Sustainable Urban Space Development Based on The Needs of Urban Communities: A Case Study of the Bandung Raid Party

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Abstract

Sustainable urban spaces are the right of every urban dweller. The preferences of citizens need to be considered in developing an urban environment, which includes their favorite communal activities. Consequently, these communities should be able to provide recommendations for ensuring effective and efficient sustainable development. This study aims to formalize the connection between reasonable development based on urban community activities and to gather input on what can be improved to enhance their experience. The Bandung Raid Party was the urban community selected for this study in consideration of their direct interaction with urban spaces, their members come from various backgrounds, and their ripe age in comparison with other similar communities. Key data and information are gathered through a literature review and structured interviews with strategic actors from the community, which are later analyzed using content analysis. After comprehensive analysis and consideration, the research shows how the Bandung Raid Party community observes and appreciates the quality of urban spaces where they hold their activities. The study also shows that their activities can be supported by developing and improving sustainable pedestrian access, public spaces, and urban iconic landmarks. These findings can be initial evidence of how urban communities can provide significant input for sustainable urban development.

Keywords: urban community; sustainable development; community-based planning; Pokémon GO, urban spaces

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Introduction

One of the main dilemmas in urban planning is how to plan development on limited land while having to facilitate the infinite activities of human beings. Despite development generally being in the hands of the government as the public sector and businesses controlling the market, the participation of more parties in the development process can have a positive impact (Banks & Hulme, 2014). Therefore, it is necessary to develop comprehensive planning alternatives to achieve optimal development for all parties. In support of this, Jones (2008) claimed that there is an ongoing global discourse regarding

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the importance of a planning paradigm shift in how urban planners and urban designers deliver more equitable urban outcomes that fit local communities. Moreover, developing alternatives in the planning process is essential to ensure that development not only follows a common template but also integrates the latest knowledge and technology, as well as the aspirations of all stakeholders (Radcliffe, 2015). Furthermore, Farr (2008) emphasizes that following urban planning templates that fit other communities' lifestyles may result in failure and misdirection.

One planning approach that encourages the participation of many stakeholders in development is community-based planning. Community-based planning is a type of planning approach that encourages community participation in providing input at various planning periods, from issue identification, and goal setting, to evaluation. Communities can help determine development alternatives, which support a shift in the planning paradigm toward more two-way communication and discussion with the community as the main users of the built environment (Innes, 1998; Al-Kodmany, 2001). Suminar *et al.* (2024) also add that integrating locals into the planning process can bring cultural values and uniqueness specific to the planning space.

The main argument for the lack of community-based planning for urban development is the assumption that the heterogeneity of urban communities results in a lack of ownership and concern for development. However, previous studies have shown that this can be changed. From their research, Hibbard and Laurie (2000) concluded that people today want to contribute more tangibly to the development of their neighborhoods than just by paying taxes. Selman (2004) elaborates that sustainable development cannot be based on bureaucratic policies alone but must also be supported by public acceptance as the main user. Moreover, Shandas and Menser (2008) state that communities are more likely to care about and maintain programs and developments that are initiated by them and located in spaces they use frequently. All of these studies point to a trend of increasing public concern for development that needs to be acknowledged by urban planners and decision-makers.

This article aims to demonstrate how urban communities interpret space and provide constructive input into the development that needs to occur in that space using a participatory approach. The resulting narrative demonstrates a new form of community-based planning that has not generally been implemented in Indonesia through planning based on interest and hobby communities. This approach is rare, especially in Indonesia, where the communities used as the basis for planning are typically economic communities (with similar jobs) or regional communities (living in the same neighborhood). Through a case study of the Bandung Raid Party Community, a gaming community that often uses urban space as a place for activities, this article demonstrates the ability of interest and hobby communities to understand space and contribute to its development. This premise aligns with Oleksy and Wnuk's (2017) belief that a community's care for its space can be influenced by all experiences that occur in that location, including the experience of using the space as the setting for their augmented reality games. It is hoped that through positive play experiences, individuals' satisfaction and sense of ownership of urban spaces can increase.

Method

This research is a qualitative study that uses a literature review and interviews to collect data, with descriptive analysis as the data analysis method. Bryman and Bell (2007) define qualitative research as research that shows the relationship between theory and actual events in an inductive, constructive, and interpretative manner. This research approach was chosen to understand the social context and environment related to the spatial needs of urban communities. It is important to understand this context so that the interpretations and findings of the study are meaningful and align with actual conditions. Data collection in this research was carried out using a literature review and interviews, after which the collected data was analyzed using descriptive analysis. Aveyard (2010) defines a

literature study as a comprehensive research and interpretation of a set of literature that discusses a particular topic. The literature review was used to identify the current state of knowledge related to community-based planning, the Pokémon GO game, and the Bandung Raid Party community as an urban community. The main data collection method was structured interviews with four key informants who are active in the development of the urban community under discussion. Structured interviews are a method of collecting data and information through in-depth oral communication with the interviewees, focusing on the chosen topic using basic questions that have been prepared beforehand. The four key informants are community leaders from three generations and an active member with a background in urban and regional planning. The three community leaders were chosen to get a continuous perspective from the formation of the community to its current condition. The active member with a background in urban and regional planning was chosen as an expert who could relate the community's activities to the context of urban and regional planning. The interview consisted of 38 open-ended questions related to the respondents' identities, their experiences in the community, and their perceptions and preferences regarding urban space elements. The transcripts were then presented to the interviewees again to provide them with an opportunity to confirm that what was written in the article was consistent with their original thoughts. The data that had been collected was then analyzed using descriptive analysis. Descriptive analysis is basically an analytical method that explains the condition of an object or situation based on existing data and information. This analysis is used to sort out the key data obtained and present it in a systematic form. The diagram below illustrates the process explained above.

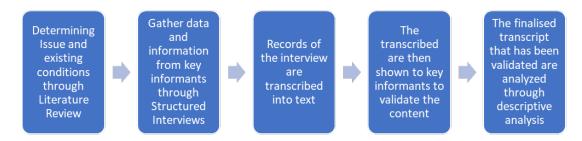


Figure 1. Research Methodology Process Diagram

The community chosen as the object of research is the Bandung Raid Party (BRP), a Pokémon GO gaming community that has an activity center in Bandung City. The selection of this community as the object of research may seem odd, especially since there are many more common communities in Bandung, such as photography communities, jazz music communities, or running communities. However, the selection of the Bandung Raid Party Community was made with a purpose based on some characteristics of the community. Some of the reasons for choosing this community as our case study are that they dynamically use urban spaces, the diverse backgrounds of their members, and their relative longevity compared to similar communities. Checkoway, Pothukuchi and Finn (1995) believe that the inclusiveness of planning needs to be as broad as possible, encompassing people from different social, cultural, and educational backgrounds. This diversity was also stated by one interviewee.

"...Dari umur sih beragam juga, dari mulai mahasiswa, yang kerja, terus ada juga anak-anak SMA, terus juga anak-anak kecil gitu yang didampingi sama orang tuanya untuk bermain gitu terus ketemu juga sama dosen. Jadi dari berbagai kalangan berbagai umur sama berbagai kewarganegaraan yang lain juga ada..." (Palaguna, A. T., Personal Communication, January 6th 2024)

Results and Discussion

The soul of a settlement is the people and community within it, as well as the values it holds, which depend on the variety of norms its citizens possess. According to Peraturan Pemerintah Pengganti *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 2 Tahun 2022* concerning Job Creation, cities are defined as areas that have non-agricultural main activities and serve as centers for government services, community services, and economic activities. In addition, a city also functions as a place of settlement. A community is a collection of people with a wide variety of characteristics who are socially bound by a common perspective and engage in activities in the same geographical location or under similar circumstances (Green & Mercer, 2001). It is this community that fills the city with its different perceptions and preferences. Thus, to plan a sustainable city, we need to understand the community that lives in the city.

Historically, planning that considers community input has emerged in world civilization since the 1930s. This paradigm encouraged them to be not only technical analysts but also communicators who could engage in planning dialogues with the public so that people could understand their role in development and would increase commitment, satisfaction, and realistic targets for development (Al-Kodmany, 2001). Looking at the current trends, people today are more involved in contributing to the common good in a tangible way rather than just paying taxes and receiving results (Hibbard & Laurie, 2000). Participatory planning also has the benefit that we as a community can achieve a universal understanding of planning issues and solutions, rather than relying on a single perspective from planners or urban designers (Al-Kodmany, 2001). One example of the benefits of community-based planning can be seen in the successful activist lawsuit against the government in 1994, which prioritized the use of buses as public transport over the more expensive MRT in Los Angeles (Grengs, 2002).

Community-based planning is an effective problem-solving innovation at various scales, especially as it focuses on identifying problems faced by homogeneous communities based on employment or economic conditions. Research regarding how the community affects planning is typically divided into identification and implementation. For example, Suminar *et al.*, (2024) successfully identified how the local wisdom of people living in Sudiroprajan shaped the physical form of their Chinatown. There are many examples of community-based planning successfully implemented in rural environments in Indonesia for economic development through tourism (Tarlani *et al.*, 2022; Aji & Faniza, 2022) and for supporting MSMEs (Aztamurri & Indratno, 2022) or as an approach to identifying opportunities in nature (Indratno *et al.*, 2023; Megantara *et al.*, 2024) or from development impacts (Ahmad Gozali *et al.*, 2023). However, when similar strategies are implemented in urban areas, the results are not as optimal as those in rural areas.

Community-based planning applied in large urban areas is often considered ineffective. One of the arguments for its inefficiency is the heterogeneous nature of the city's population, which has a variety of occupations with their priorities. However, urban residents form their own communities not based on their occupations, but rather on their specific interests and passions. Therefore, this research attempts to apply a community-based planning approach to urban communities that are formed based on these common interests. Interest-based communities, such as the Bandung Raid Party, which is one of the communities that use urban space as their playground, are expected to provide input for sustainable urban development.

Through the implementation of Augmented Reality that combines the real world and the digital world, a particular mobile video game called "Pokémon GO" has succeeded in changing the stigma towards video games that have been held by society. Gamers in society are often associated with teenagers who have pale skin and live in dark basements (Paaßen *et al.*, 2017), with unhealthy living habits such as poor sleep (Kemp *et al.*, 2021), lack of physical activity, and limited socializing

(Morgenroth *et al.*, 2020). This is different from Pokémon GO players, who are not only required to explore the real world and leave their houses but also have to socialize with other trainers to complete challenges in the game.

"Manfaatnya buat saya yang pasti punya teman lebih banyak itu udah pasti terus lebih mengenal Kota Bandung itu dimana aja kita keliling-keliling juga bertemu teman-teman semua sama yang saya suka itu banyak memories yang bagus sama anggota." (Pingkardi, K.C., personal communication, January 6th 2024)

To date, there have been many studies related to this phenomenal game that can provide benefits to its players and related sciences. The benefits of Pokémon GO are generally related to the health field, such as increased physical activity at a light intensity (such as walking), improved mood and social interaction, as well as improved aspects in terms of cognitive abilities, such as memory, attention, and concentration (Lee *et al.*, 2021). Although many studies have been conducted on Pokémon GO, few have discussed how this game affects the surrounding environment, which in the context of this study is the Pokémon GO community, on the development of Bandung City.

One key feature that attracts people to this game is called "raids." This game feature encourages players to defeat tough opponents together. This encouraged players to cooperate with each other through the formation of groups and local Pokémon GO communities. One such community formed out of the need to raid together is the Bandung Raid Party Community. The Bandung Raid Party Community was formed in June 2017. This is based on discussions from several relevant sources.

"Pertama kali itu saya masuk ke Kaskus kemudian kenal yang namanya Mang Cedel. Beliau mengajak ke grup Mystic. Akhirnya di.... Itu belum ada sistem raid hanya menangkap doang. Karena pas pengumuman ada sistem raid yang mengharuskan orang raid-nya bareng Anggota-anggota disitu mengusulkan kenapa tidak membentuk grup Pokémon GO khusus Bandung yang lintas grup tim. Karena kan disitu buat tim biru doang gitu setuju lah Mau bikin BRP Mengajak dari tim lain Andi Terbentuk BRP Bulan apa ya Juni Kalau nggak salah Beberapa hari sebelum lebaran lah" (Rahman, A. Z., personal communication, January 6th 2024).

In terms of membership, the Bandung Raid Party has a very diverse background of members, ranging from age, and occupation, to nationality. The uniqueness of the game and the popularity it has achieved since its inception have resulted in a wide diversity of backgrounds among its players. Whether for health reasons, habit, interest in learning, or love for Pokémon's alluring designs, players have successfully integrated the game into their daily lives and brought the community to life. Based on the interviews, this understanding is recognized and strongly held by the community members.

- "...Jadi disitu (Komunitas BRP) tuh banyak dari seperti saya kan kerja di kantor bagian akuntan, ketemu sama temen saya contohnya yang punya usaha sendiri gitu...."
- "...Dari umur sih beragam juga, dari mulai mahasiswa, yang kerja, terus ada juga anak-anak SMA, terus juga anak-anak kecil gitu yang didampingi sama orang tuanya untuk bermain gitu terus ketemu juga sama dosen. Jadi dari berbagai kalangan berbagai umur sama berbagai kewarganegaraan yang lain juga ada..." (Palaguna, A. T., Personal Communication, January 6th 2024).

The activities carried out by the Bandung Raid Party Community have developed following the development of features in the Pokémon GO game. From its initial function of accommodating raid event activities, the Bandung Raid Party has continued to grow and organize various community activities such as Raid Days, Player Versus Player (PVP), Community Days, and collaborations with Pokémon GO communities outside of Bandung.

"Pokoknya kegiatannya tetep di dalam Pokémon GO ya intinya tapi biasanya ngikutin event juga kan misalnya eventnya apa berarti kan pokoknya misalnya salah satunya Community Day" (Irawan, C. D., personal communication, January 2nd 2024)

"...kita bakal ngadain turnamen ini, Archaviari yang perbulan. Dan, nanti akan diadakan lagi. Jadi, Bulan Agustus itu nasional, satu Indonesia.." (Pingkardi, K.C., personal communication, January 6th 2024)

As a gaming community with Augmented Reality, Bandung Raid Party engages in activities that interact directly with the Bandung Urban Space and pay attention to the development of Bandung City. Therefore, we conducted this research to formulate the relationship between development and the activities of urban communities, using the Bandung Raid Party as a case study.

Various types of urban development can be implemented to support Pokémon GO playing activities and the Bandung Raid Party Community activities. However, the most significant developmental influences are the improvement and provision of quality pedestrian paths, the improvement of safe and well-distributed public spaces, and the dissemination and information of iconic objects and landmarks of Bandung City. These solutions can be proposed based on the results of discussions and interviews conducted with community members, based on their indirect observations that occur when they are active in the community. These solutions can be implemented by the government without supporting cheating or legal negligence. Without additional guidance and education, Pokémon GO has the potential to contribute to fraudulent and unlawful behavior, such as trespassing on private property, breaching regulations, engaging in acts that endanger safety, violating walking rules, and parking vehicles in illegal areas (Alomar, Alsaleh & Alarifi, 2019). Paay *et al.* (2018) have formulated possible cheating behaviors in the Pokémon GO game, some of which are directly related to space, such as illegal parking and trespassing.

The first spatial need that must be developed to support the activities of the Bandung Raid Party Community is **the improvement and addition of qualified pedestrian paths** in the Bandung City Area. According to the *Peraturan Menteri Pekerjaan Umum Republik Indonesia 2006* concerning Technical Guidelines for Facilities and Accessibility in Buildings and the Environment, pedestrian paths are intended for pedestrians, as well as for people with disabilities, the elderly, and the blind. These paths are designed according to minimum space requirements to move comfortably and unobstructed. Pattisinai, Nadiar, and Nusantara (2020) define pedestrian pathways as infrastructure built to support walking as an environmentally friendly transport option. One of the goals of the Pokémon GO game is for players to maintain their physical health by doing outdoor activities such as walking. Therefore, it is clear that the condition of the walkway facilities will affect the players' experience while playing Pokémon GO. This is also supported by the research of Alomar, Alsaleh, and Alarifi (2019), which shows that the construction of good pedestrian paths can help Pokémon GO players move safely.

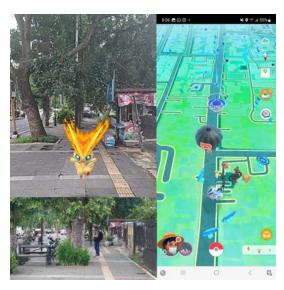


Figure 2. A View of Dago Street, the Best Pedestrian Path to Play Pokémon GO in Bandung City, in the Real World and in Pokémon Go

The importance of improving and providing footpaths was highlighted by interviewees when asked to identify which urban spatial elements have the most influence on their community activities, especially in terms of improving the quality of footpaths and the equitable distribution of quality footpaths across all roads in Bandung. The majority of interviewees stated that despite the existence of footpaths on most of Bandung's arterial roads, they are not well-maintained and can be dangerous for pedestrians. In addition to the potential injuries that pedestrians may suffer if they insist on walking on unmaintained footpaths, another risk is traffic accidents that may occur due to pedestrians preferring to walk in motor vehicle lanes rather than on footpaths. Furthermore, the interviewees expressed a desire for all areas of Bandung to have consistent pedestrian paths so they can conduct their activities in various locations in the city, rather than focusing on Dago only. Other pedestrian issues that were discussed included the comfort of pedestrian paths when supported by sufficient vegetation, as well as the need to curb street vendors and illegal parking in several pedestrian corridors in Bandung.

"...nggak konsisten ada yang bagus ada yang jelek, ada yang gede ada yang kecil, ada yang malah nggak ada. Ada tapi nggak enak jadi contohnya ada tapi udah rusak dan naik-turun..." (Rahman, A. Z., personal communication, January 6th 2024).

The second spatial need that should be developed is **the improvement of safe and well-distributed public spaces**. Public spaces are expected to be accessible to all people, regardless of age, ethnicity and race, gender, and income, with limited restrictions to reduce the challenges of urban life (Madanipour, 1999; Latham & Layton, 2019). The purpose of its development, based on mutual benefit, is that the formation of this public space must be based on shared aspirations. The formation of public spaces can affect the social, political, physical, and mental health conditions of urban communities (Latham & Layton, 2019). In addition, public spaces play a major role in ensuring that there is no social segregation between urban communities. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the different interpretations and expectations of various communities (Madanipour, 1999). These considerations align well with the hopes of the communities for improving public spaces.

Concerning the development of public spaces, the main focus is the limited accessibility of public space and the unequal distribution of public space. One government policy that has not adapted

to the post-Covid-19 pandemic is the reopening of city parks for citizens. For example, Bandung City Hall Park, which was frequently used by community members to play, has not yet reopened access to the public despite the lifting of the ban on activities in public spaces. Concerning the distribution of public spaces in Bandung, these areas are still agglomerated in the city center to the north so players from other corners of the city need to give more effort to gather and carry out community activities. Although other areas of the city have public spaces, the existing public space does not have the quality needed to carry out the activities of the community. For example, its size is minuscule, it does not possess landmarks to be used as a portal or Pokéstop, and it is located in a residential area, which limits accessibility. Other things that are highlighted by the sources related to public space are the provision of public space facilities such as garbage disposal, lighting, and public toilets.

"...tamannya terpusat di pusat kota, nggak menyebar ke daerah-daerah di pelosok. Pinggiran-pinggiran mah tamannya belum ada yang bagus" (Rahman, A. Z., personal communication, January 6th 2024).

The last spatial needs that can be concluded are the **dissemination and information of iconic objects and landmarks** of Bandung City. The iconic objects of cities and landmarks are used in Pokémon GO as "Wayspots", which are unique objects found around cities in the real world that when we interact in the game will players. The placement of these unique objects must be taken into account so that the process of playing Pokémon GO does not interfere with the norms of common life imposed in urban communities. Objects that can be used as Wayspots are very diverse, ranging from monuments, sculptures, and structures with unique architecture, to wall pictures by local artists, as long as the Wayspot is in an interesting location for exploring, exercising, and socializing. The setting of iconic objects as a point of interest in Pokémon GO needs to pay attention to public or private land ownership in order to meet the ethics of blending physical and digital space (Neely, 2019). Alomar, Alsaleh, and Alarifi (2019) concluded that someone's specialization in playing Pokémon GO has the potential to increase a person's awareness of the rules in force. When someone is too focused on their phone screens, there is a chance they may not notice streets, fences, and other surroundings. However, these levels of distraction can be reduced through good game planning, including related positioning of points of interest in secure and pedestrian-accessible locations.

In connection with the spread of the city's iconic objects, the sources point to the addition of iconic city objects and better maintenance of the city icons. Similar to previous problems, the community representatives hope that more iconic objects will be added, especially in the urban suburbs. The addition of iconic objects can provide additional identity and branding to the sites, as well as help the public more easily recognize the public areas of the city. However, many of the iconic objects that have been built are unmaintained and lack information. Many iconic objects in Bandung were only treated at the beginning of deposition and inauguration but afterward will be long forgotten and ruined. Besides, sometimes there is no clarity about the reasons for the placement and the significance of such objects for urban communities. In the context of their use in Pokémon GO, these iconic objects need to provide space for players to interact with the objects without interfering with the activities of other inhabitants. One example of Bandung's iconic object known as a good Wayspot is the Kubik Monument. These iconic objects are always well-maintained, clearly meaningful with the availability of information plaques, and have enough space for interaction for the community to carry out their activities without interfering with others. The following figure shows the status of the Kubik Monument as an iconic object in the city of Bandung.



Figure 2. Kubik Monument, One of the Best Wayspot in Bandung, Condition in Real Life and in Game

"...pemerintah bisa nambahin beberapa ikon-ikon yang unik lah di kota, apalagi di taman-taman tuh mungkin setiap taman kalau bisa dibikin satu ikon yang uniknya. Nah, itu buat nandain kalau taman area itu tersebut unik bisa dijadiin objek Pokéstop juga ya itu sih lebih ke memperbanyak ikon-ikon di tiap taman-taman mungkin." (Palaguna, A. T., komunikasi personal, 6 Januari 2024)

Conclusions

In short, the game that managed to integrate the digital information layer into the real-world layer of its player known as Pokémon GO has succeeded in encouraging its players to observe a variety of things, including spatial experiences. Emerging statements from members of the Bandung Raid Party Community show hope for spatial improvement in line with urban planning theories developed by the experts. Our role as planners is to further open our senses to urban communities and involve them in the planning process that holds a firm participatory foundation. Just as Pokémon GO succeeded in adding a new layer of information to the real world, this article invites readers and planning stakeholders to add a new perspective on planning. This article shows how a community based on interests and hobbies can provide constructive input to urban planning and development. Based on our research on the Bandung Raid Party Community, they are able to give suggestions regarding the improvement and provision of quality pedestrian paths, the improvement of safe and well-distributed public spaces, and the dissemination and information of iconic objects and landmarks of Bandung.

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