



## Thematic Design Concept of Artwork in Hospitals: Public Spaces of Children's Hospitals Focus

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### Abstract

This research has explored the thematic design of artwork for the public spaces of children's hospitals. The context is Palestine, which has specific cultural and religious considerations. In Palestine, the context of this research, there is a dearth of literature on thematic design artwork for public spaces of children's hospitals. Relevant literature recommends conducting research on the design of artworks that provide healing environments for children's age groups. Few studies have used artbased approaches to identify children's artwork preferences. Thus, this paper has come to fill in these gaps. The data collection process was divided into two phases: Phase 1 evaluated and analysed the thematic design of artwork presented in 45 photographs in two paediatric departments in Palestine. Phase 2 consisted of nine participatory workshops. The workshops which included arts-based activities and semi-structured interviews were conducted in Palestine. Participants (n=52) were 3-18-year-old children and teenagers, parents, doctors, nurses, reception and admissions staff, and four groups of designers. This research has employed the thematic analysis approach for the analysis of the qualitative data in the second phase. The findings of the study identified a number of themes: nature, water features, culture, sport, music, abstract art, and semi-permanent art, related to the function of the space. The findings also revealed a strong preference by all stakeholders to include nature as a thematic design to provide appropriate artwork for all stakeholders. This research has demonstrated how practical design methods in the research process could effectively foster creativity and draw out ideas and preferences from young children and other stakeholders. Such methods can help identify the appropriate artwork.

**Keywords:** Artwork, Children's hospitals, Participatory research, thematic analysis approach, nature