

Analysis of Intergenerational Collaboration in UNTAR's Photography Exhibition at Ciputra Mall Jakarta

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ABSTRAK

Pameran fotografi adalah media komunikasi visual yang disajikan sebagai sarana apresiasi karya, media belajar, sarana berinteraksi secara sosial, dan juga media distribusi karya ilmiah untuk konsumsi publik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis penerapan kerja sama lintas generasi yang dilakukan oleh dosen, alumni, dan mahasiswa pada sebuah pameran fotografi yang bertema “Perempuan” yang diadakan oleh Program Studi Desain Komunikasi Visual Universitas Tarumanagara di Ciputra Mall Jakarta. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data observasi, dokumentasi, dan wawancara tidak terstruktur. Kesimpulan penelitian ini adalah bahwa kerja sama lintas generasi mampu mendukung transfer ilmu, menuangkan pengalaman profesional, dan membangun potensi yang dimiliki. Sedangkan dengan pemanfaatan ruang publik sebagai tempat pelaksanaan pameran, mampu meningkatkan peran serta publik dan menjalin hubungan antara lembaga pendidikan tinggi dan masyarakat sekitarnya. Dengan demikian, dapat disimpulkan bahwa pameran fotografi dapat dijadikan salah satu model pelayanan sosial berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci: pameran fotografi, komunikasi visual, pengabdian kepada masyarakat, kolaborasi antargenerasi

ABSTRACT

Photography exhibitions are a form of visual communication that serve as a means of appreciating works, a learning tool, social interaction, and also disseminating academic works to the public. The purpose of this research is to analyze the implementation of intergenerational collaboration involving lecturers, alumni, and students in the photography exhibition 'Women' themed, organized by the Visual Communication Design Study Program at Tarumanagara University at Ciputra Mall Jakarta. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative, with data collection through observation, documentation, and informal interviews. The results show that cross-generational collaboration supports knowledge transfer, professional experience exchange, and the development of creative potential. In addition, the use of public spaces as exhibition locations successfully increased public participation and strengthened the relationship between higher education institutions and the surrounding community. Therefore, this research shows that photography exhibitions have the potential to become a sustainable model of social service.

Keywords: photography exhibition, visual communication, community service, intergenerational collaboration

INTRODUCTION

The Faculty of Fine Arts and Design (FSRD) at Tarumagara University (Untar) has developed various academic and creative activities through its Visual Communication Design (abbreviated as 'DKV') Department. Visual Communication Design, which combines visual appeal with communication, functions as a medium for conveying messages through visual elements to influence how the audience interprets them (Hasyim & Senoprabowo, 2019). One of the practical applications of this idea is the photography classes taught by the DKV Department, in which students create photographic projects that delve into different themes such as fashion, culture, travel, documentary and portrait photography. An exhibition of photography is a medium of visual expression that stimulates the interaction of artists with audiences and a chance for those scholarly works to be shown to a larger audience (Hamidoyo & Riyanti, 2022). Therefore, photography exhibitions become not only artistic appreciation spaces, but also educational and communicative spaces between academic institutions and the community.

In Indonesia, photography exhibitions have progressively extended beyond conventional gallery environments to more open and accessible public areas. Photography exhibitions in Indonesia have emerged in diverse venues, including galleries, cultural centers, cafes, and shopping malls (Zahar & Mustaqim, 2021). The variety of exhibition spaces allows photographic works to be showcased to the public outside traditional gallery environments. Likewise, shopping malls in Indonesia have developed beyond their commercial functions and can serve as public spaces that accommodate social and cultural activities. Ciputra Mall Jakarta was selected as the exhibition site due to its role as a public-focused shopping center, which offers an approachable environment for interaction between academic works and a varied audience. Shopping malls can function as public spaces that accommodate various social and cultural activities beyond their commercial functions. Located in Grogol Petamburan, Jakarta, the mall is situated within an area associated with several higher education institutions, providing potential for interaction between academic communities and the wider public (Fatih Primadani & Nurhasan, 2020).

Within this context, one of the unique aspects of the photography exhibition held by the Department of DKV, Untar is the involvement of lecturers, alumni, and students. This intergenerational collaboration creates opportunities for the exchange of knowledge, professional experience, and creative perspectives among people with different academic and professional backgrounds. Alumni offer practical insights from their industry experience, lecturers provide academic guidance, and students provide contemporary visual approaches with innovative ideas. This collaborative process makes the exhibition a place not only to show photographic works but also a place to learn, mentor, and interact creatively across generations. The exhibition was conducted in Ciputra Mall Jakarta, a public space which draws visitors of various backgrounds and offers direct interaction between academic communities and the public. Exhibitions can also be promotional media to introduce institutions and creative activities to a wider audience (Khomsah et al., 2024).

Photography is a form of visual communication that enables messages to be transmitted from photographers to audiences through symbolic visual representations. Each photo contains its own meanings and stories that can be interpreted differently based on the experience also perspective of the viewers (Amalia Fasiha, 2023). People often confuse about portrait photography with model photography in the world of photography. But the two of them are different in their purpose and visual representation. Portrait photography is mainly about capturing the character, personality, or mood of the subject. Meanwhile, model photography is more about visual presentation, pose, styling, and aesthetic composition. However, the two approaches are not without the same technical skills in operating the

camera, composition, lighting control, and visual storytelling to convey messages through images (Saputra & Rohmad Dwi Happy, 2021). Thus, to develop photographic skills, it is necessary to obtain not only theoretical knowledge, but also practical experience and direct involvement in photographic activities.

Previous research has demonstrated the significance of exhibitions and photography as media for communication, education, and artistic appreciation. According to (Purnomo & Widharyanto, 2020), exhibitions are not only a place to display artwork but also a place for social dialogue, cultural reflection, and public engagement. According to the research by (Tanrere et al., 2024), photography exhibitions provide opportunities for practical learning experiences and facilitate the development of photographic competencies through direct engagement with visual works. Furthermore, (Latuny & Happy, 2023) point out the importance of aesthetic experiences in photography for the interpretation of the audience and visual communication. Furthermore, the ability of photographers to overcome barriers of communication related to perception, meaning, and understanding of the audience is an important factor for effective photographic communication (Angga et al., 2017). Collectively, these studies suggest that photo exhibitions have a significant educational, communicative, and social value.

Although previous studies have discussed photography exhibitions, visual communication, and photography education. However, little attention has been paid to intergenerational collaboration among lecturers, alumni, and students in photography exhibitions as a form of community engagement. Previous studies have mostly considered exhibitions as media for appreciation of art, for communication, or for learning photography. Collaborative relationships between different generations in academic communities are seldom studied. A relevant question here is, therefore, how intergenerational collaboration between lecturers, alumni, and students can be realized through photography exhibitions and how this collaboration contributes to knowledge exchange, public engagement, and promotion of academic works in public spaces.

With this background, the Photography Exhibition titled “Happiness is Me” was held with the theme ‘Women’, by the Visual Communication Design Department of Tarumanagara University in collaboration with Ciputra Mall Jakarta, with participants comprising lecturers, alumni, and students. This study aims to explore the implementation of intergenerational collaboration in the exhibition and its impact on visual communication, public engagement, and dissemination of academic works to wider communities. The results are expected to contribute to the understanding of the formation of exhibition based academic collaboration as a sustainable means of community engagement and creative education.

METHODS

This study used a qualitative descriptive method to analyze the implementation of intergenerational collaboration in the photography exhibition organized by the Visual Communication Design Department of Tarumanagara University (DKV Untar) at Ciputra Mall Jakarta. The study aimed to explore the collaborative process among lecturers, alumni and students in planning, organizing, and executing the exhibition and to identify the educational and social contributions arising from the activity. The research was conducted in the process of preparing and implementing a photography exhibition with the theme Women, held at Ciputra Mall Jakarta, from 9 to 23 June 2025. The participants of this study were lecturers, alumni, students of Visual Communication Design Department of

Tarumanagara University, representatives of Ciputra Mall Jakarta, and visitors who attended the exhibition.

The data were gathered through observation, documentation and interviews. Observation was carried out throughout the exhibition process, including curation, installation, promotion and exhibiting activities. Documentation data included photographs, promotional material, catalogues of the exhibition, reports on the activities, and any visual material related to the implementation of the exhibition. Furthermore, interviews with the organizers and some visitors were conducted in order to collect information about their experiences, perceptions and responses towards the exhibition and the collaborative process among the participants from different generations. Informal interviews and face-to-face interactions were conducted with the organizing team and selected participants to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the exhibition and the collaboration process. Since the participants in these interviews were spontaneous and intended solely to capture general public impressions as supporting contextual data, their total number was not systematically documented. The interviews included Julius Andi Nugroho, a photography lecturer in the DKV Department of Tarumanagara University and the chairperson of the exhibition committee, and Yoel Abednego, a DKV Untar alumnus from the 2015 cohort who participated as an exhibiting photographer.

The interview with Julius Andi Nugroho, the photography instructor and head of the exhibition committee, revealed that the partnership with Ciputra Mall Jakarta aided in presenting DKV Untar and its academic creations to a broader audience. The exhibition further enhanced intergenerational connections through 16 photographs, including four pieces by lecturers, six by students, and six by alumni. Over 200 attendees were present at the opening, with activities spreading beyond the central exhibition space, showing heightened community involvement within the mall. Furthermore, the interview with Yoel Abednego, a DKV Untar alumnus participating as a photographer, indicated that the exhibition provided an opportunity to reconnect with the academic community and expand the exposure of his photographic works. The public environment allowed the artworks to engage attendees from various backgrounds, fostering chances for enhanced appreciation and acknowledgment.

The analysis process includes data reduction, data organization, interpretation, and drawing conclusions. Themes related to visual communication, educational outcomes, community engagement, and intergenerational collaboration were used to categorize the information gathered from interviews, documentation, and observations. Furthermore, to understand how the exhibition functions as a vehicle for public education and knowledge sharing, these findings were interpreted using theories of visual communication, collaborative learning in higher education, and photography exhibitions. This study provides an in-depth explanation of how intergenerational collaboration was implemented in the photography exhibition, as well as how it helped improve visual literacy, promote academic works in public spaces, and foster interaction between the academic community and the general public through this approach.

DISCUSSION

1. Intergenerational Collaboration in the Photography Exhibition

The “Happiness is Me” photography exhibition, held at Ciputra Mall Jakarta from June 9–23, 2025, is a form of intergenerational partnership that brings together students, alumni, and faculty members from the Department of Visual Communication Design at Tarumanagara University. This partnership provides each group of participants with the opportunity to contribute according to their respective expertise and experience. Alumni

offer professional insights gained through industry experience, while students contribute creative ideas and modern visual techniques; faculty members serve as academic advisors and curators. As demonstrated by this initiative, intergenerational partnerships can serve as a strategy for knowledge transfer and experience-sharing that supports the development of creativity in higher education.

This exhibition serves not only as a platform for academic collaboration but also as a medium of visual communication to connect photographic works with the broader public. According to (Hamidoyo & Riyanti, 2022), photography is a form of visual communication that allows photographers to convey messages to an audience through visual images. Consequently, the works on display offer not only aesthetic value but also social messages about the lives and responsibilities of women from diverse social backgrounds.

2. Impact of the Exhibition on Public Engagement

This exhibition was carried out in nine stages. The first stage involved coordination between the organizing committee from the Department of Visual Communication Design at Tarumanagara University and the management of Ciputra Mall Jakarta. Discussions during this stage covered several topics, including the exhibition concept, theme, location, timeframe, and technical requirements. This stage emphasized the importance of collaboration between academic institutions and public spaces to create events accessible to a broader audience.



Figure 1. Discussion with representatives from Mal Ciputra

The idea was created during the second phase of the show, when the theme of women was selected to honor World Women's Cancer Day. This theme was chosen so that the exhibition would highlight many social challenges in modern society in addition to showcasing photographic works. According to Purnomo and Widharyanto (2020),

exhibitions function as a platform for social discourse, a communication tool, and a way to comprehend various cultures through visual media.

The third stage was the curation process, which comprised faculty, students, and alumni. The value of the submitted works was determined by taking into account their visual quality, subject significance, narrative strength, and emotional effect. Consequently, twenty pictures of ladies from different social classes were chosen for the show. Because of this curating method, the exhibition's visual materials were far more successful in communicating their intended meanings.

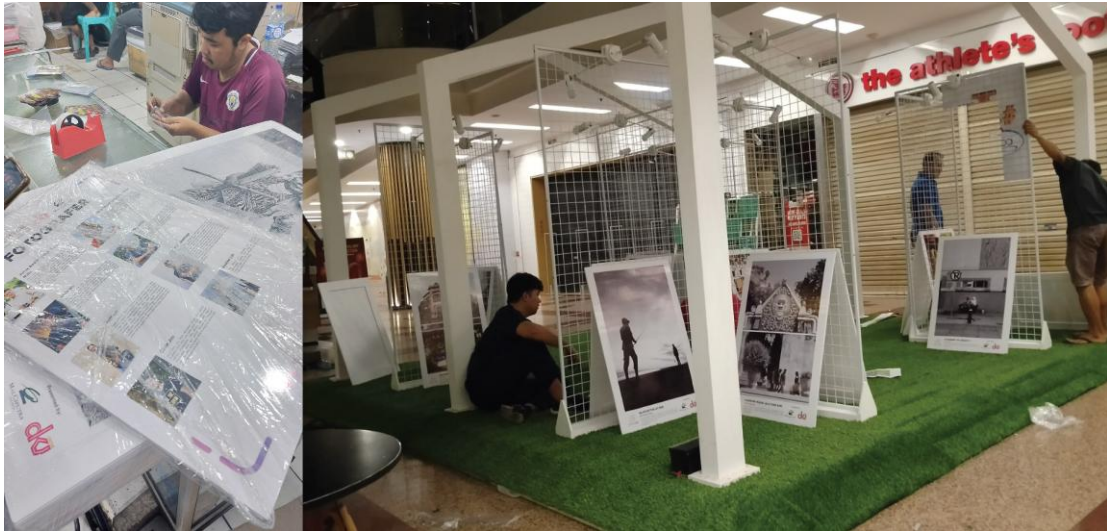


Figure 2. Photo Printing and Exhibition Setup

The fourth step involved writing descriptions for every picture. These descriptions provide details about each work's background, message, and history. Visitors were better able to comprehend the visual meanings in the pictures thanks to the explanatory captions, which improved the efficacy of visual communication.

In the fifth stage, the chosen photographs are printed in accordance with preset guidelines to create the show materials. Because print quality directly affects visitors' visual impressions, it receives special attention. High-quality reproduction makes it possible to communicate visual messages and photographic details to the audience more effectively.



Figure 3. Promotional Poster Design

Installing the photographic pieces and designing the exhibition layout constitute the sixth phase. The layout places a high priority on visitor flow, information clarity, and simplicity of seeing. By allowing visitors to access information methodically and interact more effectively with the exhibited pieces, a well-organized exhibition layout can boost visual communication. The seventh stage focuses on promotional operations through partner communication networks and social media. Promotional activities to increase public awareness and boost tourist turnout start about a month before the show begins. According to Khomsah et al. (2024), this strategy is consistent with the role of promotional media in presenting goods, services, companies, and events to a larger audience.



Figure 4. Photos from the Opening Ceremony



Figure 5. Photographic Documentation of the Exhibition

The exhibition itself is introduced at the eighth stage with interactive discussion sessions, seminars, and an opening ceremony. These gatherings provide an opportunity for direct communication and interaction between the academic community and the general population. These seminars and discussion sessions further support the exhibition's educational goal as a venue for public education.

The show was assessed in its ninth and last phase utilizing visitor input, interviews, and documentation. This evaluation process aimed to assess how effectively the exhibition conveyed its visual messages and to identify areas for improvement in future initiatives. This step is crucial for measuring the exhibition's effectiveness as a tool for visual communication and community participation.

During the two-week exhibition, twenty photographs depicting women from various backgrounds were displayed to the public. Visitors' interest in the exhibited works and their participation in discussion sessions held throughout the event demonstrated their enthusiasm. Interview results indicated that some guests were previously unaware of the existence of the Visual Communication Design Department at Tarumanagara University. While interacting with the guests, it became clear that some of them were not familiar with the Department of Visual Communication Design at Tarumanagara University prior to this event.

These results indicate that the exhibition served as an excellent means of introducing the academic institution to a wider audience, while also providing a venue to appreciate the photographic works.

The exhibition's ability to attract visitors demonstrates that public spaces such as shopping malls can serve as alternative venues for enhancing visual literacy. Visitors have a greater opportunity to interpret and understand visual messages more deeply through direct interaction with the photographic works and their descriptions, compared to relying solely on digital media. This exhibition shows how cooperation between universities and outside partners may produce a learning environment that improves ties between the general public and the academic community. As a result, it also encourages the creation of visual communication programs that support intergenerational learning, public involvement, academic work, and visual literacy.

CONCLUSION

Intergenerational cooperation can be a successful strategy for fusing academic pursuits with community involvement, as demonstrated by the "Happiness is Me" photography exhibition, which was put together by faculty, alumni, and students from Tarumanagara University's Department of Visual Communication Design at Ciputra Mall in Jakarta. A more dynamic and inclusive creative process is fostered by this collaboration, which allows individuals from many generations to share knowledge, professional experiences, and creative viewpoints.

The planning, curation, production, promotion, implementation, and evaluation phases of this exhibition show that a photography exhibition serves as a medium for visual communication, public education, and institutional promotion in addition to being a platform for exhibiting visual works.

Since there are no systematic surveys or quantitative estimates of visitor counts, the study's findings on "communication effectiveness" and "enthusiasm" levels are offered as exploratory results. Only informal interviews and participant observation were used to gather data. It is widely accepted that the qualitative approach has limited data generalizability.

A viable model for community service projects that support visual literacy, public access to scholarly works, and significant cooperation between academic institutions and outside partners might be intergenerational photography exhibitions. Future exhibitions could incorporate formal assessment methods, such as short questionnaires or feedback forms, to increase the validity of data related to public participation indicators. These procedures can be combined with qualitative field data to provide a more rigorous analytical framework.

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