teams of the researchers with different jobs. One team distributed the questionnaires as well as interviewed the participants and the other as documented the site. The object of study is the Lansia (Elderly) park. The scope of the study is a sense of place with an emphasis on dominant features, users and activities as well as the community assessment. In terms of subject assessment, this study comprises the visitor expectation regarding the theme and their satisfaction level. The respondents involved were the visitors of the Lansia park. They were selected by purposive sampling, meaning that the participants were selected randomly by the researchers. The period of observation was 1 week (7 days) including 5 weekdays (Monday-Friday) and the weekends (Saturday-Sunday). The time of observations were at 11:00 to 14:00 at the weekdays and at the weekends, the obseravtions were performed twice: at 08:00 to 10:00 and 15:00 to 16.00. Five sample vistors were targeted during each day. The observation data were collected through field survey, aided documentation and interviews. The collected data were analysed using descriptive qualitative research method.

### 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The object of study is an old park in Bandung city, formerly known as the Cisangkuy park. It was renovated in 2014, and was given a new identity by being named the Lansia park. The consideration of the given name was because the park was often used for the elderly to do physical exercise back in 1990s (Sebandung, 2014). The area of the park is estimated based on a map of Bandung is ± 15.000 m2. (see figure 3)

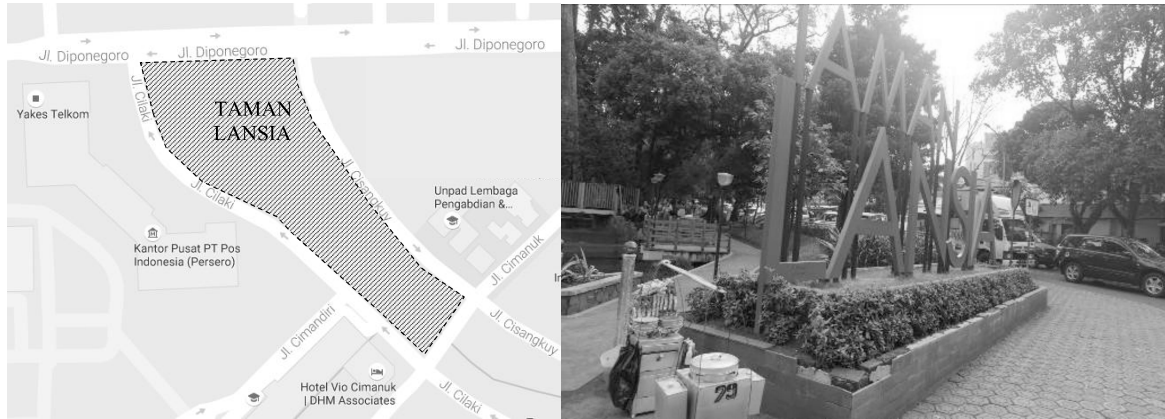


Figure 3 location of Lansia park  
Source: google map, 2016 and personal document

#### 4.1 Identity of Place

As aforementioned in the previous section, the identity of a place is represented by the dominant features. In this section, the dominant features of the Lansia park is described. There are 2 retention lakes. The first lake has an area of 1,397 square meters and the second one has an area of 689 square meters (Dispuapar, 2015). Based on our observations, we identified some common zones in the park. We classified the zones into these categories: (1) Retention lakes and river, (2) Sitting zone, (3) Open Plaza (4) Green zone (5) On progress library, (6) Supporting facilities (see fig.4). Some of these zones are spread into several areas. For example, the visitors can find the sitting zone in several spots in the park. While the library, which was not operate, and the support facilities such as the toilets and the pray rooms can only be found in a particular area.

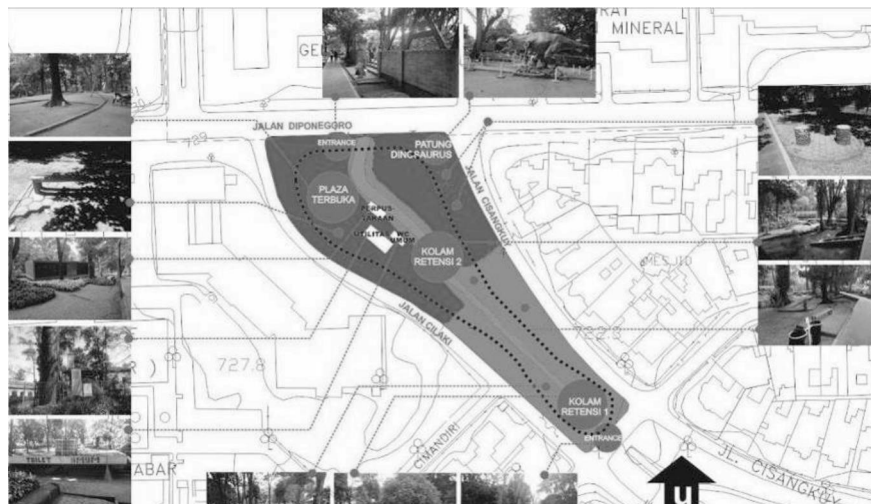


Figure 4 the zones in the Lansia park zones  
Source: google map, 2016 w/ personal document

There are a variety of dominant features in the park which can be classified into soft scape and hard scape. The soft scape elements are considered as not dominant features, such as perennials or shrubs typical. The hard scape elements, on the other hand, are the dominant features such as the lakes, river, jogging tracks, Dinosaur sculpture, benches, signage, lighting, etc. Among these features, there are some that attract the visitors more, i.e. the retention lakes and the dinosaur

sculpture (see fig. 5). However, it is important to note that we cannot see the link between those features. It seems that the features are not related from each other in terms of their design or theme.



Figure 5 dominant feature at park  
Source: personal document

To create a place for a certain community, as mentioned earlier in this paper, there should be features in the place representing the community itself. Since the theme of the Lansia park is the elderly, as it was named for the elderly, this place should provide features for the older people to provide them a mutual care bond needed in their age to relieve their loneliness, maintain their physical psychological health and further to decrease the dementia. However, based our observation, the features do not really provide opportunities for the mutual care bond, except for the benches. While other features do not seem to favor the elderly since they are pretty dangerous for their safety, such as the lakes and the river. In addition to the soft scape and hard scape, the visual component of the park such as the colors do not seem to represent the elderly as well because it is colourful.

In terms of the culture and lifestyle, the elderly has their own culture and lifestyle such as togetherness and interaction with their family members or friends, as well as do some physical exercise. Based on our observation, the Lansia parks does provide features to support these lifestyles. However, these features are not really safe for the elderly considering there are different elevation levels which should be reached by stepping on stairs instead of the ramp. Additionally, there are bridges then steep contour at the side of river, as well as the inexistence of therapist facilities that can stimulate the health of the elderly community. Therefore, this park does not accommodate the lifestyle of the elderly community

In terms of innovation, this park was actually designed based on the engineering consideration for solving the problems of the city. Therefore, the Cilaki river which was the only potential feature in the park, was blocked to create two retention lakes to function as the flood control, water conservation and to produce micro-climate. The two retention lakes are parts of the 17 lakes which were planned and spread in some areas of the city as flood control. From the aesthetics point of view, our observation identified that the design was focused on the elements around the retention lakes such as the bridges, wooden cantilevers, stairs, etc. Therefore, the lakes become the main point of the park.

#### **4.2 User and Activity in Lansia Park**

In addition to the dominant features, it is important to investigate the visitors of the park including their activities their response to the design of the park.

According to our data, the visitors or users of the Lansia 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).

Table 2 number of visitor at lansia park based age segment

No	Observation date	Time (WIB)	Number of visitor by age				Total number of visitor	The most active in age segment			
			0-12	12-21	21-40	40-60		0-12	12-21	21-40	40-60
1	26 July 2016	11.28	10	16	33	23	<b>82</b>			x	
2	27 July 2016	13.35	23	26	33	11	<b>93</b>			x	
3	28 July 2016	10.50	44	9	27	23	<b>103</b>	x			
4	29 July 2016	12.20	6	21	19	18	<b>64</b>		x		
5	30 July 2016 (morning)	10.40	45	7	12	36	<b>100</b>	x			x
6	30 July 2016 (afternoon)	15.50	17	28	45	38	<b>128</b>		x	x	
7	31 July 2016 (morning)	09.48	87	60	40	>20	<b>187</b>	x		x	
8	31 July 2016 (afternoon)	15.20	32	>45	>30	>20	<b>32</b>	x		x	
9	1 August 2016	13.00	5	20	28	15	<b>68</b>			x	
			<b>269</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>164</b>					

Source : personal documentation

Our observations found that the most number of visitors at the weekends were dominant by the adults. In line with this, the observation of the most active age in parks was the adults.

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 and which zone was the most visited by the park users. This data helped the researchers to identify the users' culture and lifestyle.

Table 2 dominant activity and favorite zone

No	Observation date	Time (WIB)	Activities (by observation at park)									Area Favorit	
			Play	Playing music	Siting	Discussion/ Studying	Chatting	Taking picture (selfie/wefie)	internet (wifi)	Working	Excercise	Picnic (eating)	
1	26 July 2016	11.28			x		x	x				x	Sitting area
2	27 July 2016	13.35			x			x				x	Dinosaur sculpture
3	28 July 2016	10.50			x		x	x			x		Bridge
4	29 July 2016	12.20			x		x						Near facility
5	30 July 2016 (morning)	10.40			x					x		x	Dinosaur sculpture
6	30 July 2016 (afternoon)	15.50			x						x	x	Jogging track, Dinosaur sculpture
7	31 July 2016 (morning)	09.48					x	x				x	Sitting area
8	31 July 2016 (afternoon)	15.20			x			x					Jogging track, Dinosaur sculpture
9	1 August 2016	13.00	x		x		x					x	Bridge

Source : personal documentation

The results showed that the most common activities conducted by the visitors were sitting, having a picnic, taking pictures (selfie/wefie) and chatting. While the most visited zones were the bridge, the sitting areas, and the dinosaur sculpture. These findings indicate that there are some new lifestyles of the city citizens to hang out in the park even for only sitting and chatting. As the matter of fact, Sundanese has a custom known as *botram* (picnic/eating together in an open space) to celebrate something or to get together. This custom has been long missed, and therefore, the existence of more parks in Bandung stimulate the old custom. Therefore, since the fact that the Lansia park was designed inclusively, it supports the Sundanese culture and even creates some new custom. The findings of the most visited zones also indicate that the citizens favor places with dominant and attractive features.

### 4.3 Community Assessment

To investigate the visitors' opinion regarding the link between the theme and design, as well as their satisfaction level, the researchers also conducted surveys and interviews.

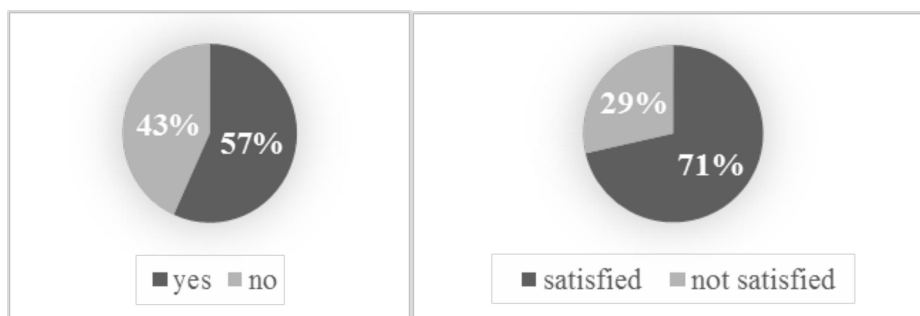


Figure 6 (a) Result of compatibility perception (b) Level of satisfaction  
Source: personal document

The results from the surveys and interviews found that the visitors believed that the theme and design were somewhat related. As seen in Figure 6, as much as 57% answered *yes* (related). These findings were unexpected, but they might be interpreted whether the visitors do not really care about the theme and the design, or they might have lacked of design knowledge. In regards to their degree of satisfaction, 71% of the visitors believed to feel satisfied with the design of the Lansia park. It might indicate that the citizens of Bandung favor any park design as long as they provide dominant and attractive features. These interpretations, however, need further investigation.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The Lansia park is one of the thematic parks in Bandung which was designed inclusive, and its design is unrelated to the theme. The features and design do not reflect the needs of the elderly as the identity of the park. The results from our data analysis showed that the park do not accommodate the lifestyle of the elderly, but instead it promotes the old custom of Sundanese (*botram*) and a new lifestyle, hangout in the park including sitting together, chatting, taking pictures. These activities were observed to be performed mostly by adults (21-40 yo). This park provides the retention lakes which become parts of innovation and the city problem solving. These lakes, indeed, are the central and dominant features in the park which create other features related to support them, which become one of the most visited areas.). From the perspectives of the visitors, it is surprising that they could see the connection between the theme and the design. Additionally, they considered themselves to feel satisfied with the design of the park.



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