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Redesigning the Signage System of Abhirama Park Sidoarjo

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ABSTRACT

Abhirama Park, a green open space in Sidoarjo, is directly managed by the Environmental and Sanitation Agency (DLHK) of Sidoarjo Regency. The park's primary attraction lies in its playground facilities and recreational areas, making it a popular destination for children and families. Beyond its recreational value, Abhirama Park also serves as an educational space for children, promoting environmental cleanliness. The park offers an interactive experience for visitors, allowing them to engage with animals such as birds, chickens, and fish. While some signage is already present, it is deemed insufficient in effectively conveying information to visitors. The presence of signage is crucial for facilitating navigation, particularly for first-time visitors to a tourist destination. Therefore, this study aims to redesign the signage system to enhance its informativeness, aesthetics, and functionality, meeting the specific needs of visitors. The research methodology employed is a collaborative approach that integrates design principles with the TOWS matrix analysis technique. This approach ensures that the signage design aligns with the park's identity and appeals to the target audience. The resulting signage design strategically positions information to enhance the overall experience and satisfaction of visitors during their visit.

KEYWORDS

Abhirama Park, Green Open Space, Signage, System.

INTRODUCTION

Green open space (RTH) plays a pivotal role in urban planning, serving not only as a recreational and educational hub but also as a means of mitigating environmental impacts. A notable example of such a green space is Abhirama Park in Sidoarjo. Initially, this park served as a water reservoir, effectively reducing the risk of flooding. In 2017, the Sidoarjo District Environment and Hygiene Office (DLHK) embarked on a transformative initiative to redevelop the park into an educational and recreational tourist destination. This transformation not only brings substantial benefits to the community but also seeks to dispel the negative perception associated with the park as a waste dump. Nevertheless, Abhirama Park continues to encounter various challenges, primarily stemming from issues related to cleanliness, damage to facilities, and the absence of comprehensive information systems, including communicative and informative signage.

Signage, as a visual communication medium, plays a pivotal role in guiding visitors, providing information, and fostering a comfortable and purposeful experience. Regrettably, the inadequate signage system in Abhirama Park has resulted in visitors' diminished awareness of the facilities available, potentially impacting their enjoyment of the park. Furthermore, the strategic placement of

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signage and the absence of aesthetically pleasing design elements contribute to the park's diminished appeal as an educational and recreational tourist destination.

Numerous studies have underscored the significance of signage. Wahyuza (2019) emphasizes its role in facilitating navigation and providing directions within public facilities, including city parks. Whitbread (2009) elucidates that the combination of symbols and text in signage enables inclusive information conveyance, transcending language barriers. Clevenger & Andrews (2021) further demonstrates that well-designed signage can enhance community engagement and promote local identity in the development of public spaces.

Despite these valuable insights, these studies primarily address general concepts and do not specifically address local needs or signage design in urban parks or green open spaces like Abhirama Park in Sidoarjo.

This research gap serves as the foundation for a more comprehensive and contextual study of signage requirements in Abhirama Park. The unique approach of this research encompasses not only the design and functionality of signage but also the consideration of the park's visual identity as an educational and recreational tourist destination. By adopting this holistic approach, this research endeavors to develop signage solutions that not only enhance visitor safety and comfort but also support the park's branding as a modern and functional public space.

The primary objective of this article is to design an effective, strategic, and contextual signage system for Abhirama Park, Sidoarjo. This signage system is anticipated to simplify visitor navigation, enhance their awareness of available facilities, and contribute to the park's branding as an educational, recreational, and integrated public space.

METHOD

The design methodology employed in this project is based on the design thinking framework, which comprises three distinct stages: design concept, design process, and design outcomes. During the design concept stage, the author utilized the TOWS matrix analysis to identify the challenges faced by Abhirama Sidoarjo Park. The primary issue encountered in this park is the absence of signage that aligns with the branding identity of Abhirama Park Sidoarjo. The TOWS matrix analysis was conducted through a combination of observation, interviews, visual documentation, and literature review. Subsequently, the design process commenced, encompassing the development of a wayfinding hierarchy, signage placement, and a leaf-shaped design characterized by a prominent green color scheme. Finally, the design results phase witnessed the production of signage tailored to the specific requirements of Abhirama Sidoarjo Park, including directional signage, welcome signs, directional signs, identificational signs, and regulatory signs.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Design Concept

The primary objective of observation and visual documentation is to provide an overview of the location plan of Abhirama Sidoarjo Park. This entails identifying the specific location points that necessitate signage placement. Subsequently, interviews and literature studies were conducted to delve into information pertaining to the historical background of the park, visitor profiles, operational procedures, and the condition of facilities and infrastructure, including signage requirements. Interviews were conducted with relevant parties associated with Abhirama Park, such as the Sidoarjo Environmental Agency, park managers, park parking attendants, and canteens located within the park premises. Literature studies were conducted online, involving the collection of reputable journals and trusted news articles. All gathered data underwent analysis utilizing the TOWS matrix to identify various factors that influence the efficacy of the signage system within Abhirama Park.

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Figure 1. Interview with the Manager of Abhirama Park

Abhirama Park TOWS Matrix	**Strengths (S)**	**Weakness (W)**
	➢ Strategic location in Sidoarjo city center, near the square. ➢ Managed by the Department of Environment and Hygiene, with improved facilities	➢ Damage to facilities, such as information boards and playgrounds. ➢ Lack of clear signage makes it difficult for visitors to navigate
Opportunities (O) ➢ Public awareness of the importance of green open spaces is increasing. ➢ Potential as a place for educational activities, attracting schools and families.	➢ Integrate the sign system with educational information about plants, the environment or the history of Sidoarjo city to enhance the attractiveness of the park.	➢ Design information boards that are attractive, easy to read, support environmental education, and are weatherproof for durability and ease of maintenance.
Threats (T) ➢ The large selection of tourist attractions in Sidoarjo has reduced the attractiveness of the park. ➢ Limited budget for repairs and threats of vandalism.	➢ Adding art installations or thematic zones to differentiate Abhirama Park from others, as well as increasing the use of educational areas for children and family thematic events	➢ Develop a prioritized budget to improve core facilities, such as information boards and signage. ➢ Reduce the risk of vandalism by installing CCTV and increasing surveillance in park areas.

Based on the TOWS matrix provided, the data obtained in accordance with this design reveals that the primary issue at Abhirama Park Sidoarjo is the damage to signage facilities and the subsequent lack of signage availability. This situation presents a challenge for visitors in navigating the park effectively. Therefore, a suitable solution involves designing a signage system that aligns with the park's branding and facilitates navigation for both current and potential visitors, according to the branding and use of the Abhirama Park.

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2. Design Process

Based on the identified challenges, the design of the signage layout, its placement within the wayfinding hierarchy, the Abhirama Park plan, and the brainstorming process, the following design concepts were obtained:

1) The Welcome Sign font incorporates a decorative font that resembles a twisted leaf vine, aligning with the image of Abhirama Park as a green open space.
2) The pictogram shape is an adaptation of the leaf shape, exhibiting a curved form.
3) The signage design incorporates the twisting and elongated leaf shape.
4) The primary color used is predominantly green, complemented by yellow and red accents.
5) Some signage elements are designed to transition between green and yellow hues.

Following these concepts, the sketching stage of the sign system design was initiated, resulting in a diverse range of design alternatives.

Figure 2. *Signage Sketch and Picktogram*

3. Design Results

1) Sign System

In designing a sign system for Abhirama Park, the selection of a theme is paramount, as it can significantly influence various aspects, including the form of signage, color palette, and information presentation. Given that Abhirama Park already possesses a well-established branding and identity, particularly in terms of color scheme, characteristics, and target audience, the author adheres to this existing identity. Subsequently, the author develops a sign system design based on the formulated data and identified challenges. According to Environmental Graphic Design (EGD) theory, a discipline that integrates graphic design, architecture, and interior design, visual elements such as sign systems can enhance the user experience within a space. Therefore, based on EGD theory, the design of the sign system for Abhirama Park is appropriate, as it will contribute to creating an informative and welcoming environment for visitors. The sign system design implemented at Abhirama Park Sidoarjo is as follows.

a. Distance Sign

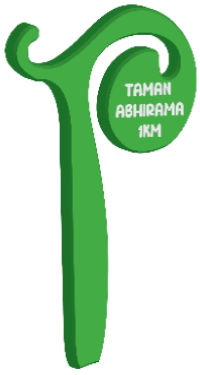

Figure 3. *Distance Sign* Abhirama Park 1 km

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b. Welcome Sign

Figure 4. *Welcome Sign* Abhirama Park

c. Directional Sign

Figure 5. *Directional Sign* Abhirama Park

d. Identification Sign

Figure 6. *Identification Sign* Canteen

e. Regulatory Sign

Figure *7. Regulatory Sign* No Swimming

2) Pictogram
Having gained knowledge of the sign system's type, it is crucial to comprehend the fundamental elements that contribute to its development. One such element is pictograms. As highlighted by

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Siti Clara and Wirania Swasty (2017), pictograms serve as an effective means of conveying information or regulations that are readily comprehensible to visitors from diverse backgrounds. This is achieved without the need for lengthy texts.

Figure 8. Pictogram Design on Abhirama Park Sign System

3) Sign System Applications

The finalized sign system design will proceed to the application phase. This process is crucial before implementing the original execution in the field, as it allows for the physical form of the signage support, the board, and the color of the signage to be tested and adjusted to the terrain of the surrounding environment. The simulation process of applying the sign system by the author involves using an original photograph as a mockup. Additionally, a simulation of the application of the sign system design for Abhirama Sidoarjo Park is provided.

Figure 9. Sign System Design Application

CONCLUSIONS

Abhirama Park, one of the green open spaces that remains well-maintained and consistently visited, particularly by children and families, cannot be separated from the role of the Sidoarjo District Environment and Hygiene Office (DLHK) administrators. However, the role of signage or sign systems is often not recognized as a crucial element in shaping the image and identity of Abhirama Park. Signage serves as an information center that assists visitors in comprehending park facilities, ranging from general to detailed information. This research and design project aims to redesign existing signage and introduce some signage deemed essential but not yet implemented.

Through field analysis, interviews with relevant parties, and a literature review, it has been concluded that signage not only enhances navigation and information communication for visitors but also supports the park's multifaceted functions as an educational, environmentally friendly, and children's space. With a more comprehensive signage system, Abhirama Park is anticipated to

provide a more gratifying experience and attract a broader range of visitors. For further development, research can be directed at evaluating the sustainability of the implemented signage design, exploring the integration of interactive technology for enhanced information delivery, and implementing community-based approaches to enhance the effectiveness and sense of belonging among park users.

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