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Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 227 (2016) 255 – 264

Procedia
Social and Behavioral Sciences

CITIES 2015 International Conference, Intelligent Planning Towards Smart Cities, CITIES 2015, 3-4 November 2015, Surabaya, Indonesia

Towards a Just City in Information Era: Understanding the Inclusiveness of Community Network Induced by Telecommunication Technology at the Local Level (Case Study: Cihapit and Cipaganti Neighborhoods, Bandung City, Indonesia)

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Abstract

With the growth and development of ICT, the concept of sustainability is facing opportunities to be enriched and developed. Focusing on the communication network improvement towards the Campbell's concept of 'just city' (1996), this study explores inclusiveness of community network induced by telecommunication technology. Taking a case at local level in Bandung City, Indonesia, this study investigates current communication network in the local level, as the ICT currently contributes greatly in communication network. The area of this study is narrowed into two neighborhoods—Cihapit and Cipaganti Neighborhoods—so the communication can be analyzed in detail. The findings suggest that some aspects of inclusive communication network are not met in Cihapit Neighborhood. On the other hand, the communication network in Cipaganti Neighborhood met several aspects of inclusive communication network, therefore Cipaganti Neighborhood promotes itself to create a just city.

Peer-review under responsibility of the organizing committee of CITIES 2015

Keywords: community network, ICT, inclusiveness, just city, sustainable development

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Peer-review under responsibility of the organizing committee of CITIES 2015
doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.06.069

1. Introduction

Current sustainability models can be broken down into three main aspects, such as ecology, economy, and equity. On behalf the models, Campbell (1996) introduced the concept of "just city"—a city developing its economy yet maintaining the environment, so the results can be fairly distributed to every citizen. Furthermore, Fainstein (2010) also explored the concept and concluded that in addition to equity, democracy and diversity should be also considered. Campbell (1996) then translated these aspects into the roles in which planners can contribute. Technically, planners can manage emerging conflicts in a city by redefining the language of the conflict, negotiation and consensus building; generating opportunities for political pluralism; and developing market mechanism. This technical roles will complement the substantive roles planners already had, such as land use planning and design; land use envisioning to achieve ecological balance—or bioregionalism; and utilizing those developing technologies to improve urban innovation. From those roles, Sutriadi (2015) concluded that during developing a city with this model, space where citizen's activities take place and communication system in planning are important to consider.

Since the growth of information and communication technology (ICT) nowadays encourages faster and more efficient communication, concepts of sustainability model regarding to ICT are also developed. Berke et al. (2006) proposed concept of smart growth and new urbanism, in which emphasize the compact and mixed physical development to induce social among citizens. Ishida (2002), Schuler (2002), and Couclelis (2004) introduced the concept of 'digital city', a city which is empowered by ICT and Internet to create a 'place' in network therefore people can interact. Angelidou (2014), Dameri (2014), Walravens (2014) and others proposed their own definition of smart city, a developed concept of digital city which aims to ensure sustainable development by enabling the effective yet efficient usage of city resources and smart decision making.

Communication system in planning itself were studied by Brooks (1980), whose result is that the consensus can be built by providing a communication system which transmits true, sincere, clear, and legitimate information from communicator to communicant—which in a city, the system components that interact with each other are government, public sectors, private sectors, and so forth. To operationalize the concept of communicative action in planning, Jeffres (2008) developed a toolset for planners to audit the urban communication system. Later in 2010, Jeffres proposed the concept of 'communicative city', a community whose environment facilitates development of a communication system that integrates its residents into a dynamic whole, that enables its citizens to get involved in civic activities and participate in a variety of roles, and makes possible a balance between mobility and stability (Jeffres, 2010).

From communicative planning perspective, the roles of ICT itself should be analyzed to develop Jeffres' concept of communicative city (2010). To operationalize the concept of communicative action in planning, Jeffres (2008) developed a toolset for planners to audit the urban communication system. Later in 2010, Jeffres proposed the concept of 'communicative city', a community whose environment facilitates development of a communication system that integrates its residents into a dynamic whole, that enables its citizens to get involved in civic activities and participate in a variety of roles, and makes possible a balance between mobility and stability (Jeffres, 2010).

Jeffres' sustainability concept—which is based on communication system—is able to enrich Campbell's (1996) concept of "just city". This study investigates the inclusiveness of community network induced by ICT at the local level towards just city. Taking a case at local level in Bandung City, Indonesia, this study aims to analyze current communication network in the local level, as the ICT currently contributes greatly in communication network. The goal is derived into two objectives, which is to analyze the current community network in local level and to analyze the usage of ICT in community network.

2. Conceptualizing Just City and Inclusiveness of Community Network

Campbell (1996) proposed a concept named just city, a city which does not only focus on growing economic activities and preserving the environment but also distributing the results fairly to the citizens. To meet the equity aspect in sustainable development, social capital plays a significant role in concocting sustainable communication network (Jeffres, 2010). Towards just city, this social capital also contributes in conveying inclusiveness of citizen, which is also included in equity aspect. Communication network is a subset of inclusiveness of citizen, but analyzing it is beneficial since successful communication is needed in building consensus between stakeholders, including citizens of the city (Brooks, 1980). Jeffres (2010) agrees that communication is actually able to operate to sustain