

Interior of 'Tunjungan Plaza' Shopping Mall in Surabaya as a Socializing Space

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Abstract: The development of shopping malls in Indonesia is growing rapidly as well as in Surabaya, the second largest city in Indonesia. 'Tunjungan Plaza', located in Surabaya is designed using interior design standards that are adopted from western culture. The design considers interior design criteria such as functionality, shape, size and the room atmosphere. In designing the interior, not only the functionality but also the users factor with its following cultural values are essential considerations. The aim of this research is to discover the visitors' social activity inside 'Tunjungan Plaza' shopping mall area. Whether or not the spaces in the mall have been utilized as its function. The findings of the research shows that the mall visitors' social activity is created from a variety of activities that results in culinary tour space, hangout space, gossiping Space and gathering space. Not every mall visitors utilizes those spaces as its function.

Key words: Interior design, shopping mall, social spaces, phenomenology, culinary tour

INTRODUCTION

The development of Indonesian shopping malls rapidly grows from the aspects of functions, types and the building areas. This also happens in Surabaya, the second biggest city in Indonesia, started by Tunjungan Plaza which was inaugurated in 1986 and is now the biggest mall in eastern Indonesia. Apart from being the first modern mall in Surabaya, Tunjungan Plaza is also a part of Tunjungan City Superblock. Hereby people of Surabaya was firstly introduced to the concept of superblock which is consisted of mall, offices, hotel and condominium. Pakuwon Group developed this superblock on a land with the area of 7.1 ha with its building consisting of Tunjungan Plaza, Sheraton Hotel, Regency Condominium and Menara Mandiri office building.

The interior of Tunjungan Plaza was designed with the criteria of interior design that inlines with the definitions of shopping space, based on the aspects of function, shapes, sizes and the room atmosphere. The appropriate function will increase the value of space. Pile explains that interior designers with professional approach will emphasize the interior design basics more on its functional design rather than decorative design. Interior space is known as a designed environment along with it design and function by the designer in order to fulfill the human activity (Pile, 2003).

Interior design is a work of planning, shaping and designing the spaces inside a building. Each design aims to arrange its elements to correspond with the main purpose of function, esthetic and the user behavior. The relation between the designed elements from these

patterns eventually defines the visual quality and matching function of an interior space and affect on how people understands and uses it (Ching, 1996). A huge amount of researchs have shown that the way architects and interior designers respond on building is totally different from the users (Moore, 1991). There are plenty architects and interior designers see spaces as a formal language in shapes, sizes, patterns, esthetics as something that is accurately defined and controllable which in reality not. Many factors that have to be considered in seeing a space in interior design, the user factors along with its cultural values makes interior design a more dynamic work. Architecture-interior is a built environment that is designed to fulfill the needs of the users. This environment-behaviour phenomeneon is a behavior aspect of the various user of space which relates to its physical environment.

The purpose of this research is to identify the relation between the cultural values of the mall visitors in their social activities in 'Tunjungan Plaza' shopping mall space. Whether or not the available spaces is inline with its function. The research emphasizes on the social activities of the mall visitors because of the developing mall function as public space which coresponds with their interaction inside. The architecture-interior function mostly merely based on dimensional problems, while the user behavior factors and their interaction with the space is also necessary. This research is done to find the awareness which based on the real phenomenon that are very helpful for architect-interior designer in concept development of local-based mall designs.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research uses the phenomenology approach. Phenomenology learns the tendency of socio-cultural starting from basic cases that underlies the human behavior for example, an awareness, therefore, phenomenology do not speak on imaginary or models like other approaches. Based on Husserl's saying that it is a better learning when we do not use certain 'prejudices' or 'preconceptions'. Therefore in phenomenology there are no use of models to learn something in people, culture not certain socio-cultural tendency, because since the beginning of time, phenomenology was not meant for those. This relates with the aim of phenomenology itself (Ahimsa-Putra, 2009). Phenomenology does not aim to analyze or describe certain tendency. Phillipson explains that the aim of phenomenology is to describe an exact phenomenon as it appears in our awareness (Phillipson, 1972).

Seamon describes environmental phenomenology as a methods which its substantive focus lays on the openness and justice and the ontology vision of this method lays on togetherness, belonging and wholeness (Seamon, 1993). Therefore on this stage an unexplainable knowledge (tacit knowledge) is necessary and can enrich the research data. The researchers can understand the tacit knowledge only by getting involved, directly observe also get the feel of space in Tunjungan Plaza as the research location. Phenomenology method can be used here because the design object will be researched based on its space function experience in "Tunjungan Plaza" shopping mall from its users' perspective and description.

Data collecting by Moustakas usually uses a long interview based on the research topic. Phenomenology interview usually involves an informal process interactively, utilizes comments and open questions (Moustakas, 1994). The data collecting process in this research uses several ways such as observation interview, supporting documents or information recordings and documentations. An interview with the Pakuwon Jati party as the developer of Tunjungan Plaza to collect the information about the mall from the owner point of view and from the mall visitor to collect it from the users point of view. Apart from observation and interview, data collecting also includes written documents such as journals, books internet, newspapers, magazines or other relating notes that will support the research.

Moustakas explains that before doing the data analysis, a data organizing is needed to be done. This data organizing and analysis are started with the statement about the topics with same and relevant

values (Moustakas, 1994b). In this case, the interview results and recordings from onsite informant are arranged into information units. Information unit is an individual yet public description of onsite phenomenon. A verbal description about the space phenomenon that can be concluded by the researcher onsite such as the information units on space settings, space users, activities and other various factors that contributes to that space phenomenon. The next process is the categorization that gives the descriptive and inferential information (to draw a conclusion) about the context or setting of those units' sources. Basically this method is a separation of units into provisional categories with its similarity bases (Guba, 1990). These various information unites then analyzed into a theme. The next step is to build or construct a description from the informant.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the observation and interview to the mall visitors which relates to their social activities in Tunjungan Plaza, results in four space information units which shape the socializing space. These space units are formed due to the activities where the visitors meet up, communicate interact in the certain space or area in the mall. These four information units of socializing space are: Culinary Tour space, Hangout space, Huddling space and Gathering space.

Culinary tour space: Culinary tour space information unit becomes a dominant unit that can show how this socializing space theme made. Most mall visitors use their weekend or day off to do culinary tour which means a hang out time to eat. After doing their routine works, this become an ideal time to do things outside work with family, friends, partners to gather, meet up, hang out and enjoy culinary. Culinary tour information unit is a space formed by the activities related to eating together in all area of Tunjungan Plaza. Tunjungan Plaza offers various places for culinary tour with various food menu to fulfill the appetite desire of the mall visitors, starting from national foods until international foods with the designed atmosphere of space to fit the type of served foods. Culinary tour is mostly done because this activity can be a way to strengthen people's relationship. Like this interview result with Mr. Yusuf: 'Culinary is my mandatory agenda to entertain friends, business colleague or relatives from out of town who come to Surabaya, here in Tunjungan Plaza they have various types of worth-try culinary. Surabaya's food is available, also European, Chinese, Japanese and others. It is also supported by a nice and comfortable space that allows us to relax and have a good conversation.'



Fig. 1: Various hangout activities in foodcourt and circulation area of Tunjungan Plaza

Hangout space: Hangout space is a space formed by the mall visitors that like to gather and hang out in a certain place. For some people, mall has become a main destination to interact, to talk with friends and working colleagues in a relax and comfortable environment, listen to music and also when now a days free wi-fi facility has become the main attraction for cafe goers. Hangout space includes cafe areas, foodcourt and lobby.

This hangout and gathering activity are mostly done by school-aged kids, they love to visit malls, hang out at the foodcourt while chatting with their friends. Like the story from Ogik that he and his friends love to hang out at Tunjungan Plaza, usually in the foodcourt, because there is a special package that fits their finance, the most important thing for them is that they can chat, relax in a comfortable and cool air-conditioned area, so hanging out there makes time flies (Fig. 1A). On Fig. 1B, the mall visitors utilizes the lobby, circulation area to sit and talk with their friends or family shamelessly as Dodi mentioned, ‘Just chill, no need to be ashamed of, many people sits around here too, talk around here will not be disturbed, because everyone here are busy talk with their own companies’.

Gossiping space: The meaning of gossip word is to talk and gossip with friends, usually in a small group of people. Based on the word definition, then Gossiping Space information unit can be defined as a space that is utilized to talk and gossip. Gossiping Space is formed by the activity of the mall visitors who are mostly consists of woman but this does not mean the man does not do the talk and gossip with their friends in the mall. Like Alka’s story, ‘Man and woman are both talkative, both like to huddle at the mall, talk about girls, while drinking a cup of coffee but it takes like years’.

The gossiping activity includes the cafe and ice cream area, foodcourt and lobby. Here like Mala’s story, an informant: ‘ After my class in university, I love to chat to get rid of my stress, go huddle in Tunjungan Plaza with my gang, mostly we go to Sour Sally, drink yogurt or ice cream we also drink coffee often well, it depends on the mood and the stomach. If we are hungry, we go to Pizza

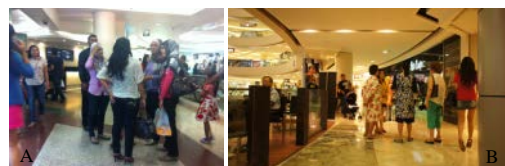


Fig. 2: Various gossiping activities in the hallway or circulation area of Tunjungan Plaza

Hut or Hachi-hachi, the interior is so comfortable and most importantly we can stay and huddle there as long as we wish” (Fig. 2).

Gathering space: Gathering Space is formed by the activities of mall visitor such as small groups, community or a meeting held by some companies to strengthen their brotherhood and hospitality in a relax and intimate atmosphere. This activity takes place in restaurant areas, foodcourt, meeting spaces and convention hall. Now a days many gathering activities are being done in the mall such as family gathering, an activity done by a company for the employees and their family to refresh them from work routines, to refresh and to strengthen their bond. Customer gathering, an appreciation model from a company to its partners and vendors. In Tunjungan Plaza, the dominant gathering are done by certain communities such as car community, gamers community, gay community and many more (Fig. 3).

Many community, small group of teenagers, youth that utilizes Tunjungan Plaza as a place to gather, do gathering, to talk about ongoing or upcoming programs with their friends, even to host events like Choco Days. Some teenagers talk about cosplay event in which they will join in the foodcourt. As cosplayer community is developing in the world including Surabaya, this indicates that Japanese culture has widely accepted by people. Cosplay is an English term made by Japan which originated from the word ‘costume’ and ‘play’. Cosplay is a hobby that use a complete clothing, accessories and make up like the characters of manga, anime, video game, singers and any idolized character as Emka explained. Many information was given by Emka who is today a member of Choco Days design team, an annual exclusive event by cosplay and pop culture community in Surabaya.

Figure 4 can be seen that the mall visitors talk with their friends, family or other visitors who are waiting to be seated in a restaurant in Tunjungan Plaza. Socializing space is formed in the lobby, an area that was originally meant for the visitors’ circulation has transformed into a space for interaction and gossiping. Taufik and his family who are usually after The Eid’s prayer, family gathering, visit to an the ancestor’s grave, then continue to meet the other family members in the mall to eat together with the whole family, ‘During the Eid like now my maid

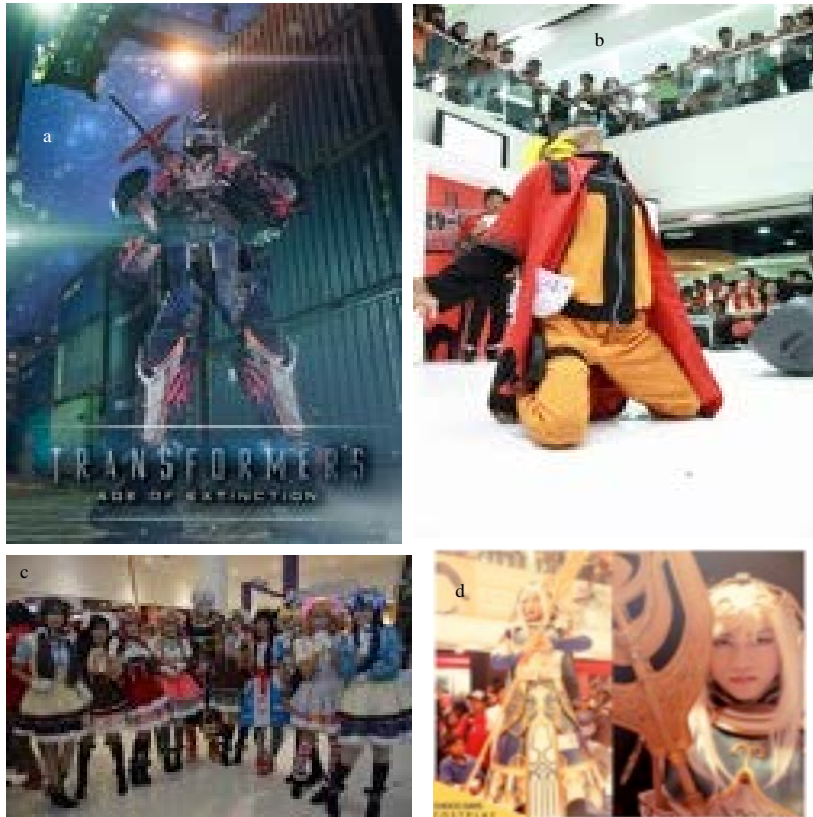


Fig. 3: Various cosplayer character and Choco Days’ atmosphere in Tunjungan Plaza. Source: Emka’s documentation (A) and Choco Days (B, C, D)



Fig. 4: The visitors activity waiting for sitting and queuing for foods

goes back to her hometown we do not bother to cook and clean our households alone. Going to mall like this is more practical, after we eat, huddle with our family and the kids can play in Amazone or other playing areas that are close to this eating area’ as he said. Tunjungan Plaza still opens on The Eid and the visitors are increasing, especially in the eating area, all restaurants, foodcourt is full-loaded, other stores also full of people who shops or just looks around. In brief, those above description can be seen on Fig. 5. Based on the mentioned information units,

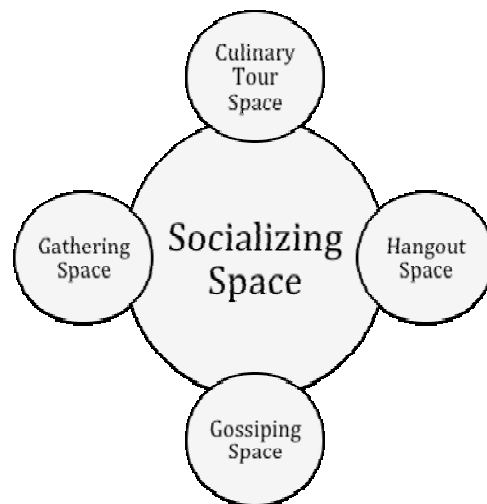


Fig. 5: Information units form socializing spaces

it is concluded that socializing space can be defined as a space that is utilized to gather, to interact to communicate which aim to strengthen hospitality happily. Mall is not only a shopping and recreational center but

has become a place to gather, meet up with family, friends and community. In Tunjungan Plaza, the socializing space is formed by the mall visitors' activity, desire to huddle, to gather and to interact in various culinary and gathering activity. These activities covers the area of restaurant, foodcourt and meeting rooms.

The onsite findings that are helpful for architect-interior designers for a local-based mall design concept are the ways of mall visitors in doing the indoor social activity. Such as the phenomenon that happens on holidays or during certain events in the mall, people will use the lobby, stairs and other areas as socializing space by sitting, standing and talking without considering their surroundings. Even though the original function of those area are meant for mall visitor circulation and though it disturbs the other visitors who pass by.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study, it is concluded that function factor is an essential consideration in interior designing but cultural values of the space users is also very important. Behavior setting occurs on the meeting between individuals and the environment. Tunjungan Plaza visitors who uses the interior spaces of the mall with their own ways, the unpredicted ways by the designers or the sudden transformation of visitor behavior as they enter the mall, these all can be a local knowledge for the designer. This local knowledge can be used as consideration in designing mall spaces, therefore the spaces can reach its maximum function and increase its value.

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