Capability Approach in Re-Imagining and Re-Producing Space
Case of Community-Based Citywide Slum Upgrading in Yogyakarta

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Abstract

The current stream of poverty alleviation, as prompted by Amartya Sen, with capability approach at its crux has the potentials to unpack space of alternatives in realms of urban design and planning. It is argued to hinge on two fundamental elements: (1) capability to re-imagine the city and (2) capability to re-produce space where deliberate participation process becomes the enabler in unsettling the power-laden realm of a city. This article exemplifies the case of community-based city-wide upgrading as performed by women groups settling on the riversides in Yogyakarta in challenging the mainstream discourse of a tourism city by repositioning kampung as major and visible components to urban development.

Keywords: capability approach, slum upgrading

Introduction

The seminal work of Amartya Sen, Development as Freedom, has changed the direction in development by positing capability and dignity as central drivers to human's quality of life. It has departed from homogeneous and materialist approaches to human development to a recognition of the diverse and irreducible nature of human which entails both material and immaterial aspects (Nussbaum, 2011). The capability approach uses the term ‘functionings’ aside from ‘capabilities’ which according to Robeyns (2005), functioning refers to the realised achievement of humans in enacting their freedom while capability explains the possibility of human’s freedom to make choices. This understanding of human’s opportunity to flourish has forced poverty reduction programs to see how deprived people should embrace their ‘valuable beings and doings’ hence supports the recognition of diversity about what humans value in their lives (Alkire, 2007). Although capability approach has been exhaustively researched in relation to individual and collective functionings as the approaches to poverty alleviation, little is unpacked about how it relates to ‘space’ where human’s functioning is enacted. The understanding of space in this paper refers to Lefebvre’s postulation of The Production of Space, where space is argued to has active, be it operational and instrumental, roles as knowledge and action in the existing mode of production of capitalism (Lefebvre, 1991). Space thus serves as an un-neutral entity as it is influenced by “[…] how hegemony makes use of it, in the establishment, on the basis of an underlying logic and with the help of knowledge and technical expertise, of a ‘system’” (ibid:11). For Lefebvre, as a tool of thought and action, space portrays as an apparatus of power in enacting its domination and control. It is thus important to understand how human capability presents itself in the power-laden milieu of space; how the complex relations embedded in space enable/disable individuals from achieving their freedom and dignity under the hegemony of capitals.

Frediani & Boano (2012) argued that capability approach is a useful framework in delving human dignity and (power) relations in the midst of unjust spatial manifestation. This re-orientation to the production of space is expected to recall the notion of ‘space’ into development agenda that have been left out by development planners. The nexus of capability and spatial approach ensues on what they termed as ‘capability space of participatory design’ which comprises of the continuous re-construction of deliberate
participatory process, production and appropriation of space to achieve freedom. Understanding capability space forces us to re-frame the dominant forms of abstraction, or for Lefebvre (1991), space of capitalism which overlooks the way we think and conduct to achieve a spatially and socially just condition. Contesting this form of marginalisation requires a grasp of “… conditions of subordination as well as oppression, but also spaces and opportunities for subversive thinking and practice” (pp.215). The questions to that are then, how (can) human(s) imagine and speak beyond such forms of abstraction? How can alternative narratives to the capitalist domination produced by human(s)? Nussbaum (2011) enlists senses, imagination and thought as part of the central capabilities that human should be “[…] able to use the senses, to imagine, think, and reason […]” and “[…] use one's mind in ways protected by guarantees of freedom of expression…”. This writing aims at linking that point with a critical engagement to the unjust spatial manifestation and degrading living quality of humans in cities.

Cities, as well as space, are socio-political construct which brings with its transformation discourses which “[…] establish limit, where the history of thoughts, in its traditional form, gave itself an indefinite space [and] are limited practical domains which have their boundaries (frontières), their rules of formations, and their conditions of existence […]” (Foucault, 1966:41). Discourses manifest in narratives, knowledge, or images which are facilitated by the appearance of cities as it becomes a site of capital (re-)production. Discourse is re-constructed through power manipulation, thus it is a question of who and how (one) dominates the discourse in a city. With the omnipresent pressure of competitiveness, cities are envisioned with marketing such as smart city, green city, or tourism city which carries with it the dispositif (see Foucault, 1980); law, moral propositions, architecture, technologies, or imagery to maintain the discourse. Guy Debord (1994) with the Situationist International brought the idea of how the visual realm of human is dominated as a site and goal of capital re-production. With such logic of modernism, eliminating poor images such as poverty, slums, any forms of informal conducts that does not fit the new modern identity becomes common practices; while also allowing capital accumulation to drive the city’s competitiveness. It is as Miles (2008) suggested about the ‘dystopian elements’ that needs to be made invisible as they do not agree the utopia of modernity and productivity. Nonetheless so, discourse can be a site of resistance (Gaventa, 2003) as also Foucault suggested (1998:101) “discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart”. This brings back the question of how alternative imagination in cities can be invented to challenge the dominant form of imagery?

This paper exemplifies the work of Community Architect in Jogja (Arsitek Komunitas Jogja – ArkomJogja) with the poor riverside communities (Paguyuban Kalijawi) to challenge the visual domination of a modern city by presenting and re-imagining their kampung, the spontaneous and self-help settlement, along with an attempt to empower the marginalised communities. Participatory mapping, planning, and development become the main tools of the community to grasp the spatial discourse of their city: how ‘others’ see informal settlers like them and how they become a heterotopia to the dominant imagery, to then challenge and offer a new approach to their city development that is anchored on kampung development. This process of ‘dislocating modernity’ into kampung relates to the space of recognition and diversity that is also propelled by the capability approach as it believes on different values on human being and doing (see Alkire, 2007). Re-visioning the city as to incorporate ‘the invisible’, or in this case marginalised communities living illegally in kampung, helps to crack the dominant approach to city planning while also at the same time allowing more voices to participate in the decision making. This process of enabling and empowering the community helps to extricate the power relation that sustains the marginalisation of specific communities. Therefore, under the domination of capitalist discourse and imagery, the capability to re-imagine and re-produce space is therefore argued to be focal for human’s functioning and improvement of the quality of life.
As the first part of this paper elaborates the background and relevance of bringing the ‘space’ through re-imagination and re-production into capability approach, the second part of this paper will serve the theoretical background to this paper on capability approach and the process of reimagining and reproducing the city. Following the theoretical foundation to this paper are the case of riverside community empowerment in Yogyakarta and discussion on how community empowerment can bring critical (spatial) approach together with the process of enabling deprived communities.

Politics of humanity and the re-imagination of the city

Chiles (2009) poses this profound question: “so can we re-imagine a city of part of a city through narrative, propose a structure and a process – a soft utopia, a re-visioning for the new century?” to think through. As Debord (1967) suggested, when humans become part of the collection of images, narratives, discourses that resemble their social relations, it becomes valid to critically investigate: how can we re-create alternatives to such images and narratives, thus relations? Narratives in the city indeed intersect and multiply; it circulates through ideas, technologies, laws, bureaucracy, and capitals that it becomes something that is “[…] bigger than our individual existences, make us feel less insignificant, sometimes give us at least partial answers to questions like who am I?” (Dolores Hayden quoted in Chiles, 2009:190). Nussbaum (1985:516) agrees this proposition on her work about literature that she argues “obtuseness and refusal of vision are our besetting vices. Responsible lucidity can be wrested from that darkness only by painful vigilant effort, the intense scrutiny of particulars”. Nussbaum pays attention to senses, imagination, and knowledge not only that they play focal functions to human functionings, but also that it reflects “… emotional as well as intellectual activity and gives certain type of priority to the perception of particular people and situations rather than to abstract rules”.

Nussbaum (2010) suggested through her concept of disgust that imagination, that is created by myths and narratives, could be constructed around an object and refuse its full humanity. Such forms discrimination leads to the politics of disgust which is at odds with the notion of equal manner in the eye of law. Respects and sympathy, allegedly, become crucial in understanding ‘others’. Nonetheless, respect itself is insufficient as the exercise of imagination according to Nussbaum helps to re-frame others’ position and shapes the realm of the politics of humanity or “a political attitude that combines respect with curiosity and imaginative attunement”. Therefore, the ability to imagine and emotionally engaged with particular’s situation are what make respect. This ‘moral imagination’ that Nussbaum suggested allows us to acknowledge things that different people value in being and doing, to recognise alternative imagination about something (Coeckelbergh, 2010). It alludes with Ranciere’s (2001) conceptualisation of the sensible: “[…] a relation, a shared ‘common’ [un commun partage] and the distribution of the exclusive parts”. The sensibility implies a partition of what can/cannot be visualised or heard, hence politics according to Ranciere is an attempt to disrupt ‘the partition of the sensible’ or to disclose the disappearance of the alternative realm.

In the urban context, the disgust manifests and transforms in slum areas where people of poverty is labelled as uneducated, illegal trespasser, dangerous, and criminal, and are marginalised in their existence, particularly under global-modern goals a city is aiming for. With city becoming a political construct, urban narrative is a contested terrain. Whose narrative counts? Meanwhile, the narrative of the city is allegedly a ‘shared process’ that: “it demands willingness to listen and learn, to focus on a ‘shared authority’ and to be at the core of the engagement with community’ (Chiles, 2009, pp.191). This shared authority depends on the “[…] autonomy of the thinking subject, who has power to re-order the world in a shift from intention to plan that parallels the shift from literary Utopias to the projection of utopian images onto the real, thereby re-framed, sites of colonization” (Miles, pp.22). The autonomy of heterogenising imageries and narratives in the city lies fundamentally on two principals: right
to difference and right to participate in the city making, which are very much what constitutes Lefebvre’s (1996) postulation of the right to the city. Lefebvre’s emphasize is more on the ‘be’ as to resist rather than ‘difference’ as to imply the importance of particularity (Dikec, 2011). Lefebvre argued that it is a difference that is enacted and lived, and cannot be trivialized into representations such as diversity or variety of living under the constructed identity. This again finds its common ground with the capability approach that being and enacting particularities are ways of articulating what people value to achieve their functionings (Alkire, 2007).

**Capability Approach and Participation in the Production of Space**

Nonetheless the idea and practice of participation has been banalized and depoliticised, it remains an important element in defining social justice, in conjunction with recognition and distribution (Fraser, 2010; Young, 1990). More importantly, as being associated with ‘freedom’, capability lies on the agency’s space in making decision with a value he/she believes in. This participation space is also suggested by Sen (2005) that “the people have to be seen, in this (development as freedom) perspective, as being actively involved – given the opportunity – in shaping their own destiny, and not just as passive recipients of the fruits of cunning development programs”. Participation is also associated with deliberate democracy which enables the making of space where “in this process, people rupture their existing attitudes of silence, accommodation, and passivity, and gain confidence and abilities to alter unjust conditions and structures. This is an authentic power for liberation that ultimately destroys a passive awaiting of fate (Freire, 1997: xi in Frediani, 2015). Alkire (2002) as explained by Frediani (2015:126) suggested how participatory approach finds its common ground with capability approach that: “they aim at obtaining outcomes that people value while empowering participants; they perceive the issue of ‘who decides’ as equally important to ‘what is decided’; they recognise that the process might not lead to the best choice but that discussion is an effective means of separating the ‘better’ from ‘worse choices; and reasoned deliberation is supported for consideration of advantage and interpersonal comparisons.” Therefore, participation should be conceived as not only the means to development, but an end to itself. The challenge to it is the trivialization of participation that reifies unbalanced power relation which often occurs through a ‘structural co-optation’ where the platform government creates for public participation was dominated by its own decision and in the end disregard people’s involvement (Miraftab, 2009; De Souza, 2006).

Involving marginalised communities in co-producing and co-improving slum settlement expands the urban political arena to incorporate more heterogeneous public into the discourse while at the same time negotiating with the standards, norms, institutional frameworks of development (Mitlin, 2008). Especially in the context of city making, participation becomes a buzzword to the development of urban vision to the implementation where people’s ideas are disregarded through consultation or socialisation of city development planning without them having a room for manoeuvre to include their vision into the documents. Here Healey (2006) stresses the importance of collaborative planning to become the bedrock of other approaches of planning to be initiated, as it initially forged relational capacity and created common space for actors to communicate. Miraftab (2009) hence pointed out the need for fluidity of insurgent movement to manoeuvre in both invited and invented space, by not only performing alternative actions against the hegemony but also influencing and reforming state’s policy to claim their urban citizenship.

Meanwhile, participation in design has been widely discussed as a fundamental mechanism to expand human capabilities (Oosterlaken, 2012; Frediani, 2010; Frediani & Boano, 2012). When design being a value-laden process and output, it transforms along with different needs of different social groups. Developing Buchanan’s (2001) argument, Oosterlaken suggested capability sensitive design approach emphasizing that design needs to be grounded and justified for its having ethical and political implications on human dignity and right. Particularly
on spatial design, Frediani & Boano (2012) conceptualised a capability space which is explained to be having two fundamental elements: process freedom and product freedom. While process freedom hinges on the deliberate democratic process which enables not only participation but also the shaping of space that allows participation (see also Gaventa, 2006), product freedom allows the creation and use of space that support human functionings according to what they value. A case study of the work of community architect in Yogyakarta is exemplified in the next chapter to illuminate the creation of capability space as prompted by the re-imagination of the city by urban poor communities.

Citywide Slum Upgrading in Yogyakarta: An Alternative Approach

In contradiction to it being highlighted as a tourism city, the dilemma of urban poverty haunts Yogyakarta. Despite of bearing many good achievements, one of them is the most liveable cities in Indonesia, Yogyakarta’s poverty rate is still the biggest among other districts in the province since 2009. In the city, poverty alleviation did not result significantly, as showed by the proportion, with only 2% decrease over the last five years. In 2013, the poor was accounted for 356.000 inhabitants (8.82%) from 452.900 (10.05%) in 2009.

Poverty has made almost the poor in Yogyakarta struggling with the lack access of formal land. The land tends to be the commodity of capitalist in the sake of tourism growth. This forced the poor to squat on any available land with slum conditions. Around 75% of the poor lived in 3 riverbank areas [1], they are Code, Winongo, and Gajahwong, with the land tenure of Sultan grounds [2] or Wedhi Kengser [3], while the remaining settle in some private land and formal kampung.

The poor in riverside has been certainly dealing with the issues of risk exposure, land security, physical and environmental matters, as well as social problems. Moreover, building lifes with informal status, even illegal, made them alienated from the government's programs, services, and attentions, including social protections. They have to provide themselves services and facilities, while the government no longer conducts river normalization but rationalization.

"The problem is, there is no more land in the city to accommodate people of riverbanks. This is clearly so dilemma. Rationalization is done by securing or improving the current infrastructure that was built in the area. For example, building an embankment to secure the inspection of the flood." (Head of Infrastructure Yogyakarta)

Against the domination of capitalistic conduct, a non-profit community architect organisation (ARKOM) took an alternative approach, namely Citywide Slum Upgrading (CSU). This idea stems from a city planning process which was done only by few elites and professionals who looked the community as object of data collection and then return to their studio. This very technocratic approach often produces some kind of solutions which are not effective, or arrive so late so the community has managed the problems in their own ways. Moreover, there was a debate among the members about the education of architecture and urban planning which is more accustomed to a top-down delivery system; such is the character of the industry. As stated by Fitrianto (2014), the debate was mostly around two things of fundamentals; 'which architecture' will work for the poor? And how to let the poor have ‘their own’ house and architecture?

The CSU is an alternative design of slum upgrading which puts the poor as a main actor in the process of planning, implementation, and also maintenance. This approach believes that the people who in everyday life experienced poverty as the key resource to solve enormous problem. The heart of this program is community savings. It works through eight principles, they are (1) implemented by community, (2) building on what is already there, (3) based in concrete action, (4) driven by real needs, (5) city wide in its scale, (6) strategic in its planning, (7) done in partnership, and (8) aiming at structural change. It is also utilizing the local belief
of “Gotong Royong”, the Javanese cultural term that solving problems should best be done together. Through these principles, the program tries to negotiate people’s right to the city with the land they already occupied, in cooperation with the local government’s plans to solve the problems of poverty, slums, and riverside.

In Yogyakarta, the program has been implemented in the riverbanks of Winongo and Gajahwong (but not in Codo), began with the participatory mapping of 23 riverside communities in the late of 2013. The mapping found that they still have problems of (1) bad sanitation system, (2) no drainage installation, (3) unsafe landslide as in a dangerous area, (4) unpaved road condition, (5) clean water installation, and (6) garbage. After 2 years, the program has been successfully involved 249 women in 23 groups with the community saving of 282 mio rupiah ($21.473) and revolving loan of 533 mio rupiah ($40.586). Also, there are at least 200 projects have done, where 165 of them are housing renovation while the remains are the development or renovation of community centre, public bathroom (MCK), embankment, gabion (bronjong), communal well, walking path, and drainage.

Since its initial introduction, CSU in Yogyakarta did not suddenly emerge from the womb of poorer citizens. The concept was adopted from a successful national upgrading program in Thailand, the Baan Mankong (see also Boonyabancha 2009). This community-driven approach was propelled when there were some facilitations from various parties that enhance the ability of communities to create and manage their resources. These facilitations primarily come from:

a. Community Architect (ARKOM)

ARKOM, the community architect organisation, conducted the guerrilla to make the poor aware about their rights to the city. Founded in late 2010, this organisation initially believes that the best way for the poor to secure their land was investing upon it through building and improving the existing of physical facilities. On its movement, ARKOM has been giving some technical and social assistances, and help the poor building trust to the city government that they were not urban disease.

b. Asian Coalition for Community Action (ACCA)

The spirit to realize the new approach at grass-root level coincides with a momentum of ongoing program of Asian Coalition for Community Action (ACCA). It is a regional program of the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR) that is building a community upgrading process in Asian cities. The program promotes community and their supporting groups to draw their combined experiences, plan and implement projects which tackle problems of land, infrastructure, and housing at scales in their cities, in partnership with their local governments and other local stakeholders. ACCA also provides maximum grant of $58,000 to set up a city-level revolving loan fund for upgrading. Integrated with that, ACHR also facilitates two region-wide platforms of sharing, linking, learning, and supporting, they are the Urban Poor Coalition Asia (UPCA) for the poor and the Community Architects Network (CAN) for the architects, planners, and social workers.

In its efforts to implement the new approach of city-upgrading, the following are the steps that have been done through the CSU program in Yogyakarta:

1. Building Women’s Saving Groups

The belief of “gotong royong” has manifested by organizing women’s saving groups. Until 2015, there are 23 groups which some of them were built by utilizing the community based organizations (CBOs) that have been in there. Every member should deposit Rp.1.000-2.000 (about $0.2) per day, which is just a little bit of their income, to the group coordinator. Saving together means enlarging the availability of collective resources. To make this works, the poor
(as household or part of community member) can use the savings [5] (as loan) for something they have to reason, such as improving the quality of their house with rolling system or constructing certain public facilities. Then, people will repay their loans every 20th of each month.

“People in the riverside of Winongo, now are having organization that quite strong. It has been proved by doing voluntary saving system. They are successful in collecting the self-funding of Rp 141 mio ($10.736). This saving can be initial fund for upgrading,”

(Coordinator of ARKOM)

To ensure and strengthen participation, the program assisted 23 groups along Winongo and Gajahwong to establish Kalijawi Federation. It is a federation of savings groups driven by women in the city-wide scale communities. The regular activities are monitoring of daily saving, community mapping, and house design exercises. Occasionally, Kalijawi interacts with municipal agencies, universities, and international researchers/students as well as engages in socio-cultural activities/campaign.

2. Mapping Process

After organized in a saving group, the poor men and women in each neighborhood conduct a social mapping to identify common problems. They transform a settlement/neighborhood basemap into more detailed information, covering their strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats. This method is easier for them to determine which project to prioritise, considering the community’s ability.

“To know the potentials and problems of Winongo, the effective way is doing a social-mapping together. The poor researching their own territory and then outlined the findings on the neighborhood map. Furthermore, it was developed into smaller zones to make it easier identifying the problems and needs of each area according to their specific characteristics”

(Coordinator of ARKOM)

A good example is in Ciptomulyo community where the group identified some problems in their neighbourhood such as not having a community centre, river dike to prevent flood, solid waste treatment, garbage, and electricity. All members agreed that building more decent community centre was the most priority. They considered the existing one was not enough to accommodate all of community members, that some of them were outside during the meeting. If they have a larger, it will make all members easier to capture clear information during meeting, as well as it can be a place for learning together and conducting some cultural gathering or ritual ceremony.

3. Technical planning and execution

A community project that have been agreed, then translated to the more technical design. The group took measurement, formulated the budget, designed the layout, calculated the material needed, and surveyed the price. The CSU promote to collect the material from local resources, e.g. sand from river or bamboo as a substitutive of woods. After the final budget plan was composed, they returned to determine the sources of project financing, whether this was enough to rely on savings or need to take loans. Community then coordinated the roles of each member, including to agree on a job rotating scheme, such as when they have to work, to prepare consumption, or got time off, as well as the target date of the project. Implementation was done independently, uphold the spirit of togetherness.

Box 1. Building Community Center in Pakuncen

A saving group in Pakuncen agreed to build a community center as they first project in CSU Program. The implementation cost about 23 mio rupiah ($1.773) where one-fourth was paid through a community loan from Kalijawi. The saving member spared Rp 1.000 ($0.08) per
day for the project. Within four months they have raised enough money to kick-start the project and took less than two months for construction.

Until now, the CSU program is still undergoing. However, the poor have felt the impact, particularly on improving the quality of life and recognition as urban citizens. This indicated that they, over their resources, have been able to function and make choices for value they hold onto.

“... by our power to build our road in kampung, we want to show to the government that we have abilities; energy, money and spirit to work together. For a long time we just received promises that our road would be built, but the reality is nonsense.” (A 45-year-old man – Leader of Road Reconstruction Team in Ledok Gajah Wong)

“... before we have community centre, we always have our meeting in street. It is very uncomfortable especially in rainy day, the meeting can be end. Now we have a community center for our activities: children can learn together, we can have out meeting about savings, ritual ceremony…” (A 50-year-old woman, lived in Ciptomulyo)

“... we have good experiences from architects about bamboo technology. For a long time we just use bamboo as a simple way for build a house. Now we know that by treat bamboo with specific treatment we can get a good quality of building. It is stronger and beautiful...” (A 52-year-old woman, Coordinator of Worker Team in Ciptomulyo)

Eventually, this paper shows that the Citywide Slum Upgrading with community-driven approach can be an effective scheme for renegotiating the city development. Although not yet fully accepted as "an official approach" of the government, this approach will continue its guerrilla, making urban rationality that is continuously renegotiated.

**Community-Based Citywide Upgrading: From A Re-Imagination and Participation in Spatial Production to Insurgency in Capability Approach**

The re-imagination of the city started through the mapping process, when Kalijawi Federation formulated their own kampung’s planning and vision. While the members of Kalijawi Federation settled on informal land nearby the river, their planning becomes an insurgency to the local government’s planning as their lands are delineated as green area instead of settlement. The label of informality is often attached to spontaneous settlement although this remains problematic. Varley (2002) discusses the obscurity of formal and informal status and argued that labelling spontaneous settlements as informal leads to their subordination to the planned ones in urban discourse and possibly, unfair state regulation of marginalising those living in incompliance with standards. Accordingly, AlSayyad and Roy (2004) also elaborate the vagueness of formal and informal status to spontaneous settlement as informality bears a degree of illegality while there are possibilities that planned and regular settlement developed with illegal procedure, standards, and plot subdivision. Informality hence turns into a logic of governmentality where the reigning power establishes ‘a state of exception’ to determine what is legitimate and illegitimate (Roy, 2003). Henceforth, reconstructing the binaries are essential in endorsing a more inclusive planning without perpetuating the unfair configuration.

Kalijawi Federation’s re-imagination of kampung emerges as critics to the dualistic discourse of ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ land market which justifies the alienation of groups of people from benefiting from some urban services and ‘formal’ settlement upgrading programs. Kalijawi Federation’s kampung planning is seen as an attempt to introduce a new narrative and imagery of kampung being integrated into political realm of urban planning by reframing the informality and bridging the political dialogue between actors in increasing the living quality of
*kampung* and the city as a whole. It is a response to the unequal power relation between actors and attempts at prompting the political participation of the marginalised. Kalijawi Federation mobilisation has created a new imagination and possibility of how urban planning could be more inclusive in the future and be directed to socio-environmental justice principles such as recognition, participation, and re-distribution of welfare (Fraser, 1998; Young, 1990). Community participation is at the crux of this process; started at the micro level with women and men’s collaboration in mapping and planning until the ‘formal’ political platform of participation where Kalijawi Federation presented their *kampung*’s vision.

Through the lens of capability approach, the existence of land, *kampung*, and socio-economic elements that relates to the livelihood is seen valuable by the urban poor women and men in Yogyakarta. Hence regardless labelled as ‘illegal’ or ‘trespasser’, the community still considers that their occupation in *kampung* is important for their functioning (doing works or going to schools). It is important to point out that as the land controlled by the market, people do not have choices other than settling nearby the river in the city. This marginalisation context occurs in a structural system which requires an alternative proposal particularly as Yogyakarta city becomes dominated by one single vision of tourism. It is also as suggested by Nussbaum (2011) that having senses, thoughts, knowledge, and freedom to express without fears of alienation is central to human capabilities. By that, it means having senses and freedom of expression beyond the discourse that limits and justifies the unjust socio-spatial condition, among which can be articulated through insurgency.

Holston (1998, 2010), accordingly, collaborate the notion of insurgency and substantive citizenship by referring to Levebfre’s (1991) ‘right to the city’ and emphasize on the opposition to modernist political practice to depict a new source of legitimate citizenship meaning, not only that of the dominant structure. In his critiques to the utopian modernist planning that is substantially empty and detached from the existing condition with false assumption on the rationality of contradiction-less future, Holston believes that planning itself is inherently ambiguous and conflictual. Therefore, insurgent citizenship emerges as a counter to the hegemonic discourse and structure and carrying the multiplicity to be recognised. Here, *kampung* insurgency serves as part of the multiplicity and heterogeneity of urban political realm that is *potential* in widening the cracks for new approach in planning theories and practice. It is not that state building is irrelevant, he argued, but ‘complementary antagonism’ that assembles insurgent approach from the citizen and also the state’s definition and control of the array of rights itself. This collaboration of bottom-up and top-down processes are relevant to avoid homogenising and romanticising community movement, but also to avoid political co-option by the current structure.

**Conclusion**

This paper exemplifies as Robeyns (2005) suggested how capability approach can be extended beyond individualistic context into a local, and even citywide community through a learning platform and network. The ability of marginalised urban groups to participate in the urban political realms is exemplified through a process of re-imagining and producing space which involves activities of mapping, planning, developing *kampung*, and creating saving groups to mobilise bigger resource. Eventually, understanding space as a dynamic, ambiguous, multiple, and political through capability approach is essential in looking at how the disjuncture of ‘what humans value’, ‘how value differs’ and mainstream discourse of development materialise in a conflictual and counter-politics engagement.
Notes:

[1] Statistics Centre of Yogyakarta City, 2014. According to the Regional Development Planning Agency of Yogyakarta, there were 278.7 hectares (8.17% of the city area) distributed in 35 neighbourhoods (kelurahan) and approximately 90% located along the river.

[2] Owned by the King of Yogyakarta, cannot be traded, but can be used and inherited with permission


[4] Code Riverside is considered the better of the two. Since 2000, many NGOs have been doing activities there. Its location is in the city centre thus more strategic for aids/programs to come, even without community organizing.

[5] Coupled with grants from The Asian Coalition for Community Action (ACCA) Program

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