

1 YOUNG ADULT'S PERCEPTIONS OF SPATIAL IDENTITY IN KAMPUNGS, SURABAYA - INDONESIA

2
3 ¹Damayanti, Rully and ²Kossak, Florian

4 ¹Architecture Department, Petra Christian University, Surabaya - Indonesia

5 ²School of Architecture, The University of Sheffield, Sheffield - UK

6 arp11rd@sheffield.ac.uk

7 8 9 10 **ABSTRACT**

Spatial identity is a connection between people (as the observers), physical elements of the place, and activity associated with them. The development of identity is through the process of psychological feeling of attachment to become spatial knowledge, which covers perception and conception. This article explores young adults' perception and identity in facing the modernity contrast of kampungs and the city (*kampung* = urban village), in order to suggest public policies in improving the spatial environment. It is based on a qualitative research with young adults aged 20-26 years old as the participants. The spatial identity identified is in terms of material, iconic and behavioural characteristics; that reflect their social life and spatial perception.

INTRODUCTION

Kampungs in Surabaya today are places that offer accessible and affordable settlements for the city centre's workers. Kampungs and the city have different speed of development and adaptations processes of modernization, and have been located side by side for periods of time, and kampungs were left untouched by governments, in terms of their development, so that kampungs have survived until the present time. Surabaya city was initiated by many villages or *kampung* that slowly emerged as one city; it was agriculture land (sugar fields) mixed with kampungs as settlement areas for the farmers (Dick 2002). Then the development of the city focused on the area around and along the main street (ribbon development). The grouped kampungs have survived on location inserted among streets in the urban area (Basundoro 2009).

This paper is based on a research in answering questions: What does it mean to be young and live in marginal areas of kampungs that is in juxtaposition to a central business district? Is there any specific spatial perception and identity that are crucial for public policy in protecting this area?. This article is based on a qualitative research that used a multifaceted methodological approach, combined

with an interdisciplinary theoretical frame. The technic for data collection are semi-structured interviews (one-on-one and group), mental map drawings, map discussion, and photos/videos documentation. The interviews cover topics in terms of the quality of the place: favourite place, disliked/worst places and change/hopes. The investigation in this article is divided into four sections: theoretical background, the social life, the spatial perception, and the spatial identity.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Spatial identity, which some experts call spatial preferences or symbols, is a product of culture that is intertwined with social dimensions and the capacity of humans in relation to their social experiences in the space/place (Nas 2002). It is an cultural element that relates to a specific meaning (Colombijn 1993) or it can be an object, act or other expression that connected with emotional dimensions of attachment (Nas 1993). There are four types of expression: material, discursive, iconic, and behavioural (Nas in Evers 2011). Material means physical elements; discursive means urban images and narratives, iconic means sacred and profane in nature, and behavioural means rituals or events.

According to Jacobs (1962), spatial identity is determined by two important factors: quality of places and activities. Quality of places is encouraged by the observers' perceptions of its elements' legibility, vitality, diversity and comfort (Shamsuddin and Ujang 2008). And quality of activities that occur within the place is a main indicator in defining the identity (Jacobs 1962). The dialog of observers-activity-elements creates place identity though its process of creating images, memories, conceptions and belief (Proshansky, Fabian, and Kaminoff 1983). Or in other words, Canter highlighted that "*we have not fully identified the place until we know what behavior is associated with, what the physical parameters of that setting are, and the conception, which people hold of that behavior in that physical environment*" (Canter 1977, p.159).

Perception is a mental representation of spatial identity or spatial knowledge (Tuan 1977), and creates a connection between the observers and the urban setting. There are a variety of ways to represent spatial perception; and mental map making is the most common way. According to Downs and Stea (2011), cognitive maps of mental map are the processes to understand human's perceptions especially in spatial knowledge. The maps are composed of a series of transformations: acquired codes, memory stores, and recalls. This decode information are about the environment and its attributes in the human's everyday spatial environment. It is affected by culture and the experiences of the observers through an interaction and attachment process between the people in the city, its urban elements, structural pattern of the city, and the observers' imagination. The observers through their positive or negative, strong or weak perception of the setting define the degree of attachment that later identify the elements or spatial quality that make the observers attached to the setting.

Because this research relates to spatial identity development process behind a specific group, a semi-ethnographical approach is needed, and it allows the researcher to interpret the meaning of the thematic findings (Dillabough and Kennelly 2010). The methods used in this research are a combination of Kevin Lynch's techniques in his books 'Image of the City' (Lynch 1960) and 'Growing Up in Cities' (Lynch 1977), and also ethnographical research methods from other studies related to young people living in marginal areas (from Chawla 2002 and Soja 1996). Lynch's concept focuses on the 'material types' of spatial identity expression, because it is emphasizing on legibility factor that is a physical value of elements/urban spaces. Through the exploration of the society in their social life in ethnographical approach, the observation of other types of symbol bearers (iconic, behavioural, and discursive) could be identified.

SOCIAL LIFE

Participants in the research are young adults aged 20-26 years old, and who have lived in kampungs since they were born. This research considered young adults who have settled in two kampungs: the kampung of Keputran Pasar Kecil and Kedondong, which are located around the business district of Surabaya, the area of Basuki Rahmad. On average, they continued their education until high school, and some of them finished college; they work in casual basis whether in their kampungs or in the city.

Time Allocation and Activities

WEEKDAYS ACTIVITIES - am					
< 4.00	4.00-6.00	6.00-8.00	8.00-10.00	10.00-12.00	12.00-14.00
SLEEP	SLEEP	SLEEP	DOMESTIC ACTIVITIES	WORK OUTSIDE THE KAMPUNGS	SLEEP
WORK AT THE KAMPUNG	WORK AT THE KAMPUNG	ABLUTIONS	ABLUTIONS	DOMESTIC ACTIVITIES	WORK OUTSIDE THE KAMPUNGS
PLAYING IN THE CYBER CAFE	PLAYING IN THE CYBER CAFE	DOMESTIC ACTIVITIES	SLEEP	SLEEP	DOMESTIC ACTIVITIES
SHALAT AT THE MUSHALLA	WORK AT THE KEPUTRAN MARKET	WORK AT THE KAMPUNG		WORK AT THE KEPUTRAN MARKET	
WORK AT THE KEPUTRAN MARKET		PLAYING IN THE CYBER CAFE		HANGING OUT IN THE KAMPUNGS	
SCHOOL					
WEEKDAYS ACTIVITIES - pm					
14.00-16.00	16.00-18.00	18.00-20.00	20.00-22.00	22.00-24.00	> 24.00
WORK OUTSIDE THE KAMPUNGS	WORK OUTSIDE THE KAMPUNGS	HANGING OUT IN THE KAMPUNGS	HANGING OUT IN THE KAMPUNGS	RELAXING IN THE CITY	SLEEP
HANGING OUT IN THE KAMPUNGS	HANGING OUT IN THE KAMPUNGS	DOMESTIC ACTIVITIES	WORK OUTSIDE THE KAMPUNGS	SLEEP	WORK AT THE KAMPUNG
DOMESTIC ACTIVITIES	RELAXING IN THE CITY	WORK OUTSIDE THE KAMPUNGS	RELAXING IN THE CITY	DOMESTIC ACTIVITIES	PLAYING IN THE CYBER CAFE
		PLAYING IN THE CYBER CAFE		WORK AT THE KEPUTRAN MARKET	HANGING OUT IN THE KAMPUNGS
				RELAXING IN THE CITY	RELAXING IN THE CITY
				WORK AT THE KEPUTRAN MARKET	WORK AT THE KEPUTRAN MARKET

note: darker color shows more participants involve in the type of activity

Figure 1. Time Allocation and Activities

According to the time allocation diagram, a small number of the participants are earning money for living from outside the kampungs in formal institutions. They have a flexible daily schedule, because they are jobless or work from home or work on a casual basis. Some of them have shops in their houses running by the family members, hence they have to wake up early morning to prepare foods/drinks and pack them. At a particular time of day, they are responsible for taking care the shop while relaxing with their friends in the shop. Most of them have casual jobs; therefore their leisure time is relatively high compared to those who work in formal institutions. Their daily schedule depends on their working time, but for those who have casual work or are jobless, they do hang out¹ in the kampung almost every day until early morning around 3AM.

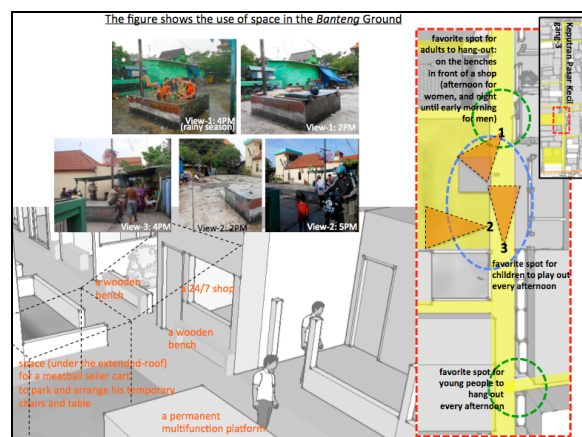


Figure 2. Spots of social activities in the kampungs

The participants spend most of their daily time in the kampungs, whether for work or relaxing with

¹ The expression 'to hang out' is deliberately needed throughout this study because although it is an informal phrase, to use another more formal phrase (like 'to socialize') would not succinctly describe the activity of loitering.

friends. Activities at the weekend show that they like to spend their holidays in the kampung in particular spots regularly. Often they continue to drink and gamble. The best time to experience the young adults' life is in the afternoon until late evening. There were no extraordinary activities in the morning, but later in the afternoon, when the sun is getting low, the kampung's main alley becomes crowded. Young adults' favourite places to gather in the kampung of Kedondong are around the corner close to a barber shop, snacks/ food shop, and one – room dwellings around the corner; and in the kampung of Keputran in front of a cyber café that is located near the entrance gate and facing the Mushalla ground (an open space).

In the kampung of Kedondong, people of many ages like to chat, play, smoke, eat afternoon snacks, drink coffee or just sit along the corner, especially in the afternoon. Children are playing around the alley, while some small children are dressed by their moms in front of their one-room dwellings after having their showers. Men and women chat in a very relaxed way. They make jokes, laugh at each other and sometimes talk about serious topics. While they converse they also drink and eat snacks provided by a shop. After Maghrib time (around 7pm), more young men in this area. Approaching midnight, some young men from outside the kampung come to gather in this area. One of them collects money from the others, and later buys alcoholic drinks from outside. It is not a legal alcoholic drink, but alcohol liquid (illegal brewing) mixed with energy drinks or sodas. At around 2AM; they finished their drinks, some left the kampung, some could not even stand up and keep lying on the floor until the early morning. Adults just watched them from distance and continued with their chatting and chess games. Sometimes, the young adult had brawls until the elders stop them and asked them to leave the area.

SPATIAL PERCEPTION

Spatial perception analysis is based on data from mental map drawings to show their imageability to the neighbourhood, and also questions related to their favourite places, disliked places and changes in their neighbourhood.

The Image of The Kampung

Exploring the young adults' mental maps of the kampung, the spatial/elements preferences in the kampung emphasized along the main alley, which is the only access to the kampung. They know most of the details: the number of houses, colour of the benches, trees and greenery; and also members of

groups that gather in specific areas. Particularly, they have strong preferences in areas along the alley especially the spots for meeting.

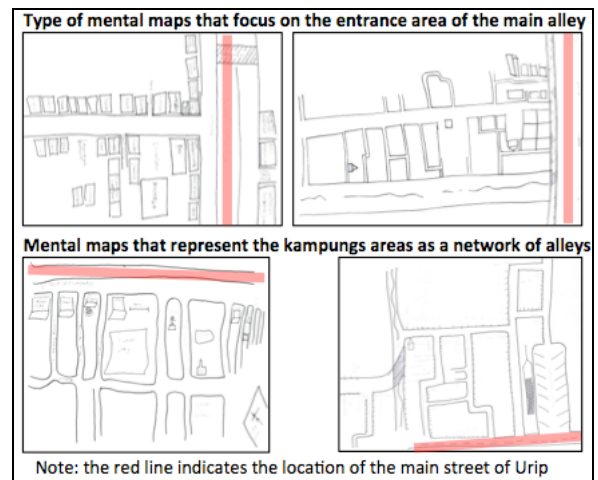


Figure 3. Kampung Images by the young adults

According to interviews with the young adults regarding the best words conceptualized their kampung, they had mentioned several important points, which are:

- Simple place in a strategic location
- Place of nice and friendly people
- Crowded and never quiet
- Claustrophobic and a lot of shops
- Place for young people with no future, gamblers and drunkards, and jobless people
- Place for gossipers

The Favorite Places

In defining favourite places in the kampung, has been asked several questions related to places: what they spend most of their time, what are the most important places in the kampung, what are the best places for social activity, and what is the best place in the kampung. In both kampung, young adults mentioned their homes as places where they spend most time and the most important place in the kampung, and then they mentioned the cyber café and the shop-corner mentioned previously. In both locations, they spend their leisure time relaxing with friends. Besides both locations, they also mention the Mushalla and Banteng Ground as their favourite places for social activity.

“My favourite place in this kampung is the cyber café, it is the place where I can play with my friends, work to earn money and kill my time. We like to sit on the bench for hours just to chat and watch people passing by until morning” (male, 26 years old)

The cyber café in the kampung of Keputran is actually a house that provides computers to be

rented by the hour, and it is open 24/7. The computers are only used for Internet connection, especially online games. They are good players of any online games; they could earn money from playing games (real transactions with real money). Sometimes, if they have enough money they like to buy an alcoholic drink, one that is illegal and involves self-mixed brewing. A spot for hanging out is a wooden bench just in front of the café, placed in the alley and facing the open space, which belongs to the Mushalla. The location of the café and the open space is very close to the kampung's entrance, people from outside the kampung also use the café and play in the open space especially children in the afternoon.

"I do not live in this area, but I come here every day to hang out with friends. This place is nice, the people are also nice, many friends from different kampung gather here. It close to a snack shop and a barber shop that open 24/7 " (male, 20 years old)

The favourite place for meeting in the kampung of Kedondong is also a favourite place for young adults from different kampungs. They said that this spot is nice and comfortable for sitting and chatting, and many young adults from other kampungs come to this place almost every night. The activity of drinking and gambling is common here. On the other hand, there is ignorance from adults and other people who do not agree with their activities. Around 2010, undercover policemen patrolled in this kampung and many men and women were happy to be their informants due to the financial incentives. But recently, the gambling has become rare and they only play occasionally depending on the seasons (dry season for dove gambling and rainy season for toy boat gambling).

The Disliked Places

In identifying the disliked places in the kampungs, young adults mentioned 'a house number 38', the gutter, and some kampungs next to them as the worst/most disliked. Number 38 is known as a haunted house located in the middle of the kampung and it has easy access from any places in the kampung (next to the short cut to the next alley). Although it is a haunted house, young adults like to hang out here until late evening, because of its accessible location. Young adults from the kampung of Kedondong have mentioned several kampungs next to their areas, which are the kampung Among Siswa, Kejambon, Panjunan and Karang Bulak, as being the worst places. They said these kampungs are dark and too quiet, not many

people like to hang out in the alley, hence it brings feelings of insecurity or danger.

"I hate the area near the cyber café and the Mushalla ground, every time I walked from work at late night, many young men sit on the benches and starred at me; I feel unsecure " (female 21 years old)

There is a contradiction of the meaning of the cyber café. For young adults belong to kampung of Keputran, the place is their favourite place to hang out. Contrary, for some young women who not live in the kampung, the activity in front of the cyber café is giving an unsecure feeling when at night they have to pass it since it is the only access from the main road and they came from work. And, just opposite the café, there is a Mushalla ground where men adults like to hang out here, continue with drinks and gambles. Therefore, the women mentioned the cyber café as a dislike place.

Changes and Hopes

"The kampung is more liveable since we had a new place for community meeting, improvement of the night lighting along the alley, and surface hardening of the alley is so great" (male 26 years old)

"Once, we always had a brawl after drinks; but now, even though more friends come to this place, we only chat together, and rarely continue to drink and gamble " (male 20 years old)

These young adults are aware of any changes in their kampungs, especially related to physical development and feeling of claustrophobic in their area. They are aware of the physical development, such as the alleys' quality improvement, development of the building for community meeting, development culverts for drainage, and improvement for the gutter's barrier. They feel from time to time the kampung is more crowded because of the city centre's workers, they feel more claustrophobic and less concern from the new comers to their kampung cleanliness. A young adult said that there is less of brawl recently; even more young people come to this area to drink and gamble. He said that more young adults are jobless, they are would not sustain in one job, and like to move from one to another.

"The best thing in this kampung is enjoying our friendship; the space here is not as comfortable as in cafes or any other nice places...but we like it here, as long as we can hang out with friends" (male 24 years old)

Surprisingly, when asked about their hope for their kampungs, mostly said that there will be no hope for the kampungs since it will be demolished by the government and change into commercial areas expanding the business district. In the future they are sure that the kampungs will be worse in terms of the environmental quality and the density. Even though they feel uncertain about the future, they still want to stay in the kampungs. When asked them about leaving the kampung in the event of them having enough money, they said no except to move to new places with their friends, and some said that they would prefer to open a business in the kampung rather than buy a new house in any formal settlements. The important values of the strategic location of their kampung which is attached to the central business district, is very crucial to them and it is not replaceable. They feel no urgency to move to a better settlements area. Even for some adults who have their second house in a formal estate far from the city centre, they prefer to stay in kampung. Attachment of young adults to their friends is strong, stronger than their attachment to the kampungs, and the value of the strategic location of the kampung is also something to keep.

"I don't want to think about the future, I have never had an opportunity to have a good career; recently, I'm just doing what I can: earning money, spending money, and playing with my friends; this is my life" (male 26 years old)

When discussed the experience of living in a kampung, the young adults had highlighted several points that they felt were important, which are: we have enough room to do our activities; we feel comfortable being here, we feel safe enough and yet we feel crowded. Their feeling is in paradox: crowded but comfort and free. They understood that kampungs are the populous areas; but living in these kampungs since they were born, they get used to the crowds, and never feel uncomfortable. From time to time; they said that parents, families and friends said it was very rare to have the opportunity of a good career. Therefore, they felt hopeless about their future, being in a kampung is a fate, no need to regret and it is better to enjoy the life.

CONCLUSION: SPATIAL IDENTITY

In answering questions raised on the first part of this article: What does it mean to be young and live in marginal areas of kampungs that is in juxtaposition to a central business district? Is there any specific spatial perception and identity that are crucial for public policy in protecting this area?. The first question is answered through the exploration of the

young adults' social practices, and the second question through the spatial perception exploration of the spatial image, favourite place, disliked/worst places and change and hopes. This section is the analysis of spatial identity identification based on the both findings; it is summarized in the diagram below.

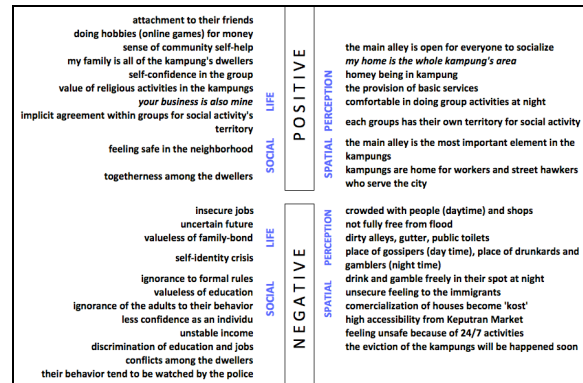


Figure 4. The young adults' social practices and spatial perception

The diagram shows two groups in spatial identity development through place attachment study (adopted from Chawla 2002): social life (left side), and spatial perception (right side). These groups has dimension in positive and negative correlations. This analysis also explores place alienation through negative feeling of social life and spatial perceptions to the environment (through the negatives dimension).

It could be summarized that the spatial identity are developed through social bonding, feeling of security/insecurity, feeling of territoriality, spatial recognition, sense of community, and sense of life stability. Referring to the four types of spatial identity expression, the spatial identity of the young adults to their kampungs are explained below, however there is an absent of discursive symbols:

- Material identity is reflected through the organic pattern of the alleys and houses, one-room dwellings, and places/ spots for hang out.
- Iconic identity is reflected through the alleys as a social space, places of worship, the ancestor's graves, and the kampungs' gate
- Behavioral identity is reflected through the young adults social activity in the spot related to their hobby that connect them to modernity in virtual life, such as the cyber café.

Based on the methods applied in this research, from the three categorization of the identity expression as above, the last category that is the behavioural identity is the most crucial one. The identification of spatial identity by studying the perception and

conception of the young adults to their kampungs, the crucial identity does not refer to the physical elements that common planning strategy acknowledged. Therefore in urban planning strategy, the socio-anthropological approach is important especially in analysing urban areas in marginal position such as kampungs.

The main purpose of this study is to suggest public policies in improving the spatial environment. Today, kampungs' development and empowerment is rarely answering young adults' needs. On the other hand, this group of people is an agent of change especially for low quality environment such as the kampungs (Lefebvre 1996). If the power (government) seriously maintain the future of kampungs, whereas industry workers have partly replaced local people (Kresno Murti 2011), their needs are important to consider. The kampungs' future is in the young adults' future; ignoring their perception and cultural (spatial) identity is also ignoring the future of kampungs.

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