

## Revitalizing Public Spaces and Educating Children Through Visual Communication in Kalisampurno Village

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** This study aims to revitalize public spaces and strengthen early childhood education through a visual communication approach in Kalisampurno Village, Tanggulangin District, Sidoarjo Regency. The activity focused on utilizing Kalisampurno Dam Park as a multifunctional public space that can accommodate social interaction, education, and strengthen the village's visual identity. **Method:** The community-based participatory approach was used, with an implementation strategy in the form of project-based learning. This activity involved 39 Communication Science students from Muhammadiyah University of Sidoarjo who were divided into three divisions: quote boards, education, and games. The data collection process was carried out through participatory observation, informal interviews, and visual documentation, then analyzed descriptively qualitatively. **Results:** The results of the program showed that the revitalization of public spaces through aesthetic elements (quote boards, garden decorations, welcoming monuments) successfully strengthened the park's image as an educational and tourist destination. The "Learning While Playing" program also succeeded in involving local PAUD institutions in culturally based outdoor educational activities. These findings indicate that locally based visual communication can be an effective tool in supporting character education and cultural preservation. **Novelty:** This program's novelty lies in the integration of public art, early childhood education, and cross-community collaboration in a single model of sustainable service.

## INTRODUCTION

Villages are the result of interaction between humans and their environment which is built through a system of mutual cooperation and local wisdom. From a geographical and social perspective, villages are formed through the integration of physiographic, social, economic, political, and cultural elements that are intertwined with each other and help shape the characteristics of certain regions[1].

One example of community-based regional development can be seen from Kalisampurno Village located in Tanggulangin District, Sidoarjo Regency. This area has just completed the construction project "Kalisampurno Dam Park" which aims to improve the welfare of the village community through the management of public open spaces. Its location at the very end of the sub-district area makes Kalisampurno Village often perceived as a remote area, so the development of this park is expected to change this perception and increase the accessibility and attractiveness of the area.

The "Kalisampurno Dam Park" project has resulted in a public space that is not only visually appealing but also functional. Some of the facilities available include a children's

playground, food court, open-air stage, stands, gazebo, toga plant garden, and pier. Apart from being a recreational facility, this park is also expected to be a social meeting space for the village community and visitors from outside. One of the initiatives that is currently being carried out is the installation of inspirational quotes boards at several points in the park. This step aims to add aesthetic elements as well as become a visual communication medium that can give a positive and contemporary impression to visitors [2]. These interactions not only create physical spatial planning, but also form the life patterns of the village community that are adaptive to change and establish connectivity with the surrounding area [3].

Education is a planned and systematic process to create a learning atmosphere and learning process that allows students to develop their potential optimally. It covers the spiritual, moral, intellectual, emotional, and skills aspects necessary to participate in community life. This definition is in accordance with the mandate of Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System which emphasizes the importance of education as a conscious and planned effort to create an active and holistic learning atmosphere and process [4].

One of the early stages in the national education system is Early Childhood Education (PAUD), which plays an important role in providing comprehensive stimulation of children's development. Early childhood education is divided into two paths: non-formal pathways such as playgroups for children aged 2–4 years, and formal pathways such as kindergarten for children aged 4–6 years[5]. Play groups have a central role in the development of children's intelligence, social skills, emotions, and motor skills through learning while playing. Play is not just a recreational activity, but an effective educational means in fostering children's independence, curiosity, and logical thinking skills [6].

As a form of community-based education implementation, Kalisampurno Village is currently developing the "Learning While Playing" program for children of play group age. This program utilizes the public space "Taman Dam Kalisampurno" as a means of outdoor learning with an educational and cultural approach. The method combines traditional games and local cultural arts education to foster children's interest in learning while instilling the values of local wisdom. This effort is also a tangible form of character strengthening and cultural preservation from an early age [7].

In the implementation of the sustainable program "Quotes Board & Learning While Playing", the use of the public space of Kalisampurno Dam Park is an important element as a means of education and social interaction. The park environment is open, green, and has functional facilities to be strategically used to support outdoor learning activities designed with a collaborative and participatory approach. This concept is in line with the place-based education approach which emphasizes the importance of utilizing the surrounding environment as a source of learning [8].

## RESEARCH METHOD

This service activity uses a *community-based participatory approach*, which emphasizes the active involvement of the community and students in every implementation process. This approach is considered effective in building a sense of belonging, social responsibility, and sustainability of programs in the community [9]. The program was carried out from April to June 2025 at Kalisampurno Dam Park, Kalisampurno Village, Tanggulangin District, Sidoarjo Regency. This location is a public open space that is being developed as a center for citizen interaction as well as an outdoor educational facility.

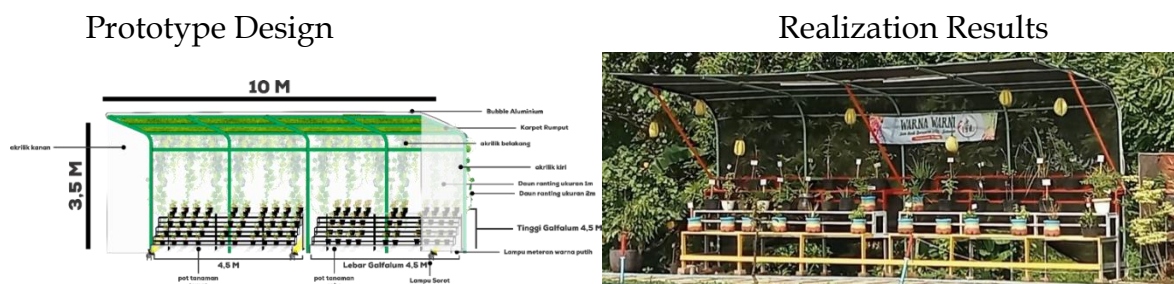
To address this, the implementation team implemented a participatory-based managerial strategy by forming a work structure that was divided into three main divisions: the Quotes Board Division, which consisted of the Carpentry Team and the Paint Team; Education Division, which is in charge of designing and implementing thematic learning sessions; and the Play Division, which manages traditional games and interactions with children. The division of this division is carried out based on the interests and competencies of each student in order to create synergy and effectiveness of teamwork. This step is also in line with the principles of project-based learning, where collaboration and individual responsibility are key components of successful learning [10].

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The service program entitled "Shining Kalisampurno: Quotes Board and Learning While Playing" is a form of implementation of student participation in building public spaces based on art, education, and local wisdom in Kalisampurno Village, Tanggulangin District, Sidoarjo Regency. This activity not only produces visual and physical outputs, but also builds social interaction and learning experiences for the community and program participants.

### 1. Public Art Icon Project: Realizing Space Aesthetics and Visual Identity

One of the main achievements of this activity is the presence of public art icons at various strategic points of Kalisampurno Dam Park. The resulting visual elements include:



**Figure 1.** Toga Garden Decoration.

The decoration of the Toga Park and the Bridge in Kalisampurno Dam Park is a strategic effort to strengthen the visual identity and increase the aesthetic appeal of the village's public space. In Toga Garden, decorative elements in the form of leaves and synthetic carpets are used to create a visually refreshing natural atmosphere. This touch

of synthetic green gives the impression of cool, clean, and orderly, while increasing the aesthetic value of the garden as an educational area about family medicinal plants (toga). The addition of this element not only beautifies the appearance of the park, but also creates comfort for children and visitors who are active in the area. Meanwhile, the Taman Dam Bridge, which previously functioned solely as a connecting route between areas, has now been transformed into an attractive photo spot with a contemporary decorative touch. The transformation of the bridge provides a stronger visual experience, creating a more modern and instagrammable image of the park, and becoming an easily recognizable visual icon. These two elements, Toga Park and the Bridge, play an important role in building the character of an inclusive, educational, and fun public space. This effort is in line with the principle of developing the park as an aesthetic and functional social interaction space, as well as an environment-based learning medium that can be enjoyed by all people.



**Figure 2.** The Welcome Monument.

The construction of the Welcome Monument at the entrance of Kalisampurno Dam Park is an important element in shaping the identity of the space and creating a warm sense of welcome for every visitor. The monument was designed with local and symbolic values in mind, so it serves not only as a physical marker, but also as a representation of the culture and pride of the residents. Its strategic location in front of the playground area makes this monument the starting point of the visual experience for visitors, giving a positive first impression and arousing curiosity about the entire park. The design of the monument is made with a modern-traditional approach, combining contemporary aesthetics with local elements to remain contextual but attractive to the younger generation. The existence of this monument also clarifies the boundaries and structure of the park's public space, as well as being a meeting point or gathering place before visitors explore other areas. In the context of the development of community-based public spaces, this monument not only strengthens the image of the park as a local tourist destination, but also becomes a symbol of the acceptance and openness of the people of Kalisampurno Village to collaboration, innovation, and cross-generational participation. Thus, the construction of the monument also supports efforts to make the park an inclusive, iconic, and emotionally imprinted space for every visitor.



## 2. Shining Kalisampurno – Papan Quotes: Aesthetics and Visual Education

In the follow-up project "Quotes Board", students succeeded in producing and installing quote boards scattered at several points in the park. The quotes used contain moral messages, invitations to protect the environment, and spiritual reminders.

Prototype Design



Realization Results



Figure 3. Quotes Board.

Quote boards serve not only as a decorative element, but also as an effective visual communication medium to convey messages to visitors. This is in line with the concept of visual communication design in public spaces which serves to build collective awareness, beautify spaces, and shape public perception of a place [11].

## 3. Shining Kalisampurno – Learning While Playing: Character Education and Local Culture

The educational program "Learning While Playing" is a real contribution to non-formal education for early childhood children in the village. This activity involved children from three PAUD institutions: Dharma Wanita Persatuan Kindergarten, Tacibi Kindergarten, and RA Tarbiyatul Aulad.



Figure 4. Playing at Kalisampurno Dam Park.

The activities carried out include Introduction to toga plants and their benefits. Education through traditional games such as dakon, gobak sodor, and cublak-cublak suweng. Teaching of regional songs as part of the preservation of local culture. This activity is particularly relevant to the learning through play and cultural-based education approaches, which emphasize the importance of social and cultural stimulation in early childhood education [12]). In addition, the use of parks as outdoor learning spaces reflects a place-based education approach that utilizes the environment as a source and vehicle for learning [13].



**Figure 5.** Student Social Participation and Learning.

The program also provides a collaborative hands-on experience for students. Through a clear division structure and interest-based division of tasks, students are trained to work together, manage conflicts, and interact directly with the community. This contributes to the development of soft skills such as communication, leadership, and problem solving [13].

## CONCLUSION

**Fundamental Finding :** The community service program entitled "Shining Kalisampurno: Quotes & Learning While Playing" was successfully implemented with significant achievements in the aspects of public space development, early childhood education, and student empowerment through community-based collaborative work.

**Implication :** The results of this activity have direct implications for the development of village policies in managing public spaces as a means of education and local tourism. Quote boards function as visual communication media that can be replicated in other public spaces. Meanwhile, the "Learning While Playing" model opens up a new discourse in the application of outdoor learning based on local culture. For universities, this activity strengthens the importance of integrating the tridharma of higher education, especially community service, in building a network of mutually beneficial partnerships.

**Limitation :** The implementation time is relatively short, so it is not possible to see the long-term impact on changes in community behavior or the sustainability of the program.

**Future Research :** (1) Involve more stakeholders, including village governments, local artists, and early childhood educators in the design of advanced programs. (2) Apply an

action research approach to develop citizen training programs in the maintenance and development of community-based parks. (3) Integrating digital media such as QR codes or augmented reality on quotes boards or parks as a form of innovation in visual communication and public education.

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