



KEY POINT SUMMARY

OBJECTIVES

To understand how hospital visitors comprehend healthcare environments and develop their own wayfinding methods so that supportive navigation designs may be better developed in the future.

Understanding Wayfinding Experience of Hospital Visitor through Tours and Maps Analysis

Mustikawati, T., Yatmo, Y. A., Atmodiwirjo, P. 2017 / Conference Paper, Volume 2, Pages 149-157

Key Concepts/Context

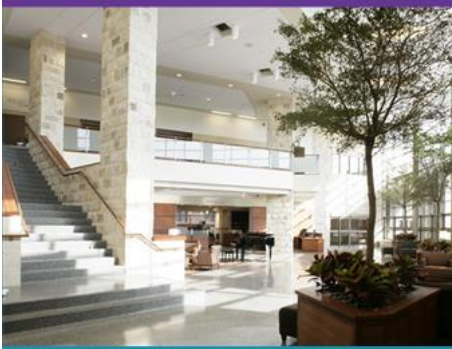
Hospitals are complex environments full of many visitors, staff members, and patients. This kind of environment can make simple navigation difficult for visitors in particular. This is especially true for visitors who do not come to the hospital frequently, leading to potential instances of stress for the visitors and the patients they are planning to visit. “Wayfinding” is a theoretical framework for understanding generally how the human mind comprehends spaces and learns how to navigate through them. The more research that is done to understand how visitors mentally form their own spatial experience and learn how to navigate bustling healthcare spaces, the more prepared designers will be able to provide helpful wayfinding tools and designs.

Methods

Field observations were conducted in the outpatient area of an Indonesian general hospital. Ten participants were involved, all of whom were assumed to be new visitors of the hospital. Each participant underwent a “wayfinding journey” during which they verbalized their experiences and actions and were not allowed to ask others for directions. A total of 40 wayfinding journeys were observed, along with video and transcriptional data. All data were analyzed for verbal expressions relating to hospital map layouts.

Findings

To portray the general findings of this study’s results, analysis of a single participant’s wayfinding journey was shown through 11 different visual scenes, relations to verbal experiences, and relations to the hospital map itself. The



The Center for Health Design: Moving Healthcare Forward

The Center for Health Design advances best practices and empowers healthcare leaders with quality research that demonstrates the value of design to improve health outcomes, patient experience of care, and provider/staff satisfaction and performance.

Learn more at
www.healthdesign.org

combination of narrative data, observational data, and hospital maps revealed insight into the participant's overall wayfinding experience, specifically: narratives of wayfinding being formed through specific physical environment markers or pathway changes, the importance of response to the environment in forming an internal guidance system, and that every wayfinding decision is related to another previous or anticipated wayfinding decision.

Limitations

The authors note that a relatively small sample size was observed in this study, and that the phase of the study design involving manual interpretations of hospital maps was vulnerable to highly subjective output. This study was conducted in a single hospital over a relatively short period of time.

Design Implications

Designers could consider incorporating the methods described in this study when working to improve navigation systems within healthcare environments; by studying hospital inhabitants' navigational experiences through narrative or observational perspectives, a better understanding of how certain spaces are navigated could be attained. This would allow designers to more accurately locate signage or other tools.

The Knowledge Repository is a collaborative effort with our partners

Academy of
Architecture for Health
an AIA Knowledge Community

AAHF
ACADEMY OF ARCHITECTURE FOR HEALTH
FOUNDATION

ASHE
Optimizing health care facilities

Design for Aging
an AIA Knowledge Community



Additional key point summaries provided by:

NIHD | Nursing Institute for
Healthcare Design
LEADERSHIP • EDUCATION • ADVOCACY

RESEARCH DESIGN
CONNECTIONS