

Youth Empowerment in Urban Kampung Neighbourhood through Placemaking. A Case Study of Bandung and Jakarta, Indonesia

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Abstract

The concept of placemaking entails the necessity for practical implementation rather than being solely theoretical or based on planning considerations. Placemaking practices focus on human activities and public spaces. Therefore, the process of placemaking necessitates active involvement and engagement with the community, as it is essential to understand and incorporate the unique needs, values, and aspirations of the residents to create a sense of belonging and identity towards a public space. A unique example is community in “urban kampung” in Indonesia, a prevalent urban neighbourhood archetype characterised by distinct attributes and a conservative community. The urban kampung, with its dense population, poses many issues, one of which is the need for additional public places. The current study focuses on employing the placemaking strategy, specifically targeting children and youth as the primary users, to enhance the provision of activities inside two urban kampungs in Bandung and Jakarta where youth predominate.

Through engagement in projects, this article demonstrates the application of two distinct methodologies between the cities. The strategy in Bandung involved revitalising a previously-neglected area under a highway bridge and transforming it into a suitable football facility. While the strategy in Jakarta concentrated on experimenting with how to organise activities with the children at the urban kampung, both cities have projects aimed at promoting community engagement in public places via the use of placemaking. It is important to acknowledge that children have distinct values, understandings, and needs that should be accommodated in public spaces. This study posits that the placemaking strategy may be effectively implemented in small-scale projects, such as creating specific activities or establishing dedicated spaces. Findings indicate that physical attributes are insufficient for a location to be considered excellent; rather, the presence of engaging activities is necessary to enhance its quality.

Keywords: placemaking, community engagement, urban kampung, youth empowerment, children

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I. Introduction

Placemaking shifts urban planning focus from buildings to public spaces and human activities (Courage et al., 2021, p.3). Placemaking is a community-driven process that is used to shape a place's image and function (Schneekloth & Shibley, 1995). Placemaking encompasses a broad range of activities, from constructing and taking over buildings and may sometimes take the shape of sporadic events or an invisible daily activity. (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995).

The Project for Public Places (PPS) developed a concept of placemaking following community engagement protocols, which inspired people or groups to work together to reinvent and revitalise public places as the core of the community. Community engagement, a fundamental process worldwide, involves stakeholders, communities, and people who use the place (Nursery-Bay, 2020). Engaging local communities is crucial because they possess invaluable knowledge about their place. The concept of engagement provides an opportunity to articulate a dialogue between the place itself and the community that uses it (Reddel & Woolcock, 2004). Nursery-Bay (2020) highlights key aspects of community engagement in placemaking: community knowledge, diverse engagement tools, digital engagement, and cultural competence.

1.1 Placemaking framework

While Mateo-Babiano and Lee (2018, pp. 22–29) outline five components, known as placemaking frameworks, that are applicable in most place-shaping events and acts: people, process, product, program, and place evaluation. These placemaking frameworks aim to assist placemakers in designing strategies. Since placemaking is community-driven, “people” are the primary factor. To that extent, people encompass place leadership, actively participate in place and placemaking, and serve as sources for identifying individual and collective needs.

Placemaking entails the continuous transformation of places, originating from the grassroots level, also known as bottom-up, or stemming from asset-based strategies like maximising the resources of an existing community or from purpose-driven methods guided by a particular objective. Placemaking results can range from large-scale interventions to pop-ups on the street and they can be either social (intangible) or physical (tangible). However, the converging results between physical and social factors could enhance social environments that foster people-place relationships. Places and people cannot function without the integration of programming that establishes a connection between them. Interventions might have a long-term or short-term goal. Programming could ensure the place's sustainability and enhance users' experiences. Placemaking, as a process, requires evaluation to ensure community recognition and preservation of the place's value. An evaluation of the effort's outcomes may indicate the need for a new, fresh placemaking method or iteration. Examining initiatives to improve social and physical outcomes is a critical component of site assessment. In the evaluation, we can take lessons from both successful and unsuccessful placemaking experiences.

1.2 Study context: Urban Kampung

An urban kampung refers to a city community that lacks infrastructure and economic planning (Wirjomartono, B., 1995, p. 171). Most discussion on urban kampung in Indonesia focuses on its negative characteristics, including its illegality, inadequate infrastructure, and lower socioeconomic status of individuals due to illegal living and urbanisation (UN-

HABITAT, 2003; p. 211; Funo et al., 2002, p.193; Yudohusodo, 1991, p. 311). The lack of infrastructure encompasses not only the physical state of dwellings, but also the absence of open spaces, sanitation, and utilities (Yudohusodo, 1991, p.311). Nevertheless, urban kampung offers advantages; the residents possess a communal social connection similar to that of a family (Funo, et al., 2002; p.1993; Jellinek, L., 2017, p.273). Children in urban kampung, particularly vulnerable to technology addiction due to limited access to outdoor spaces, require public areas dedicated to physical activity and social interaction to foster holistic development. Public spaces dedicated to children's activities are vital. The placemaking method entails establishing a tangible space that promotes user engagement through its programming (Mateo-Babiano and Lee, 2018). This research investigates the need for a placemaking strategy in urban kampung in Indonesia, concentrating on two short case studies in Bandung and Jakarta.

2. Methodology

This study used descriptive analysis to determine the patterns of implementing the placemaking strategy in dense urban kampungs in Bandung and Jakarta. Building on the 5P Placemaking Framework (Mateo-Babiano and Lee, 2018), we examined each case in terms of people, process, product, program, and place evaluation. In both cases, the placemaking approach aimed to improve the environment, particularly for the children, and to increase their sense of belonging to their local community.

Based on our experiences, the challenge project in Bandung aims to revitalise an abandoned area of 2600 square metres, located under the highway bridge. Ruang Ketiga, a student youth community, received funding from Global Infrastructure Basel (GIB) to undertake this project in collaboration with the World Resource Institute (WRI) Indonesia. The team, led by four senior students, collaborated with 29 students on the project for a duration for approximately five months. The initiative in Jakarta aimed to promote social interaction among children by encouraging them to disengage from electronic gadgets and play with their peers at the kampung. A cohort of 23 young students participating in a summer school program under the Architecture Program of Institut Teknologi Bandung dedicated their efforts to create a pop-up event. The funding was supported by Paragon, a factory next to the kampung, which has been actively collaborating with the local kampung community. The flow of this research is shown in Figure 1.

3. Case studies

a. Case 1: Taman Futsal in Tamansari urban Kampung, Bandung City

Taman Futsal is located in Tamansari Urban Kampung, at the centre of Bandung. This area has the highest poverty rate in the entire Bandung Wetan District, reaching 94% (BPS, 2019). Due to the high poverty rate, individuals are unable to afford to live in the city centre, forcing them to reside in high-density population areas. According to Kim (2015), low-income communities living in densely populated settlements struggle to find space for movement. This also happens at Tamansari, where people have limited opportunities for social interaction, economic activities, and other productive endeavors.

Taman Futsal is situated in a convenient location on government-owned land. However, its position is under a flyover, which limits its visibility. Local communities and children's

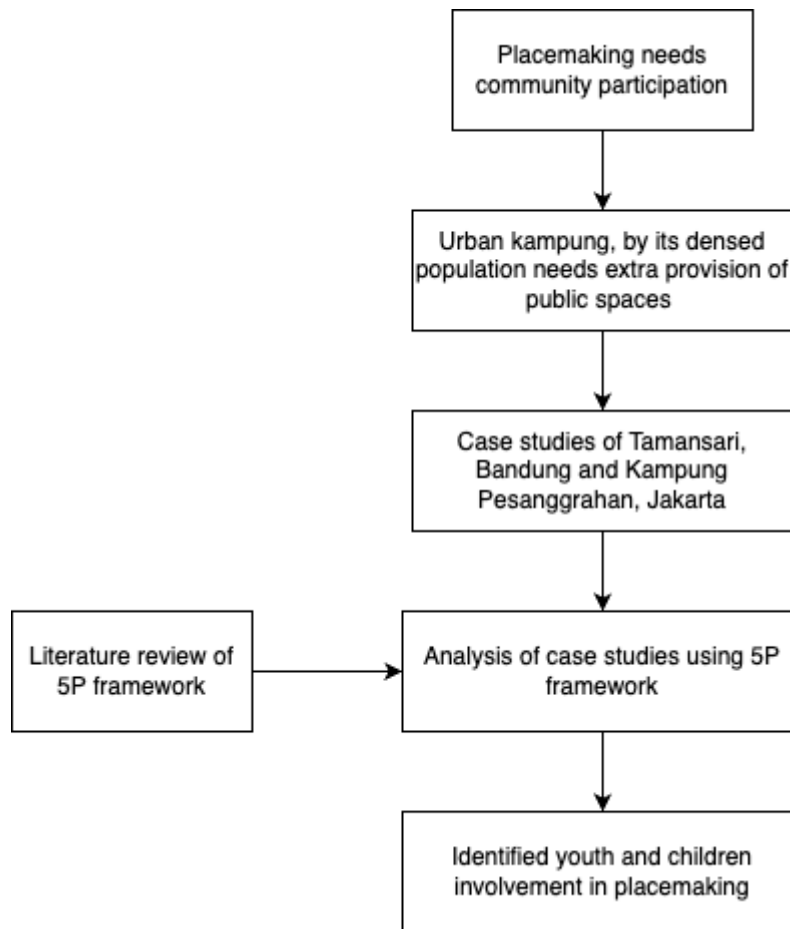


Figure 1. Methodology structure. Credits: Author

football teams have previously used Taman Futsal, as part of a company's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative. This field also served as the venue for the 'Homeless World Cup.' Unfortunately, the pandemic has left Taman Futsal abandoned, transforming it into a neglected area. Some local elites have exploited the area, illegally leasing it to nearby residents for parking purposes. The area's frequent users, primarily children and youth, lack the authority to keep it as a public space.

To that extent, the project aims to return this place to the local community as a public space. We observed from January to March 2023, between 2 and 4 days per week. Based on our observations, we were able to locate some of Futsal's instruments, specifically nets and poles. However, we discovered that Taman Futsal had become not only an informal parking area but also a place for people, especially the drivers, to throw their garbage and urinate in the field. In this situation, children who used to play futsal had to move to the park located next to Taman Futsal, which has terraces and might not be safe for playing futsal.

Following the observation, we separated the strategy into three phases: aspiration gathering, design, and execution. The first phase was to gather the aspirations from the local community stakeholders. We collected the data via informal offline interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). We identified five local community stakeholders: head of district, head of urban kampung, local youth community (Karang Taruna), head of all Rukun Warga in Tamansari Urban Kampung (smaller citizen association under urban kampung),

and the current land-power who rented the Taman Futsal. We invited the heads of all Rukun Warga and local elites to an informal interview to understand their aspirations regarding Taman Futsal. We invited the five local community stakeholders and government officials who were in charge in that area to participate in a FGD to discuss and address their worries and wishes regarding the future use of Taman Futsal. During the design phase, we analysed the data from the interview and FGD. After collecting the necessary data, we developed the Taman Futsal design to create a public place at Taman Futsal. After we had finished the design, we invited the stakeholders, including community leaders and public officials, to review and give feedback on the design. Once the design received approval, we initiated the construction process.

However, an obstacle arose before construction could commence. The elite locals who illegally rented the area for parking, refused the idea of turning it into a public place. As a result, we worked with them to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the plan and specify its benefits. A consensus was reached in which we allocated one-third of the space for parking purposes with an agreement that work would commence after the rental time for the parking lot concluded at the end of the month, causing a further delay in construction.

During the execution phase, our primary emphasis was on the field's construction and activation. We completed the building in roughly one month, and required an additional month for event activation. Upon completion, we reached out to the surrounding community and educated them on the need to maintain cleanliness in the field. We encouraged them to participate by collecting litter if they were to use the space for recreational purposes. Over time, youngsters began to frequently participate in recreational activities in Taman Futsal, utilising not only futsal as well as rollerblades and kites.

This project has shown the need to meet the expectations of all stakeholders when adopting placemaking. This includes considering the significance of each stakeholder and their role in the process. User involvement in the design of a place, known as participation engagement, is crucial since people own the most extensive information about their region and everyday activities. It is important to actively listen to the local community in order to ensure that the project effectively addresses their needs. As such, placemakers must establish a strong connection with the local community to gain their confidence and to communicate the importance of their active participation in establishing a communal space that will provide them with advantages.

b. Case 2: Kampung Pesanggrahan - Jakarta

Kampung Pesanggrahan is located in the southern part of Jakarta and has a population of 246900 inhabitants. Most of the inhabitants are engaged in kampung. Despite the fact that children constitute less than 50% of the population, the kampung has a limited amount of open space for them to play in. The Paragon factory, which is next to the kampung, has actively collaborated with the local community. This factory provided us with funds to support our program, and its employees, known as Paragonian, assisted us in establishing contact with the kampung residents.

The event preparation lasted for one week and involved various activities. We collaborated with the Paragonian to perform an online observation of the kampung due to the pandemic in the following manner: while we were in Bandung, the Paragonian took a field trip around the kampung synchronously using the Zoom platform. The investigation revealed that the kampung lacked public areas designated for children to play. There was



Figure 2. Taman Futsal condition before placemaking project. Credit: author



Figure 3. Taman Futsal condition after placemaking project. Credit: author



Figure 4. (left) The game challenge at the pop-up event, Credit: author
Figure 5. (right) The pop-up ends with the presentation of the group's dream park. Credit: author

only one public area: a badminton court next to the head of the kampung's residence. The kampung is prone to flooding during the rainy season because of the irrigation system that runs through it.

We had an online interview with residents/ parents which revealed that children often spend their leisure time in the alleyways near their homes or in the alley next to the irrigation system. Parents emphasised that children are consistently engaged with their gadgets. Given the scarcity of public space and the growing dependence of children on gadgets, the project aimed to demonstrate to the local community how to engage children in leisure activities within the limits of public space. We coordinated a pop-up event which drew approximately 30 children, aged 9 to 12. The social experiment project took place in June 2022, following Paragonian's agreement to the proposal and budget. Our social experiment, a three-hour pop-up event, focused on familiarising children with their environment and deepening their comprehension of waste management. The pop-up event used a game to incorporate physical activity, teamwork, and creativity. The game taught lessons for children to collect trash and categorise it by examining trash from their surroundings. They explored the kampung in three distinct locations, each of which presented unique challenges. Once they finished, their task was to develop their dream park.

The suggested game required teamwork, and it worked. The activity helped children make new friends. We were surprised to draw in parents and siblings who were not part of our intended audience during the location presentation. The event was well-received by parents, as their children actively participated and refrained from using gadgets. We found that the pop-up event met our target, as children engaged in activities without their gadgets in a limited space.

4. Results and discussions

This section will analyse the two scenarios using the 5P framework to enhance our understanding of how different factors interrelate in the creation of placemaking strategies. As placemakers, we spearheaded all cases at Taman Futsal with Ruang Ketiga and Kampung Pesanggrahan, collaborating with a group of students.

	Taman Futsal, Bandung	Kampung Pesanggrahan, Jakarta
People	Local champions with a powerful communal vision. Local community stakeholders involvement Children as the major users at Taman Futsal	Paragonian representative from the factory who gave funding assisted in contact with locals Several adult residents Children as participants in the pop-up event
	All group discussion excluded children.	
Process	A mix of bottom-up and top-down process The community's assets to create a sense of belonging	A bottom-up approach with the agreement from the Paragonian who provided the funding
Products	Medium-scale physical intervention (tangible) Social intervention (intangible)	A-3 hour of pop-up event Social intervention (intangible)
Program	Creating an event and collaborating with youth community Introduced the returned Taman Futsal to several communities.	Promoting physical activity and social interaction among children Redirecting children from gadgets to activity
Place evaluation (lesson to learn)	It's challenging to educate urban kampung residents about public space maintenance.	Children are a good intermediary for increasing adults' awareness of creating public spaces.

Table 1. Summary 5P's from Two Cases

Although children were the intended recipients in both scenarios, they did not actively engage in the process. The scale differences between Bandung and Jakarta revealed that larger-scale projects attract more stakeholders. Both studies found that local champions and stakeholders play a crucial role in the placemaking approach. This study suggests that in a placemaking process, stakeholders can alter the approach of either a bottom-up or top-down strategy. Practices necessitated a combination of bottom-up and top-down placemaking processes, as placemaking approaches require collaboration. The range of placemaking products can vary from tangible to intangible; however, the intangible or

social intervention is the core of placemaking, as it will activate the place. The utilisation of the placemaking process is extremely important. Placemaking programs can establish connections between communities and the place itself, and those communities will have different experiences with the place. Assessing the place will require more effort, as the placemaking process necessitates users' awareness and stewardship as well. It's encouraging to know that the entire family can participate. This indicates that children may be suitable candidates for placemaking initiatives.

5. Conclusions

This study demonstrated the implementation of placemaking strategies that specifically targeted children and youth as the predominant user cohort. Our study revealed that parents' dominant influence often disregards the existence of children and youth despite their primary role as public space users. Thus, it is crucial to observe children and youth's behaviour in order to determine their needs in future placemaking projects.

The placemaking approach necessitates the presence of local champions who can assist locals in assuming responsibility for the program's sustainability. A suitable solution could first change the mindset of the local community. Children could be potential mediators in raising adults' awareness, although in some countries this action should be integrated with the culture and regulations.

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