Informal Settlement and Community Adaptation Along the Railway Road in Cimahi

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Abstract: Due to urbanization, informal settlements have been portrayed as a form of adaptation in managing a community's limitations. Using informal settlements along the railway road in Cimahi City as a case study and qualitative method, this study aims to see how the community conducts adaptation and shapes the surrounding environment. The study found two types of adaptation, adjustment and reaction, as a response to rail noises, limited space, and accident-prone problems. In addition to the adaptation, there is a co-production in producing services to assure the community's safety since they live along the railway road. The findings revealed that the absence of government in guaranteeing citizens' rights has enforced community creates a system that increases community resilience.

Keywords: Informal Settlement, Adaptations, Co-production, Resilience, Community

INTRODUCTION

Today, informal settlement is a part of urban reality amid large-scale urbanization [1] [2] [3]. Informal settlement is an instance of geographic separation based on income [4]. The informal settlement is usually stigmatized as being characterized by poverty and crime. In addition, it is considered an area that damages the city's image and is sometimes also targeted for evictions to improve the city's image [5]. Shatkin (2004) argues that the informal area is a forgotten and neglected space [6]. People in this area are often seen as different from those in formal settlement areas. Still, they deserve limited access to several basic needs, such as clean water, appropriate sanitation, and safety. This situation is seen by Barnett (2018) and Locher (1999) as an urbanization injustice, while E. Soja (2009) described it as a spatial injustice [2] [7] [8]. This injustice is produced collectively, and it shapes the way people live. The government has an agenda to improve essential services for all urban citizens, but at the same time, it does not represent people living in informal settlements [9].

Informal settlements have also become a reality of the development of the Bandung Metropolitan Area. They were created by large-scale urbanization in the area. One settlement thrives along the railroad, integrating Bandung with other cities and regencies, such as Cimahi City. The informal settlement thriving along the railroad in Cigugur Tengah, Cimahi City, has existed for over 50 years. Poverty exacerbated by the inaccessibility of basic urban infrastructure is a situation that describes the condition of communities along the railroad tracks in Cigugur Tengah Village [10]. In addition, the development of informal settlements in Cigugur Tengah is increasingly complex, considering that this area lies on the administrative border between Cimahi City and Bandung City. Intergovernmental coordination and cooperation within metropolitan areas is one of the challenges in managing metropolitan areas or other types of extended urban areas [11] [12] in that these border areas tend to have weak supervision. Moreover, this kind of

informal settlement always faces specific disturbances, such as noise and the threat of danger when trains pass by the settlement. Previous studies regarding informal settlement in developing countries, as conducted by Ahlers et al. (2014), Jones (2017), Ortega (2016), Sultana (2015), and Sultana & Loftus (2019), have described how the absence of government in the informal settlements force people to adapt their behavior [1] [13] [14] [15]. Berry (1992) classified people's adaptations into three categories: adjustment, reaction, and withdrawal [16]. Adjustment refers to the behavioral changes in adapting to the surrounding environment in harmony. Unlike the adjustment mode, the reaction emphasizes changing the environment to increase harmony between people and the environment. Withdrawal refers to the voluntary avoidance by people. Furthermore, this adaptation also forms co-production, where people help themselves to meet their needs for public goods and services that the government otherwise supports [17]. For more than 50 years, citizens living in informal settlements along the railroad in Cigugur Tengah indicated that they also adapted their behavior amid their limitations. Thus, they can survive and still dwell along the railroad. Therefore, this study questions how citizens living in the informal settlement along the railroad in Cigugur Tengah adapt and dwell in the settlement. This research uses a qualitative method to identify how citizens adapt to survive and still achieve their rights.

This research is significant, considering that the previous research has been conducted by Bakti et al. (2017) and Ridlo (2020), who insist on seeing this phenomenon as a spatial violation that occurs due to weak spatial controls [18] [19]. Using a qualitative approach, this research also tried to see the other side of the space that forms and is formed by the social community and showed how the government's absence encourages the citizens' independence in collectively meeting their needs. This insight can enrich illustrations regarding the impact of urbanization. In addition, in urban and regional planning practice, this research can be used as material in compiling recommendations to the government regarding the collective provision of basic infrastructure for the community as an alternative to meeting community needs in informal areas, considering that the government is an essential agent in the distribution of community welfare. This paper is structured as follows. First, the theoretical framework is outlined by reviewing theories regarding adaptation and co-production. Second, the method of collecting and analyzing data is presented. The third part gives the results and discussion on adaptation conducted by people living in the Cigugur Tengah informal settlement along the railroad, and the conclusion follows this.
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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Adaptation and Informal Settlement

In social life, space is often regarded as an empty background. However, it is different from the views of Harvey (2012), E. Soja (2009), and E. W. Soja (2016), which hold that space is a social product that forms social and vice versa [2] [3] [20]. In the case of informal settlement, Kamalipour and Dovey (2020) described an incremental adaptation conducted by people living in the informal settlement, which is considered one of their capacities [5]. Adaptation is seen as a process, and Dovey (2012) saw adaptation as creatively developing a complex system that increases residents' resilience [23]. Human behavior is all kinds of experiences and interactions with the environment manifested in the form of knowledge, attitudes, and actions or responses [21], and the environment will reciprocally influence attitudes and behavior. The interaction between environmental situations and attitudes, with various factors inside and outside the individual, will form a complex process that ultimately determines the shape of a person's behavior. According to Berry et al. (1994), the influence of space on humans and vice versa also encourages acculturation [22]. One of the products of acculturation is adaptation. Adaptation can be seen as a strategy during the acculturation process.

There are three adaptation strategies: adjustment, reaction, and withdrawal [22]. Adaptation with adjustment addresses changing behavior to create harmony with the surrounding environment. Meanwhile, adaptation with reaction emphasizes the changes in the environment to increase harmony between the individual or wider society and the environment. The last type of adaptation is withdrawal, characterized by voluntarily avoiding contact with the environment. The exciting thing is Berry et al.'s (1994) argument that sometimes adaptation is the only alternative people have. Acculturation can occur through two categories of changes, namely, shifts in behavior and acculturative pressure [22]. Behavioral shifting involves learning new behaviors in new environments. In line with the individual/community's contact with the new environment, it also indicates that their contact with problems is higher, so changes in behavior are varied. Moreover, Kamalipour and Dovey (2020) also built three types of incremental adaptations conducted by people living in informal settlements: extension, replacement, division, connection, and

infill [5]. These adaptations emphasize the community effort in renovating their buildings in the middle of an informal settlement situation. Seeing the behavior of people living in informal settlements as adaptation and spatial production becomes more interesting. However, the study did not consider that behavioral changes without changing the environment also play a significant role in the vast development of informal settlements, particularly in the Global South countries. Therefore, this study also explored how people adapt by changing their environment and how they change their behavior to survive living in informal settlements along the railroad.

Co-production as Adaption in Informal Settlement

The adaptation generally is a complex adaptive assemblage [23]. It is complex due to the unpredictable independent and dependent factors that create a system. Thus, the adaptation of people living in an informal settlement can create a system that results in increased resilience. The interesting aspect of community adaptation is the adaptation toward securing their rights when the government does not provide suitable public services, such as clean water and sanitation, or even ensuring comfort, security, and safety. This kind of adaptation is seen as self-organization. It is defined by Boonstra and Boelens (2011, p. 100) as an initiative for spatial interventions that originate in civil society via autonomous community-based networks of citizens outside government control [24]. In the informal settlement context, self-organization is also seen as a process of space production and place-making [5] [25]. Another term denoting this kind of phenomenon is "co-production." In addition to self-organization, co-production is seen as an adaptation in this situation. First promoted by Ostrom (1990), co-production refers to an unorthodox arrangement of producing goods and services that non-state actors conduct.

In the Global South context, co-production exists due to the limited capacity of the government to deliver public services. In poor communities, people collectively provide their own basic needs on a small scale [26]. When a community faces the failure of the government to provide for its needs, the community is forced to establish services for itself. As an illustration, the community's struggle for the right to clean water in informal settlements is manifested by managing water resources for local community needs [15]. The framework of co-production in seeing adaptation conducted by a community living in an informal settlement will enrich the perspective that adaptation is not only an attempt to change behavior or the environment but also emerges as a survival strategy in poor neighborhoods to achieve community members' rights as citizens when government is not present. This study will depict a particular type of adaptation, which can also be seen as a co-production phenomenon where a community collectively creates services for itself.

DATA AND METHOD

Primary data was collected by interviewing ten participants chosen by purposive and snowball sampling. Two criteria are used to determine the participants when conducting purposive sampling. First, the participants must have lived along the railroad in Cigugur Tengah for over ten years. Second, the participants must understand physical and social development in the informal settlement along the railroad in Cigugur Tengah. Based on those criteria, this study interviewed the urban Cigugur Tengah sub-district secretary and three heads of neighborhoods. The rest of the participants were chosen by snowball sampling, starting from names proposed by the heads of neighborhoods. The interview covered questions regarding the activities of people in their daily lives, their experiences and impressions of living along the railroad, and how they dealt with the problems that occurred along the railroad. The participants involved in this interview were both heads of family and homemakers with an age range of 30 to 60 years old. They have also been living along the railroad for more than 20 years.

This research employed a qualitative approach because it helped to identify how citizens' behavior is shaped by the conflicts faced by citizens living along the railway road. In analyzing data, this study utilized Atlas to build codes developed by an inductive approach. The codes were determined by interpreting the chunking of interview transcripts [27] regarding the problems that people faced and the adaptations made by people living along the railroad. After codes were collected, some codes were grouped into one subcategory, and the subcategory showed a similar interpretation and reflected the type of adaptation formulated in the literature review. After that, axial codes were developed by seeing the connection between one category and other categories, revealing how people change their behavior due to the problems they face in their neighborhoods.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Problems in Informal Settlement Area Along the Railway Road

The informal settlement along the railroad in Cigugur Tengah has thrived for over 50 years. Most people living there are immigrants from other regencies in West Java, such as the Garut Regency and the Tasikmalaya Regency. Their migration aimed to get closer to their workplace as most of them worked in the surrounding factories. Financial limitations forced them to live in informal settlements along the railroad despite the availability of formal settlements. Surprisingly, although they live near the rail track and are not designated for settlement, they have freehold titles. This is one of the facets of the informal sector in developing countries, such as Indonesia; there is a gray area between formal and informal. Therefore, they can still access some basic needs, such as electricity, because the government provides it in space, although it is not designated for settlement.

However, regarding the codes obtained in the analysis, this study found that people living in the informal settlement along the railroad in Cigugur Tengah face several significant problems—noise, limited space, and an accident-prone context. Noise is the most apparent interference experienced by people living along the railroad. It emerged from the interviews that a train passes by every half hour. Moreover, after midnight, trains also pass by at 1 and 2 a.m. In this situation, children and homemakers are more exposed to noise than men, who spend most of their time at work. In contrast to the formal settlements, which usually have proportional open space or open green space in the neighborhoods, the only open space around people living along the railroad in Cigugur Tengah is the railroad itself and limited space between the railway and the houses, which is still part of railroad border. Figure 1 shows two kids sitting on the railroad tracks due to limited space. People do not have enough space to park their motorcycles, hang their laundry, or provide a play area for their children, and one dwelling could be a home for more than one family. In addition to the noise and limited space, being in an accident-prone context is an obvious hazard since trains pass by frequently, and there is no concrete barrier between the railroad and the houses. Reports of accidents involving residents were commonplace. These accidents happened because people only relied on their hearing, and there was no railroad crossing barrier.

FIGURE 1. Along the Railway Road's Situation (author's documentation, 2022)

Adaptations in Informal Settlement Area Along the Railway Road

Based on the three problems discussed before—noise, limited space, and being in an accident-prone context; people living along the railroad in Cigugur Tengah exemplified two types of adaptation. The first is adjustment, the most straightforward adaptation compared to other adaptations, such as reaction. Reaction adaptation is conducted to respond to limited space noise and problems. According to the interviews, this study found that people frequently reconcile to the noise they hear. It is reflected by the words chosen by a participant in the interview, namely "…there is not much I can do… I get used to….." This adjustment is seen as a forced situation since they knew they could not afford a better dwelling and environment. For people residing in the informal settlement along the railroad in Cigugur

Tengah for more than two years, the noise does not bother them anymore and has just become a part of their lives. The adjustment type of adaptation is conducted to deal with noise and the limited space problem. Since they live in a very dense settlement with limited private space, they use the limited open space around them to park their motorcycle. Most people living along the railroad do not have enough private space to park their vehicles, particularly motorcycles. Moreover, most have a bike since it was the favored type of vehicle in the face of unavailable public transport from this area to people's workplaces. As seen in Figure 2, owing to the limited public space for children to play around, they even dare to play next to the rail tracks, which is dangerous. However, the courage of children playing next to the rail track is produced by their interaction with the environment since people's interaction with their surroundings also shapes their attitude, as in Maeklong Market, Thailand [21].

FIGURE 2. Playing Kids Besides Railway Roads as An Adjustment of Limited Space (author's documentation, 2022)

The next type of adaptation found in informal settlements along the railroad in Cigugur Tengah is reaction. The reaction is seen by changing the environment to create harmony [22]. This adaptation responds to limited space and being in an accident-prone context. This study found that people react in several ways. As discussed before, limited space forced the Cigugur Tengah community to utilize minimal available space to keep performing their activities. The reaction type of adaptation is characterized by changing the surrounding environment. As seen in Figure 3, people created a simple pole and line to hang their laundry beside the railway, which is still a part of the railway border. The structure they made is straightforward to disassemble and reassemble, considering they realize that the authorities could dismantle it since they built the structure in an area that, strictly speaking, should be free from human activities. Indeed, Figure 3 also illustrates that there are permanent swings. Some people built permanent swings for children to play on since they do not have a playground. Limited open space for children forced them to create one even though it was harmful since it was built beside the railroad. This case shows us that the community will always fight for its right to open space. Thus, people utilize what is available even though it might be dangerous. Moreover, this also proves that their adaptation even increases their resilience [23].

FIGURE 3. Reaction Adaptation of Limited Space (author's documentation,2022)

Similar to the problem of limited space, the community also responded to the accident-prone context with two types of adaptations: adjustment and reaction. Since most people living along the railroad have been living there for more than ten years, they have memorized the times when the train passes so that when the time is near, they will be cautious to avoid the railroad. However, it is just a gut feeling that could be wrong. They said that people being hit by trains happened regularly before they collectively created a simple barrier from a simple iron bar at a particular point, and they collectively kept watch on the situation around the railroad, mainly when a train passed by. As seen in Figure 4, something built collectively is constructive for people who have to cross the railroad. Although the barrier made collectively is simple, it offers a sense of security. This behavior and the effort to create a simple barrier are seen as a reaction type of adaptation. The reaction adaptation, seen as a response to limited space and accident-prone problems, does not show sophisticated or expensive tools. Moreover, the exciting aspect of this simple barrier created collectively by people is that a group voluntarily created a non-permanent structure, such as a security post beside the railroad. This security post is a place for this group of people to take turns overseeing the traffic flow, particularly when trains pass by. The initiative to create such a system was devised after several train accidents. This solicitude prompted some people to help the local community to cross the railroad safely. Local community contributions funded the iron bar and the non-permanent construction of the security post. People taking turns guarding this traffic flow are also not paid. Yet, local communities crossing the railroad sometimes give them tips in gratitude for supervising the traffic flow of motorcycles, pedestrians, and trains passing by.

FIGURE 4. Simple Barrier as A Reaction Adaptation of Accident Prone (author's documentation, 2022)

As a discussion of adaptations in the Cigugur Tengah informal settlement, this study found that adjustment adaptations appear for each problem, as seen in Figure 5. This adjustment shown by people living in this kind of informal settlement has emphasized that acceptance is the easiest and cheapest thing they can do by letting the problems around them occur and creating harmony with the problem. The cheapness and ease of this adaptation drive the vast development of informal settlement, particularly in a country lacking land use control, such as Indonesia. As time passes, adaptations, particularly reaction adaptations, will transform an informal settlement into a very dense neighborhood since most reaction adaptations require space, as in Cigugur Tengah. Compared with the type of incremental adaptation, people living along the railroad in Cigugur Tengah showed different patterns. Since they have very limited private space or property, they utilize any available open space around them. Therefore, this study also found that the 'extended' adaptation also happened. Still, it added non-private space for private purposes, such as creating a simple structure to hang their laundry. Every upgrading conducted by the community in the informal settlement can escalate the informal settlement into a slum settlement because the environmental change conducted by people did not follow the formal codes or rules [5]. Displacement discourse has been spreading to the community since they live on land legally owned by the Indonesian Railway Company. Most people living along the railroad have known that they might be displaced at any time by the company. Interestingly, when they built the permanent

structures, such as the swing beside the railroad in front of their house, they were aware that the authorities could dismantle it at any time since they did not build it on their private property.
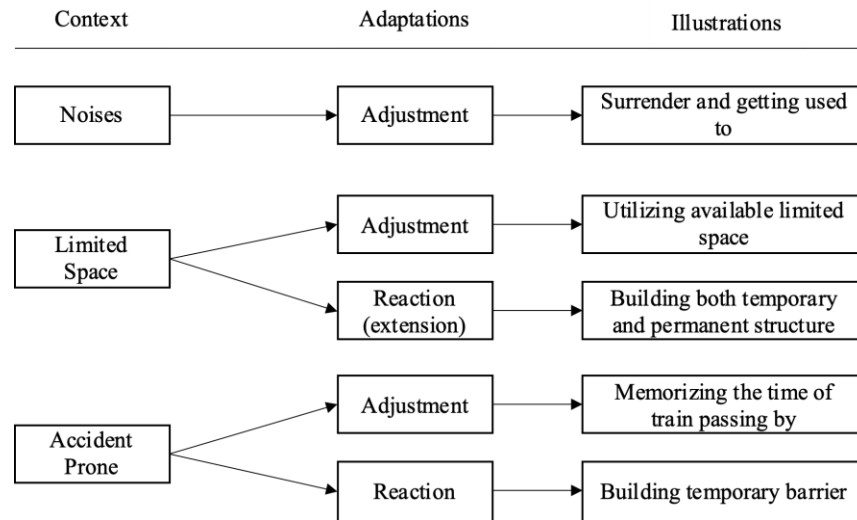

FIGURE 5. Adaptations Conducted in Cigugur Tengah Informal Settlement (analysis result, 2022)

Co-production as An Adaptation in Informal Settlement Area Along the Railway Road

Safety and security are at stake since this informal settlement is located along the railroad. As discussed previously regarding reaction adaptation to the accident-prone context, it can be seen in Figure 4 that the barrier was built by the community for the community. To increase safety for the local community living along the railroad and for people who need to cross the railway, a group of people created a security post, and they worked alternately as security guards supervising the situation around the railroad. Based on the interview conducted with the persons guarding the post, the community funded the development of that simple infrastructure. There is no financial aid from the local government, such as the sub-district government. Community contributions also supported infrastructure maintenance, particularly from motorists who crossed the railway. When crossing the railway, most motorists put their money in the box (See Figure 5), which was placed nearby. Not only for maintenance, the guards also take the money collected in the box as a "salary" for their services. Of course, the amount is not fixed daily; it depends on the people and motorists who use the crossing. In the rainy season, the total amount of money in the box tends to be small due to the difficulty of putting money in the box while it rains.
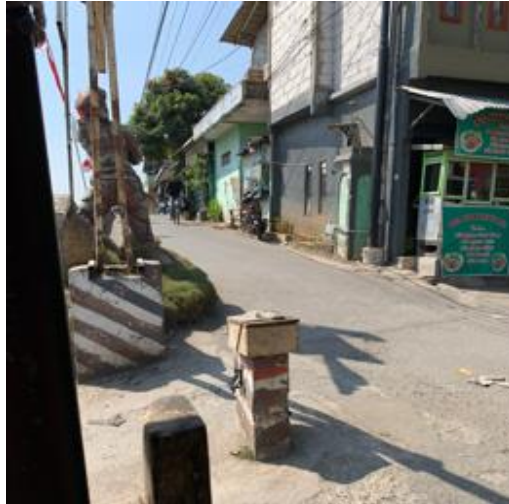
Figure 5. Box to Collect Money from Crossing Motorists (analysis result, 2022)

When safety is one of the citizens' rights, and the government cannot provide or create such an environment, a community will try to create one. Since they face an accident-prone context daily, they are forced to create a safe environment. Although not built by a formal institution, motorists crossing the railroad obey the system created by non-traffic police actors when, legally, it should be guarded by traffic police, not civilians. This adaptation is not simply a reaction or an extension type of incremental adaptation. It also produced services, resulting in a small scale system that is obeyed by the community and motorists crossing the railroad, illustrating co-productive phenomena. The system resulting from this adaptation increases the resilience of the community. This illustration suits Dovey's (2012) argument that informal settlement can settle into resilient forms, but it has dynamic stability [23].

CONCLUSION

Amid large-scale urbanization, informal settlements have become a part of the urbanization process since they are produced by urban capital accumulation that creates a crisis of formal settlement for low-income groups and separates them spatially from higher-income groups [2] [28] [29] [30]. Due to their limited capability in accessing formal settlements, they are forced to live in areas with limited essential services and a lack of comfort, security, and safety, particularly for those who live in informal settlements along the railroad in the Cigugur Tengah, Bandung Metropolitan Area. This study found that amid limitations, inconvenience, and the absence of government in assuring basic needs and a sense of comfort, security, and safety, the community living along the railroad showed adaptations in response to problems in their surroundings, such as noise, limited space, and an accident-prone context. The adaptation demonstrated by the community is an adaptation with adjustments and reactions. An adaptation with adjustment is the most commonly found in responding to noise, limited space, and accident-prone problems because adjustment is the easiest and cheapest of changes they can make to survive. This ease of adaptation is one of the factors that may escalate an informal settlement into a slum area [5]. Conversely, this is also seen as a capacity of community living in the informal settlement. The community living in the area under study also showed adaptation with reactions, particularly in responding to limited space and accident-prone problems. People building permanent or temporary structures outside their private property demonstrates the adaptation with reactions. Interestingly, reaction adaptation in response to an accident-prone context is illustrated by co-production phenomena where the community produces services, such as a service that increases safety from the accident-prone context. This co-production created a system obeyed by people living along the railroad even though the formal institutions did not create the system.

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