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ASLI QoL 2017



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3<sup>rd</sup> ABRA International Conference on Quality of Life  
"Quality of Life 3"

Riverside Majestic Hotel, Kuching, Malaysia, 14-16 Oct 2017



## Urban Picnic: Reaction among actors as spatial mechanism of urban space

Achmad Hery Fuad, Yandi Andri Yatmo

Department of Architecture Faculty of Engineering  
Universitas Indonesia, Kampus Baru UI, Depok 16424, Indonesia

heryfuad@gmail.com  
Tel: +62217863512

### Abstract

Picnic activity plays a role in enhancing the quality of life of urban residents. The objective of this research is to reveal spatial mechanism and taxonomy of urban spaces through spatial experience. We use affordance from Gibson (1986) as a theoretical lens. Bodily experience approach from Pallasma (2012) and Lepori and Franck (2000) as the method for collecting data. To analyse the data we use the qualitative method and grounded theory. The finding is the reaction among actors as spatial experience exhibits spatial mechanism and taxonomy of urban spaces has a role in transforming urban spaces into a new kind of spaces.

**Keywords:** Urban Spaces, Spatial Mechanism, Taxonomy

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<https://doi.org/10.21834/e-bpj.v2i6.939>

### 1.0 Introduction

Bundaran Hotel Indonesia (Hotel Indonesia roundabout) is one of the popular places in Jakarta. Particularly on Sunday morning when the car-free day event held, this area is crowded with the guest. They do sports, gathering, parenting, chit-chat, play, eat, take a picture, playing music, dance, jaywalk, sitting, and enjoy the ambience and the scenic view of the city. They use street and pedestrian way, and pool's edge, pool's courtyard as space and place for their activities (Fuad, Yatmo, 2017). At the weekend, particularly in Sunday morning, Suropati Park (Taman Suropati) as one of the famous urban park in Jakarta also full with the visitors. According to Hern (1989), all the activities can categorise as a picnic. The picnic also is an activity to get health, Hern (1989).

Picnic usually occupy natural environments, research about picnic explores characteristic of the space for the picnic. Most of the picnic areas are out of town as a physical location with its splendid scenery includes the beach, edge of the forest, lakeside, riverside, mountain range and countryside (Hern, 1989; Miller, 1989; Shand, 1996; White, 2009). Misra (1988) reveals the relationships between human and nature, especially in savouring its atmosphere. However, picnic activities not only done at out of town but also in urban spaces such as the urban park, historical monument and church's open space (Ellis and Ellis, 1983; Hern, 1989). Research about the picnic, particularly in the usage of urban space is a few. Research about the picnic in an area which is not intended for picnic merely conducted by Sankalia (2014). He studied urban picnic, especially about the production of space and bias attitude of the urban resident in Berkeley, California. Fuad and Yatmo (2017) also examine relationships among actors in picnic activities in urban space. Their finding reveals that a different kind of relation among actor shows us the spatial mechanism that promotes a transformation of space.

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Picnic activity plays the important role to elevate the quality of life of urban residents. Therefore seeing an opportunity to use, and to transform urban spaces as picnic areas need to review. This research is part of our study about the urban picnic, the first part of it reveals that a different kind of relation among actor, (Fuad and Yatmo,2017). The second part of the research is about reaction among actor within picnic activity in urban spaces.

### 1.1 Research Objectives

The research objectives are to explore spatial mechanism which enables the user of urban spaces to transform the function of it to become the variety function of space, and also to search taxonomy of urban spaces which support the development of urban picnic space. This research aims to reveal how urban spaces transform into picnic spaces.

## 2.0 Literature Review

### 2.1 Urban public spaces

According to Nasution and Zahrah (2017), public life shows that the public open spaces (POPS) give a positive contribution to fulfilling community needs for a communal space. Omar, Ibrahim and Nik Mohamad (2017) study about human-human and human-nature interaction in open spaces. They show that nature and human interactions need elements of open spaces such as the green spaces, water elements, physical attributes to enhance the communications between human-human and human-nature. Study about public space by Danis, Sidek and Yusof (2016) find that physical and social environment influenced physical activity and neighbourhood usage. Refers to study by Saidlue et al. (2016) about improving quality of open spaces in the residential area, enhance the quality of the open spaces will bring significant changes in the living standards of the residents in the residential complex. Gidding, Charlton, and Horne (2011) study about develop criteria for comfortable external spaces by using software modelling. This software modelling can be used to predict solar access and thermal comfort, wind speed and movement, noise, and pedestrian movement for proposed public squares in the design stage. Different tendencies which affecting urban contemporary cities are studied by Mela (2014). She conveys: "The study shows the form of urban space, in its physical and symbolic dimensions. It is not only a question of aesthetic or functional choices but is a decisive factor in dialectics between individual and collective social actors. The form of urban space plays an important role in the prevalence of inclusive or exclusive models of social relation." Stahle and Alexander (2010) study about green space, density and a critical relation between user experience and urban form. Moreover, the finding is four large factors seem to profoundly affect green accessibility such as are a surface area, use values, orientation, and range. All of the research mention before, none of it discuss relation and reaction of the body to the urban spaces and vice versa. However, a study from Fuad and Yatmo (2017) examine the relationship among actor in public urban spaces. Their finding is the relation among actors within picnic activities in urban spaces shows a different kind of relations. The exploration of picnic activities on urban space shows us the relationships among users, events, spaces defines a variety of changes in the function of urban spaces.

### 2.2 Affordances

This research intended to explore the reaction among actor. For this purpose, we need an approach to bring us into a different point of view. Affordances notion from Gibson (1986, pp.127) see the environment not only as an object but also as subject. He mentions: "Affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill." He sees environment has a role like the human, and it can offer something to an animal. This notion is in line with Latour (2007) Actor-Network Theory. Ideas that sees both human and non human have the role in social action. Further Gibson conveys that an affordance points both to the environment and to the observer (1986, pp.129). Those approaches bring us into a position to see the equal role of human and non human, or actor and actant. In this research, ranks of each party will examine.

In the social activity, a human has a connectedness with another human, or sometimes human does something because of the presence of another human, or do something because he or she perceived information that other person could do an action, then he or she thinks he or she can do the same measures. We can see an example when we queue in line to get something; then we follow the other person queue too. Gibson mention: "What other individuals afford comprises the whole realm of social significance for human beings,"(2000,pp.128). Gibson mention other persons have affordances for another person. Therefore to understand the spatial mechanism in urban spaces we use affordances approach. Refers to him, affordances has relation to the medium, substances, surfaces and also layouts. Medium is things such as air, sometimes can be seen, and seldom cannot be seen. With medium, we have the opportunity to see things clearly or opaque. Substances are something more dense than medium; it can be liquid or hard as stone. For instance are water and wood with a flat surface. Both substances have different property or quality. Somebody cannot stand at the top of the flat water because water is not dense, but the human can stand at the top of a flat surface of wood because of its density and hardness. Gibson also asserts different layout afford different behaviour, (Gibson, pp.130-131). With affordances of the environment, another person, object and its property or quality we try to explore the spatial experience of the urban spaces users in urban picnic activity.

### 2.3 Actor and Actant

To reveal the role of the actors within picnic activities in urban space we need to see who the actors are? We use the approach from Latour (2007). *Anything* that does modify a state of affairs by making a difference is an actor-or, if it has no figuration yet, an actant. (Latour, 2007, pp.71). With Actors Network Theory all those who involved in the activities of a picnic on urban open space, such as

users, visitors, vendors, can be categorised into the actor and objects. Space, space elements, statements, event, rules, situations, formal and informal rules are actant ( Fuad, Yatmo, 2017)

### 3.0 Methodology

This research is intended to reveal reaction among actor, spatial mechanism and taxonomy of urban space within picnic activity through spatial experience in urban outdoor public space. The location of the study is at Hotel Indonesia roundabout and Suropati urban park. The first step executed literature survey by collect data from the newspaper, social media, and journals. The purpose is to get information and identify the visitors, their activities, their favourite space, and place. That information is used as primary data for the first stage of field survey and rechecks it with field condition. Field study performed by doing observation, and active participatory. It has made from October 2013 to April 2016. For Hotel Indonesia roundabout the field survey implements in car-free day event, from 06.30 a.m to 10.00 a.m Sunday morning. For Suropati urban park is execute at the weekend, Saturday and Sunday. Mostly on Sunday morning from 08.30 a.m to 11.30 a.m. Both locations of a survey observed more than 40 times.

We observe the activity of the visitors, picnickers, how they respond to the actor, actant. What kind of space and place they occupy for their vigour. Moreover, also see the physical condition of the space and place as the object of this research. Try to seek what is offers by the environment to the visitors, picnickers. We collect the data by notes, take photographs, sketch and mapping it, and sometimes we held an interview with the picnickers. One of the obstacles is we cannot interview the same person for the next time. Because the person always changes and come and go every time we do field survey. To check all of the data, we do drifting, a journey without exact destination, we will stop when the object speak for itself when it is interesting to explore, ( Debord, 1955, 1922).

In conducting field survey, we observe the reaction of the visitors to the presence of another person, property or quality of the object as a medium, substances, layout, location, and position (Gibson, 1986, pp.127-134). The idea of Gibson also is in line with Franck and Lepori (2000) approach. " Our relationship to all else is structured from the position, location, and attributes of our bodies."( Lepori and Franck. 2000, pp. 31). Scanning and close attention to the environment and its users are also substantial as mention by Franck and Lepori (2000). Architecture does not simply suggest movement, it frequently choreographs it, encouraging us to move in a particular way, adopting specific positions, sometimes quite insistently (Lepori and Franck, 2000. pp.38). This statement brings us into a position that environment, architecture and human both are active and influence each other. Pallasmaa (2012) convey that bodily experience is necessary if we want to examine spatial experience in the city as he said: "I experience myself in the city, and the city exists through my embodied experience. The city and my body supplement and define each other. I dwell in the city, and the city dwells in me,"( Pallasmaa,2012. pp. 43). Pallasmaa underscores that both body and city also play a significant role to collect spatial experience about a town and its spaces. For this research, we use qualitative method, and for analysis, we use grounded theory, ( Corbin, Strauss, 1990; Cresswell,2007)

### 3.1 Study Area

As for the location of the survey, we choose two urban area with different characteristics. The first one is Bundaran Hotel Indonesia or Hotel Indonesia roundabout. This urban space is circulation media for vehicle and pedestrian. Every Sunday morning from 06.00 AM to 11.00 AM used for car-free day space. They do sports, gathering, playing, parenting, watching the performance, take a picture, also expressing art. Bundaran Hotel Indonesia is one of the leading space and place for Jakarta's resident to do a variety of outdoor activity. It surrounded by tall, splendid hotels, apartments and office building, and also encompassed by the luxurious shopping centre. This space also is equipped with a pool of water fountain and in the middle stood the famously welcome statue of Jakarta. At the edge of the Bundaran Hotel Indonesia surrounded by flat and spacious pedestrian way. However, this space is not designed for human use, but for vehicle purpose.

The second one is Taman Suropati or Suropati Park. This space is an old urban park which has developed during the colonial period of the Dutch (Heuken and Pamungkas, 2001. p. 22 ). Taman Suropati location is in the central of Jakarta, particularly in Menteng area, one of the prominent residential housing for the haves in Jakarta. This park is also famous for inhabitants of Jakarta. Every weekend from morning to evening this urban park has many visitors. Its visitors are not only from the surrounding area but every district in Jakarta. They enjoy the ambience, playing, parenting, chit-chat, gathering, also playing music and perform another kind of arts. This space is designed as an urban park and has many old, big and beautiful trees. This park is complete with water fountain pool, wide area flat plaza, and pedestrian way at the edge of the park. Space is designed and intended for a recreation area.

## 4.0 Result and Discussion

### 4.1 Relation among Actors

From Hotel Indonesia roundabout and Suropati Park, we can see the relation among actor and actant in picnic activities in urban spaces are occurred among human with human, human and another person, human with surfaces, human with property and quality of the object also human with layout or position of the urban spaces



(a) (b)  
Fig 1(a) parenting; (b) parenting and eating  
(Source: Author)

**4.1.1 Human with a human.**

In Suropati park and Hotel Indonesia roundabout seen fig 1 (a), (b), 2(a), (b) and 3 (a), (b). We can see that there are relationships among human with human, or human and another person such as a family with strangers fig 1(a), within a family fig 1 (b) and Fig 3 (a) , within a group of musician fig 2(a) , within a community fig 2 (b), and a group of teenager fig 3 (b) . Those pictures give us variety of relationships among actors. Relation within a family, relation within group or community and relation with strangers. That kind of connection occurred because of the presence of another person. This human and human relationship proof to us that that affordance happen because of another person, Gibson (1986, pp. 128).

**4.1.2 Human with surfaces.**

From fig 1(a), (b), 2 (a), (b) and 3 (a), (b) we find that the person or human is related to the surface such as flat and full surface fig 1(a), flat and comfortable surface to sit fig 1(b) , flat and wide open space and soft surface fig 2 (a), flat and open wide surface, without obstacle fig 2(b) and Fig 3 (b) , flat and sittable surface fig 3(a). The picture exhibits a different kind of relation between human and surface, mostly the surface is flat, open, broad and has no obstacle. That sort of connection shows us the quality of the surface as affordances to the human who use the space. Also, reveals to us that the air as the medium which is transparent give high visibility for the human who uses the space and place. This relation among human as an actor with surfaces and medium as actant shows that object has its property or quality, Gibson (1986,pp.134).



(a) (b)  
Fig 2(a) Playing and exercising music; (b) community gathering.  
(Source: Author)

**4.1.3 Human with location.**

Human relation to a surface is not merely one of the spatial mechanism within the urban space. Fig 1(a), (b), 2(a), (b) and 3(b) show us that there is a relation among human with space which has a particular location. They use the position because it gives them the convenience to use the space. From fig 1 (a) we see that the mother has a comprehensive view to see her daughter play in the park, from fig 1 (b) a family which is sitting on the Street's median also have a broad view to see all the activities surround them. That kind of relation shows that human choose the location because of the position give them easiness to see or this space provide high visibility to them. From fig2 (b) the ontel bike community uses the street at Hotel Indonesia roundabout, they can look by everyone who's passing by the road. This fact shows us that there is the relation between human and its location. The place with its strategic position plays its role in for ontel bike community. This fact also reveals to us that there is the relationship among human, another human ( passerby), surface, and the position.

The relation between human and location cannot separate with the presence of another person. The site with its position has its property or quality. Location and property offer easiness to see and high visibility emerge the affordance of the space, Gibson (1986, pp.127).



#### 4.1.4 Human with a property of space and its element.

From fig 1(a), (b), fig 2(a), (b) and Fig 3 (a), (b) show us a relation between the human and space. Especially space with its scenic view surrounds that space fig 1(a), (b), fig 3(a), (b). The beautiful area is the property of the object or space. The attractive space at the urban area such as a view of the beautiful garden with its flower and greenery, view of open space which surrounded by tall and splendidly luxurious building, and also open space with its famous city icon. That kind of beautiful space is the property and the quality of it. From fig 2(a) we see a relation of the human with space give the community opportunity to play music together without any disturbance because the space with its wide open area gives them to have their territory. It shows space with its property as communal distance. From fig 2(b) the wide open area gives the ontel bike community a high visibility space. A property of space which makes them can see from every direction. Scenic area and high visibility cannot occur if the medium such as air is not transparent. Therefore relation among human and its beautiful space, high visibility area is support by the transparent medium. Those facts show that connection among actor such person, a family, a group of the teenager, a community with space and its property or quality as an actant. The relation among human with a property of the object describes that space provides and furnishes high visibility, territory to the person, Gibson (1986,pp127).

Through the activities in Hotel Indonesia roundabout and Suropati Park, we can see the relation among actors with actants such as another person (human), and with surface, location, and property. Those relation enables the affordances of the spaces.

#### 4.2 Reaction among Actors.

In Hotel Indonesia roundabout particularly at Sunday morning's car-free day event and Suropati Park, we can see myriad of events or activities. Those activities reveal the spatial mechanism through spatial experience in picnic activities within urban spaces; we explore the response among actors. Reaction among actors and actant occur because of respond of human to object property or qualities, such as layout, substances, surfaces, and medium. Also reaction among actors and actant as responding of human to another person.

##### 4.2.1 Human response to another person

From Fig 1(b), Fig 2(a), (b) and Fig 3(b) show us that there are responding from human to another person. That kind of respond demonstrates the reaction of human to the presence of another person, event, or activity within the surrounding area see Fig 1(b). From fig 2(a) reveals to us that the community responds to the presence of another user of the park by developing their territory, a space with communal distance. From Fig 2 (b) ontel bike community is instead merely gathering at Hotel Indonesia roundabout, they also exhibit their ontel cycles. It reveals that there is a respond from ontel bike community to another person, From fig 3 (a) shows us that a group of teenager take a selfie picture. They reveal a response to someone else by making photographs without disturbing another group of girl. The response to someone else also shows that there is a territory of the team. Those activities by a family, a community of musician and a group of teenager show us that there is the reaction among actors. This kind of response among actors, human to other person enables affordance of the space, Gibson (1986, pp.128).



(a) (b)  
Fig 3 (a) A family take picture; (b) A group of teenager takes a picture  
(Source: Author)

##### 4.2.2 Human reaction to object property or qualities

As mention before that, some of the space has its property such as flat surface, comfortable environment, wide open space, fragrance, and also scenic or beautiful view. Space as object also have properties or qualities such as colour, texture, composition, size, shape, and features of shape mass, elasticity, rigidity, and mobility, the object also can be manufactured and manipulated Gibson (1986,pp.133-134). Fig 1(a), (b), fig 2 (a), (b), fig 3(a), (b) show that human has responded to property or quality of the object.

Fig 1(a) shows human to respond to flat, open, vast space without the obstacle of the urban park. The ample open space has offered flexibility and high visibility to human. As the response to the affordances from the vast open space, the mother watches her daughter play and cycling around the park.

Fig 1(b) exhibits people to respond to open, wide open space of the street near Bundaran Hotel Indonesia. The surrounding offers scenic city view of beautiful high rise building to the visitor of Bundaran Hotel Indonesia. As a response to the affordances from the street, the family sitting, chatting and eating at the median of the road. The median of the street also offers bright, flat and clean surface to the family. As their response, they use the Street's median as sitting place to sense the atmosphere of the surrounding. From fig 1 (a) and (b) space shows two affordances, first, the flexibility to use and the high visibility of the vast open space. The second the scenic city view and comfortable sitting area.

From fig 2(a) disclose human to respond to flat, vast, open, shady space of Taman Suropati. The park offers to the person comfortable and flexible space. The flat, full, open and sheltered area also provides space which enables the person to confirm their territory. As the community responds to space, they use the area as space for playing, exercising music and expressing their art. This urban park offers three affordances such as comfortable space, flexible space and territorial space.

Fig 2 (b) exhibit human responds to flat, wide, open space of the street at Hotel Indonesia roundabout, the street offers a place where everybody was passing by that area, it also provides a space which can see from every direction, space without visual obstacles. The community of ontel bicycle responds to the street use the space as gathering space and place and also as a space for exhibiting their unique and antic's bike. This street has several affordances such as high visibility area, and also as the strategic location for exhibition activity.

Fig 3 (a) reveals a family takes a selfie picture at the front of a water fountain at Taman Suropati. They use a rounded, clean yet comfortable edge of the pool as their respond; they use it as sitting place. The side's pool with its rounded, appropriate height and width to the seat has affordances as the comfortable sitting area. Space also offers a scenic view, especially the attractive water fountain. As their response to the affordances, they take a selfie picture of the pool and use water fountain as the background. There are two affordances at this space, first is attractive scenic space, and the second is edges of pool sittable space.

Fig 3(b) shows human to respond to flat, wide, open space of the pools area of Hotel Indonesia roundabout, the open space as part of the pool offers a place with a famous city icon; Jakarta's Welcome Statue. Also, it provides an ample open space without visual obstacle with 360° eyesight, from this site people can see the scenic city view as splendid, high rises office building and hotels surrounding the pool. A group of teenager consist of girls respond to this property and quality of the open space, they take a selfie picture at the front of the Welcome Statue, the scenic city view becomes the background. Space has two affordances such as spectacular city view and as one the famous or popular space and place to take the picture in the town of Jakarta.

All the activities mention above show to us that reaction among actors as the human with human occurs within the variety of activities. The respond of human to space, the element of space and its affordance show reaction among actors and actant which shows through a spatial experience of the user enables the transformation of the original space to become new areas for picnic activities in an urban area.

Table 1. Spatial Mechanism and Taxonomy of Urban Space

Actor	Original Space	Relation	Object	Property or quality	Other person	Location, layout, position	Affordances	Reaction	New Spaces
Mother, daughter Fig.1(a)	Urban park	Human with human Human with wide open area Human to park's bench Human with comfort space Human to scenic area	Plaza and bench	vast, open, bright air, shady, beautiful space, flat surface	Visitors	Easy to access, easy to find	High visibility, flexibility to move, comfort for sitting	Respond to Flexibility to do activities Respond to High visibility	Playing, parenting space
Family Fig 1(b)	Vehicle circulation space	Human with human Human with street Human with Street's median Human with passerby (performance) Human and scenic surrounding space	Street and road's median	Wide, open, flat surface, appropriate space for sitting, scenic city view, shady	Performers, events	Easy to access, easy to find	High visibility, Comfort to sit Flexibility to move	Respond to comfortable of seating Street's median Respond to surrounding scenic area Respond to passerby/performance	Parenting and eating space
Musician community Fig 2(a)	Urban park	Human with human Human with bench Human with broad, comfortable	Plaza	Wide, open, flat surface, enough space for group, shady, semi-public	Visitors, audience	Easy to find	Communal space, Little noise from surrounding, Easiness to hear	Respond to another human Respond to wide open space Respond to comfortable space Respond to flexibility	Expression space

		area Human with communal distance						to use the space Respond to space which enables territory	
Ontel Bicycle community Fig 2 (b)	Vehicle circulation space	Human with human Community with wide open space Human with high visibility from every direction Group to strategic location	Street and pedestrian way	Flat surface, wide, open, no visual obstacle, public	Visitors, events, performers, audience	Easy to access, no visual obstacle, easy to see	Easiness to be seen, Flexibility to move, high visibility, strategic location	Respond to strategic location Respond to high visibility Respond to another visitor	Gathering space, exhibition space
Family Fig 3 (a)	Urban Park	Human with human Human with attractive scenic space Human with vast open space Human with sittable pool's edge	Pool's edge	Ergonomic for sitting, beautiful water fountain	Visitors	Easy to find, easy to access	Attractive water feature	Respond to impressive scenic space Respond to comfortable space for sitting at pool's edge	Narcist space
A group of teenager Fig 3(b)	Pool's at vehicle circulation space	Human with human Human with surrounding scenic area the human with flat horizontal space at the edge of the pool. Human with smartphone	Pool's flat surface	Completed with city icon, wide, open, no visual obstacle, public	Visitors, events, performers	Easy to see, easy to access	Scenic view, famous place, attractive background of tall, splendid buildings	Respond to beautiful surrounding area Respond to co- presence of another human Respond to one of the famous places in Jakarta	Instagrammable pinned place

From table no.1 we can see that the events or activities in car-free day events Hotel Indonesia roundabout, and events in Suropati Park shows the relation among actors such as user and the presence of another person (human) with actants such as surface, location, and property enables the affordance of the space. The relationship among them shows that actor and actant reciprocally support each other in a cause to emerge the affordances. Those spatial mechanism work if the user and another person as the actor, the surface, location, and property play their equal role in creating the affordances of the object.

From the activities in a car-free day at Hotel Indonesia roundabout and activities or events in Suropati Park as described in the table no. 1, we can see the original space and object with its properties work together with location, layout, position, and another person. As actant and actor, they work together then emerge the multiple affordances of the object. The user or human reaction to the affordances, therefore the human take action and decide what to do with space and its affordances. In this kind of process, the affordances take a role as the actant. The process of reaction among actor and actant creates and transforms the original space to become new spaces. The whole process of the reaction among actor and actant exhibits to us the spatial mechanism of the transformation and production of urban spaces to become urban picnic spaces.

From the table no 1, we can see that relation among actor and actant and reaction among actor and actant, show the spatial mechanism and taxonomy of urban spaces. The process of transformation of space from original space to become new spaces can be traced through the spatial mechanism as the object with its property works with other person and location emerge the affordances of the space. The reaction of users to the affordances transform the original space become new kind of space with the new function. Moreover, the process delivers the taxonomy of urban spaces.

## 5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

This research indicates that a reaction among actors within urban picnic is one of the spatial mechanism informing urban picnic spaces. The exploration of spatial mechanism based on spatial experience shows that there is the taxonomy of urban spaces which support the development of urban spaces.

The research is part of our research about an urban picnic, the first part of it reveals that a different kind of relation among actor shows us the spatial mechanism that promotes a transformation of space. The second part is about relationships among actor; this research also shows the spatial mechanism which emerges from relation among actor. It is exhibit urban spaces spatial character and the new function of urban picnic's spaces. However to understand the mechanism of urban spaces to become urban picnic space we

also need to see the structure of the urban spaces. Therefore we need to explore the nesting mechanism of events in urban space for the next research.

## Acknowledgements

This paper is part of Achmad Hery Fuad doctoral dissertation which was still in the second stage. The research was funded by Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education of the Republic of Indonesia, under the Grant of PITTA UI 2017 scheme. We would like to express our gratitude to Directorate of Research and Community Engagement Universitas Indonesia for the grant. To all who have contributed to this paper, especially the users and visitors of Hotel Indonesia Roundabout, Surapati Park in Jakarta, and all colleagues in the Department of Architecture, Faculty of Engineering, Universitas Indonesia.

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