

# Reappreciating Urban Involution Theory: An Account Of Jakarta 3 In 1 Traffic Regulation After Fifteen Years Of Its Implementation

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## ABSTRACT

This writing reviews urban involution theory in relation to the dynamics of modernization in Jakarta. Modern life, characterized by urbanization, improved literacy, the use of mass media, and improvement of transportation facilities; has brought social changes in Jakarta. Dubbed as one of the primate cities in Southeast Asia, the biggest and the most populous city in the region; Jakarta brings influences toward its satellite cities that surround it. One of the influences is reflected during the enactment of 3 in 1 traffic regulation that directly affect people who live in satellite cities. The people take advantages of the situation; and at the same time, the regulations create negative social impacts to the people. Purpose - This writing is aimed at shedding light on 3 in 1 traffic regulations and the changes it made to people who live in urban cities surrounding Jakarta. Design/ methodology/ approach - The situation is analyzed using normative approach, and literature study is used to collect and analyse data. Data sources are from Statistics Center Bureau and news. Conclusion - Modernization brings with it changes to people. The changes bring along irregularities to society.

**Keywords:** Urban Involution, 3 in 1 Traffic Regulation, Modernization, Primate City

## BACKGROUND

This study examined the implementation of 3 in 1 traffic regulations in Jakarta in relation to its social impacts to a community seen from the perspectives of urban involution theory. However, it is important to firstly understand its situational background and the development of the underlying regulations.

Besides being referred to as one of the big cities in the world, Jakarta gets the title as one of the cities with the worst congestion in the world. Every day, cars and motorbikes queue for hours to reach their destinations during busy hours (06:00-09:00 and 16:00-20:00).

Very often, the agony bites even stronger when drivers carelessly break the rule. Just to name a few, cars and motorbikes violating traffic signs and road markings is a proof of street violations conducted in the street. The situation causes discomfort not just for other vehicles but also for passengers and pedestrians. Ironically, despite of the fact that the number of vehicles has crowded the street, the annual increase in car and motorbike sales volume continues.

With approximately the same situation around the world, big cities should have strategic plans to manage their street congestions. On one case Jakarta as the capital city of Indonesia, the

Government of DKI Jakarta Province released traffic regulations that was aimed at reducing congestion problems on the street. The Governor's Decrees on 3 in 1 traffic regulations that were released in 2003 was the answer to manage the situation.

The first 3 in 1 traffic regulation was released on December 23, 2003. It was arranged based on the Governor's Decree of Daerah Khusus Ibukota Jakarta No. 4104/2003. The Decree titled *Determination of Traffic Control Area and Obligation of Bringing at Least Three Passengers per Vehicle in Restricted Roads in Daerah Khusus Ibukota Jakarta* required passenger cars that pass certain roads on 07:00-10:00 must carry only three passengers (including driver). The rule applies during work days (Monday-Friday), but does not apply during week days and holidays (Saturday, Sunday, and national holidays).

Later in September 2004, the Decree was slightly updated upon the beginning of Transjakarta Program, Jakarta bus rapid transit (BRT) transportation mode. Hours for the regulation was extended to 16:30-19:00, passenger cars are not allowed to pass certain areas such as: (1) Jalan Sisingamangaraja, (2) Jalan Sudirman, Jalan MH Thamrin – both fast lane and slow lane; (3) Jalan Merdeka Barat, (4) Jalan Majapahit, (5) Jalan Gajah Mada, (6) Jalan Pintu Besar Selatan, (7) Jalan Pintu Besar Utara, (8) Jalan Hayam Wuruk; (9) The intersection of Jalan Gatot Subroto and Jalan Gerbang Pemuda (Balai Sidang Senayan) until (10) the intersection of Jalan HR Rasuna Said and Jalan Gatot Subroto on the non-toll public road lane.

The Decree also determined cars with weight 5,501 kgs or more are not allowed to pass the 3 in 1 areas on 06:00-22:00; within restricted areas: (1) Jalan Sisingamangaraja, (2) Jalan Jenderal Sudirman, (3) Jalan MH Thamrin, (4) Jalan Medan Merdeka Barat, (5) Jalan Majapahit, (6) Jalan Gajah Mada, (7) Jalan Hayam Wuruk, (8) Jalan Pintu Besar Selatan, (9) Jalan Pintu Besar Utara.

Along with the rules, buses and motorbikes are not allowed to pass through the fast lane in the restricted areas: (1) (Jalan Sisingamangaraja, (2) Jalan Jenderal Sudirman, (3) Jalan MH Thamrin).

Buses and motorbikes are also not allowed to pass through areas that does not have slow lane, such as: (1) Jalan Merdeka Barat, (2) Jalan Majapahit, (3) Jalan Gajah Mada, (4) Jalan Hayam Wuruk, (5) Jalan Pintu Besar Selatan, (6) Jalan Pintu Besar Utara. Bus and motorbikes are only allowed to use the leftmost 1 and 2 lanes.

The mentioned areas are determined for the location to implement the regulation because those are areas where office centers and business areas reside. The fact refers to the amount of vehicle flow to the area every day during morning (the start of office hours) and evening (the end of office hours).

Executive Director on Regional Development Study, Syahrial Loetan, in a Seminar themed "Menatap Masa Depan Jakarta, Sebagai Pusat Kegiatan Sosial Dan Ekonomi Nasional", at Hotel Borobudur, Jakarta, on Wednesday (21/2/2018); mentioned that there are 18 million vehicles entering Jakarta every day. He also mentioned the fact that motorbikes dominating the streets has become a serious transportation problem in Jakarta. In brief, he said that vehicle composition fulfilling Jakarta streets is now: motorbike 73,92%, private cars 19,58%, freight car 3,83%, bus car 1,88%, and special vehicles 0,79 % (Hamdani, 2018).

At the same event, Ministry of National Development Planning (Bappenas), Bambang Brodjonegoro, mentioned that according to 2015 data, private cars have been dominating the streets with composition: cars (38%), motorbike (49%), and public transportation (13%). The Minister put his concern on the fact that there are fewer public transportation and significant increase in traffic congestions even though the Government has provided facilities for flyovers and under passes. On the contrary, upon monitoring and evaluation, the regulation that was once prepared to reduce congestion problem by controlling vehicles flow on restricted streets turned to create further social problems.

In the areas where the regulation is applied, there are people known as 'joki 3 in 1' took advantage by earning income from offering their services of being 'passenger'. Car users, especially with passengers less than three, used the 'service' offered by jokies so they can pass the 3 in 1 area. The jokies, coming from middle to lower social class and sometimes from areas outside Jakarta, make themselves paid jokies ('passengers') to fulfill the obligation of three-passenger in each vehicle (Erwanto Khusuma, 2016).

From the situation, it is understood that the presence of jokies as well as car users, who use the services of the joki, shows the ineffectiveness of 3 in 1 regulations; and lack of awareness and community participation in enforcing the regulations. Supervision on the highway is unable to eradicate the existence of jokies and instead the activity become a way to meet the needs of life for the jokies. Raids on 3 in 1 jokies are often held, but it did not prevent the jokies from continuing to offer their services when the raid has subsided.

This situation eventually led to a bigger social issue when it was identified there existed exploitation of women, babies, and children during regulations implementation. Babies and children are forced to 'work' with the adult as joki. When adult female jokies bring babies and children, the required amount of three passenger in each car can be fulfilled and each joki will then get bigger payment. Further, a more serious problem revealed when babies and children are found to be sedated while 'working'. The action is aimed at preventing babies and children from crying when in the car (Erwanto Khusuma, 2016).

Moreover, 3 in 1 regulation also allegedly failed to overcome congestion because, in fact, there were not many people who switched to using public transportation and continue using their cars instead. At the end of the writing, there is a chart showing percentage of amount of vehicles according to its type that pass through DKI Jakarta Province in 2016, and a statistics table revealing vehicles data in DKI Jakarta during 2009-2016.

## DISCUSSION

Traffic congestion is understood as a condition where there is a buildup of the number of vehicles on certain road segments due to an imbalance between the number of vehicles passing compared to the size of the road. An article written in 1988 mentioned that traffic congestion is not a new phenomenon and that it happened in the cities of central business districts. It also stated that congestion usually takes place in midday, mid evening, and during weekends (Deakin, 1988).

Just like Jakarta, cities around the world share quite similar characteristics. They are surrounded by satellite cities where people commute from their places to go to work during morning and go back to their places in the evening. This social mobility, a social process that leads to people behavioral change (Soekanto, 1990), has caused explosion in the number of vehicles entering the city every day. When the impact of urban congestion spreads, the vehicular problem can then be found in satellite cities.

In the case of Jakarta, every morning the city is filled with cars from Jakarta and its satellite cities such as Bogor, Depok, Tangerang and Bekasi. The cars will return to their respective habitats in the evening after working hours.

The people who come to Jakarta are urban communities who make a living in Jakarta and live outside the city. Some of them work in formal sector, and some in non-formal sector. Those who work in the non-formal sector will fill the niche of work opportunities such as 3 in 1 joki. Some of them may stay temporarily in the city, and some of them choose to return to their homes outside the city or occupy new dwellings that grow on the suburb. The reason for coming and stay in the city is not just for easy access to work but also for education, recreation and self-development (Soekanto, 1990).

The urban people fulfill the definition of urban in various background. In India, urban is understood as place with population of at least 5000 people with 75% of them working in the non-agricultural sector (Alkema, Gavin, & Lai, 2013). The term urban can also be understood as areas under one particular jurisdiction. People coming from the areas support and, at the same time, depend on the city. Not only they earn living in the city, but they are also capable of filling vacant positions in jobs that might not be able to be filled by city people. With that, it is clear that the emergence of urban society is a manifestation of modernization concept.

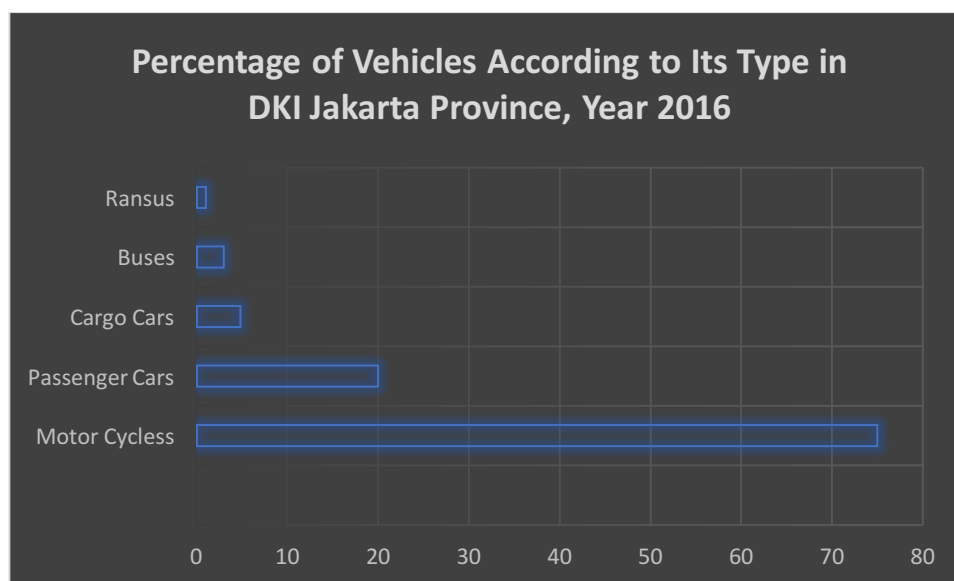
An article explained that modernization is characterized by rapid increase in urbanization, the improvement quality in education, human awareness to improve the quality of life through health, the increase of transportation facilities, and the extensive use of mass media (Ghannam, 2001). Pulled backwards, modernization is seen as a process of social change that the era was marked with industrial revolution in late eighteenth century followed by people urbanization to industrial areas for work. With a reflection from the past, it is like understanding modernization from the perspective of changes like in the breakdown of communist regimes that brought with it the ideological and cultural transformation.

As with present condition, when satellite cities eventually continue to grow and raise demand for livelihoods, employment, settlements, vehicles, and addition on the length of the streets; the city will be unable to keep up with the demand (Statistik, 2017). As portrait of Jakarta, the city deserves the title primate city, a concept basically contains positive connotation since its definition as a city that has greater size and capacity than other adjacent cities. Therefore, it becomes a reference of those other cities. A primate city is presumably an originator of other cities advances. Now, Jakarta is the drives of the cities like Bogor, Tangerang, Depok, Bekasi; and other capital cities in Indonesia like, among others; Bandung, Medan, Semarang. Implicitly, the primate city of Jakarta gets along mission of bringing up people prosperity in all aspects. Therefore, implementing long term systematic urban spatial planning and assuring people welfare in economic, social, and psychological matters have become the most priority. In fact, although Jakarta is dubbed as one of the primate cities in Southeast Asia and the biggest and the most populous city in the region, the city has not capable of bearing upon fulfilling the productive criteria of the primate city. Rather, it connotes negative growth with population grows rapidly and uncontrollably, and people socioeconomic discrepancies unevenly.

The situation would then be like forcing the city to meet the needs of its inhabitants with limited land availability. An effort made by a city to meet the needs of its population with limited resources shares similar thinking to that of Clifford Geertz's agricultural involution theory. In its original theory, "*agricultural involution was a process through which labor*

*intensified in Javanese wet rice agriculture in order to feed the rapidly growing population of the island” (Smith, 2014).*

If applied in the case above, the theory has implications on three aspects. First, it is way of thinking that make the outside world logical and construct it as real life narrative. Second, agricultural involution concept positions human being as object - be it natural, structures, and policies object. The fact that during 1960-1970 development strategies were arranged in a top-down manner and place humans only as objects is the concrete proof. Third, the concept leads further to a study with close relationship to agriculture-urban (Saifuddin, 2011). With urban involution, cities are encountering increasing complexities without evolutionary changes (Evers, 2007). The increasing populations that resonates to crowded settlements, more modern and traditional markets, more goods of similar types, more people come to the city to try their luck, complicated bureaucracy, pollution, and health problem constitute to tangible forms of urban involution.



Source Statistik Transportasi DKI Jakarta 2015/ 2016 (Statistik, 2017)

#### Number of Vehicle in DKI Jakarta Province - Period 2009-2016

Type of Vehicle	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Motor Cycles	7.518.098	8.764.130	9.861.451	10.825.973	11.949.280	13.084.372	13.989.590	13.310.672
Passenger Cars	2.116.282	2.334.883	2.541.351	2.742.414	3.010.403	3.266.009	3.469.168	3.535.925
Cargo Cars	550.924	565.772	581.290	561.918	619.027	673.661	706.014	689.561
Buses	309.385	332.779	363.710	358.859	360.223	362.066	363.483	338.730
Ransus	0	0	0	129.113	133.936	137.859	139.801	131.516
Total	10.496.698	11.999.574	13.349.813	14.620.289	16.074.882	17.525.981	18.670.071	18.008.420

Source: Statistik Transportasi DKI Jakarta 2015/ 2016 (Statistik, 2017)

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