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Restorative Green Outdoor Environments at Hospital

Shreena Fais Abdul Shukor & Noorznin Mohamed

INTRODUCTION

Today, designers and especially landscape architects attempt to design outdoor hospital environments by taking into consideration the fact that one needs more ameliorate stress and provide opportunities for positive experiences in the physical and mental wellbeing of users where patients can have a relaxing influence and reduce stress levels (e.g., Verhaul et al., 2008; Mouszok, et al., 2006; Felenus et al., 2011). In a current study by Fais et al. (2012) indicates that a hospital with outdoor environment surrounded by greenery were the most preferred by the users.

Many different theories are used, and together they build up the theoretical framework that we follow today and use. The Psychobiological Design Theory (Appleton, 1975) claims that positive feelings are gained from adaptive functions of preferentiality regarding certain landscape characteristics. The studies which deal with the restorative, health-related effects and the human benefits derived from contact with nature consistently refer to the Biophilia Hypothesis (Wilson, 1984) which signifies the impression of ‘restorative through contact with nature or green outdoor environments’. The key focus is to solve complex site planning problems focusing at institution areas, public parks or resorts. A site visit was carried out at the Serdang Hospital where the students visited the site and interview with staff from different departments. The students visited the hospital to gain knowledge about the healing outdoor green environments and to get a picture of how the hospital is designed. The study of Serdang Hospital shows that it is a multi-specialty hospital located in the state of Selangor, Malaysia, the hospital is surrounded by a park measuring 45 acres (181,000 m²).

DESIGN SOLUTION

Four artifacts were selected as case studies under this topic.

The Lite-Inn Datum

By Musliar Ahmad bin, Mohd Razali

The student, Iskandar Ahmad bin, Mohd Razali used the concept called ‘Therapiescapes’. Healing is a process of recovery. The design focus is the patient in the process of the whole planning of the outdoor environment in the hospital to be interconnected in the amenity and healing units in the design. This student was very bold in using landscape ideas to create restorative and healing outdoor environment to represent the image of an urban hospital.

Altheic Ambiance

By Mona Liza Mohd Kassim

The student, Mona Liza used the concept ‘Altheic Ambiance’ because of its positive influence on mental comfort and harmonious to senses, therapy and healing strategies. Healing is being close to nature. The design maximizes the usage of native species vegetation for sustainability, as well as enhancing the landscape pattern and form that mimic natural element such as the Malaya nut.

Kandy's Restorative Ambiance

By Maril Abidah

The designer used a promising treatment of the hospital landscapes towards enhancing the environment approach. The infinite experience of Kardinsky philosophy is carried out in a landscape design for the Serdang Hospital. With the inspiration from the Kardinsky philosophy, the designer was able to enhance experience of restorative environment at the Serdang Hospital. As a whole, the scheme is evidently signifies the implementation of ‘restorative through contact with nature’ as intended. However the design can be improved by in-depth exploration of planting and sculptural design.

Soul with Nature

By Leng Li-Thing

Leng Li-Thing intends to transform outdoor spaces as healing landscape in Serdang Hospital. Her idea conceptualized the hospital communities to work and recuperate in green and natural ambience. The design concept. Soul of Nature ‘incorporates a tropical shady trees palms, shrubs and ground covers as green connectives for the designed spaces. Leng Li-Thing also looked at the negative spaces among the structural building as functional spaces and creatively turned these areas as green courtyards, Fana Garden, Liesse Garden, Walland Garden and Sculpture Garden.

DISSCUTION / FUTURE STUDY

As a whole, the students have shown the ability to design and present their ideas for a restorative green outdoor environment for a hospital. They managed to grasp the understanding of how a well-designed green outdoor environment with both landscape and themes could provide restorative environments to heal the sick of hospitals. The use of multiple uses of spaces such as public areas, semi private and private areas offer choices for the users in selecting types of areas they want to be in, however, plants selections prove to be the weakness here as the selection in having plants with that could be hazardous to patients with respiratory problems or those that could attract insects and ants. The understanding of related theories should be fully understood in order to understand the uses of healing landscape design where it is practical and usable. The total idea of restorative or healing green outdoor environments should be applied in the selection of this softcape and also the use of materials throughout the project.

References


Jury Review

Sapura Mohamad

An impressive design sketches which are advantageous as an eye-catcher, which strengthen a mediocre proposal. Array of good graphic creates these art pieces and recommended for display and exhibition to a wider audience.

Norhalizoh Hanifah

A big applause to the students for their wonderful graphic drawings and sketches. The proposed design follows through design process, and one can easily understand it’s design idea and justification. Issues/problems raised are detailed out and resolved thus provide the best proposed possible solutions to achieve the desired design goals and concept. The master plan has sufficient details to explain and convey clearly the design intent. The final question to one of the actual problems of the existing site which is ‘insufficient parking’ is yet to be considered and resolved.
The project was to design the outdoor environments with restorative quality at the Serdang Hospital. The main thrusts behind the Life-Link Datum concept is 'Rejuvenating, Healing and Recovery'. The planting concept involves creating green avenues which include the paths and walkways. Fragrant plants with vibrant colours could provide stimulations were proposed for the site. The intention is to highlight the image of Serdang hospital as an urban and modern hospital while at the same time fulfils the needs of the users. The strength of the project lies in the idea where the whole planning of the outdoor environment were interconnected and creates unity in the design. Each level was given different considerations and provides different gardens with healing and restorative qualities. The design proposal could improve further by putting more attention to appropriate plants selection. Due diligence and care required to avoid are plants and flowers containing spores which are easily blown away, stying patients with breathing difficulties. Additionally, plants which easily attract insects and ants. The blow up plan could be more detailed to show the hardscape and material used whilst explaining how the outdoor spaces function.
The design of forest recreational park in the hospital environment is transpired by the lack of green spaces surrounding the majority of hospitals in the nation, and Hospital Serdang is no exception. Greenery are proven to have therapeutic effects and magical power in healing to human beings besides helping to provide thermal comfort for users. The concept “Athermic Ambience” stresses on providing a cool environment, cooling and harmonics to senses, harmony and healing strategy as well as being close to nature. The design maximises the usage of forest species vegetation for softscape while enhancing the hardscape pattern and form that mimic natural element such as the Malva nut. Despite such thoughtful ideas, the design could improve with more understanding of forest biodiversity for justifying the selection of appropriate plants used. An in-depth study on the characteristics and requirements of forest species for design selection would be definitively useful.
The designer’s idea is promoting revitalisation of the Hospital Serdang using restorative approach. In general, Nur Afikah has excellently determined issues in existing Hospital Serdang before suggesting the concept of restorative hospital. The infinite experience of Kandinsky painting philosophy is captured in a restorative design for the Hospital Serdang. The form of the structure and pattern symbolises the energetic composition of Kandinsky’s philosophy. With the new inspiration and explanation from the Kandinsky philosophy, the designer enhances the experience of restorative environment in the Hospital Serdang. The incorporation of structural, sculptural, water features and planting are well harmonised with each other. Articulated elements of the form and structure are visible to passerby and thus her design encourages further exploration. In addition, the designer has created an undulation of scales resulting in rhythmic, repetitive and harmony that dispersal the whole design through interactive linkages and planting design. Taken as a whole, the scheme evidently ignites the impression of ‘restoration through Kandinsky experience’. The design can be further enhanced through thoroughly exploration of planting and sculptural design.
Soul with Nature
Nor Allah Ismail, Mohd Yazid Mohd Yunus, Shureen Fadzil Abd Shukor, Nizaran Mohamed & Mohd Kher Hussien

Ling Li Thing intends to transform outdoor spaces as healing landscape in Serdang Hospital. Her ideas concentrated the hospital communities to work and recuperate in green and natural ambience. This design concept, ‘Soul of Nature’, incorporates tropical shady trees, palms, shrubs and ground covers as green connectors for the designed spaces. Ling Li Thing who is an expressionist student could do better by enhancing ‘space identity’ for each garden she created. More details showing the characteristics of healing components in her design could support her exciting landscape design.

Fans Garden, Leisure Garden, Wetland Garden and Sculpture Garden. Various types of gardens are created surrounding the hospital area, changing the hospital’s sorrow setting into a vibrant and promising healing environment for its users. Nevertheless, Ling Li Thing who is an expressive student could do better by enhancing ‘space identity’ for each garden she created. More details showing the characteristics of healing components in her design could support her exciting landscape design.