

SOCIAL INTERACTION SPACES IN KAMPUNG PASIR GINTUNG, BANDAR LAMPUNG, INDONESIA

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To cite this article: Stirena Rossy Tamariska, Agestha Bio Moze Fatna (2025): Social Interaction Spaces In Kampung Pasir Gintung, Bandar Lampung, Indonesia, Jurnal Ilmiah Arsitektur, 15(1), 22-29

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Homepage Information

Journal homepage : <https://ojs.unsiq.ac.id/index.php/jiars>
Volume homepage : <https://ojs.unsiq.ac.id/index.php/jiars/issue/view/445>
Article homepage : <https://ojs.unsiq.ac.id/index.php/jiars/article/view/9202>

SOCIAL INTERACTION SPACES IN KAMPUNG PASIR GINTUNG, BANDAR LAMPUNG, INDONESIA

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<hr/> Article History : Received : April 30, 2025 Revised : May 27, 2025 Accepted : May 29, 2025 Publisihed: June 30, 2025 <hr/> Keywords: adaptive, kampung, social space, urban	<hr/> <i>The rapid growth of settlements in Indonesian metropolitan areas compels migrants to establish territories spontaneously, resulting in increasingly dense communities and the need for deliberate social spaces. These spaces emerge organically among residents who share long-term living experiences, cultural backgrounds, and daily activities. This study explores the characteristics of communal spaces in urban kampungs using a qualitative narrative method. Data were collected by observing the Sukamampir road corridor in Pasar Gintung, Bandar Lampung, Indonesia. The findings show that residents have transformed the road corridor into meaningful spaces for interaction, focusing on gathering activities at specific points. Given the limited spatial resources in the kampung, the study examines how citizens adaptively create places for social interaction within the remaining available areas. Activities such as sitting, standing, playing, eating, and buying and selling food occur within the corridor, facilitating daily interactions. This research highlights the adaptive strategies employed by residents to sustain social engagement amidst spatial constraints.</i> <hr/>

INTRODUCTION

Urban settlement development in Indonesia is closely linked to rapid population growth, largely driven by rural-to-urban migration (Kamila et al., 2025). Economic motivations often underpin this migration, prompting the establishment of new residential areas within cities. When land prices are unaffordable, residents tend to inhabit denser, lower-cost areas that frequently emerge informally. These unplanned environments are known as urban kampung (Fitri & Others, 2021).

Indonesia's settlement typologies include planned housing, remote rural villages, and unregulated urban settlements. The latter urban kampung is informal, high-density areas often lacking basic infrastructure and spatial order (Nurjani, 2021). Though structurally reminiscent of rural villages, they exist within metropolitan areas and are often perceived negatively due to their chaotic appearance and inadequate amenities (Kustiwan & Ramadhan, 2019; Rukmana & Sucipto, 2020). These conditions result from spontaneous, community-driven efforts to fulfill housing needs, leading to fragmented, unstructured spaces that are sometimes illegal (Sudarwanto et al., 2017).

One example is Bandar Lampung, a key urban center in Sumatra with deep historical roots as a trading port and migration hub (Dewi et al., 2021). Over the decades, the city has seen significant population growth, especially in districts like Pasar Gintung, an active market area that has evolved into a dense urban kampung. The Sukamampir road corridor within this district exemplifies the spatial improvisations of kampung residents who adapt their limited environment to support social interactions and communal routines.

While many studies have addressed kampung life in Indonesia's larger cities, the urban dynamics of Bandar Lampung remain underexplored. This study examines how the residents of Sukamampir construct and preserve social space amidst spatial constraints. It draws on Ray Oldenburg's theory of "third places," which describes informal, accessible spaces where people gather outside of home and work, such as sidewalks, warungs, or street corners, as essential to social life (Oldenburg, 1997). These spaces foster familiarity, dialogue, and collective identity.

Complementing this, Michel de Certeau's theory of everyday practices provides a lens for understanding how residents tactically reclaim and repurpose space through ordinary actions (De Certeau, 1985). De Certeau emphasizes how people resist imposed spatial structures by walking, sitting, trading, and playing in ways that personalize and reshape their environment. In Sukamampir, road corridors become multifunctional spaces that embody these tactical uses, sites of negotiation between necessity and cultural resilience.

Thus, the study investigates how informal urban communities create meaningful spaces for interaction and how these everyday adaptations

contribute to social cohesion and cultural continuity. These insights are vital for architects, planners, and policymakers to understand the lived experiences of kampung residents better and support more inclusive urban development strategies.

Social spaces in urban kampung

Urban kampung is commonly used to describe informal settlements in Indonesian cities. These settlements typically emerge due to rapid urbanization and migration from rural areas for better economic opportunities (Setiawan, 2010). As a result, urban kampungs often face significant challenges such as overcrowding, inadequate infrastructure, and limited access to basic services (Letfiani & Widyasari, 2015). Despite these challenges, urban kampung has become integral to Indonesian urban life, providing low-cost housing options and creating unique social dynamics within metropolitan areas (Pigawati et al., 2017).

The growth of urban kampung is a direct consequence of urbanization processes prioritizing economic growth over spatial planning, leading to the proliferation of informal settlements in urban centers (Rukmana & Sucipto, 2020). These areas' lack of formal planning leads to spontaneous housing formation, often resulting in unregulated and unorganized environments (Sudarwanto et al., 2017). Despite the chaos, urban kampung fosters strong community ties as residents develop strategies for coping with the limited space and resources.

Social space is critical in urban kampung as it provides the setting for interactions, communication, and community-building. In densely populated areas, communal spaces become even more crucial as these spaces enable residents to maintain social connections and cultural practices (Kamila et al., 2025). Social sustainability, a term defined by Yiftachel and Hedgcock, refers to the ability of urban environments to support meaningful social interactions and cultural development (Yiftachel & Hedgcock, 1993). In this context, urban kampung spaces often become platforms for social exchange, where shared experiences help build social cohesion and strengthen relationships between residents.

Ray Oldenburg's "Third Place" Theory

Ray Oldenburg's Third Place theory (1997) provides a significant lens for understanding the role of informal social spaces in urban life. According to Oldenburg, third places exist outside the home (first place) and workplace (second place), where individuals can gather and engage in social interactions. Third places are typically characterized by their informality, accessibility, and neutrality, which make them essential for fostering social interaction and community building. Examples of third places include cafes, bars, public parks, and local markets—spaces that serve as communal hubs for people to connect, share experiences, and create social bonds.

For Oldenburg, the significance of third places lies in their role as social spaces where people can form relationships, exchange ideas, and participate in the city's cultural life. The presence of third places, particularly in urban environments, is vital for promoting social cohesion and fostering the development of strong social networks. Third places also contribute to social sustainability, a concept described by Yiftachel and Hedgcock (1993), which refers to the capacity of urban spaces to support social interactions and community relationships over time. In the context of this research, the notion of third places offers a useful framework for analyzing the informal, community-driven spaces that emerge in densely populated urban areas.

Michel de Certeau's concept of everyday life practices

Michel de Certeau's work on everyday life practices (1985) provides a complementary theoretical framework for understanding how people navigate and make meaning of urban spaces. For de Certeau, tactics represent how individuals exercise agency in their everyday lives, creatively using available resources and spaces to construct meaning and identity. These practices are often subtle and invisible, yet they shape urban life's social and cultural fabric. In urban kampung or informal settlements, residents engage in tactical practices by transforming shared spaces into social arenas where relationships are formed, and community life is nurtured. Through everyday practices, such as creating food stalls or informal gathering spots, residents of urban kampung reconfigure their environment to suit their social, economic, and emotional needs.

De Certeau's distinction between strategy and tactics helps to highlight the agency of individuals in shaping the spaces they inhabit. In urban settings where formal planning and infrastructure are often lacking, residents rely on tactical practices to negotiate their environment and create meaningful spaces for social interaction. These practices often emerge out of necessity as people seek ways to adapt to limited space and resources while maintaining social bonds and cultural practices (Agustian et al., 2021). De Certeau's emphasis on the role of everyday life in shaping urban space aligns with the notion of place-making, where spaces are transformed through daily actions into places with social and cultural significance.

Social Space Production

Oldenburg's and de Certeau's theories underscore the importance of place-making—the process by which individuals and communities transform space into meaningful places. Tuan (1977) notes that space becomes a place through human experience and interaction, and this process is central to understanding how social spaces are produced in urban environments. Social spaces, particularly in informal settlements, are not simply

physical locations but places filled with meaning, significance, and relational connections. These spaces are shaped by the practices and interactions that occur within them, and they contribute to the environmental quality of the community (Kustiwan & Ramadhan, 2019).

In urban kampung, the production of social space involves the collective efforts of residents who create informal gathering spots that serve as places for conversation, exchange, and cultural expression (Darmawan & Utami, 2018). Drawing on de Certeau's concept of tactics, these spaces are shaped by the everyday actions and decisions of individuals, who navigate the constraints of their environment to carve out spaces for social interaction. Meanwhile, Oldenburg's theory of third places highlights the importance of these informal spaces in fostering a sense of community and social cohesion.

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative research approach as a case study to explore the social spaces within an urban kampung. This research focuses on the Sukamampir Road Corridor in the Pasir Gintung District, Bandar Lampung, Indonesia. The selected site is a narrow alley, approximately 1.4 meters wide, situated in a densely populated area. This study aims to understand how urban kampung residents navigate their limited living space to create meaningful social environments.

The research follows a two-step process. First, it utilizes a case study methodology, which allows for an in-depth examination of specific social spaces within the Sukamampir area. This approach enables the study to focus on residents' practical use of space and the types of social interactions within these spaces. Second, the research is exploratory, aiming to understand how residents use and interact within these spaces daily and how these spaces contribute to community cohesion and social sustainability.

Data for this research was collected through field observations and interviews. Field observations were conducted to capture the daily activities of residents and how they transform the physical environment into spaces for social interaction. An interview with a user was held in each place, and the user involved was identified. Various communal practices were observed, such as casual conversations, social gatherings, and shared activities. In addition to observations, interviews were conducted with residents to gain deeper insights into their perceptions of these spaces and their significance in fostering social relationships.

The data gathered from these observations and interviews were analyzed using Ray Oldenburg's Third Place theory and Michel de Certeau's concept of everyday life practices. These theoretical lenses offer a framework for understanding how residents use space in informal and creative ways and how these spaces facilitate social interaction and community building. The study examines the

dynamics of spatial practices and their role in shaping the social fabric of urban kampung communities.

The Sukamampir Road Corridor was chosen as the study site due to its central location and role as a community social hub. The alley is characterized by its narrow width, making it an ideal subject for investigating how limited space can be adapted to meet the social needs of urban residents. It has two key entrances, one through Fransiskus School and the other through Empang Street. This area offers a variety of social spaces that were closely observed and analyzed for their impact on social interaction.



Figure 1. Left: Case study area (Source: Google Earth), Right: Sukamampir road corridor (Source: Author documentation, 2024)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Through field observations in the Sukamampir Road Corridor, three primary communal spaces were identified, each playing a significant role in fostering social interaction and community cohesion. These spaces are essential for residents to engage in social activities despite the limited physical area. The following sections describe these spaces and their social significance based on Ray Oldenburg's Third Place theory and Michel de Certeau's concept of everyday life practices.



Figure 2. Social space in Sukamampir road corridor (Source: Author documentation, 2024)

Food stalls area

The food stall area is one of the corridor's most active communal spaces. Located near two food-selling houses, this space includes several dining tables, chairs, and cement benches that residents

use for eating, socializing, and interacting with neighbors. Ray Oldenburg's theory of Third Places emphasizes the importance of spaces where people can gather informally, and this food stall area embodies such a place. It functions as a neutral ground where residents from different backgrounds can meet, socialize, and exchange ideas.



Figure 3. Social space in Sukamampir: Food stall area (Source: Author documentation, 2024)

According to Michel de Certeau, informal interactions and activities shape everyday practices in such places. Residents use the space for eating and casual conversations, making it a central part of their daily social life. The physical characteristics of the space, such as the proximity of seating and food stalls, encourage these practices and contribute to its role as a communal hub.

Toy stall area

The second identified space is near a toy stall selling snacks for children. The owner has set up a large shared table with several chairs, making this area an informal gathering spot for adults and children. This space is often filled with children playing and socializing in the afternoon.



Figure 4. Social space in Sukamampir: Toy stall area (Source: Author documentation, 2024)

Oldenburg's Third Place concept can also be applied here, as the space is a gathering place outside of home or work. It is where children and adults can come together in a relaxed environment. Michel de Certeau's concept of everyday practices is evident in the informal use of the area as a play and

socializing space. Children use it as a playground, and parents often gather nearby to observe and engage with each other. The activities in this space, playing, talking, and watching, demonstrate how social interactions are woven into daily routines, creating a sense of belonging and community.

Community security post

The third identified communal space is what is locally known as *pos ronda*. These terms refer to small, informal structures, typically made of concrete and wood, that serve as gathering places for residents. These security posts play a dual role throughout neighborhoods: they function as spots for social interaction and contribute to the area's sense of security. They act as informal hubs where residents can meet, converse, and engage in communal activities while also providing a form of vigilance over the surrounding neighborhood. These posts serve as a Third Place, offering a space for people to gather outside their homes or workplaces, fostering a sense of community. In line with Michel de Certeau's theory of everyday life practices, the security post is a social interaction site where daily routines and local identity are practiced and reinforced.



Figure 5. Social space in Sukamampir: Community substation area (Source: Author documentation, 2024)

Discussion on Social Interaction Spaces

The physical and symbolic components of communal spaces significantly influence how residents interact with each other and the surrounding environment. In the context of Sukamampir Alley, the spaces identified, such as food stalls, shared tables near the toy stall, and security community posts, highlight the adaptive strategies of urban kampung communities in responding to limited land availability. These spaces function as venues for daily activities and play a crucial role in fostering social cohesion and solidarity among residents.

Communal spaces facilitate social interactions, allowing individuals to build relationships and reinforce communal ties (Maulana et al., 2022). In urban kampung settings, these spaces are often shaped by the resident's needs and ability to adapt

and reconfigure available spaces for social purposes (Kustiwan & Ramadhan, 2019). In these cases, the food stall area, toy stall area, and security community post evolve from simple, utilitarian spaces into places imbued with social meaning through the actions and interactions of the community members.

The role of the security community post (*Pos Ronda*) in promoting physical and social security is particularly noteworthy. These posts, which are often seen as informal security hubs, act as symbolic markers of community solidarity and vigilance. They contribute to the collective identity of the neighborhood, serving as spaces where individuals monitor the area's safety and engage in informal social exchanges. This aligns with Michel de Certeau's concept of everyday life practices (De Certeau & Rendall, 2004), where spaces are continuously reshaped through the actions and negotiations of the people who inhabit them. In this way, the security community post exemplifies how social practices, such as watching over the neighborhood or engaging in casual conversations, become integral to constructing community identity and social cohesion.

The food stall area and shared table near the toy stall further illustrate how Third Places, or spaces outside of home and work, are crucial in strengthening social ties. These areas are often used for informal meetings, conversations, and communal activities, fostering residents' sense of belonging and connection. As Ray Oldenburg's theory suggests (Oldenburg, 1997), these spaces are essential for the well-being of individuals and communities, as they provide a neutral ground for socialization and the development of a shared sense of place. In the case of Sukamampir, these spaces offer more than just physical amenities; they act as sites for socialization and reinforcing cultural practices.

These communal spaces in Sukamampir serve as crucial sites for developing social capital and community resilience (Whitaker, 2023). They provide the necessary conditions for building and maintaining relationships, sharing resources, and fostering a sense of collective identity. As such, the planning and design of urban kampung areas must consider the importance of these spaces, ensuring that they are not only physically accessible but also socially inclusive, enabling the continuation of these informal yet vital social practices.

CONCLUSION

In urban kampung settings, communal spaces foster social interactions, cohesion, and community. The case study of Sukamampir Alley in Pasir Gintung, Bandar Lampung, demonstrates how residents creatively utilize limited urban spaces to create environments for socializing, exchanging ideas, and reinforcing cultural values. Residents can develop meaningful connections through spaces such as food stalls, shared tables, and security community posts despite the challenges posed by high population density and constrained land. For

urban planners, architects, and policymakers, creating and preserving such communal spaces should be a priority in urban development initiatives. These spaces contribute to the community's social fabric and offer valuable opportunities for fostering interaction and participation among residents. By recognizing the importance of these informal social spaces, future urban development can be more inclusive, responsive, and conducive to building stronger, more connected communities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Agestha for his invaluable collaboration and insights throughout this research. I also thank the residents of Sukamampir Alley in Pasir Gintung, Bandar Lampung, for their cooperation and willingness to share their experiences.

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