



Defining and Understanding Experiences of Tiny Home Living in Indonesia. Case studies: Greater Jakarta and Bali Urban Areas

Setiamurti Rahardjo

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Sheffield
Faculty of Social Sciences
School of Geography and Planning

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Abstract

Studies of tiny homes in Western countries and some Asian metropolitan areas have identified them as a movement, a trend of shrinking dwelling space, an approach to address housing issues, or a strategy for capitalism through housing development. Studies of this phenomenon in Southeast Asia are still rarely found. Responding to this gap, this study explores the existence and the lived experiences of tiny homes in Indonesia to generate a new dataset and ignite further discussions and studies associated with this topic. This study was conducted as qualitative research, with multiple case studies in the Greater Jakarta and Bali urban areas, utilising multiple methods: semi-structured interviews, photo documentation, photo elicitation, sketches, ethnographic observations, and field notes, all of which were collected during the fieldwork. In addition, this research incorporated a document review of Indonesian housing regulations to get a fundamental understanding of housing in the Indonesian context. Exhibiting a wide range of data, this study has revealed that Indonesia also experiences this global phenomenon. However, there are nuances and differences in the existence and lived experiences of tiny home living due to restrictive sociocultural norms and a lower standard of housing size set by the Indonesian government. This research has generated insights for housing stakeholders in the Indonesian context and, more broadly, contributes to international academic study and future housing research to further our understanding of the typology, drivers and lived experiences of tiny homes.

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1. Introduction

This study began as a reflection on what I witnessed in the housing trajectory of my hometown, Bandung, and was sparked by the COVID-19 lockdowns that forced many people to stay at home.

It started with the memory of my parental home. It had already become a spacious two-story house with five bedrooms when I moved out, but originally, it was built as a 50 m² detached home with an individual plot of land. After a few years, my parents used the entire land area to make our home bigger, so everyone in the family could have individual bedrooms. In the beginning, it was the smallest unit in the neighbourhood. I was complaining that the house was too small for five people in the family, and then I had a conversation with my mother. This was in the 1990s. She gave me an understanding that our house was not that small, because there were houses that were even smaller, but only people with less money were allowed to buy them. Fast forward to my adulthood, the smaller house my mother told me about became my home in the future. It was a two-bedroom 36 m² house, rented with a housemate. The difference from what she had told me was, it was no longer a house for people with less money. Many of my neighbours at that time had nice cars. However, I was not satisfied with the privacy and environment, so I moved to a 25 m² studio apartment that was originally sold as a two-bedroom apartment. Without having to compare it to any other dwelling, this unit was too small for two bedrooms, one small kitchen, one bathroom, and one cramped living room. Hence, I removed most of the walls and modified the entire interior. This was my last home, where I spent my COVID-19 pandemic years.

My personal observation and housing biography had revealed that housing units produced by housing developers had gotten smaller over time, but the prices were getting higher. Although inflation was expected, there was a trend that did not feel normal. During the pandemic, people shared their struggles with space restrictions at home through social media. Apparently, many people who could afford devices for accessing social media felt their homes were too small. At that time, I was comfortable with my home because in my mind, I lived in a proper-sized studio apartment. However, recalling that it was converted from a two-bedroom unit, I was also a part of this phenomenon. Therefore, as a researcher, I brought this topic into a doctoral study.

This research project critically explores the rationales, motivations, and everyday realities of tiny home living in Indonesia. There are many drivers for the growth of 'living small' across a range of international contexts. For example, housing affordability is an increasing challenge in many countries due to demographic movements, such as the fast-growing metropolitans (Garde and Song, 2022), households' education and financial situations (Bujang, Zarin and Jumadi, 2010), or decreasing land for housing development, which makes prices for housing rent or ownership higher (Anacker, 2019). The housing market crash in 2008 also had a major impact on housing affordability (Trambley, 2021), and individuals and families had to think of less costly housing alternatives. Living in a smaller dwelling may therefore be seen as one solution, yet research into tiny home living also suggests that there are a range of positive imaginaries associated with living small, tied to narratives of sustainability and environmental footprints (Evans, 2018b). A number of studies discuss small-sized housing as a niche in housing markets with the terms "tiny homes", "tiny house", "small homes", "micro-unit", and others, often used interchangeably (Mutter, 2013; Wyatt, 2016; Shearer, 2019; Cohen, 2021; Shearer and Burton, 2023). Their prominence in media coverage has also inspired many enthusiasts around the world to live, or plan to live, in a tiny home.

Nonetheless, less research has been conducted on living in smaller spaces in contexts beyond the Anglophone world. Meanwhile, housing unaffordability in Asian developing countries is severe and tends to increase in cities with larger populations without a balanced response to housing supply (Helble, Ok Lee and Gia Arbo, 2021). In Indonesia, the phenomenon of shrinking housing size challenges the residents of those homes in their daily lives. For example, a small-scale study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic with questionnaires involving 67 inhabitants of 36 and 45 m² houses, and 52 of them reported facing difficulties doing their own activities when all the family members were at home (Rahardjo, Akhmadi and Salsaqilah, 2023). While there is a growing body of international literature on tiny housing, there remains relatively limited research on tiny housing in the global south context, including in Indonesia.

Recently, in their collected article edition book, Harris, Nowicki and White (2023) have called for more studies of tiny homes beyond the Western context. However, in their contribution to the collection, Bergan and Dufty-Jones (2023, p. 24) noted records of tiny homes in Southeast Asia, but without further reference towards the existing scholarship in this region. This demonstrates the need to expand understanding of living experiences in tiny homes to account for a broader range of social and institutional contexts in Southeast Asia (Rahardjo, 2025), including Indonesia. For example, whilst individuals from countries with traditions of generous

average floor space in their homes might find living in a tiny home exceptionally challenging, those from very high-density contexts might perceive such living space differently or adapt in different ways. Therefore, this thesis provides a core contribution to this gap by exploring the cultural and social significance of tiny homes in Indonesia through a ‘lived-experience’ approach, which has been implemented in broader social sciences (Van Manen, 1990; Fenby-Hulse, 2019). This approach is a qualitative research methodology, rooted in everyday lived experience, emphasising the importance of narrative, emotions and perceptions to inform the findings of a study (Van Manen, 1990); allowing the stories of people who experience living in tiny homes to construct the understanding of where tiny homes are perceived from beyond more formal, technical or legal definitions of housing.

Research aim and objectives

The aim of this research was to increase our knowledge and understanding of tiny homes as an increasing phenomenon in Indonesia, including exploring the lived experience of these tiny homes, and to contribute to the broader international literature by comparing tiny homes in Indonesia with those in other, primarily global north contexts that have been subject to greater levels of research.

To achieve this aim, this research had the following objectives:

1. Investigating how tiny homes are defined in Indonesian law, policy and regulations, and sociocultural understandings through the lens of the dwellers.
2. To develop a typology of the forms of tiny homes in Indonesia.
3. To identify and analyse the factors driving the growth in tiny homes in Indonesia, including legal, political, commercial (including supply and demand) and resident motivational factors
4. Evaluating the experiences of living in tiny homes through the daily practices of the residents and their approaches towards the available space at home.
5. Analysing how these experiences are affected by household composition, age, gender, class, and housing tenure.

Research scope

Indonesia is a developing country that faces significant challenges in informal housing and slums, with much of its poor population living in extremely tiny spaces and experiencing extreme overcrowding. However, the current phenomenon of tiny homes represents something new and different, with these homes often being developer-led and occupied by a range of socio-economic classes. The study focused on ‘formal’ housing, built with legal

permission, either by registered housing developers or by individual contractors, with owners obtaining the building permit prior to the construction. The research participants were also all Indonesian citizens.

Thesis structure

Following the introduction, the structure of this thesis is as follows:

Chapter 2 develops a conceptual framework of the study based on a review of previous research on tiny homes in Indonesia and internationally. This review informed the research questions the study sought to answer.

Chapter 3 provides an explanation of the research methodology, explaining the selection of the case study locations, the set of methods utilised in the fieldwork, the profile of the research participants, and the processes of analysing and structuring the data and findings. The following three chapters seek to answer the key research questions.

Chapter 4 focuses on the legal, technical, and cultural definitions of tiny homes from governmental, developer, and dwellers' perspectives.

Chapter 5 examines the drivers and mechanisms of tiny home living in Indonesia, how these are shaped by government, regulators and developers, and the interaction of this with the motivations and reasons for individuals and households living in tiny homes.

Chapter 6 explores the positive, negative and ambiguous experiences of tiny home living through the perspectives of those residing in them.

Chapter 7 situates the study findings in the broader context of the international literature, as reviewed in Chapter 2, providing a critical reflection and identifying key policy implications and an agenda for potential future studies.

Chapter 8 summarises this thesis and provides contributions this study has sought to make to the field.

2. Conceptual Framework

This chapter begins by reviewing the existing research literature on tiny homes, covering both international studies and those specifically in the Indonesian context, to provide an understanding of how tiny homes have been defined, to summarise existing evaluations and accounts of the experiences of those living in such units, and to reveal gaps in existing knowledge. The latter part of this chapter summarises the existing evaluations from the literature review to construct the conceptual framework for this study. The chapter is presented in four parts: 1) a review of tiny home studies in their global context, 2) a review of previous research on tiny homes in Indonesia, 3) a critical evaluation of existing research and identification of current gaps in existing knowledge, and 4) a conceptual framework that guides the formulation of the research questions presented at the end of this chapter.

2.1 Review of tiny homes in a global context

There are multiple elements to tiny home studies in the international literature covering a range of disciplinary perspectives, including human geography, urban studies, economy, sociology, life culture, design, and engineering. The literature review is structured thematically around definitions of tiny homes, their drivers and motivations for living in them, and the evaluation of tiny home living.

2.1.1 Definitions of tiny homes

Classifying 'tiny'

There is no single, cross-cultural definition of a 'tiny' home, and previous studies have identified regulatory, technical, and cultural ways to describe the size of tiny homes. Technically, tiny homes refer to smaller dwellings than other dwellings, averaging from 20-30 per cent smaller than the conventional unit in the same region or country (Kholid and Zaharin, 2019) or where it appears that the living space is 'shrinking' (Harris and Nowicki, 2020). The largest benchmark to classify a tiny home by floor area is less than 1,000 sq. ft. or 93 m² (Riegler, 2011; Trambley, 2021). In Australia, the average floor area is 214 m² (Wotton, Skates and Shutter, 2018), and contemporary policies suggest 260 m² as the 'normal' minimum, whilst 80 m² for a housing unit would be considered too small (Wynne, 2017). In Italy, many apartments can be found being below 60 m² (Signorelli *et al.*, 2020), and there are numerous tiny house enthusiasts who live in much smaller dwellings, for example, the mobile tiny homes

that should adhere to a transportation restriction and only have around 20 m² for the total floor area (Rock, 2018).

So, many authors suggest more stringent criteria for homes to be considered 'tiny', with such homes not exceeding 500 sq. ft. or 56 m² (Friedman, 2015; Wyatt, 2016), 40 m² (Lau and Wei, 2018) or less than 400 sq. ft. or 37.2 m² (Wotton, Skates and Shutter, 2018; Shearer, 2019). To move such debates relating to the technical size of a 'tiny' home further, Mangold and Zschau (2019) suggested that it would be helpful to distinguish between the terms 'small' and 'tiny', with truly 'tiny' homes being classified in such a schema as being smaller than 400 sq. ft. or 37.2 m².

The number of dwellers also defines what tiny means to the occupants. For example, a 400 sq. ft. house occupied by a single dweller may not feel as small as if it were occupied by two or three dwellers. Some studies suggest a measurement of tiny homes relating to both size and occupation, for example, only being suitable for a maximum of two dwellers to prevent overcrowding (Tucker *et al.*, 2024) or homes which are less than 200 sq. ft. for single occupancy only (Pflaumer, 2015). With this understanding, the size of tiny homes is defined solely by numbers or measurements. However, how individuals may also perceive the size of their housing relatively, for example, based on their past experiences (Foye, 2021). For example, individuals may perceive their homes to be tiny if they previously lived in a bigger house. In this view, the dweller's socially constructed perception is not less accurate than the technical spatial measurements but is also an important element in defining a tiny home. In other words, if an individual feels that their house is small, it is a valid measure (Preece *et al.*, 2021).

Finally, the spatiality of small and tiny homes is also co-constructed by the wider cultural context and associated norms in which they are embedded. Tiny homes are seen not only as a physical construction of small dwellings but may also represent a cultural movement where individuals downsize (Sandberg, 2018). The main idea here is the process of transitioning to a smaller space to dwell. Usually, this movement involves giving up consumptive behaviour (Roy, 2019) and decluttering material possessions to embrace minimalist lifestyles (Ford and Gomez-Lanier, 2017). In several countries, this movement occurs as an expression of disagreement with existing predominant cultural norms. For example, there is a prevalent socio-cultural view in America that the bigger the better (Mangold and Zschau, 2019), or Australia, where houses are generally large (Penfold, Waitt and McGuirk, 2018). In those countries, the tiny home movement serves as a rejection of pride in large spaces, arguing that

a better life is achievable with less space. With a reduction in material possessions, individuals can live in much smaller dwelling space than match the categorisation of “tiny” homes.

Architectural design of tiny homes

The concept of tiny homes is inseparable from small residential space that serves a private function, which is varied in design since it is influenced by “region, design trends, society, and related culture” (Adediran *et al.*, 2020). Evidence in the North American and Australian contexts identifies tiny homes as mobile dwellings or permanent buildings with structural foundations, as categorised by Shearer and Burton (2019). Mobile tiny homes include those designed on wheels, relocatable prefabricated homes or container houses, caravans, RVs, or converted buses, while permanent dwellings appear in the forms of detached single houses, prefabricated houses that have been made permanent with structures on a foundation, additional housing units in the backyard, and tiny house villages. Shearer and Burton’s discussion of the typology of tiny houses is detailed, but does not include other types of small homes, such as compact housing (Khan, 2014), the grow homes, narrow rowhouses, modular housing (Friedman, 2015) or micro-apartments (Armitage, 2017; Clinton, 2018; Lau and Wei, 2018; Sandberg, 2018).

Possibly influenced by the series ‘*Tiny House Nation*’ on Netflix, tiny homes may come to be seen as an aspirational branding to change the expectations of an ideal home (Harris and Nowicki, 2020). The constructions are perceived as semi-nomadic homes (Willoughby, Mangold and Zschau, 2020) that are “small, flexible, modular, economical, and transportable” (D’Angelo, de Lieto Vollaro and Sforzini, 2019). Tiny homes are portrayed as “appealing and cute” (Wyatt, 2016; Carras, 2019) that seem inviting to more minimalist lifestyle enthusiasts. Although of an extremely small size, both portable and permanent tiny homes are equipped with the facilities of a modern dwelling (Brokenshire, 2018) to support daily living.

With its image as an affordable housing option, tiny homes appear to provide a mechanism for individuals to build their own accommodation (Shearer and Burton, 2023). To ensure that the building fits the essential needs of the residents, Wyatt (2016) suggests that the home width, ceiling height, and hallway width should not be less than 8.5’/ 260 cm, 6’8”/ 203 cm, and 36”/ 91.5 cm, respectively. The room size should be a minimum of 70 sq. ft./ 6.5 m² per person, and the total size of the home should not be less than 170 sq. ft./ 16 m² for single occupancy, with an extra 100 sq. ft./ 9 m² per additional occupant, with the lot sizes for the individual homes being 1200 to 3000 sq. ft./ 110 to 280 m². To manage the complications of electricity and plumbing provision, tiny homes can be delivered through licensed design plans

from building manufacturers that are adaptable for the dwellers, which usually include a kitchen, a bathroom, a living/working space, storage, and a sleeping area (Rock, 2018); and the homeowners can follow the manufacturer's instructions to build their own tiny homes.

Typology of tiny homes

From this review of the existing literature, an expanded typology of tiny homes can be built on the existing classification by Shearer and Burton (2019). However, it is important to consider other aspects to classify the typology of tiny homes. Other than discussing floor areas or the number of rooms, there is very little focus on the minimum facility provided in a tiny home, which is supposed to provide “the base level amenity in the form of shelter, a place to sleep, with safety and security” (Wotton, Skates and Shutter, 2018). From the studied literature, there is also little discussion on the temporality aspect of tiny homes. (Glumac, 2021) discusses the duration for renting mobile tiny homes but does not mention the duration of living in permanent tiny homes, which may impact the design. When individuals dwell temporarily in a place, they may be less likely to accumulate furniture and other material possessions, whereas if they plan to live in a tiny home in the long term, requirements such as storage of items may be a more pressing issue, since the modes of living are substantively different. Lastly, among the many types of tiny homes, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) have a unique position as they are part of a larger dwelling, making them less independently adaptable than other housing types (Evans, 2019). Table 1 presents a typology of tiny homes based on existing studies:

Table 1 Typology of Tiny Homes based on previous literature

Types of Tiny Homes	Movability	Temporality
THOW (Tiny House on Wheels)/ Mobile home	Movable	Short or long-term
RV	Movable	Short-term
Cabin/ cottage/ granny flat	Permanent	Short-term
ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit)	Permanent	Short or long-term
Detached house on foundations	Permanent	Long-term
Micro-apartment	Permanent	Short or long-term
Tiny house village	Permanent	Long-term
Compact housing	Permanent	Long-term

Source: interpreted from Shearer and Burton (2019) and Glumac (2021)

2.1.2 Motivations for living in a tiny home

It has been found that individuals involved in the tiny homes movement typically started to look at this movement because of a major life event resulting in reflections on their lifestyle and circumstances, such as feeling weighed down by accumulative possessions in their homes or

a personal financial collapse, with moving to a tiny home seen as a means to achieve what is perceived as a “good life” (Mangold and Zschau, 2019). These people usually experience downsizing living in their tiny homes, whether voluntarily or involuntarily (Sandberg, 2018). According to Sandberg, voluntary downsizers are those who are willing to reduce their dwelling size. However, there are also involuntary downsizers who are more reluctant to do so. In another study, Foye (2021) uses the term ‘forced’ downsizers, who, in contrast to those making a calculated voluntary decision, really have no choice other than living in a very small home.

However, both motivations can be intertwined; for example, where individuals consciously decide to trade off their dwelling size for something they consider more valuable, there might be a push-and-pull process before the decision is made. What makes people choose their place to live might come from different aspects of housing preferences. For example, age is an influential factor in housing preferences (Andersson, Abramsson and Malmberg, 2019) and tiny home living often attracts those either aged under 30 or older than 55 years old (Shearer, 2019), representing a group of people who live alone or only with a partner, and not with children. Even so, being attracted to tiny homes does not necessarily drive a decision to dwell in one or practice tiny home living. Some people may prefer a big home but live in a smaller one because of financial constraints (Karlen, Pagani and Binder, 2022); and there are many terms used to describe the processes that lead to a decision to live in a particular form of dwelling, including housing choice, preferences, expectations, and aspirations (Preece, 2018).

The understanding of terms such as choices, preferences, expectations, and aspirations within the housing studies literature is sometimes overlapping; resulting in a challenge in differentiating housing aspirations from other terms (Preece *et al.*, 2020). This study explains that even though housing choices can be formed through aspirations, those mechanisms exist independently. For example, people may choose one type of housing, but aspire to something else, and it is clear that people still have these aspirations even though they may have very limited choices or the ability to achieve housing outcomes that reflect these aspirations. Furthermore, Preece (2018) lists “life course, dwelling characteristics, tenure, place, work, and constraints, such as affordability or forced moves” as influencing factors of housing aspirations and choices. While these factors might be intersecting with the drivers of tiny home living, the following section discusses the drivers of personal preferences and those of necessity.

Driven by personal preferences

Even though housing affordability is the biggest factor that drives people to move to tiny homes (Evans, 2018a, 2018b), there are other motivating factors to live in a tiny home, and the reasons can be personal depending on the experience of the occupants. For instance, when people reach their retirement age with less income, older households might end up with a big housing asset, but less consumption capability (Kim, Choi and Choi, 2021). On the other hand, people might lose their physical capability as they get older, so they prefer to downsize (Doteuchi, 2008) to be able to manage their homes independently. Also, dynamics in a family, such as children leaving home in their adulthood, may result in a family home feeling too big. Individuals can lose the connection to their space, so they downsize to reconnect to their homes (Riegler, 2011; Sandberg, 2018). Downsizing can also be driven by personally desired changes when individuals perceive that a small space is now sufficient for their needs (Sandberg, 2018). In addition, when a person lives alone, the reasons for living in a tiny home include the desire for personal space (Clinton, 2018) or the unwillingness to share domestic space with other people (Shearer, 2019).

The exposure of various tiny home designs in the media also encourages architects, interior designers, and artistic craftsmen to create an appealing look for tiny homes. As a result, tiny homes become a socially and culturally popular trend, encouraging others to want to live in such a unit (Mutter, 2013; Glumac, 2021). For example, the popular introduction of Pocket compact houses in London targeted at young people illustrates how demand can be generated, evidenced by a waiting list that exceeded 17,500 people (Habra *et al.*, 2015). This reveals how the marketing practices of developers, or local and regional policy decisions, also play an important role in influencing the preferences of prospective tiny home dwellers through design innovation, especially targeting at young single people, who are an increasing proportion of urban populations (Harris and Nowicki, 2020).

In other cases, some individuals are driven by values related to the environment. Although it does not appear to be the most frequent reason for downsizing, ideas of sustainability and self-sufficiency are additional important motivations (Vasseur, Sing and Short, 2022). Occupants of Tiny Houses on Wheels (THOWs) rely on their self-provision of energy, such as using propane for the kitchen, having composting toilets, and solar energy to generate electricity, and when these measures are consistently practised, they can have positive environmental impacts (Mutter, 2013; Vasseur, Sing and Short, 2022). Living in a tiny home makes many things simpler, resulting in a reduction in housing footprints that has a positive impact on the environment (Ford and Gomez-Lanier, 2017). However, Sandberg (2018)

argues that downsizing is not related to environmental concerns because a reduction in energy consumption does not determine that a house is environmentally sustainable. This movement, therefore, seems to be also related to economic values rather than solely environmental concerns (Mangold and Zschau, 2019; Vasseur, Sing and Short, 2022).

Another factor that drives people to move to a tiny home is the flexibility offered, especially by THOWs. In the Netherlands, this type of housing attracts particular interest from young males under 35 years old (Glumac, 2021) since it allows people to travel with their homes and gives an experience of freedom of living anywhere (Summers, 2022). However, housing regulation in certain areas of the city or country may create different dynamics for the existence of THOWs. In Australia, the regulations for THOWs are more lenient than for tiny houses built on foundations (Tucker *et al.*, 2024). In the United States, several States approve THOWs and ADUs, but some other States do not (Evans, 2018a). In Canada, the municipalities only authorise ADUs as part of an infill development strategy (Lessard, 2022). However, THOWs are seen as the most flexible strategy to avoid the need for council approval of housing (Shearer, 2019).

Driven by a necessity to trade off housing size for other purposes

As a result of demographic movements, with more people living in city areas, housing size becomes more compact to meet the volume of housing demand (Khan, 2014), and prices become higher. When their financial conditions are challenged, individuals are faced with an option to trade off one or some of their housing preferences for elements that are more essential for their lives. For example, in London, where people want to obtain ownership of a house, they may need to be willing to get a small property (Preece *et al.*, 2021). In the United States, households who want to avoid a long-term mortgage (Cumberbatch-Pearson, 2020) may need to downsize to fit in a portable tiny house or in an ADU in someone else's backyard. So, a response to financial pressures is often downsizing to a tiny home to reduce living costs (Boeckermann, Kaczynski and King, 2019).

Living in a smaller home may not provide enough space for storage, so occupants tend to be more selective or mindful about purchasing items. In addition to saving on housing costs, they therefore reduce their expenditure on other goods, and this may enable them to accumulate savings for their future to prevent old-age poverty (Vasseur, Sing and Short, 2022), or as strategies to better allocate their financial burdens to other desirable needs or to reach financial freedoms more easily (Carras, 2019; Shearer, 2019; Summers, 2022). The construction of a tiny home may enable homeowners to be able to build their homes

themselves (Summers, 2022) or be partially involved in the process (Murillo and Bianchi, 2024) reducing the costs of hiring others on the project.

Many studies also report that people move to a smaller dwelling as a trade-off for a more convenient way of living, for example, young people who want to enjoy city life (Shearer, 2019). Even though there are more affordable and bigger houses in suburban areas, some people prefer to live in a micro-apartment as long as they can get easier access to desired places (Lau and Wei, 2018) or preferred situations in a neighbourhood (Clinton, 2018) even though it means they have to live in a substandard sized dwelling (Alfirević and Simonović-Alfirević, 2022). Especially for individuals living alone, such as young professionals and new arrivals to the city, the existence of a micro-apartment provides a solution to making their lives more efficient in general (Shore, 2014) even though sometimes it means they have to pay a higher price for their desired comfort (Infranca, 2014).

There are also groups of individuals who are interested in living in tiny homes in rural areas (Shearer, 2019; Vasseur, Sing and Short, 2022) for more freedom and connections to the neighbourhood that they cannot obtain in urban areas, especially those who can work remotely through online connectivity. However, with no specific office to interact with their colleagues in person, they can experience loneliness or stress due to over usage of digital devices (Taser *et al.*, 2022). Being in a community of tiny homes may be beneficial for their social needs as human beings and is reported as one of the influential factors that drives this movement (Mutter, 2013; Mangold and Zschau, 2019; Willoughby, Mangold and Zschau, 2020; Shearer and Burton, 2023).

Driven by necessity

The occupation of tiny homes is also influenced and steered by wider housing, planning and welfare policy and legal contexts that can directly promote and facilitate, or, conversely, limit and prevent, the use of tiny homes. In addition, wider governmental responses to housing affordability crises impact the need or desire for tiny homes at both local municipal, private developer and individual household levels. These also interact with commercial drivers of production as housing developers calculate demand patterns and profitability. In some cases, tiny homes are used as a governmental programme to provide dwellings for more marginalised groups. In the United States, tiny homes are used to accommodate the homeless (Mingoya, 2016; Turner, 2017; Greene, 2019; Jackson *et al.*, 2020), who have rapidly increased across the nation (Evans, 2020). Studies of types of accommodation have not established whether occupants previously lived in a bigger or smaller dwelling, and whether they perceive this type

of housing as sufficient or lacking in space. However, few financial resources significantly constrain their levels of choice (Murillo and Bianchi, 2024).

Besides targeting support to homeless people, government land sale policies direct individuals to choose smaller dwellings to tackle the scarcity of land supply for housing (Evans, 2018a; Lau and Wei, 2018) especially in many East Asian cities that need to facilitate a large number of new inhabitants (Harris and Nowicki, 2020; Batista and Farias, 2021). Even if housing affordability may not be a huge problem for homeowners, the limited land supply becomes a constraint that sets a limitation on the maximum size of a dwelling, and tiny homes can become the only available housing type. There might be another housing option with a bigger floor area, but the segment is sold at a significantly higher price, which makes it exclusive for people with much higher incomes. Thus, the decision to live in a small dwelling becomes involuntary because it is the only affordable choice (Sandberg, 2018). Therefore, understanding the wider local and national policy imperatives and drivers, and the extent to which tiny homes are fundamentally seen as problematic, is a key element of understanding this phenomenon.

2.1.3 Evaluation of tiny home lived experiences

With a substandard dwelling size, space sufficiency can be the main concern of living in tiny homes, especially related to the issue of overcrowding (Friedman, 2015). The number of occupants who share the space, differences in age, gender, and the relationships between occupants, also influence the overcrowding of a house (Signorelli *et al.*, 2020). Evaluating the success of tiny homes cannot rely only on size sufficiency but also needs to consider housing conditions, the neighbourhood, and overall housing expectations (Foye, 2021). Moreover, Foye explains that expectations towards dwelling size are shaped by past experiences and the size of living spaces of other people in the surrounding area. People tend to feel satisfied with a tiny home if they are more familiar with a smaller house, but may be dissatisfied when their previous house was bigger.

Advantages of tiny homes

With compact size, tiny homes bring a tangible financial advantage by lowering energy bills and maintenance costs. The significant reduction in energy consumption also has a positive impact on the sustainable environment (Huebner and Shipworth, 2017; Stieß, Umbach-daniel and Fischer, 2019; Nezzi *et al.*, 2022). The practice of minimalist lifestyles from this movement is set as an ethical norm of housing consumption (Summers, 2022). Dwellers may regard the need to reduce their material possessions as a freedom rather than a restriction, so they adopt this lifestyle and become a part of the “tiny housers” movement (Carras, 2019). As a tiny

houser, Foreman (2021) reports the joy of the decluttering process and the freedom from “stuffology,” suggesting the success of this movement.

Whether in the form of a detached home or apartment, carefully planning the design of the limited space can make tiny homes sufficient to contain everything needed by the occupants (Sandberg, 2018). The dwellers can apply the minimalist lifestyle and see it as normal or appropriate (Carras, 2019). They often begin with struggles, but then their expectations adapt, allowing them to reframe their portrayal of ideal homes (Harris and Nowicki, 2020). For groups of individuals who make trade-offs to live in a small dwelling, it is reported that they are satisfied with the choice they make without dismissing the spatial compensation. The challenges related to amenities from space limitation are seen as a means to creative solutions, such as using space-saving furniture to make their homes look bigger (Preece *et al.*, 2021). The concept of open space is also commonly adopted as a spatial strategy to increase the spaciousness of a tiny home. Studies have found that tiny home dwellers show positive responses when the kitchen and the living room are joined together but prefer to keep the bedroom separated for privacy and accept the idea of a bedroom loft in a tiny home (Soub and Memikoğlu, 2020). When they experience challenging situations in their domestic space, they are willing to cooperate with other occupants in terms of sharing their spaces (Tucker *et al.*, 2024).

Another benefit is that tiny homes can protect a segmented group within housing market competition, as experienced by the dwellers of micro-apartments. Since the occupancy number is limited, this type of housing provision prevents young people who are still building their financial capacity from having to compete with older citizens with a family when both groups like the same neighbourhood location (Shore, 2014). For example, as described above, ‘Pocket houses’ in London are small apartments prioritised for single young people.

Despite size restrictions, tiny homes can independently provide the dwellers’ needs regarding energy resources. Rock (2018) estimates that tiny homes typically have enough electricity supply for modern lifestyle equipment such as laptops, TVs, cell phone chargers, cooktops, coffee makers, and other kitchen utensils, all of which can consume up to 7,000 watts of power if everything is used at the same time. Moreover, Rock states that most of the mobile tiny homes are capable of being adapted to tackle situations in a wide range of climates to ensure that the dwellers can live comfortably inside their homes.

Other positive reports about living in tiny homes relate to personal growth that brings a sense of pride in the experience of the dwellers, especially those who live within tiny home communities (Huebner and Shipworth, 2017) and for those who take part in the construction work of their house (Murillo and Bianchi, 2024). Older people who live in tiny homes are also motivated to take care of their space independently because the small space enables them to do so (Stieß, Umbach-daniel and Fischer, 2019). Those who are satisfied with this lifestyle can find their lives more oriented toward getting closer to their version of happiness (Mangold and Zschau, 2019). Moreover, the existence of tiny homes also brings potential to ensure accommodation for the homeless who are employed but on lower incomes (Cumberbatch-Pearson, 2020).

Disadvantages of tiny homes

Living in a small dwelling means there will be restrictions. In Australia, where the average floor area for housing is large, tiny homes can end up being “unliveable” (Wotton, Skates and Shutter, 2018). Anthropometric standards are also negotiated, which may reduce the convenience of mobility when households are doing their activities inside their homes. Shearer (2019) reports that some occupants complain about the ceiling clearance being too low in loft bedrooms, the difficulty and lack of safety for accessing the loft because the stairs are not designed accordingly to an ideal safety standard. In addition, there were complaints about the smells of the cooking pervading the entire house because open space design integrates the kitchen with other rooms, the impracticality of using composting toilets, and the lack of storage for kitchen equipment, tools, and other basic housing items. There were also particular challenges for households with babies and very young children, who were often motivated to look for larger accommodation as a result.

Micro-apartments are also considered impractical for multiple purposes, such as having both a bed and a couch. Even though a customised design of foldable furniture can be a solution, folding furniture requires a certain amount of space before it is expanded to serve its function (Li and Wu, 2021), but even this may be challenging in a tiny home. Constructing retractable furniture requires more cost than conventional furniture (Gronostajska and Szczegielniak, 2021). Folding furniture every day can also be a laborious activity. Occupants may eventually stop doing it and feel that the space is more constrained (Urist, 2013).

Since tiny homes are only appropriate for one or two occupants, overcrowding can be an issue if there are more inhabitants. However, budget restrictions may force occupants to share space with more people, shown by a study in Hong Kong where the majority of the occupants

felt dissatisfied and 70 per cent of them admitted to not having enough space in their homes (Lau and Wei, 2018). The lack of space also brings concerns of not being able to have guests (Huebner and Shipworth, 2017) and living in a tiny home can be lonely for a single occupant, but sharing with another household or staying in a communal place with other tiny home dwellers can raise concerns over privacy (Willoughby, Mangold and Zschau, 2020). In a study on tiny homes provided for the previously homeless, functionality was reduced, and the number of amenities was compromised to lower the property's price and increase affordability (Clinton, 2018). With the small size, this type of housing is often associated with low-quality housing, with related concerns about neighbourhood poverty, crime, and the creation of unwanted slum conditions in a neighbourhood (Evans, 2018a; Cumberbatch-Pearson, 2020).

Tiny homes can be more costly per square metre than a conventional house. What makes them affordable is the size reduction and not needing to purchase land in the case of THOWs (Shearer, 2019). The homeowner also needs to prepare all budgets in advance because there is no financial support in the way of a mortgage available for conventional housing. From the technical perspective, the indoor air quality may be compromised. Research in Hong Kong found that the highest levels of CO₂ were detected in micro-apartments due to inevitable overcrowding (Cheung and Jim, 2019a). Other research revealed heat stress due to the building's poor ventilation, which increased the potential symptoms of 'sick building syndrome' (Cheung and Jim, 2019b). A different study in South Korea found evidence of organic compounds exceeding the tolerated level required by indoor air quality guidelines (Kim and Kim, 2019).

Not every downsizer who lives in a tiny home is satisfied with their choice. An online real estate poll in the United States showed that 44 per cent of the participants expressed housing regrets, and one third of homeowners wished they had chosen a larger home, which was a bigger proportion than those who were pleased that they had downsized (Murtaugh, 2022). These studies suggest that tiny homes still need improvements to become comfortable dwelling places. Undoubtedly, size does matter in creating the satisfaction of living in a dwelling (Wotton, Skates and Shutter, 2018). A better plan of furniture and amenities layout can help improve the spaciousness of the home (Gong, Bai and He, 2017) and prevent occupants from feeling overcrowded, but technical guidance is also required to ensure the building does not adversely affect occupants' well-being.

2.2 Review of existing literature on tiny homes in Indonesia

The most recent policy document relating to housing in Indonesia is Government Regulation No. 12, 2021. Translated from the original document, the Indonesian Government defines ‘house’ as a “building for dwelling that is liveable, facilitates family development, reflects the honour and dignity of the occupants, and is an asset of the owner.” This description implies that ‘house’ does not only serve as a dwelling but also as an expression of other Indonesian values associated with family, social norms, and investment. The term ‘house’ is used here as there is no differentiation between home and house in the Indonesian language (this is discussed further in Chapter 4). In terms of size, this regulation only states the minimum size is “9 m² per person for houses in a plot of land, which can be fulfilled gradually, with the minimum ceiling height being 2.7 metres,” and “the area for an effective plot of land being 60 – 200 m².” With this parameter, it may be interpreted that houses in Indonesia can be as tiny as 9 m² and still be legal for single occupancy. However, the information based on the government regulation may not be familiar to Indonesian people because there are different terms or ‘brands’ when a new housing segment is built in a neighbourhood or launched in the housing market. Table 2 presents examples of types of housing in Indonesia that can be associated with tiny homes:

Table 2 Types of Indonesian Tiny Homes

Types	Description
<i>Rumah sederhana</i> (translated as “simple house”)  Source: rumah123, 2023	A mass production of small lot houses with individual plots of land. The minimum size is typically 36 m², built by housing developers. Any Indonesian citizen is allowed to buy this house.
Subsidised housing  Source: Nugroho, 2017	Similar to “simple house” but specifically targeted to low-income households. The government contributes to parts of the funding to help them obtain ownership of a home.
Urban village/ urban vernacular	Tiny homes as informal settlements that are usually occupied by low-income people who have lived there for generations.



Source: Aminudin, 2022

“Kost”



Source: Chan, 2020

Micro-apartment



Source: design-milk, 2021

A built-to-rent property, usually used as a boarding house for young single occupants. This housing type has recently also become an option for small families who want to live very close to their workplaces.

A typical small apartment in the centre of an urban area in the city.

RISHA



Source: Housing Estate, 2018

RISHA stands for *Rumah Instan Sederhana Sehat* (translated as “Simple and Healthy Instant House”), a small house that proposes an innovation in building material constructions to suppress the costs. It can also be a subsidised programme by the government.

Compat house



Source: Archinesia, 2021

A custom-designed house by an architect or a design bureau. The size might be similar to other tiny homes, but the look is more appealing and is usually more costly.

Related to the Indonesian Government's regulatory definition of a house which includes a facility for family development, the size of a house is set based on the number of people in a family unit, with an 'ideal family' popularly understood to consist of two adults and two children, which becomes the rationale to set 36 m² as the minimum floor area, with each household members getting 9 m² space.

Indonesian housing studies have long navigated the complexities of tiny homes, particularly through two lenses: urban '*kampung*' or urban villages (Anggraeni and Herlily, 2020) and 'simple houses' as part of subsidised housing (Perdamaian and Zhai, 2024). *Kampung* itself is part of the indigenous form of Indonesian urban housing, often referring to informal settlements and can be associated with slums or deprived localities. It has been widely studied, leading to practical developments through the Kampung Improvement Programme (KIP), involving housing activists and communities, particularly in Surabaya, East Java (Silas, 1992). Besides his involvement in KIP, Silas has also contributed to the classification of the typology of *kampung* houses, identifying the transformation processes of Indonesian informal tiny homes, including revealing that *kampung* houses that were previously tiny could be enlarged up to 200 m² houses (Funo, Yamamoto and Silas, 2002), making them no longer considered 'tiny homes'. The recognition of KIP and other research contributions in Indonesian housing studies has made Silas the leading Indonesian scholar on community-based housing, especially since he was awarded the UN-Habitat Scroll of Honour in 2005 (UN-Habitat, 2005). Following the success of KIP, Anggraeni and Herlily (2020) explored an urban *kampung* in North Jakarta and conducted interviews with residents, during which they discovered practices of a sustainable lifestyle through a strong community bond, communal activities and attempts to leave minimal environmental footprints. These were depicted by Ford and Gomez-Lanier (2017) in a wider international context as approaches to environmental and social sustainability that emphasises consideration of the particular community context. While the success of KIP may not have reached all Indonesian *kampungs*, the programme was recognised for its 'community-based' approach, suggesting the important role of sociocultural aspects in Indonesian housing.

More recent Indonesian scholarship has also studied tiny homes as subsidised or affordable housing, focusing on aspects of housing liveability (Paramitha, Soemarmo and Silas, 2012; Perdamaian and Zhai, 2024). While Paramitha, Soemarmo and Silas (2012) examined the construction of housing liveability through a post-positivist qualitative approach, Perdamaian and Zhai (2024) found that housing performance did not meet some requirements of housing liveability and proposed a solution through integrated performance modelling, a simulation

model which incorporates various aspects of building performance, including energy, daylight, and human behaviour, to create optimum design configuration. In contrast, some studies found that the houses met the expected standards of housing health or comfort (Kurniati and Nurhidayatullah, 2020; Putra and Hakim, 2021; Bomo and Pasaribu, 2022).

Regarding the size standards that have been previously discussed, Suryo and KemenPUPR (2017) recommend a smaller size for the minimum standard of Indonesian houses, being 30.75 m² for the interior space and 37 m² for the land area (Susanto *et al.*, 2022), but this study only confirmed that the size would enable essential activities without evaluating the mobility or circulation comfort spatially. On the contrary, Amalia and Simarmata's (2020) field observation in the city of Bandung reported that more than half of their respondents complained about insufficient circulation areas or tended to make renovations to double the floor area (Imriyanti, 2020), suggesting the given standards by the government were too small for a home. This was also supported by a more recent study of the Indonesian Millennial generation's user preferences in tiny homes that showed the most preferred size for housing was between 80 and 100 m², larger than the typical tiny homes (Analisa and Okada, 2023). However, those studies were predominantly generated using quantitative methods, comparing technical field observations with government guidelines or through statistical data analysis. This review found no study involving examination of the actual lived experiences of Indonesian tiny home dwellers, where the data is generated through direct interactions and interpretations of their shared experiences. Therefore, there is not enough existing evidence to conclude that Indonesian tiny homes are insufficient for providing comfort, suggesting the lack of qualitative research on housing evaluation and inconclusive evidence on how positively or negatively tiny homes are viewed.

From the two lenses of Indonesian tiny home studies, the first interpretation of Indonesian tiny homes has been more established in Indonesian housing studies, identified as '*kampung*' as the preferred lexicon, as *kampung* houses are not always 'tiny homes', whereas the studies of the second interpretation of tiny homes are more nuanced and may be merged with tiny homes as a phenomenon of shrinking domesticities, as described in the Introduction chapter, that resonates with tiny homes in the international housing literature. Furthermore, Bilquish and Susanto (2018) revealed the prevalence of micro-units in Jakarta apartments, suggesting tiny homes within larger blocks of housing that are not visible from the building's exterior. While this is not depicted in the previous two interpretations, it suggests a broader understanding of Indonesian tiny homes, especially in relation to the global phenomenon of shrinking domesticities.

2.3 Critical review and gaps in existing knowledge

To date, studies of tiny homes have mostly been conducted in North America, Australia, and Western European countries, with some studies also from East Asian, Latin American, and Middle Eastern countries. This generates a variety of insights, but most of these are based on data from the Global North, resulting in gaps in our understanding of tiny homes in the context of the Global South.

2.3.1 Defining tiny homes

Generally, existing studies agree that “tiny” homes are dwellings with a floor space of less than 400 sq. ft. or 37 m² and are occupied by one or two dwellers, but there is no discussion on the actual size beyond the measurement of the physical boundaries. For example, a 37 m² tiny home on foundations that is set in a rural area can have a generous extension of outdoor space that serves as the front yard or back yard, but the size of tiny homes in the forms of micro apartments is set to a precise measurement based on the physical boundaries of the unit walls and all activities are assumed to occur within it. So, the metrical approach to determining the size of tiny homes is not done equally since it does not consider the possibility of expanding the space to an outdoor area.

Determining a sufficient house size is extremely difficult and cannot be calculated only by measurement metrics (Cohen, 2021) because people also interpret size depending on their previous spatial experiences (Foye, 2021). Since different countries have different average sizes of housing units, a 37 m² house can be very small for people from Australia, but might be normal for people in Indonesia, because that is the size they usually see. Moreover, Indonesian regulations only state the minimum size per person, making the interpretation of tiny homes possibly vague, compared to other countries. Indonesian regulation also defines ‘house’ as a place for family development and as a reflection of the occupants’ honour and dignity, which shows that social and cultural values are embedded in the policy definitions. We therefore need further research that defines tiny homes from a wider range of aspects.

Furthermore, the previous typology of tiny homes (Wotton, Skates and Shutter, 2018; Shearer and Burton, 2019) differentiates the types based on the mobility of the house. There are more opportunities to include different types of small homes and suggest the minimum facilities that a tiny home should have (Wotton, Skates and Shutter, 2018). Looking from the design perspective, residential facilities are provided based on the occupants’ immediate needs rather than considering how long the occupants will stay in that home, so there is a need for further

research on the temporality dynamics of tiny homes. On the other hand, Indonesia had been familiar with tiny homes in the forms of urban villages and subsidised housing even before 'tiny homes' became a recognised and studied global trend. However, these existing interpretations have not accommodated the understanding of tiny homes as part of shrinking domesticity, which likely occurs in Indonesia as in the Global North. Therefore, it is essential to define the term 'tiny homes' specifically in the Indonesian context.

2.3.2 Drivers and housing mechanisms of tiny home living

Tiny homes in the Global North have become a housing segment that attracts both young people and senior citizens, but young people in Indonesia, represented by the Millennial generation, prefer a larger house than a tiny home (Analisa and Okada, 2023). So, age may not be a significant factor in determining housing preferences for tiny homes across all countries. Furthermore, studies from the Global North also convey that living in a tiny home often comes through a decision of intentional downsizing or a conscious trade-off between size and more important life values. There is less prevalence of living in a tiny home because that is the only available type of housing, except for the case of homelessness, where it is part of a government programme as a housing solution. However, even those with very limited housing choices still have housing aspirations that are worth exploring (Preece *et al.*, 2020). In Indonesia, the existence of tiny homes might be potentially influenced by the governmental setting that states only 9 m² per person as the minimum standard of housing floor area. People may live in that house because it is the only option available, but before they finally decide to move in, they also have ideas about homes. Terms like housing aspirations or preferences come from English words that may not have an equivalent meaning in Indonesian words, but the process of thinking before deciding to live in a particular home may still possibly be seen from the perspective of housing aspirations, choices, preferences, or expectations.

Glumac (2021) shows that some tiny house enthusiasts are short- to medium-term renters of THOWs, but there is less research on the ownership or rental status of other types of tiny homes. A study of Indonesian millennials' housing preferences shows that they prefer a bigger home and plan to accumulate money to increase their purchasing power (Analisa and Okada, 2023). Without mentioning what type of accommodation they live in now, there is a possibility that, at the current moment, dwellers are still building their financial capacity and now live in a smaller home temporarily. This dynamic indicates the need to investigate how the tenure status of tiny homes in Indonesia, as well as the broader contexts of housing pathways (Clapham, 2005) and other housing mechanisms (Skobba, 2023) that may intersect with Indonesian tiny home living.

2.3.3 Evaluation of tiny home living

Research suggests that living in tiny homes is generally evaluated positively by those who intentionally downsize, as it brings happiness to their dwellers (Mangold and Zschau, 2019; Foreman, 2021; Murillo and Bianchi, 2024) who can reframe the ideas of space sufficiency (Penfold, Waitt and McGuirk, 2018). Some regard tiny home dwelling as the ethically correct behaviour regarding housing consumption (Summers, 2022). Living in a tiny home is also seen as a refreshing lifestyle for those who previously lived in a much bigger home or as an escape from the dominant social construction of ideal homes. However, studies have also found significant disadvantages related to space limitations. The consequence of living in a very small space is that there is no dedicated room for every activity, and most rooms must serve multiple purposes. The more serious concerns are issues related to overcrowding and poor indoor air quality that might threaten the health of the occupants.

In contrast, studies on Indonesian tiny homes show a broader spectrum between satisfaction and dissatisfaction regarding their spatial comfort and size. Concerns about the housing liveability in previous studies (Paramitha, Soemarmo and Silas, 2012; Perdamaian and Zhai, 2024) imply that there is room for improvement in Indonesian housing. It suggests the need for further investigation into the evaluation of tiny home living, including potential implications and practical navigation strategies, especially in crowded cities where tiny homes may be the only available housing option.

2.3.4 Limitations in the existing Indonesian housing research methodologies

Previous literature reviews show that research in Indonesia has utilised more quantitative or mixed-methods approaches than primarily qualitative ones. Susanto et al. (2022) collected data through surveys and questionnaires for their ergonomic studies to propose minimum space standards, Suryo (2017) measured anthropometric data to propose an efficient spatial organisation for affordable housing, and Amalia and Simarmata (2020) measured spatial dimensions, humidity levels and illuminance to evaluate housing comfort; all of those used solely quantitative methods. Perdamaian and Zhai (2024) used integrated performance modelling, which was nested within quantitative approaches, but they began their study with a “qualitative stage” that “mainly involves studying the livability aspects of simple housing” (p. 298) that was not standardised. However, they did not explain the process of this “qualitative stage”. On the other hand, their study presented multiple parameters for measuring housing liveability in tables and formulas, grounded in quantitative methods. Some researchers claimed that they used both qualitative and quantitative methods in their studies. Analisa and Okada (2023) described their qualitative stage as “an exploratory approach on textual and

internet sources” (p.1), while Imriyanti (2020) and Putra and Hakim (2021) only mentioned “descriptive” to imply their qualitative approach. However, there was no specific explanation of how they used the methods. In contrast, quantitative approaches were more prevalent, as they used charts to present respondents’ data from online forms (Putra and Hakim, 2020) and analysed data using statistics (Imriyanti, 2020; Analisa and Okada, 2023).

While some studies appeared to use only qualitative approaches, the depth and quality varied. Funo, Yamamoto, and Silas (2002) comprehensively described the typology of kampung houses based on a field survey. They generated substantial physical data on houses in particular urban settlements, but their study did not involve in-depth critical analysis. Kurniati and Hidayatullah (2020) and Bomo and Pasaribu (2022) used the same descriptive approach, even though their data were much simpler than those in Funo, Yamamoto, and Silas’ study. Paramitha, Soemarmo and Silas (2012) also claimed that they used “qualitative research with post-positivism paradigm” (p.155), where they tested residents’ surveys and questionnaires against theories of liveability. The only qualitative study that involved housing residents in direct interactions for data collection was Anggraeni and Herlily’s (2020) research on sustainable lifestyles in a tiny home *kampung* settlement, which used in-depth interviews and field observation.

The methods above imply that most Indonesian housing research relies on technical parameters or theories against which data are tested and suggest a lack of research approaches that generate data directly from interaction with residents as research participants and utilise their individual information to construct the data, which can be addressed through qualitative methods. Moreover, in research on housing evaluation, it is essential to include the experiences, perceptions and orientations of household residents in the studies, so that these can be examined to provide a more informed, holistic understanding and evaluation of tiny homes. Reflecting on Preece *et al.* (2023), who included these aspects while investigating individual trade-offs against housing dimensions in some UK cities, this study seeks to address this gap by adopting a similar strategy.

2.4 Conceptual framework of lived experience for this study

The previous section has identified the substantial and methodological gaps that have informed the development of the conceptual framework for this study (Table 3). The substantive gaps in knowledge shaped the study’s research questions, and these questions, in turn, informed the study design and choice of research methods, most notably to enable examination of tiny homes’ residents’ lived experiences.

Table 3 Substantial and methodological gaps in constructing the conceptual framework

Summary from research gaps	Guidelines for conducting research
Substantial gaps: • Understanding how tiny homes in Indonesia are defined as part of the phenomena of shrinking domesticity, including how calculated metrics to determine the size of tiny homes could be enhanced by integrating exterior space into the measurement and how perceptual, sociocultural values or policy influence can complement and/or challenge anthropometric measurements to define tiny homes. • Exploring the drivers of living in tiny homes in crowded cities, where tiny homes are the dominant housing form in the market and the mix of economic, cultural, policy and individual households and their interactions, including the balance between voluntarism and involuntary necessity. • Evaluating the experiences and impact of tiny homes in relation to the temporality of dwelling (temporary or permanent/ short or long-term occupancy), tenure status (renter or owner), and affordability (rent and ownership), including potential implications due to spatial constraints that may impact the dweller's life quality.	Constructing research questions
Methodological gap: Performing constructivist qualitative research regarding the specific contexts based on the lived experience of Indonesian tiny home occupants.	Seeking approaches in lived experience

In their article on the notion of 'lived experience' for social policy analysis, McIntosh and Wright (2019) noted that lived experience is most closely associated with phenomenology due to its contrast with positivist approaches, which are "fundamentally rooted in the description, analysis, and interpretation of lived experience" (p. 454), while implementing lived experience in ethnography results in better intimacy while understanding the shared meaning of a particular subject. They also suggest that lived experience "can be usefully understood as involving clusters of commonality and shared intersubjective experiences" (p. 459) and are "especially relevant where they are shaped and mediated by policies" (p. 452). Furthermore, they explained that this approach can account for things that are "intuitive and culturally shared... in such a prominent way with little explication" (p. 451), and this is beneficial for researchers to get "direct access to a solid base of pure knowledge" through "tapping into people's experience" (p. 451). Addressing the gap in methodology, these approaches are applied in this research, which involves residents of a neighbourhood or housing community and includes nuances in social, cultural, and policy discussions.

Specifically in housing studies, Allen argued for the importance of the lived experience and linked perceptions of residents as a legitimate and essential form of knowledge. Using debates about the role of housing research in the housing markets renewal programme in the north of England, he criticised how housing research undertaken by ‘professional’ researchers in government, universities and consultancies was conceived of as “superior” in its understanding of theories rather than “absolute truths” (2009, p. 63), and called for a greater acknowledgement of the “knowledge claims” made by “ordinary people that live in houses” (Allen, 2009, p. 55). This implies that housing studies needs to incorporate lived experience approaches to avoid the “superiority” that may dismiss the depths of truths that only “ordinary” housing inhabitants can reveal. In an exchange with Allen, Flint supported the claim that “housing studies does need to assign legitimacy and authenticity to marginalized voices who have **direct experience**...” (2011, p. 81 – emphasis added).

While the limitations of existing Indonesian housing studies and Allen’s criticisms have informed the emphasis on capturing and understanding the lived experience of housing in this study, McIntosh and Write (2019), as presented earlier, describe the characteristics of the lived experience approach that can be applied in this study. Beyond the physical aspects of housing, Rapoport (1969) documented how culture shapes housing forms, including how people from different geographies interpret public and private territories in their homes differently (p. 80). As a nation of multiple cultures with their own traditional houses, there may be some cultural values traced in Indonesia’s urban housing, especially with a strong community bond characterising *kampung* tiny homes (Anggraeni and Herlily, 2020).

In line with this, the international literature review identified themes related to tiny homes, including technical and architectural scopes (Rock, 2018; Wotton, Skates and Shutter, 2018; Shearer and Burton, 2019), community values and desire to connect with other people in the neighbourhood (Mutter, 2013; Willoughby, Mangold and Zschau, 2020; Shearer and Burton, 2023), individuals’ preferences and choices (Riegler, 2011; Clinton, 2018; Sandberg, 2018; Shearer, 2019), and the relationship between the housing market and financial constraints (Habra *et al.*, 2015; Evans, 2018b; Foye, 2021; Karlen, Pagani and Binder, 2022) that may be shaped by housing policies or regulations (Evans, 2018a; Lau and Wei, 2018). Therefore, this study developed multidimensional research strategies that integrated themes from both Indonesian housing studies and international studies of tiny homes into an examination of lived experiences in the Indonesian local context, while remaining grounded in ‘qualitative thinking’ (Mason, 2006) and guided by the conceptual framework, with themes and specific approaches described in Table 4.

Table 4 Themes and approaches in this study

Themes	Research approaches
Social, including community values	Lived experience: involving direct observation of tiny homes dwellings and interactions with their inhabitants Reviews of policy documents and housing standards.
Economic	
Cultural	
Technical	
Housing policies	

Note: Enabling a technical understanding of tiny homes used both approaches to triangulate the policy documents and/or housing standards with the field observations.

The conceptual framework for this study was constructed through integrating the characteristics of lived experience – descriptive, interpretative, policy-mediated, and involving shared values or commonality (McIntosh and Wright, 2019) – with themes generated from the literature review of tiny homes. This framework provides practical guidance for exploring the lived experience of tiny homes in Indonesia. By doing so, this study would increase our understanding of tiny homes as a growing phenomenon and address the gaps in existing knowledge through comparing tiny homes in Indonesia with those discussed in existing literature, ensuring that the research aim is met through empirical investigations, document review, and synthesis of academic data.

2.5 Research questions

The information given by the research gaps and conceptual framework led to the formulation of the following research questions for this study:

1. How are tiny homes defined and understood technically, socially, culturally and in policy terms in Indonesia?
2. What are the social, economic, cultural and policy drivers of Indonesian tiny home occupancy, including both voluntary and/or involuntary mechanisms within the wider context of housing aspirations, opportunities and constraints?
3. What are the lived experiences of residents of tiny homes in Indonesia, including the impacts on these experiences and how they navigate through them?
4. How do the specific Indonesian demographic, economic, policy, cultural and social elements of the lived experience of tiny homes relate and compare to the wider international literature?

3. Methodology

This chapter explains the methodology of this study, explaining the rationale for the methods selected and describing how they were enacted. The chapter begins by explaining the design of the study, including the use of case studies, the selection of the case study locations, the research techniques utilised, the recruitment and profile of research participants, and the stages of data collection and analysis. This is followed by an account of the research timeline. The chapter concludes with critical reflections on the methods, including the researcher's positionality and the effectiveness and limitations of the research techniques used.

3.1 Research Design

Due to its focus on lived experiences and perceptions and the aim of understanding the importance of local contexts, the study was designed to use primarily qualitative research methods using a multiple case study approach. The research was conducted in Indonesia, which is the researcher's home nation and also provided an opportunity to partly rectify the limited research on tiny homes in the Global South and, more specifically, South-East Asia. However, while Indonesia is partly illustrative of these contexts, it is recognised that there are considerable differences between nations in this region, and indeed, as will be illustrated in this study, between different localities within Indonesia itself.

Studying the context of tiny homes in Indonesia required both exploring the forms of Indonesian tiny homes and the lived experience of their dwellers. This required in-depth observation in the field; and case study research was selected in accordance with its capacity to explore, describe, and explain a phenomenon (Yin, 2014). This research also emphasises the generation and analysis of empirical data to construct the narrative stories of Indonesian tiny home occupants to address its key questions. Thus, this study has been conducted using mainly qualitative methods, as the concern of this research is with the observed phenomenon within the case study itself, rather than primarily focusing on theoretical inference (Hammersley and Gomm, 2009). Conducting qualitative research enabled the data to be generated from the lived domestic context of the tiny home dwellers, focusing on their interpretation and meaning of their tiny homes and how they made sense of living in them

(Groat and Wang, 2013), followed by processing the findings through inductive reasoning that derives a theory from field observations and empirical data (de Vaus, 2001).

3.1.1 Indonesian case studies

According to de Vaus (2001, p.226), having more than one case study is essential for inductive purposes, and each case is treated as a single case. This study selected two cases as the units of analysis: the Greater Jakarta and Bali urban areas, to ensure that this study was performed rigorously by avoiding the weak representation of populations in a single site (Stake, 2009). Using two case studies also enabled the direct replication of methods that made the analytic conclusions from the case studies more robust (Yin, 2014). Since studies of tiny homes in Indonesia are still underrepresented in the literature, the Greater Jakarta and Bali urban areas were also chosen as sites in Indonesia that were most familiar to, and linked to, international networks and system flows, for example, by having the most used and important international airports in the country (Misachi, 2017). In addition, Greater Jakarta is a metropolitan area that may share similar characteristics with other metropolitan or capital cities in other countries, and Bali is a tourist destination island that has become internationally well-known over time.

Greater Jakarta is a term used to refer to the largest metropolitan area on the island of Java, comprising the formal administrative region of 'DKI Jakarta' (Special Capital Region of Jakarta) and its peripheral areas that are administratively part of different provinces and regions, including Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, South Tangerang, and Bekasi. DKI Jakarta itself is the name of a city and is divided into: West, North, East, South, and Central Jakarta. Since Greater Jakarta is very large and continues to expand, people from outside the area tend to have difficulty addressing a specific city precisely and only call it 'Jakarta', whereas Greater Jakarta locals tend to be more specific in referring to geographical areas of the metropolis. For example, instead of saying "Jakarta", they would say "South Jakarta" or shorten it to "The South", or emphasise that it is "Tangerang", not "Jakarta". To simplify geographic terms, this study uses 'Jakarta City' for DKI Jakarta and 'Jakarta adjacent cities' for other cities in Jakarta's periphery.

Similar to Greater Jakarta, 'Bali urban areas' refers to administrative divisions that have transformed into heavily populated urban areas, centralised from Denpasar to the coastal areas. The official term used by the government is 'Sarbagita', an abbreviation from Denpasar, Badung, Gianyar, and Tabanan (emphasis added), which are names of a city and regencies in Bali. Administratively, Denpasar is the only 'city' acknowledged in Bali, as it has been the capital of Bali and the centre of the province's government. The other areas are called 'regencies. Apart from Denpasar, the pattern of development in Bali is mainly driven by tourism

regardless of the administrative division. Although there have been many development projects in Badung, Gianyar and Tabanan, they are situated considerable distances away from tourist attractions and have less developed tourism infrastructure and leisure facilities. Also, they remain more connected to agriculture, with associated rural characteristics. Therefore, using the term 'Bali urban areas' instead of 'Sarbagita' is more accurate to address the contexts of this study, whereas the name of a district, a regency or a city is mentioned when the study refers to a specific location.

Both case studies are located in two of the most populous islands in Indonesia, Java and Bali, where recent data found Java to be the most populous island in the world (Samuel, 2024) with more than 50 per cent of the nation's population living there (Siahaan, 2020; Chaaya, 2024). The Indonesian data also showed that these capital cities had the highest number of commuting citizens for work: 18.48 per cent for Jakarta City and 11.4 per cent for Denpasar (Rizaty, 2022). However, data from the Statistics Indonesia (BPS) showed that these two cities (Table 3 – marked grey) had the lowest percentage of home ownership amongst Indonesian regions and other data showed the percentage of household living in homes below 50 m² being 56 per cent in Jakarta City (BPS, 2022a) and 52.26 per cent in Denpasar (BPS, 2021a) as presented in Table 4 (p. 26 – marked grey), indicating the prevalence of homes with equivalent sizes to tiny homes.

Table 5 Percentage of Home Ownership in the case study areas

Cities/ Regions	Home Ownership (%)
DKI Jakarta	48,48
West Java	77,60
Banten	76,98
Central Java	89,92
DI Yogyakarta	76,53
East Java	87,12
Denpasar, Bali	52,16

Source: BPS, 2021b

Table 6 Percentage of Household Distribution based on Home Floorspace Area (%)

Cities	Year*	Home floorspace area					Total
		≤ 19 m2	20-49 m2	50-99 m2	100-149 m2	150+ m2	
DKI Jakarta	2021	15.92	40.23	24.3	9.95	9.61	100
Denpasar, Bali	2020	32.01	20.25	21.11	20.09	6.53	100

*per last update from the source

Source: generated from BPS, 2021a & 2022a

This data suggested that some of the commuting citizens might own their homes outside the administrative boundaries of the cities, that many housing tenancies were acquired through rent, and that tiny homes were prevalent in those two cities. With these hypotheses, the geographical scope of this study needed to be broader than Jakarta City or Denpasar as there are more tiny homes likely to be built outside those cities' central administrative boundaries. Therefore, the terms 'Greater Jakarta' and 'Bali urban areas' are used to represent the contexts of this study.

Selecting Greater Jakarta and Bali urban areas as two case studies also represented two examples of the phenomenon of urbanisation in the Indonesian context, which makes the replication suggested by Yin (2014) possible to apply. In addition, both areas were also desired destinations for domestic migrants. As the nation's capital, Jakarta has become the centre of Indonesia's economic development, which creates employment demand, with (Martinez and Masron, 2020) describing it as "a city of migrants". Meanwhile, the popularity of Bali Island as a travel destination has also created job opportunities in tourism and related industries, as well as facilities supporting it. So, in the Greater Jakarta and Bali urban areas, there are many Indonesian people from different cities or islands who migrate for work and may settle there. In addition, regardless of their official administrative status, both areas had an equivalent geographical size that assisted the organisation and feasibility of similar field work approaches in both case studies.

Jakarta, as the most populous area in Indonesia, will no longer be the national capital as the Indonesian government has developed another region in Kalimantan (also known as Borneo) island as the new capital. From 2024, the official name for Jakarta has changed from "Special Capital Region of Jakarta" to "Special Region of Jakarta" (National Law No.2, 2024), but the official practices of the new capital are still awaiting the current President's decision. This means this city may not grow in the future as rapidly as it has previously, and the government may be able to focus on implementing its planned solutions for housing issues rather than dealing with exponential population growth.

In contrast, Bali's population continues to grow, with numerous housing development projects expanding from Denpasar to the outer areas. This island is also rich in cultural influences that also shape the housing layout. The traditional housing law is called *Asta Kosala Kosali*. Since this law comes from the indigenous Balinese tribe, there is no official document to reference it in either the Indonesian language or English, but its implementation in modern culture has been studied several times in Indonesian vernacular architecture contexts (Putra, 2020; Sitinjak, Wardani and Nilasari, 2020; Wijjatmaja, Wiriantari and Suardana, 2024), and the essential parts are embedded in the regional policy; enforcing any modern building to keep some parts that represent their traditional characters. With these different backgrounds, the context of the two cases in this study is distinct even though the generation of the data was conducted using the same process. Having the two case studies also enabled the research to generate findings that are relevant to the Indonesian government, who funded the studentship, and its attempts to develop policies to enable effective urban development in the country.

3.1.2 Research methods

The study aimed to generate a range of data that was sufficient for qualitative analysis. Previous relevant studies of tiny homes have shown the utility of using interviews as the primary research method, for example, the research by Murillo and Bianchi (2024), who conducted in-depth online interviews with 19 participants in their exploratory research about tiny homes in Latin America. (Mangold and Zschau, 2019; Preece *et al.*, 2023) used in-depth interviews with structured questions in a study of the lived experiences of 27 small home occupants in England. Mangold and Zschau (2019) conducted semi-structured phone interviews with 30 home dwellers in the United States about their living experiences; and (Evans, 2018b) undertook face-to-face interviews with 11 individuals who were involved in the development of tiny homes in North America. Following the successfully applied methods of these previous studies, this research also used semi-structured interviews as the primary method, with the aim of generating in-depth information from probing and open-ended questions (Jamshed, 2014). Although considered time-consuming, this method enables the discovery of the independent thoughts of the participants that may not be generated by other methods (Adams, 2015).

However, it was important to rely on multiple sources of evidence to converge the data in a triangular fashion to ensure that the research was conducted rigorously (Groat and Wang, 2013). Some previous tiny home studies have anticipated this by incorporating several other methods besides interviews. (Clinton, 2018) used questionnaires involving 142 respondents, besides conducting semi-structured interviews with 15 participants; Shearer (2019) included three questionnaire surveys; social media analysis and ethnographic work to complement

semi-structured interviews with tiny homes dwellers and builders; and (Tucker et al., 2024) combined interviews, focus groups, and system thinking workshops to collect the views of micro-village stakeholders across the housing sector, including potential residents, in Australia.

Building on this multi-method approach, in addition to semi-structured interviews, this study included home tours with photo documentation (taken by the researcher) and photo elicitation (generated from participants' collections), and field-focused observations (Winther, 2021) that mapped the activities of the households in their domestic space. Responding to the technical component in one of the study's research questions, measured sketches of general home layout were also produced during the home tours to capture the metrical definition of "tiny" homes. The measurement itself was carried out approximately using a short measuring tape or by multiplying the number of tiles in the room by the size of one tile.

By using a combination of these methods, it was possible to discover the experiential qualities of the units of analysis (Groat and Wang, 2013). Previous research about domestic space in Jakarta has shown the success of conducting in-depth interviews with the residents (Anggraeni and Herlily, 2020) and incorporating respondents' active participation enhanced the research data (Nuraeny, Paramitha and Herlily, 2020). Thus, this research also incorporated elements of an ethnographic observation by engaging in the daily activities of some research participants (Forsey, 2010) and observing the natural settings in tiny home communities where participants resided. While collecting the data, the accommodation units for the researcher's home base in both locations were also considered tiny homes. Although this method was not performed evenly, there were opportunities to interact and conduct multiple visits with some research participants who lived in close proximity as neighbours and 'flatmates'.

For the field practices, all of those methods were performed during home visits that lasted between one and three hours, with the exception of three participants who had less time and decided to carry out the interviews online to a different schedule, and two participants who were willing to receive multiple visits as a result of organic interactions with participants who were also neighbours during the fieldwork. The recording durations were between 45 and 90 minutes, including the interviews and the discussion about the photo elicitation.

Before the home visit took place, each participant (or the representative if participants were married couples) was asked to show between two to five photographs of their homes that had specific meanings for them. This method induced discussions during the interviews as practised in previous housing research (Maginn, Thompson and Tonts, 2008; Evans, 2018b; Zielke, 2022; Preece *et al.*, 2023). With small home sizes, all home tours could last less than

30 minutes, which was sufficient to create photo documentation and draw measured sketches of the general home layouts, as previously demonstrated by Winther (2021) in her study of compact living. Sometimes participants continued to share their thoughts after the formal interview recording stopped or while other methods were performed. In this case, this additional information was captured in field notes. The visits were also set to participants' comfort. For this, some participants had prepared their homes to be presentable for documentation, and no other occupants were there except the interviewee(s), but some other participants presented their homes without making any adjustments prior to the visit. Other occupants who were not involved in the interviews continued with their normal activities, such as watching TV, being in their bedrooms, or having a meal. These were when the short ethnographic observations were performed.

Adams (2015) suggests that an interviewer's positionality is important and that sharing aspects of the research participants' culture also brings benefits since this method requires the interviewer to have knowledge about the substantive issues, and the researcher's familiarity with the case study's geographical areas has contributed to understanding the general contexts. However, this researcher comes from a different part of Indonesia to the case studies. In this case, a broader exploration of tiny home neighbourhoods in the case study localities and a study on the housing policy in each regional context of the case study locations were required to avoid a generalised understanding in the national context, as well as to enrich the later analysis. These similarities and differences that were shared between the interviewer and the interviewees enabled the generation of reflexive thoughts that enriched the analysis process.

Parallel to this set of methods, this study also carried out desktop research that was widely used by other researchers to analyse information from website resources (Yuvaraj, 2020; Dunn *et al.*, 2024), including a review of the national and regional housing policy, and information from the national press media websites. Indonesia implements regional autonomy, which means any regulation is applied at a regional level, which may vary depending on the administrative status of the individual's address. As described earlier, Greater Jakarta consists of Jakarta City and its adjacent cities that have developed a large metropolitan area. Administratively, those adjacent cities belong to different provinces and only partially contribute to the metropolitan area. Many housing developments found in the peripheral metropolitan areas may seem to be a part of Jakarta City, even though administratively they belong to other cities in other provinces, and the same applies in Denpasar too. It was not realistic to investigate regulations in every adjacent city individually, so a review of housing regulations outside Jakarta City was only carried out in South Tangerang, which features significant housing development. These official documents often present the regulations very

briefly, with little explanation or guidance on how they should be applied in practice. Therefore, information from the national press media websites was also reviewed to complement the understanding of housing policy practices.

3.1.3 Research participants

Interview participants were drawn from a sample of the tiny home typologies found in the case study fields, in line with Flyvbjerg's and Yin's recommendations on the required units of analysis (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Yin, 2014). In addition, to better understand the interplay between regulations and professional practice, some interviews were conducted with professionals involved in tiny home production, including architects and representatives of housing developer marketing staff whose project locations included Greater Jakarta and Bali.

The main method of recruiting the participants was through purposive sampling to achieve a diversity of participants. Participants were contacted through the researcher's networking, with the remaining participants recruited through snowball sampling via already recruited participants (Atkinson and Flint, 2001), as well as through daily interactions with local residents met in the fieldwork locations. With snowball sampling, most participants were strangers to the researcher, and visiting their homes to carry out research was not without risk. To minimise the risks, all visits were conducted in the daytime, with the exception of a small number of cases in which participants' work patterns meant they returned later. In this case, they had been recommended by a trustworthy acquaintance.

Aligned with ethical procedures, the time taken to carry out each home visit was compensated with an Indonesian e-commerce voucher (equivalent to £15), whereas the professionals who participated in this study allocated their time for the interviews without payment. Due to the different nature of communication and work styles, the recruitment process in Greater Jakarta was organised with a sufficient time window between recruitment and home visit schedule, which enabled participants to generate photo elicitation. The process in Bali was more spontaneous with a shorter time window, making photo elicitation less successful, and this is discussed further in Section 3.3.2.

The communication with participants between recruitment and the interviews was managed through WhatsApp, which is a common method of communication in Indonesia. Following the safeguarding procedure, the phone number for WhatsApp was only used during the data collection processes and had been inactivated after contact with the last interview participants. The criteria for individuals being included in the study included them being adults (18 years old or older) who had lived in their tiny homes as their main residence for a minimum of three months. The project also sought to achieve a diverse participant sample in relation to age,

gender, ethnicity, household configuration (singles, couples, and families with children), housing form (apartment/ detached home), ownership/ or rental status and duration of occupation of current dwelling. Thus, any Indonesian citizen who felt their homes were tiny or lived in homes equivalent to the suggested size of tiny homes by previous literature ($\leq 37 \text{ m}^2$) was eligible to participate in this study. Adjusting to the familiar housing typology in Indonesia, '36 m^2 or less' was used as the criterion for the dwelling size.

In qualitative research, each interview is studied intensively, as one can generate a large amount of information as valuable data (Curtis et al., 2016). In this study, two participants who were married partners were interviewed together to represent one case of a tiny home, but each of them was regarded as an individual participant. Even though there is no agreed standard for an appropriate sample size, it is recommended to obtain at least 10 participants for individual interviews in studies involving biographical narratives, in which data could be individually diverse (Brannen and Nilsen, 2011). In housing studies, this can be equivalent to housing careers or housing pathways that may be attached to an individual's biographical timelines. However, Marshall et al. (2013) suggest that the number of interview participants being around 30 in his study was based on the midpoint of the recommendations suggested by research method theorists. Eventually, this research successfully recruited 50 individuals: 46 tiny home occupants (living across 36 different tiny homes/households) and four housing professionals (two architects and two developer marketing staff), exceeding the initial target participant number. The professionals involved in this study were beyond the initial plan, but their willingness to give insight about tiny homes based on their personal experiences was relevant to and valuable for this study. Thus, they were treated equally to other research participants who took part in the interviews. The details are presented in Table 5.

Table 7 *Participants' data and general demography*
(see appendices for the complete data)

Locations	Participants		Individual Age Range				Citizenship			Occupation				
	Cases	Individuals	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Originals	Locals	Migrants	Unemployed	Temporary-term	Lower level	Middle level	Upper level
Gr.Jakarta	21	29	10	10	9	0	0	5	24	6	6	8	7	2
Bali urban	15	17	3	9	2	3	2	7	8	1	3	6	5	2
Professionals		4												
	36	50	13	19	11	3	2	12	32	7	9	14	12	4

Demographic details for participants were collected to enable analysis of a range of characteristics, life stages, and experiences. For example, the information on participants' ages helped to understand different housing pathways and experiences in homemaking, whereas the information on their citizenship status and occupation provided an indication of their socioeconomic status. As previously mentioned, Greater Jakarta and Bali were the sites

of economic opportunities for individuals from across Indonesia. Thus, it is common to call non-locals 'migrants'. The group labelled as 'originals' is given to participants from the indigenous tribe who still lived in the same smallest administrative border as their previous parental home, such as Balinese who live in inherited family land, where 'locals' refers to participants who were originally from nearby cities but still considered the same region, including the second or third generation of migrants who had become locals of their area. Especially for the Balinese, this differentiation is important as their context of 'local' is narrower than Indonesia in general. For them, someone who has moved out from their family land may no longer be considered local, even though they are still a local in a wider Indonesian context. Referring to the general Indonesian understanding, this group is referred to as 'locals' in this study, and others who are the first generation of incomers from other regions or islands are referred to as 'migrants'.

The occupation classification of the research participants was created based on temporary- or open-ended employment, dividing permanent employment into three levels of job positions. This segment was created to project participants' social class based on their economic status. Although this is a proxy measure, combined with observation and evaluation on the building quality of their homes, a sensible projection may be generated. This category was classified individually, including the occupations of participants who were married partners and participated in an interview together. However, there were a few unemployed married female participants who conducted the interview alone, and they spoke about occupation on behalf of their husbands. In this case, they were categorised according to their partners' occupation.

3.1.4 Data collection and analysis

Although there were several methods used in this study, semi-structured interviews provided the main starting point for data analysis. As suggested by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), the stages involved processes of: 1) thematising an interview, 2) designing, 3) interviewing, 4) transcribing, 5) analysing, 6) verifying, and 7) reporting.

The themes for the interviews were generated directly from the research questions (RQs) with keywords: 1) defining..., 2) drivers..., 3) experiences..., and 4) who are the inhabitants.... of tiny homes, which led to designing the questions as presented in Table 6.

Table 8 *Interview design and samples of questions*

Keywords to respond to RQs	Samples of questions	Additional Notes
Defining	How do you see the size of your home?	-
Drivers	How did you find out about this home?	-
Drivers	What brought you to live in this home?	-
Experiences, who they are	Do you have experience related to space confinement in your home? Or other interesting experiences living in your home?	Participants may share information that suggests another demographic of tiny home occupants
Experiences	Do you have any plans for this home in the future?	The information may indicate unpleasant experiences to make better in the future
Experiences	What are the stories behind the photos?	For photo elicitation
Experiences, drivers, who they are	Do you have any stories about this home to compare to your previous home(s)?	The information may suggest their social level or who they are as downsizers or upsizers
Experiences, drivers	From the range 1-10, how would you score your home based on anything you want?	As an alternative to probing for information that was unarticulated through previous questions.

Participants provided informed consent to be involved in the study, including interview recording and using photo documentation for publication and academic dissemination purposes. A research information sheet was provided to potential participants and was reviewed before any data was collected, emphasising that there would be several methods performed, and that they were allowed to refuse partially or withdraw eventually if they felt uncomfortable. Participants were also informed that their stories would be published using pseudonyms and that there would be a post-interview transcription. The process was undertaken with the help of GDPR-compliant software (Transkriptor), using the paid version to ensure the capacity to process the whole duration of the interviews and privacy, as the software requires individual login, which was the researcher's account (see Appendices).

Since participants occasionally spoke in their native dialects, the final transcripts were refined manually, with translations to English only being given to direct quotations that would likely be used in the thesis writing, using their pseudonyms. It was previously mentioned that participants sometimes said "Jakarta" to refer to a different administrative city that was not Jakarta but was included as an area in Greater Jakarta. Any term quoted from the interview transcripts that refers to a location was written verbatim but is explained in the narration in case there is another meaning. In summary, the dataset for this study can be classified into: 1) transcription, 2) visual data from photo elicitation, sketches, and photo documentation, and

3) text summary from ethnographic observation, field notes, and document review, with the details as described in Table 7.

Table 9 *Details of data collection methods, categories, and contribution to the RQs*

Methods	Modes of Data collection	Details	Data categories	Contribution to RQs
Semi-structured interviews	Home visits and online interviews	35 interview recording files representing 36 tiny home cases and 50 individuals. Participants were recruited through snowball and purposive sampling.	Transcription	RQs 1,2,3,4
Photo elicitation (only in Greater Jakarta)	Home visits	Photos shown by participants. Prior to the visit, they were asked if they had some pictures of certain areas of the home with particular meanings and importance to them.	Visual data and transcription	RQs 1,2,3
Sketches		Researcher's sketch of the layout of the house, incorporating rough measurements of the size of the house to capture the metrical description of "tiny"	Visual data	RQs 1&3
Photo documentation	Home visits and fieldwork in general	Photos taken by the researcher on 1) general documentation of tiny home neighbourhoods, and 2) specific documentation of physical features of the visited homes, focusing on the communal living areas (living room, dining area, or kitchen)	Visual data	RQs 1,2,3
Ethnographic observation		Researcher's observation on households' activities (incl. participants) that were captured during the visit.	Text summary, recorded in a diary	RQs 1,2,3
Field notes		Of the researcher's reflexive thoughts during the data collection processes and short notes during the interview (notes of facial expression, gesture, etc)	Text summary, recorded in a diary	RQs 1,2,3,4
Document review	Desktop research	Reviewing regional housing policies that cover the areas of Greater Jakarta and Bali, and press media websites.	Text summary	RQs 1,2,3

With data that came in different formats, there were some preparation processes used in advance of the actual analysis. The first step was refining the notes taken during interviews from the short, 'messy' phrases to readable sentences (Figure 3.1). This was a useful technique to better describe spontaneous gestures and tones during the interaction with participants, including the impressions and reflective thoughts from the overall tours of participants' homes and neighbourhoods. Without relying on the availability of a computer, this was performed immediately after the interviews on the days in the fieldwork when there were no home visits or actual data collection, to ensure that the memories from the fieldwork were recorded as soon as possible.

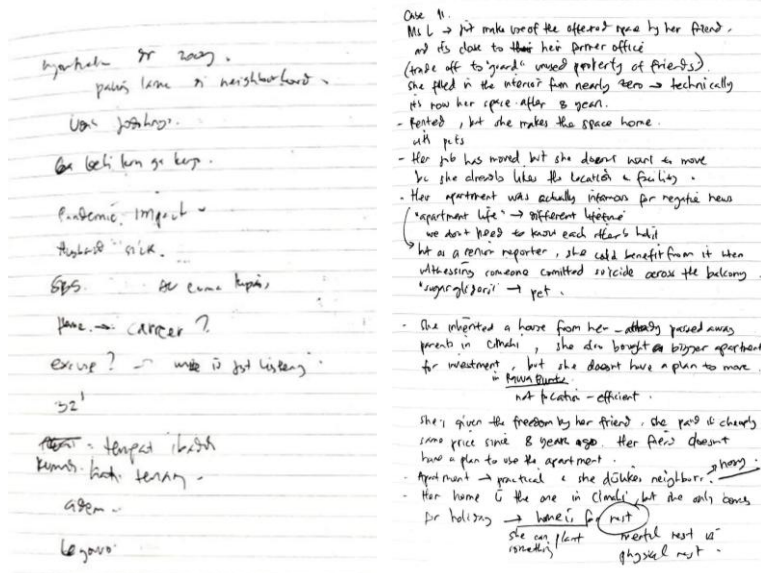


Figure 3.1 Original fieldnote (left) and the refinement (right)

Data refinement was also carried out on the layout sketches to get the actual size ratio when the layouts were presented in mathematically scaled images (Figure 3.2). However, not every layout sketch was refined. Some homes had nearly identical layouts because they were mass-produced by housing developers, so this process was prioritised for homes that showed different spatial organisation. Refining the layout images aided the selection of images to use in the later process of writing up the findings.

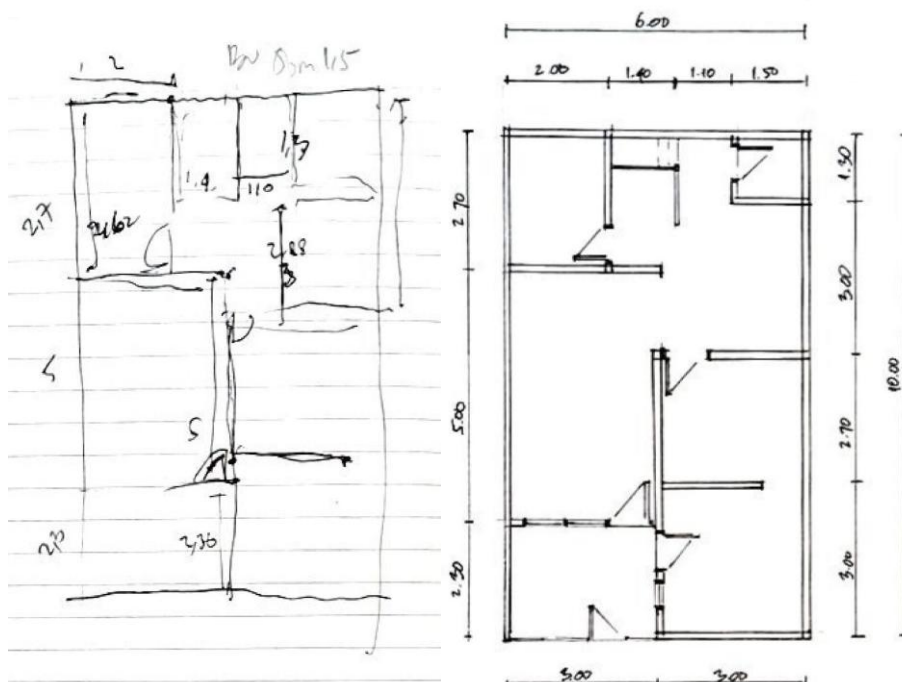


Figure 3.2 Original layout sketch (left) and the refinement (right)

After refining the raw data, the actual analysis process began, using reflexive thematic analysis. This analysis method is able to accommodate a wide range of coding accuracy from the interview transcription to the “inescapable subjectivity of data interpretation” through the reflexive thoughts of the researcher (Braun and Clarke, 2021a). The analytic process in reflexive thematic analysis involves “immersion in the data, reading, reflecting, questioning, imagining, wondering, writing, retreating, returning” (Braun and Clarke, 2021b). Without reducing the activities included in thematic analysis, this study simplified the stages into three steps: 1) generating themes from the research questions, 2) processing coding from the interview transcripts, and 3) restructuring the themes simultaneously with the visual and textual data to prepare the writing structure (Figure 3.3). The result of the restructuring process generated main themes that aligned with the study’s main research questions.

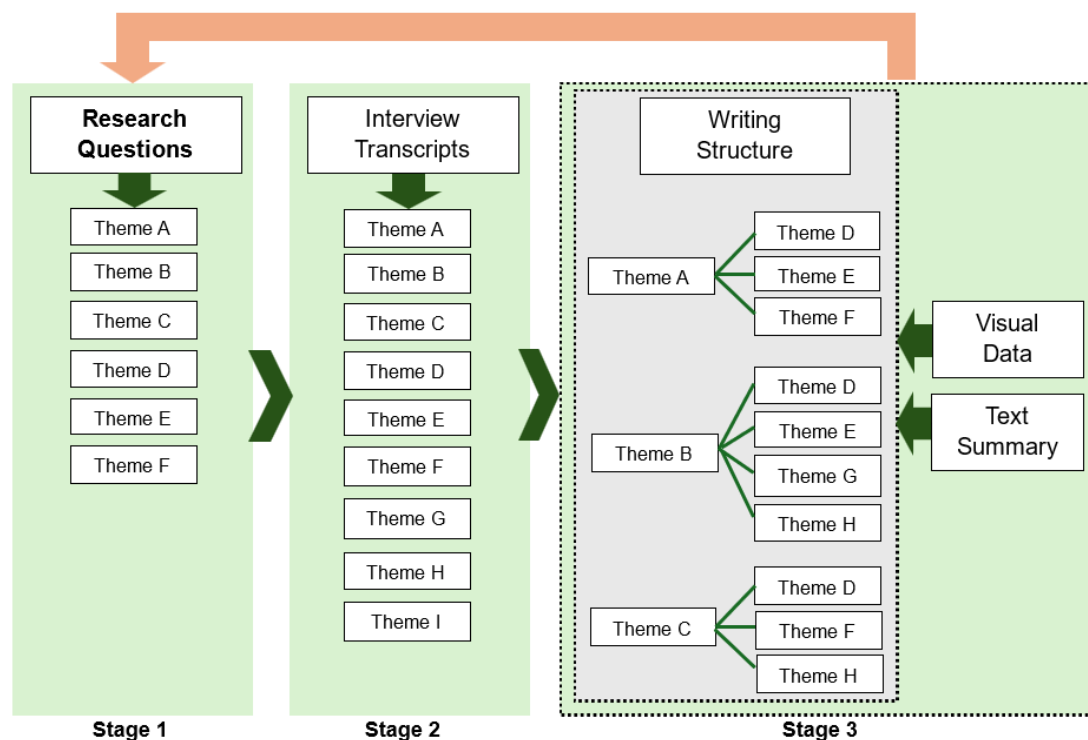


Figure 3.3 Stages of the thematic analysis framework

Even though the data came in different formats, the analysis generated themes derived from the research questions regardless of the formats (Stage 1 - Figure 3.3). At this stage, a summary of each individual case was made briefly, merging different data formats and highlighting some phrases that resonated with the generated themes (Figure 3.4).

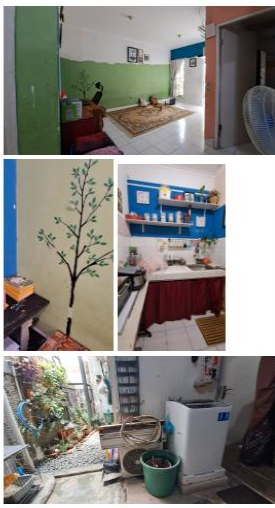
5	Female, 38, owner 2BR detached home in a gated cluster 4 households: 2 adults, daughter and son 3 cats at home Occupant since 2011 45 sqm, not renovated, the land area is 60 sqm	- First impression: the house was 'cute', neat, decorated, almost like a kindergarten. - Later she clarified that the living room is regularly used as a place for children in the neighborhood to do 'pengajian' (a religious gathering for muslims to study about Koran together and listen to sermon by the leader) - We were sitting on the carpet, there's no furniture in the living room. She said she actually needed a sofa, but the place was used for 'pengajian' and she liked it, so she gave up that idea. - The family lives there to get closer to the husband's workplace. The husband is the only one who works – by living nearby, he can have lunch at home and dinner together with the family. - She looks happy when sharing about her life. Her house is small, but she said she didn't need anything else. By staying at home, she can manage her home well. Her children are already big enough to take care of themselves at home – one is at a boarding school, so only comes home occasionally, and she's got a lot of friends from the neighborhood. When everybody else has gone, there are 3 cats to play with at home. Also being able to spend time together with her husband for lunch and dinner on the workdays is a privilege. - She likes gardening and keeps extra outdoor space at the back of the house for cross-ventilation and keeping the natural daylight in. - Overall, her home feels 'healthy'. Despite of the hot weather, it was still okay with only a fan while doing the interview in the living room. The lamp was off, but the room was already bright.	
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Figure 3.4 Merging textual and visual data in an individual case

To ensure the data in the analysis was managed in an appropriate structure, this study used NVivo software to develop the themes for the iteration process. With the interview as the dominant data, the coding process using NVivo was carried out only for the interview transcripts, whereas visual data was used to confirm, to clarify, or even to counter what participants said, and the textual summary was used to build the narrative of the case studies. To ensure the thoroughness of analysis in each case study location, the dataset was split into three categories of coding: interviews in Greater Jakarta, interviews in Bali, and interviews with housing professionals. The process of analysing the themes was replicated in each category, but the themes generated as the outcome were not identical. However, the themes in the coding list were not a rigid structure. The iteration process also generated new themes, and these were added to the code book (Stage 2 - Figure 3.5).

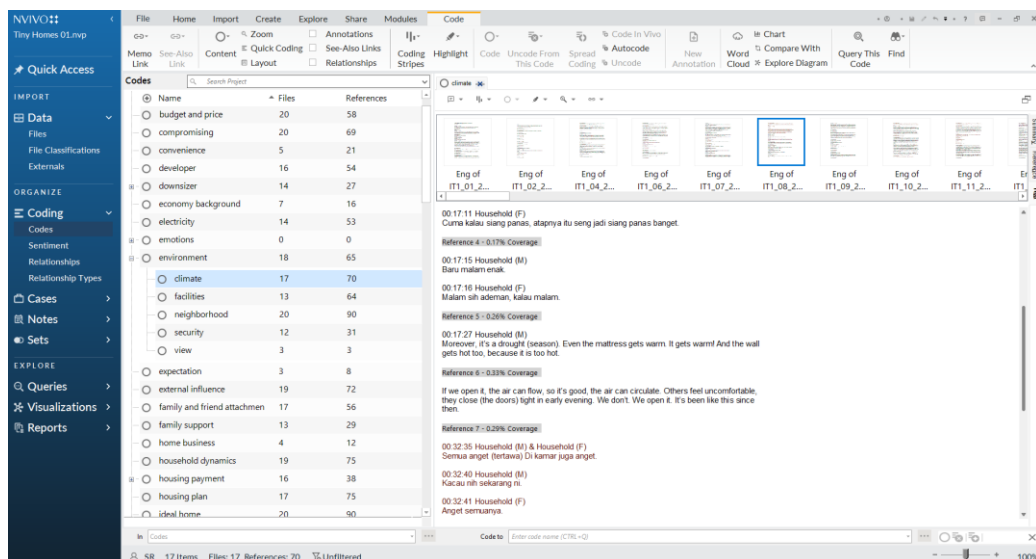


Figure 3.5 The coding process using NVivo

The final outcome of the coding process generated numerous themes that are associated with this study (Figure 3.5). However, some themes were more directly relevant to the research questions, more important, or added more to academic understanding than others. As Braun and Clarke (2021b) described, the analytical process includes stages of ‘retreating’ and ‘returning’. These processes were included in Stage 3, where the analysis was carried out manually using a spreadsheet to filter the themes, rearrange them, and map them based on the priority of relevance to the research questions (Figure 3.6). This process generated new themes that would define the structure for the following findings chapters. In the end, not every generated theme was included in the discussion of this study due to the word limitation of this thesis (Illustrated in Figure 3.3, p.36, where ‘Theme I’ generated in Stage 2 was not used in Stage 3).

CHAPTER 4		CHAPTER 5		CHAPTER 6	
Ch 4	Quote	Ch 5	Quote	Ch 6	Quote
21					communal car park. There are two areas. The big one fits 21 cars, and the small one fits 3 cars. Alhamdulillah everything runs well and no complaints from the people in the neighborhood.
22	Of course this house is bigger. In my rented house, there's only a bedroom, a small living room, and a bathroom, because we only rented it. They call it a row house. Now it is a bit larger, and it's my own belongings, so it's more comfortable.	So I imagined it, I did the calculations with the bank scheme with my salary. It was possible to place an installment, so I made that decision.	cheap?		The year now... About 5 years ago, since I became the leader. For the parking charge, it goes straight to our treasurer, not to me. So, we have a neighborhood management cost of 60,000 per month. If they park their car, they pay 75,000 to the treasurer.
23	In my rented house, there's only a bedroom, a small living room, and a bathroom, because we only rented it. They call it a row house. Now it is a bit larger, and it's my own belongings, so it's more comfortable.	Yes (laughing). But well, that time I didn't earn much.	cheap?		When you did the renovation, did you ask permission? 00:40:06 Household (M) Last time, no? 00:40:15 Researcher And no one checked too?
24	No, there's no kitchen at that time. Just this living room, a bedroom, and a bathroom.	4.4.1 And I saw the brochure at the parking area. There are pictures of the layout and also the price. I	marketing		I knew that I should have got the permission, but almost every house here... no one checked anyway. The big renovated houses there, they didn't arrange the permission. So I had that thought. I don't think anyone will check as long as the neighbors have no problem. But I told people here to ask permission from the left and right, front and back neighbors. Just the talk, letting them know that there will be a renovation project that might disturb them with noise.
25	I felt cramped. Small. Because it was small, that time, at the first time. After the handover, oh, the house was just like this (disappointed tone, laughing ironically)	4.4.1 I started a family and I took this house while paying the installment. If we rent, we don't know when we will need to move again. Sometimes the rent price surged up (high intonation) and we couldn't afford it anymore, so we moved.	lifestage		More comfortable, convenient, and nicer to hang around with the neighbors too. So we're now the original occupants in this neighborhood.
26		It was around 2000. It was 36 millions if you pay cash. But then because we didn't have much salary, we were given a 15 year mortgage. We paid the installment with the Down Payment about 10,500,000.			They can park in the open space as long as it is organized. Alhamdulillah everything runs well and no complaints from the people in the neighborhood. Because if they park on the left or right side of the street, in the end there will be an argument between neighbors.

Figure 3.6 Refining the themes and classifying them manually using a spreadsheet

Rearranging the themes manually with the spreadsheet was also helpful for the writing process to effectively utilise the selected quotes and avoid unnecessary repetition. As seen in Figure 3.6, data generated from the coding were used to develop Chapters 4-6, as empirically-focused chapters that answer research questions 1-3. Chapter 7 was informed by the critical discussions from the empirical chapters including relevant key findings from themes identified during the coding process, that answer research question 4.

3.2 Research Timeline

Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the University of Sheffield in the middle of August 2023, and the preparations for commencing the fieldwork and contacting networks for getting potential participants were started immediately afterwards. Aligning with the amount of research grant and time limit given by the Indonesian Ministry of Finance who funded this study, the data collection was undertaken during a four-month fieldwork period between September to December 2023 with around two months spent in each case study locality, and additional weeks between February and March 2024 were used for online interviews with participants who could not allocate their time while the fieldwork was carried out.

Based on the researcher's familiarity with the geographical settings and the readiness of potential participants, the fieldwork began in Greater Jakarta, followed by Bali. The home visitations were planned to be completed before the end of the year holiday season. This time period was considered effective to conduct research as the participants were most likely to utilise their house regularly based on their 'normal' daily lifestyle, such as work and school, without the distractions of other national holidays or big religious ceremonies. The researcher's return to the UK was set soon after the holiday season ended in January 2024 to avoid possible riots in case there was political turbulence linked to the Indonesian presidential election in February 2024. After the home visitations were completed, the rest of the research processes did not require the researcher to be in the field, so the document review, transcription and data analysis were progressed following the researcher's return to the UK.

Following the return to the UK, the newly elected Indonesian President changed the political cabinet. The implication for this research was extending the time duration for document research as new programmes were proposed and published in the media, including those which related to the research topic. While the studies for the literature review had been concluded before the fieldwork, the studies on updated literature and other references for the empirical and discussion chapters continued until May 2025, which was four months prior to thesis submission. However, the new cabinet has been proposing new regulations, including in Indonesian housing, such as a regulation draft where there will be a further reduction in the minimum size standards of housing in June 2025, followed by the withdrawal of the proposal in July 2025, as this agenda received negative responses from Indonesian planners, architects, and citizens. Noticing that the political situation in Indonesia has fluctuated since the new cabinet was appointed, any developments after May 2025 were not included in the analysis of this study. The timeline of the processes after the ethics approval is presented in Table 8.

Table 10 Research timeline Gantt chart

	2023					2024										2025				
	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	...	...	May	July	Aug	Sept
Ethics approval																				
Fieldwork planning																				
Data collection Gr Jakarta																				
Data collection Bali																				
Refining sketches																				
Online interviews																				
Interview transcription																				
Theme-mapping and coding																				
Document review																				
Writing and editing																				
Submission																				

3.3 Reflections on the research methodology

Overall, the selected methods enabled the data generation required to answer this study's main research questions. Utilising semi-structured interviews as the main method had been tested in other research before this study and was also effective for this research. Nonetheless, it was beneficial to apply the additional methods to complement the interviews and generate data that was difficult to articulate through conversations. Challenges and obstacles that occurred during the fieldwork were predictable and had been included in the mitigation plan and risk assessment for the research proposal, which was useful for navigating to another method when unexpected things happened, such as carrying out the interviews online when the fieldwork duration was over. However, not every method generated results evenly. Some methods in this study went better than expected, some were less successful, and there were research limitations where some findings could not be articulated sufficiently, even with these chosen methods. Each of these reflections is described in the following sections, starting by explaining the researcher's positionality that affected the implementation of these methods:

3.3.1 Positionality

Even though Indonesian is spoken widely as the national language, more than 80 per cent of Indonesians speak their traditional languages as their mother tongues (Translators Without Borders, 2020). Unless there is a necessity for being formal, almost all Indonesian people speak colloquial language with most vocabulary having different spelling and word order from the language used for general writing. Many of them also speak with local dialects and are unable to exclude traditional words in their daily conversation, making mixed-languages inevitable during the conversations. Where language may become a barrier in data collection, my position as a researcher who is fluent in Indonesian dialects and several traditional languages in Java Island has given me advantages to carry out conversations seamlessly, as

many participants, including those who resided in Bali, were originally from Java Island. However, the Balinese locals were able to speak in good Indonesian language, presumably due to the tourism nature, where they are used to speaking with non-Balinese every day. With this positionality, carrying out research methods that involved direct interaction and frequent conversations with participants was effective, as I was able to gain a deeper understanding of participants' views, identify relevant follow-up questions, and build rapport more easily than may be the case for others. In addition, Indonesian people tend to support people who want to study in higher education. As I introduced myself as a student who was doing doctoral research, most participants were cooperative and treated me politely regardless of my gender, age, or social class.

As a holder of Indonesian citizenship, carrying out research fieldwork in my own country has given me privileges that support the time efficiency of data collection. There was no time required to set up the basic necessities, such as phone number, bank account, or driving license, as they had already been set. Also, in Bali, where the government tries to protect the locals from the rising economic costs of living, some costs for Indonesian citizens are cheaper than for foreigners. This enabled me to hire a local guide to mitigate the risk of navigating unfamiliar areas when looking for tiny home neighbourhoods or finding the addresses of participants' homes. In addition, my familiarity with distances and transportation modes between cities in these case study areas contributed to creating efficient time management. With these advantages, I was able to generate sufficient amounts of data for this study within the duration of fieldwork that may not be replicable for researchers from other nationalities.

However, those advantages did not eliminate the challenges that occurred during the data collection and analysis processes. As someone who grew up in Bandung, the capital of West Java, involved in my own housing journey and witnessing the trend of housing sizes changing over time, balancing the acknowledgement of what I witnessed while avoiding the subjectivity in the research process has been a difficult task. This also became one of the reasons why case studies in Greater Jakarta and Bali urban areas were selected. By getting further away from Bandung, the bias of subjectivity could be reduced, while the similarities found in the case study locations and what I witnessed in Bandung or other cities that I visited were used to build a general narrative on Indonesian housing in urban contexts.

3.3.2 Successful and less successful methods

Carrying out the home visits during the fieldwork was one of the most successful processes in this study. Most participants were generally welcoming and willing to engage in conversations during the interviews. Especially in Greater Jakarta, finding home addresses was straightforward, as the digital map in this city has better accuracy than in Bali. Recruiting

participants was also easier than in Bali because some participants were particularly interested in the research topic. Some participants who came from formal job sectors also exhibited organised time planning and responsive communication, making the scheduling process convenient for both the researcher and the participants. Although some participants had to split the interview schedules to include an online component due to time limitations, all managed to participate as set out in the information sheet. Each participant in both case study locations may have given different details of their stories based on their personalities or based on the level of openness that they wanted to share, but all provided sufficient information to enable the research questions to be answered effectively. During the home tours, some participants voluntarily included their bedrooms or their children's bedrooms as consented parts of their homes for photo documentation, which exceeded the expectations of data collection and access to the more private spaces of people's homes.

The technical method to roughly measure the home layout was also successful due to its practicality, given the small sizes of the homes and the simplicity of the room layouts. Collecting the information from this method in the fieldwork was a quick process, while refinement of the sketches was carried out on days when there were no home visits. However, the success of this method was supported by the researcher's previous experience in architecture practices, where practical skills of sketching and measuring room sizes are essential, and there was familiarity with typical sizes for homes produced by Indonesian developers. Researchers from different backgrounds may consider allocating more time to incorporate this method.

Another success was incorporating field observations in this study. In Greater Jakarta, choosing accommodation in a part of a housing estate with multiple housing segments, including tiny homes, enabled wider observations to be made. In Bali, this was supported by drawing on private transportation facilities. Utilising tourism services, it was possible to get a local Balinese driver who was not only capable of finding potential areas where there were tiny homes but also gave insights into Balinese culture and history that were valuable to gain a better understanding of the Bali regional context.

On the other hand, some methodological approaches were less successful in Bali, despite being previously successful in Greater Jakarta. Due to different communication styles and cultures between participants in Greater Jakarta and Bali, only three participants in Bali provided images for photo elicitation. Some participants in Bali were not as responsive as participants in Jakarta during the communication process prior to the home visits, making it

difficult to explain the research through textual information, including asking whether they could provide some photos of their homes to discuss during the interviews. Neighbourhood observation in Bali was also not as easy as in Jakarta, as encounters with stray dogs occurred frequently in all neighbourhoods in Bali. In locations in which reports of rabies cases were still common, home visits were only made to homes that were accessible by car to ensure safety until reaching the destination points. These obstacles also explain why there were slightly fewer participants in Bali than in Greater Jakarta.

3.3.3 Research limitations

The most significant limitation of the combination of purposive and snowball sampling was the inability to capture all varieties of tiny home demography due to the unpredictability of participants' circumstances when they were recruited through the snowball method. First of all, not all areas within the border of Greater Jakarta were captured evenly. Also, commuting in and around the area of Greater Jakarta took one and a half hours on average per trip. Although this duration is considered normal for people who live there, with the traffic challenge, the observation of tiny home neighbourhoods was only performed in the areas of the participants' homes. Among the five cities included within the area, no participant lived in Depok, so this city was excluded from data sampling. Another group that was not captured in this study was elderly tiny home residents. With the snowball sampling, participants' references for the next potential participants were usually people from their community or professional networks who were of a similar age. However, some participants who lived in tiny apartments mentioned that they had elderly neighbours, which accords with previous studies on older people who preferred living in small homes (Andersson, Abramsson and Malmberg, 2019; García, 2024). Nevertheless, with restricted time in the fieldwork locations, it was not feasible to undertake purposive sampling to obtain participants across all demographic characteristics.

Although interview methods have been tested in previous research, undertaking semi-structured interviews with participants in this study was not without weaknesses. Whereas the interviews were not limited to sets of questions and participants' answers could also generate more questions, the depth of discussion of a particular topic varied between participants. Consequently, some participants spoke to some themes more than others. Also, there was a possibility that participants' responses were affected by their circumstances at the time of the interview, whereas they might have spoken about a different thing had the interview taken place at a different time. For example, this fieldwork was conducted starting in September 2023, when the temperature in many parts of the world was unexpectedly warmer than usual, including in Greater Jakarta, which had not had any rain for months before. This made some

participants talk more about the room temperature, which might not have been such a prominent theme had the temperature been less warm.

This set of methods was also unable to generate cases from minority groups that are not acknowledged formally in the Indonesian society or citizenship due to fear of being exposed. Although these groups exist in all countries, there are particular challenges, sensitivities and restrictions in the Indonesian context. As a country, Indonesia is inflexible in acknowledging the varieties of gender and sexuality and also the diversities of beliefs and non-belief spirituality. With domineering religious values, the idealised household composition is a traditional family, formed by married heterosexual partners of the same religion. With its metropolitan culture, many people in Greater Jakarta have started to become less stigmatised. Although adults who remained unmarried were willing to participate in the study, the formal nature of the research is likely to have intimidated other groups, such as LGBT people and unmarried cohabiting partners. However, even if officially largely invisible, these groups exist and are involved in navigating housing journeys, which may include tiny homes. Even though this study has targeted a range of tiny home occupants and has acknowledged their existence, the stories of some minority communities are still underrepresented. With Indonesia's social circumstances, and mindful of the risks involved for these households, representing the voices of these unacknowledged groups through interviews may require different strategies, approaches, or a longer time dedicated to finding participants who are willing to take part and building up trust in the research process and its anonymity.

Reflecting on responses and conversations with potential participants, some felt pressured by the formality of signing the consent form because they associated it with the process of signing a contract that bound them to a commitment. Signing a consent form for data permission has not been a culture in Indonesia. The Indonesian government also has no protection on data privacy, which is shown by the tragedy in 2024, where national data was leaked in a cyber-attack (Reuters, 2024), and a lot of personal data of Jakarta citizens was stolen to manipulate the number of supporters to promote a candidate in their regional electoral process (Besari, 2024). Although some people could understand what the consent form was and then agreed to participate, some participants simply could not associate signing a paper with giving permission for something. This reduced the number of participants from the initial recruitment conversations. However, some potential participants who refused to consent were still willing to have an unrecorded non-formal conversation. Although I have not used this data in the study, these conversations still provided valuable information in terms of wider insights and developed the researcher's understanding. With this gap of understanding, conducting social

research that requires personal data collection from participants may require more creative methods to obtain consent that are responsive to cultural contexts whilst protecting participants.

Apart from the practicality in the fieldwork, there are further limitations in selecting two case studies based on different geographic locations in Indonesia. Fundamentally, Indonesia comprises numerous islands and diverse cultural backgrounds. Even though Greater Jakarta and Bali are considered multicultural due to their attraction as domestic migrant destinations, conducting case studies in these locations cannot represent the whole characteristics of Indonesia in general. Moreover, Statistics Indonesia (BPS, 2022b) also recorded the prevalence of homes below 50 m² in West and East Nusa Tenggara, North Sulawesi, and Papua, where the elements of housing can be very diverse and may represent a contrast from the research findings in the Greater Jakarta and Bali urban areas. Furthermore, this study was broadly focused on the lived experience of tiny home inhabitants who were underrepresented in Indonesian housing research and did not include any government officials in the interviews. Although some architects and housing developer marketing staff participated in this study, they only shared their personal insight based on their individual experiences without sharing any official data that might be confidential for their companies. Involving some government officials and housing developer staff who can share information representing their organisations would have enriched this research data. Unfortunately, it has been customarily necessary to know an employee who can be the 'network' to pass the bureaucratic processes of acquiring any official data from the government or companies in Indonesia. Since this was unavailable in the researcher's network, the target of research participants was focused on general Indonesian citizens to ensure the time efficiency of data collection in the fieldwork.

4. How Tiny Homes are Defined in Indonesia

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the different approaches to defining tiny homes in Indonesia. When classifying Indonesian housing, terms used in housing laws and regulations can differ from those used by housing developers to market their projects to the public. Therefore, two different terms might sometimes refer to the same type of housing. Furthermore, there are interpretations of 'home' that are associated with the Indonesian language and Indonesia's background as an agricultural country, with traditional houses developed within indigenous cultures.

Acknowledging this variation, this chapter begins by overviewing the general contexts of 'home' in Section 4.2, where homes are interpreted linguistically, culturally in the forms of traditional houses, and geographically as part of tropical architecture. Moving on to the specific discussion of defining 'tiny homes', there are tangible and intangible aspects included in the Indonesian context. The first two sections discuss tangible aspects where there are specific guidelines to classify homes, comprising the overview of the official policy definitions of tiny homes and their technical specifications. Section 4.3 explains how the official regulations and developers create different terms for classifying homes in Indonesia, and this section will spot where tiny homes belong in those classifications, and Section 4.4 identifies the sizes of homes developed during this study's field observations and defines what is categorised as 'tiny' based on visual size contrast and measurable architectural standards. Photographs of housing neighbourhoods and participants' home layouts are used in this section. The following two sections discuss the less tangible aspects, covering other definitions and interpretations of tiny homes that come from social and cultural perspectives. Section 4.5 examines participants' perceptions of their homes, whether they acknowledge their homes as tiny homes, or not, or somewhere in between. This section is generated from the interview transcripts. Section 4.6 explores the cultural backgrounds that shape the definition of tiny homes. In this section, a deeper explanation of *kost* as a unique typology of tiny homes in Indonesia will also be introduced. The substance of this section will be generated from interview transcripts, field notes from daily observations, and some information collected during the preparation of accommodation for the fieldwork, where I searched for this type of housing to stay during the data collection. Concluding this chapter, Section 4.7 offers a summary discussion of the

previous findings. For further information, all images and illustrations used in this and the following chapters are taken from the researcher's documentation and illustrations unless stated otherwise.

4.2 The context of 'home' in Indonesia

Indonesian people consist of different indigenous tribes who have developed their dwelling places based on their customs with their tribes and geographical characteristics, long before the technology of building construction was introduced to the country and before the Dutch colonies came into the country and built the cities. Linguistically, Indonesians also use a specific term to define a form of dwelling space that may not have a direct translation into other languages, especially English. The following sections will give exposure to aspects that form Indonesians' general understanding of home in their concepts.

4.2.1 Interpretation of 'home' in the Indonesian Language

In the Indonesian language, there is only one word '*rumah*' to describe both 'house' and 'home'. As per the 'Great Dictionary of Indonesian Language' (KBBI, no date), it is defined as 'a building used for dwelling'. There is no specific word to describe 'home' since the literal translation of '*rumah*' is 'house'. Thus, framing the interpretation of 'home' in Indonesia requires an intuitive understanding of its wider linguistic and cultural context. As a country with a reliance on the agricultural sectors (Moeis *et al.*, 2020), Indonesians are attached towards land possession. Historically, Indonesia consisted of rural areas where indigenous tribes cultivated their ancestors' land and built houses there that would become their homes. Thus, the image of home is perceived as a combination of building(s) and land together, whereas the concept of home in a different form of building evolved later, when some localities in Indonesia started to become urban areas. In an earlier period when vertical buildings¹ were introduced in Indonesian housing, the National Law No.16/1985 stated that their purpose was to provide housing for low-income people (p.3), contributing to perceptions of vertical buildings as an alternative choice when someone cannot afford a more culturally normative home. Given these linguistic and historical backgrounds, the definition of 'home' cannot be detached from the physical forms of the houses in a specific plot of land: this still constructs the 'ideal' form of housing for many Indonesians, with other forms of housing being regarded as lesser than this ideal.

¹ Refers to tall multi-storey housing

However, Indonesian cities have been gradually developing, and now housing in the form of vertical buildings can be seen in many urban areas. Where density and housing prices are no longer bearable, Indonesian people have started to dwell permanently in housing units outside the 'ideal' house typology. Although some individuals may not acknowledge it linguistically, they still form attachments to their dwellings, and intrinsically, they feel at home there. So, 'homes' may refer to housing typologies that are socially accepted as permanent dwellings in Indonesian urban contexts, comprising conventional houses, apartment units, and Indonesian boarding house units called '*kosts*'. Even so, this chapter will distinguish between the terms 'house' and 'home' depending on the linguistic interpretation or the direct translation from official documents.

4.2.2 Review of Indonesian traditional houses

With the existence of indigenous tribes, Indonesians have occupied traditional houses that are diverse in shape and form. Variations in the strength of the community of those tribes in preserving their original values mean that some types of houses have been gradually vanishing, but others are still found in wider neighbourhoods, usually in rural areas. Examples from the case study locations can be seen below: illustrations of a Betawi² traditional house in Greater Jakarta (Figure 4.1) and a Balinese traditional house (Figure 4.2).



Figure 4.1 Illustration of a Betawi traditional house with the layout
Source: kebudayaanbetawi.com, 2024

² Betawi or Batavia is Jakarta's previous name in the era of the Dutch colony. Now the term is still used to refer to Jakarta's indigenous tribe.

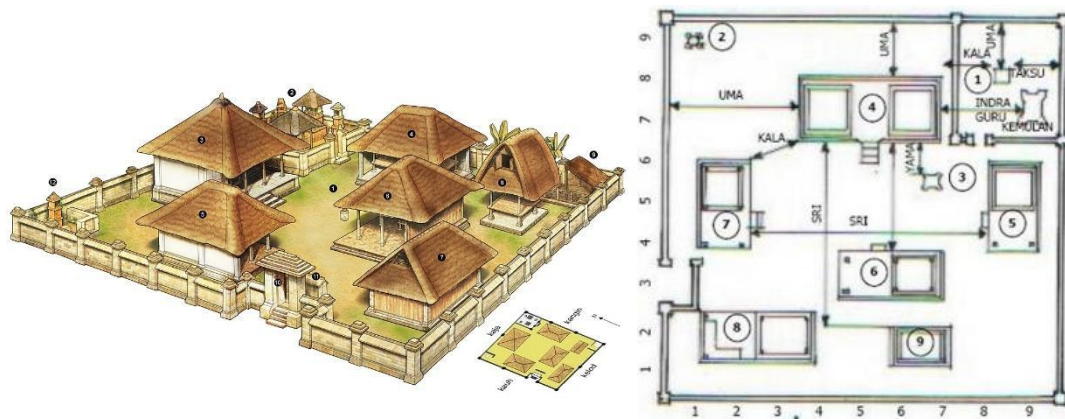


Figure 4.2 Illustration of a Balinese traditional house (left) and the layout (right)
Source: Rochelimit, 2015 (left) and Sitinjak, Wardani and Nilasari, 2020 (right)

As seen from these figures, traditional houses for Betawi people and Balinese differ, with a singular building for Betawi traditional houses and a collection of several buildings within a gated plot of land for Balinese traditional houses. Comparatively, the buildings in Balinese traditional houses are smaller than the singular building in Betawi traditional houses. Whilst differences that occur due to various cultural, geographical or historical reasons are beyond the scope of this study, there are commonalities that underpin the characteristics of traditional houses, such as:

- Using natural resources as building materials, such as terracotta bricks, stones, wood or bamboo for the walls and thatch or palm fibre for the roof. Consequently, the walls are thin, and some can be permeable for air circulation because the materials are not solid, such as woven bamboo or wood planks. Triangle-shaped roofs are also a part of the material form. Besides the practicality of constructing the structural frame, this shape also allows rainwater to flow easily to the ground.
- It is common to have a semi-outdoor area as a part of the house, such as a terrace or veranda. As there is no necessity to protect the home interior from extreme coldness, it is also common to cook in a space that is exposed to the outdoors for better ventilation of smoke. Meanwhile, enclosed walls are only necessary for private functions such as bedrooms or inner family rooms.
- There are hierarchical concepts for home layouts that are associated with religious beliefs or customs, which will create spatial zonation, such as 'sacral-profane' or 'male-female' areas. For example, the kitchen and bathroom must be at the back of the house because they are considered dirty (not sacred), but bedrooms and the living room can be in the front area because they are clean (more sacred). Females are also expected to gather in the kitchen, as the living room is traditionally reserved for males.

Whilst not exhaustive, these examples offer a wider understanding when interpreting some of the characteristics found in contemporary Indonesian homes, including tiny homes.

4.2.3 Review of Indonesian tropical house

Combining the local wisdom of Indonesia's traditional houses with the construction technique learned from the Dutch during the colonial era, the contemporary design of Indonesian houses implements the concept of tropical architecture that is widely adopted in tropical countries, especially in Southeast Asia. Fry and Drew (1964) have discussed this in relation to climates, and Lauber and Cheret (2005) explore some cases from Southeast Asia, but the underpinning aspects that are relevant to this study are manifested in the typical form of Indonesian houses, ideally appearing as a detached building with a high triangular roof and many openings from windows or doors.

Similar to the concept in traditional houses, the triangular roof helps the flow of rainwater, with the elongated tip of the roof providing shade to protect the area underneath from heat (Figure 4.3-a). In addition, the space under the roof serves to keep the temperature comfortable by elevating the heat to the upper interior area (Figure 4.3-b). Meanwhile, being a detached building allows the surrounding walls to be used as openings, creating cross ventilation that is crucial for tropical buildings (Figure 4.3-c).

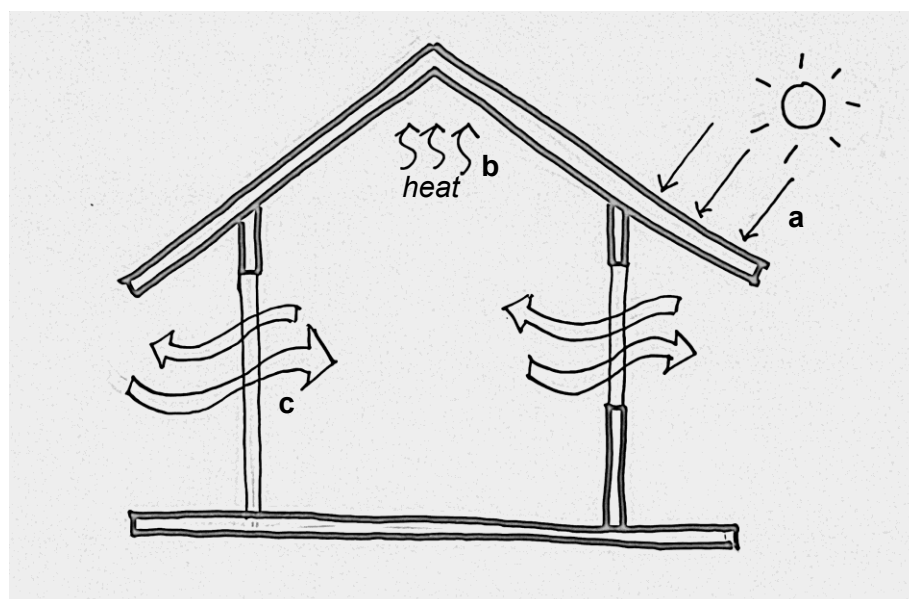


Figure 4.3 Key points in tropical houses

With these necessities, the ideal tropical architecture requires each room to have openings in two opposite directions, and this can be challenging for the layout. Although it is ideal to provide cross-ventilation in detached buildings, it is still possible to have only two sides of the

wall facing the outdoors as long as they are parallel to each other. Consequently, home layout designs tend to place private rooms on the sides that allow places for windows, arranging the 'middle area' for communal space where external walls are unnecessary. This also means that homes in the form of apartments or other units in multi-story buildings are often viewed as less ideal, because there is usually only one side of the wall that directly faces the outdoors, preventing cross-ventilation.

4.3 Formal Definitions of Indonesian Housing

This section discusses the definition of tiny homes in relation to the formal classifications of Indonesian housing, by looking at the terms within Indonesian housing regulations and in the Indonesian housing market. For this purpose, this study investigates Indonesian housing regulation documents from the National Law to the ministerial regulations, focusing on the classifications that are associated with size, also comparing this to the terms that are more familiar to the wider Indonesian population. While discussing government regulation at the ministerial level, there are different names for the housing ministries due to occasional name changes whenever a new cabinet is appointed. However, those ministries generally serve the same role according to their period of service in the Indonesian cabinet.

4.3.1 Definition based on regulations

Dating back to the earliest national policy documents between 1958 to 1964, the only term used to define dwelling places was 'housing', which was described as "all buildings that are used by individuals, companies, and other corporations for dwelling or other purposes" (National Emergency Law, No 3, 1958, p.2). In 1992, the terms were elaborated into 'housing', 'settlements', and 'house', with house being defined as "a building function as a residence or dwelling and a facility for family development" (National Law, No.4, 1992, p.2-3), including a "plot of land" as a prepared component to build housing (p.4). The most recent National Law document that gives the most detailed definitions of houses was published in 2011 (National Law No.1, 2011). This law was later renewed by the Omnibus Law (National Law No.6, 2023) to clarify that regulations about houses would be presented in the Government Regulation, but the information that refers to tiny homes is described here. The Indonesian National Law No.1 (2011, p.21) introduced the types and forms of houses, as shown in Table 9. Unfortunately, the original Indonesian language in the official document uses general phrases that are imprecise in translation. Thus, the table displays both the original interpretation directly from the substantive part of the document and the explanation derived from studying other documents and Indonesian housing websites.

Table 11 Types and Forms of Houses based on the Indonesian National Law

Types and Forms	Original Interpretation	Explanation
Commercial houses	to make a profit according to the people's needs	conventional houses built by the developers to meet the market's demand, as well as to gain profit for the developers' companies
Public houses	to provide the needs of low-income people with support from the government and/or the regional authorities	subsidised houses to support low-income people in getting homes. The buildings are generally small, and they use cheap materials to suppress the production costs. Homeowners who are eligible to purchase this housing segment still pay the mortgage, but the government supports them through policies to obtain a much lower rate of interest than other houses in general
Self-supporting houses	built based on people's initiative, either individually or collectively, which may receive support from the government and/or the regional authorities	houses built by local people in a certain area in a region for their area's specific needs, whereas the funding may come from the government or other external funding
Specific houses	for specific purposes, provided by the government and/or the regional authorities	houses built by the government for displaced people, fishermen, workers in isolated places, and other similar needs related to governmental programmes
Government houses	provided by the government and/or the regional authorities.	government-owned houses for rent by official staff.

From those five types, public, self-supporting, and specific houses may have similar forms and features, as they are basically built within a restrictive budget (Figure 4.4), whereas commercial and government houses may come in different sizes and levels of luxury. The difference between commercial and government houses relates to their ownership status, but the sizes and levels of luxury may come in various forms. When the government house is used by a minister, it may appear as a mansion (Figure 4.5 - left), but when the house is for a civil servant staff at a lower level, it is far more modest (Figure 4.5 - right). In addition, some lower-level government houses might be sold to the occupying staff after a certain period of service, arranged by a specific policy, thereby losing their status as government houses.



Figure 4.4 (left to right) Public, self-supporting, and specific houses
Sources (left to right): Ministry of PUPR, 2022, Effendi, 2018, Albarsyah, 2020



Figure 4.5 Examples of government houses for a minister (left) and a civil servant (right)
Sources: Ministry of PUPR, 2024 & Satriatama, 2010

In the same law document in 2011, the forms of houses are defined based on the structural connection between buildings, which are: 1. detached houses, 2. row houses, and 3. stacked houses (p. 21-22), illustrated in Figure 4.6.

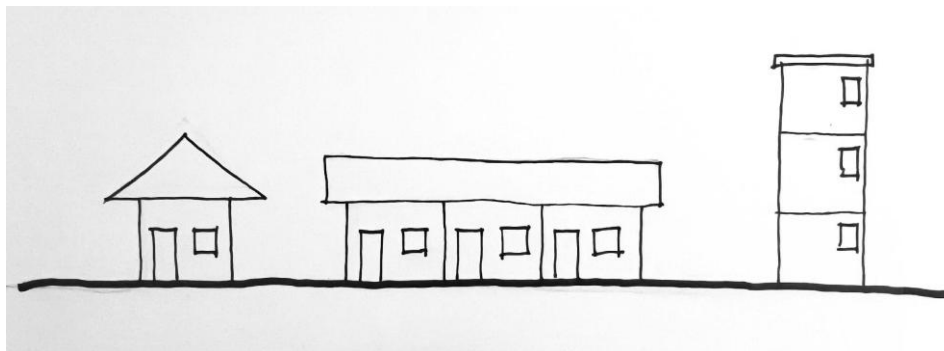


Figure 4.6 A detached house (left), row houses (middle), and stacked houses (right)

It should be noted that these terms are directly translated from the Indonesian language. The definitions of detached houses and row houses are the same as those used in common terms of housing typology, whereas stacked houses can be apartments, condominiums, flats, or other names given to specify the buildings. Technically, those are multi-storey houses, but stacked houses are mostly identified as vertical housing, referring to 'stack' as a term

correlated to vertical composition, in contrast to 'row', which is correlated to horizontal composition. Also, individuals may build multi-storey houses with units for rent, where each unit is called a '*kost*', which has different regulations from 'stacked houses'. Hence, this thesis will use the term 'stacked houses' when referring to the formal term stated by the national policy document and use the term 'multi-storey houses' as a general interpretation.

This document highlights 36 m² as the minimum floor area for detached houses and row houses (p. 22), but no size information is provided for stacked houses. From the government's perspective, multi-storey housing is seen as an alternative, as the Government Regulation (No.12, 2021, p.16) states, "whenever a single landed house or row house is not possible to build, the simple or small house can be built in the form of vertical or public housing." The regulation on stacked housing itself is described in a separate document of National Law (No. 20, 2011). That document sets the guidance to determine the number of units and the types of stacked housing, and the zone and the location of the buildings, but does not specify the guidance for the size of each unit. For detailed requirements of housing units in multi-story houses, the Ministry of Public Works (No. 5, 2007, p.9) only states that stacked house buildings must provide spaces for at least individual activities, family or communal activities, and services; and each unit must be at least complemented with a kitchen, a bathroom, and a toilet.

Historically, the Ministry of Public Works (No.54, 1991) had introduced the term "Very Simple Houses" (*Rumah Sangat Sederhana*) for a lower segment than 'simple houses', allowing the floor area being between 12-36 m² and the plot of land being between 54-200 m². Bathrooms, washrooms, and toilets could be built as shared facilities outside the house if it was not possible to have a water closet inside each individual house. However, this programme was designated for lower-class people, and the intention was for the units to be upgraded in the future to "simple houses". As of now, this programme is obsolete, and the existing original units that have not been developed are considered non-ideal housing.

The term 'budget houses' was introduced in 2011 through a regulation from the Ministry of Public Housing (No.25, 2011), which had the closest definition to the global understanding of tiny homes. It referred to a type of housing with a minimum 36 m² floor area, the same as that which is written in the Indonesian National Law (No.1, 2011), with an emphasis that the house must be simple and affordable in its construction. This national regulation was cancelled in 2018 by a regulation from the Ministry of Public Works and Housing (No.13, 2018), but the

concept of lower-class housing as being defined by being 36 m² and affordable has persisted in the perception of the wider Indonesian population.

A more recent regulation (Government Regulation No. 12, 2021, p.14) classifies houses based on their relative economic values, using the terms 'luxurious houses, middle houses, and simple houses', as described in Table 10. Although the term 'budget houses' is now obsolete, the current regulation includes this housing category in 'simple houses', which is the most affordable housing type compared to the other two.

Table 12 Housing classification based on economic values

Houses classification	Definition
Luxurious houses	luxurious house prices > 15x the market price of the public houses, set by the central government
Middle houses	15x ≥ middle house prices ≥ 3x of the market price of the public houses, set by the central government
Simple houses	houses built on the plot of land, with the floor area and market price set in accordance with regulatory law.

Updated in 2011, this regulation sets the minimum floor space at 9 m² per capita, with a minimum ceiling height of 2.7 metres, an effective land area between 60 and 200 m², and a minimum land width of 5 metres. There is also additional information that 'simple houses' may be categorised into subsidised and non-subsidised houses. Subsidised houses are houses built with the government's support to target people with lower income (further description in Chapter 5), and non-subsidised houses are commercial houses in general that are offered in the housing market.

Up to this date, without any abolishment of the housing standards in the National Law in 2011, the national regulation no longer emphasizes 36 m² as the minimum size for Indonesian housing unit, but acknowledges 9 m² of floor space per person with 2.7 m of ceiling height as the minimum requirement for landed houses (Description of the Government Regulation No. 12, 2021, p.5). Thus, the latest regulation permits a housing unit of less than 36 m² if the occupants are fewer than four persons. Whether being 36 m² or less, houses of this size are considered the smallest permitted by law.

4.3.2 Definition based on terms in the market

In addition to formal legal and policy terms, developers also have terms that are classified by size and that are more familiar to Indonesian people than government terminology, given that

this is often vague to interpret. Also, Indonesian public documents only became more readily accessible on the internet around the past decade, but before that time, Indonesian people had been familiar with the market terms that classify houses by size. This classification makes more sense to the Indonesian people's common understanding, so the terms are widely accepted and understood in the housing property markets across the nation.

Developers use the word 'Type' followed by the numbers representing the interior floor space and the land area. For example, it will be written "Type 36/60" for a house with 36 m² floor space in a 60 m² plot of land, as it can be seen in Figure 4.7, illustrating the typical marketing layout for a common commercial house. Referring to the previous section, this type is equivalent to a 'simple house' in the government's formal term, built according to the minimum size permitted.



Figure 4.7 Common sample of Type 36 house in the marketing brochure
Source: jurnalfaktual.id, 2024

There are some common numbers to represent the interior floor space in square metres, such as 30, 36, 45, 50, 60 and 120. When the floor space area is 60 m² or higher, there is a possibility that the house has multiple floor levels. There are also common numbers to inform the sizes for the land area in square metres, such as 60, 72, 90, and 120. It is common to find multiple combinations for the same floor area or land area such as Type 36/60, Type 36/72, Type 50/72, Type 60/72, and so on. Nonetheless, the study found that there are possible variations, with research participants reporting that their houses were 'Type 21' and 'Type 22'. Both types were built on 60 m² of land and had been renovated to 40-50 m², but they still refer to the original types given by the developer when they bought the houses. Since developers mainly produce properties for the private market, the classification made by numbers will also

represent the price of the housing units. The bigger number indicates the higher price for the properties in the same project area or the same housing cluster.

Another term used by the developers is 'landed house'. Regardless of whether the house is individually detached or adjacent to its left and right, where the side walls are attached to the neighbours like a row of houses. If it is built directly on a plot of land that is sold together with the house, it is called a 'landed house'. In the Indonesian context, 'row houses' are usually built to tackle slums or informal housing in urban areas (Figure 4.8). Due to its diminutive meaning, developers tend to avoid using this term for commercial housing.



Figure 4.8 'Row houses' interpreted in the Indonesian context
Source: Matahari, 2016



Figure 4.9 Facade and layout of a Type 36/80 landed house in South Tangerang

In contrast to Figure 4.8, the houses in Figure 4.9 (left – there are three houses, seen from the roofs) are technically row houses because their walls and roofs are directly adjacent to

one another. However, houses in Figure 4.9 are more exclusive as they have their own private territory for the plot of land, unlike houses in Figure 4.8, where the ground outside the building is shared. It is also apparent that these houses have a higher level of building quality and economic value, so the developers do not want to risk any negative interpretation of the housing segments they sell. Using the term 'landed house' is more neutral to avoid different perceptions between detached houses, row houses, and semi-detached houses. As a justification, the developers prove that their 'landed houses' are different from 'row houses' by building different structures for each individual house. Each building has its own foundation, columns, and walls, as seen from the detailed section in Figure 4.9 (right), where there are two layers of walls at the border between neighbours, proving that the building structures are separated. Even though structural risks are not entirely eliminated, this strategy enables its owner to renovate or demolish the building completely without affecting the neighbours' building structures. Whenever the term 'landed house' was used by participants during the interviews, they spoke in English instead of using the Indonesian formal term '*rumah tapak*', but participants who used to live in a row house used the Indonesian term '*rumah deret*' or '*rumah petak*' to describe this house as their previous home when they were poorer. This reflects a wider cultural phenomenon in Indonesia, where using English terms for a product is viewed as potentially increasing the selling price of the product itself (Kemala and Fajri, 2024), which is also applicable to housing property.

Looking back to the terms from formal policy documents, "tiny homes" can be interpreted as any unit of formal dwelling (detached houses, row houses, or stacked houses) with floor space areas that are similar to or less than the minimum permitted measurement, which is 36 m² built in a 60 m² plot of land, or Type 36/60 houses based on the developer's term. In this case, all subsidised houses are considered tiny homes because they are built at the bare minimum standard of housing size, but other housing categories can also be tiny homes as long as the size is a minimum. Hence, tiny homes are not solely determined by their economic values, physical forms, or purposes of the dwelling. As this research is not focused on informal housing, slums, or housing related to poverty, this study uses the term 'landed houses' to avoid the conflict between the terms 'detached houses' or 'row houses' and keep the neutrality of the term from the linguistic perspective.

In summary, tiny homes can be defined formally as landed houses or housing units in multi-story buildings with a restricted area, either 36 m² or 9 m² per capita for the interior space. This means that any form of vertical housing, including apartments or boarding houses, may be considered tiny homes as long as they serve the dwelling purposes where the inhabitants

‘feel at home’ as they can find comfort while doing their domestic routines. For landed houses, the total land area must not exceed 200 m², including the area that is covered by the building.

4.4 Technical Definition

Apart from the government’s regulations, there are homes that are technically tiny when compared to other homes. This section explores this understanding based on the smallest housing type on the market, houses that are still small even after renovation, and substandard homes that do not meet the minimum technical requirements.

4.4.1 The smallest housing type in the market

Referring to the policy document in the previous section, the government has set that the minimum floor space area for a landed house is 36 m² or 9 m² per capita, and the house must be built on a minimum of 60 m² of land. There is no regulation on the number of occupants inside a home, but the main definition of home is as a place for a family, which means there will be more than one person living together in the same unit, and there is no individual housing unit allowed to be built with 9 m² floor space. Although no one can exactly define how many people will constitute a family unit, a household consisting of a married couple with two children has been socially acknowledged as an ‘ideal’ Indonesian family composition, as advertised in the 1990s media when the government introduced contraception to limit the number of children to two. Based on this understanding, setting 36 m² as the minimum requirement for interior floor space is constructed by a projection of two adults and two children living in the same housing unit. However, there is no certainty about how many children a family will have. There is also a possibility of married couples with no children. In this case, they might not need a 36 m² house if they prefer a smaller dwelling.

In contemporary Indonesia, childless couples are still considered unusual and married partners who plan not to have children are still facing criticism and challenges, including from the government. Lately, the number of childless couples and individuals who delay marriage has increased. The government considers this phenomenon a threat to the country’s economy and has encouraged Indonesian married couples to have at least one female descendant (Saputro, 2024) and not to delay marriage (Firmansyah, 2023) so they can produce offspring or get a separate home. On the other hand, some developers view this trend as an opportunity to build smaller housing units to attract consumers who prefer to live with a partner or alone. As seen in Bumi Serpong Damai (BSD City), some housing types were built not in complete

accordance with the regulations, as they only provided one bedroom and were constructed on a smaller plot of land than the government's minimum requirement.

BSD City itself is not a city, but a massive and prestigious housing neighbourhood with numerous awards for multiple housing aspects (BSDcity.com, 2025). With its achievements, this neighbourhood has showcased a greater variety of housing than that defined in the regulations, although some are not in alignment with the government's regulations. The examples of their project are shown in Figure 4.10, where houses are very narrow, with the facade being only slightly wider than the width of a single carport, which is undoubtedly less than 5 metres. Even though the total interior floor space might be larger than 36 m² because they are multi-level, the land area might be less than 60 m², and the width of the land plot is less than what has been set by the national regulation.



Figure 4.10 Examples of tiny home housing clusters in BSD City.

The most recent project being advertised during the visit was 'Flathouse', a term coined by the developer to describe a multi-level, split-house (Figure 4.11). Each building was built on 30 m² of land, which is half the size of the government's requirement. As compensation, Flathouse has more interior area, which is 41 m², including stairs, divided into four split levels (Figure 4.11 bottom-right). This means the usable interior area for activities is less than 41 m² because some spaces have been taken for circulation.

Seen from the layout design, this housing type has a very minimal green area and does not provide a cross-ventilation system from any of the two opposite sides of the building, where these two things are paramount for tropical housing. In contrast to the traditional approach of tropical houses, where the roof is designed with a high inclination to let the rainwater flow quickly, this type appears to bear the tropical rain with a skylight on the roof (Figure 4.11, bottom-right). Although the developer may have mitigated the risks, constructing openings on

the roof is generally considered unsafe for battering tropical rain, which happens frequently in any season. However, this requires further examination.



Figure 4.11 Details of Flathouse in BSD City
Sources: BSD City brochure and author's photograph, 2023

Another compensation for not meeting the regulatory standards is that Flathouse is sold in one package with basic furniture. This has become the developer's strategy for other small houses to ensure the optimal space use by providing furniture of appropriate size and design. It also means that they can price the units above average. In December 2023, the price was 1.1 billion Rupiahs³, or approximately £52,000 per unit, for the building, furniture, and land ownership. For Indonesian housing prices, this price is extremely expensive, as for the same

³ Indonesia's local currency

floor space area and even bigger land nearby, but outside of BSD City, houses can be sold at about half the price of a Flathouse. The total land area for a Flathouse individual unit might seem extremely small, but this is not the smallest size. Mr. Gun, a participant who worked for property marketing, said about a new housing type sold by the company's competitor, "If I'm not mistaken, it is a 21 (m²) house... the land is 7 to 3 (metres). The total floor area is unknown, but it confirms the current phenomenon where more housing properties are built below the government's minimum requirements, and they also compete in the housing market.

Besides the landed house, BSD City also built a different type of housing, as seen in Figure 4.12 (left). This is a gated cluster inside a bigger cluster in the neighbourhood and guarded by security staff. Unless they are residents, individuals may only come to this neighbourhood by declaring their purposes to the guard. Mr. Bang, a participant who lived in one of the units, gave access to see this neighbourhood. Each unit of this housing consists of two bedrooms, one bathroom, and a narrow kitchen, serving as the only common space, arranged within a 22 m² floor area (Figure 4.12 - right), and is considered a tiny home due to its size.



Figure 4.12 'Kostel' exterior (left) and interior (right) outlook

When size becomes the primary parameter, then the smallest type of any housing unit, including studio apartments, and '*kosts*' can be tiny homes, and they also experience the shrinkage in the size of the floor area, as shared by Mr. Gun, "...but at the same time, there was one big developer building a far, far smaller apartment. The size was 28 m². It was smaller, a studio... I was quite shocked; it was even smaller! It kept running in West Jakarta... tiny dwellings became a trend at that time. The studio! And the development until now has been a bit senseless actually." As property marketing staff, Mr. Gun had been working in the property marketing sector for more than a decade, and what he meant was that studio apartments used

to be 28 m² in his earlier career, but they became smaller in later years. The following images show examples of the smallest housing units found in Jakarta and Bali (Figure 4.13), which were far smaller than what he said.

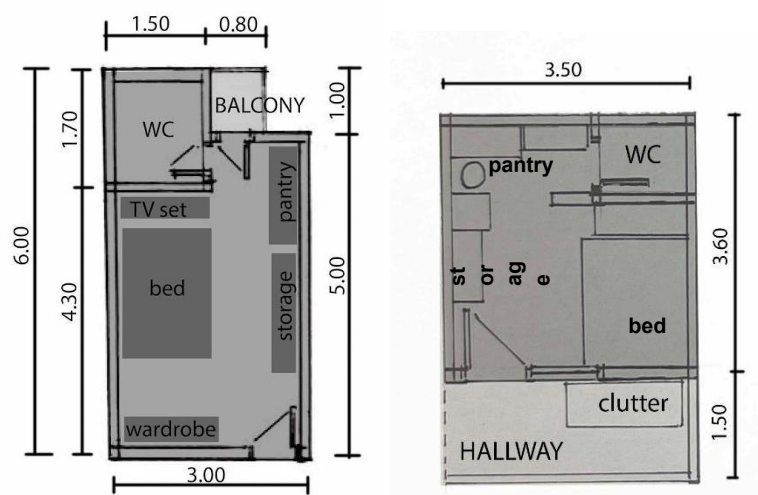


Figure 4.13 A 14 m² studio apartment in Jakarta (left) and a 12.6 m³ *kost* in Bali (right)

The sketch on the left is a layout of the smallest unit in an apartment complex in West Jakarta, labelled as a 'studio apartment' with 14 m² *nett*⁴ floor area, which is just about half the size of a common studio apartment in the past. The sketch on the right is a layout of the smallest *kost* found as a home in Denpasar, Bali, also as the smallest home found for this study with only 12.6 m² interior floor space and a 1.5 m width of front terrace. The word '*kost*' itself has a broad understanding, from a temporary boarding house to a permanent home ('*kost*' will be discussed in Section 4.6.2). With a 1.4 m² difference, both units presented in Figure 4.13 have equivalent interior arrangements.

4.4.2 Being small even after an upgrade

As described in the earlier section on housing regulation, there was a period of time in which the government permitted houses to be as tiny as 12 m² with an expectation that the owners could gradually upgrade them. During that time, developers produced Type 21/60 houses sold in the commercial housing market. Although this type is no longer permitted, it is still found in older neighbourhoods, and many have been renovated into larger buildings. The results varied depending on the homeowners' ability or financial capacity to fund construction work. So, although some houses have become much larger, others still appear very small because the upgrade was not significant.

⁴ Refers to the 'clean' interior floor space without the walls

The example is seen in Figure 4.14, showing pictures of houses in a neighbourhood in Bekasi, one of the cities in Greater Jakarta. Participants who happened to be husband and wife have lived in this neighbourhood since the 1990s. They shared that they bought their home when it was newly built using a housing mortgage from the bank. Housing mortgages in Indonesia are more common for developers' newly built housing⁵. It means the house still had uniformity in size and shape at that time. During the visit to one of the clusters, no evidence of the original shape was found. All houses have gone through several renovations, including enlargements to increase the floor space, making physical building changes inevitable. Captured in this set of pictures is a contrast that exhibits how the neighbourhood has evolved within a few decades. Some houses have enlarged their volume or even renewed their look to a modern style (Figure 4.14 - right). Even though all buildings have the same width for their facades, those which have enlarged their sizes vertically are perceived to be bigger, leaving single-story buildings looking tiny by comparison.



Figure 4.14 Comparison of tiny homes (boxed) and other homes in an 'upgraded' neighbourhood

Another example is seen in a neighbourhood in Serpong, built in the early 2000s. All participants from this neighbourhood who were the first buyers said that they did the contract between the years 2000-2003, signing that the planning for this neighbourhood had been carried out in the late 1990s. It was not until 2011 that the National Law stated the minimum size allowed was 36 m². Until then, developers still sold Type 21/60 home units, where the building size was measured at 21 m² built on a 60 m² plot of land. Similar to the previous neighbourhood, no household in this neighbourhood could stand living in the original space for many years, so houses have also been enlarged. Although all houses have physically

⁵ Another type of loan is more common for buying a second-hand property, even though it is still possible to apply for a mortgage if buyers have stronger financial power to pay the down payment to the previous owner that can be bigger than the percentage set by housing developer.

changed, the trace of the original layout was found in one participant's home because some walls remained at the same place (Figure 4.15 - left), showing the grey area as the former building and the green area as the outdoor space. Based on the owner's information, the early version of this house consisted of only one bedroom, a water closet, and a common room. The current version of this home has been enlarged with more rooms added, transforming almost all of the outdoor space within the plot of land into more interior spaces (Figure 4.15 - right), but this home is still labelled as 'Type 21' house based on the size upon purchasing.

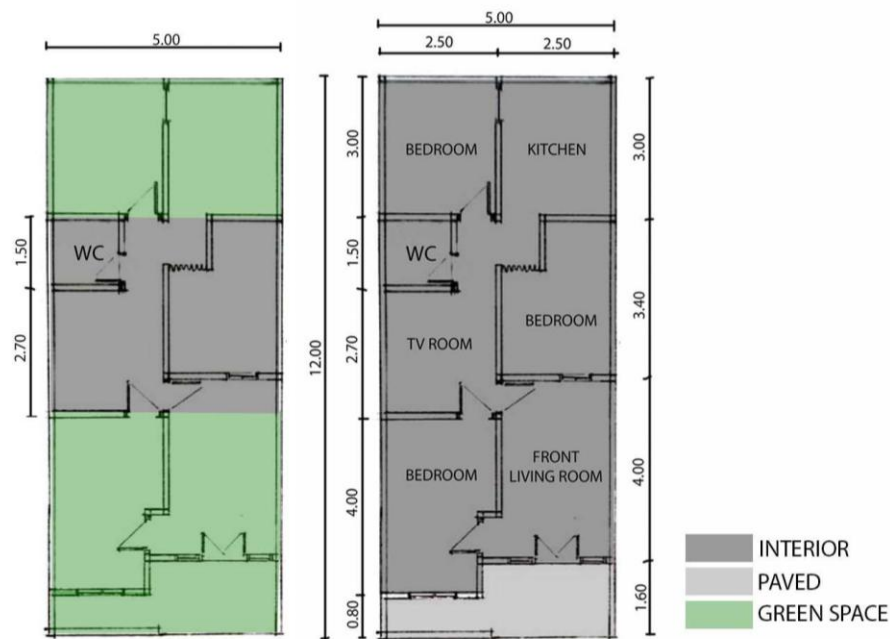


Figure 4.15 A trace of the original Type 21/60 house (left) and the current layout (right)

Moreover, houses built on a plot of land with a minimum width of 5 metres will still look small even after enlargement due to their narrow appearance, as long as the house remains a single-story building (example: Figure 4.16 - left). Compared to houses in their surrounding area (Figure 4.16 - right), some have turned into two-storey buildings. Since this neighbourhood is set for 21 m² houses, it requires demolition to build a two-storey building because the structural requirements are technically different. In other words, two-storey houses have a higher valuation because they have a stronger structure than single-storey ones. In this context, tiny homes appear as houses with less value due to their visibly smaller size and simpler structural requirements.



Figure 4.16 A Type 21/60 home after renovation (left) and its surroundings (right)

4.4.3 Having substandard technical requirements

Apart from the categories stated in the regulations, varieties of substandard housing are apparent. The term 'substandard' not only covers the size of the physical area or the building, but also the sizes in smaller interior aspects and/or the number of other technical requirements. For example, two buildings with the same total floor area may consist of different numbers of rooms and/or be occupied by different numbers of people. Referring to the formal standard, the minimum size of a home is either 36 m² or 9 m² per capita for the interior space. So, a 30 m² house for a single household may be sufficient, but a 40 m² house for a family of five would feel insufficient. Thus, there is a relativity in defining tiny homes when the viewpoint is taken only from the building size. However, there is an absolute benchmark to evaluate space sufficiency from an anthropometric aspect. Furniture at homes is designed based on human anthropometry that has been standardised and agreed globally in architectural design through design reference books, such as *Architect's Data* (Neufert, Neufert and Kister, 2012) or *Human Dimension & Interior Space* (Panero and Zelnik, 1979). When a space is dedicated to a specific function that requires furniture, sufficiency becomes absolute.

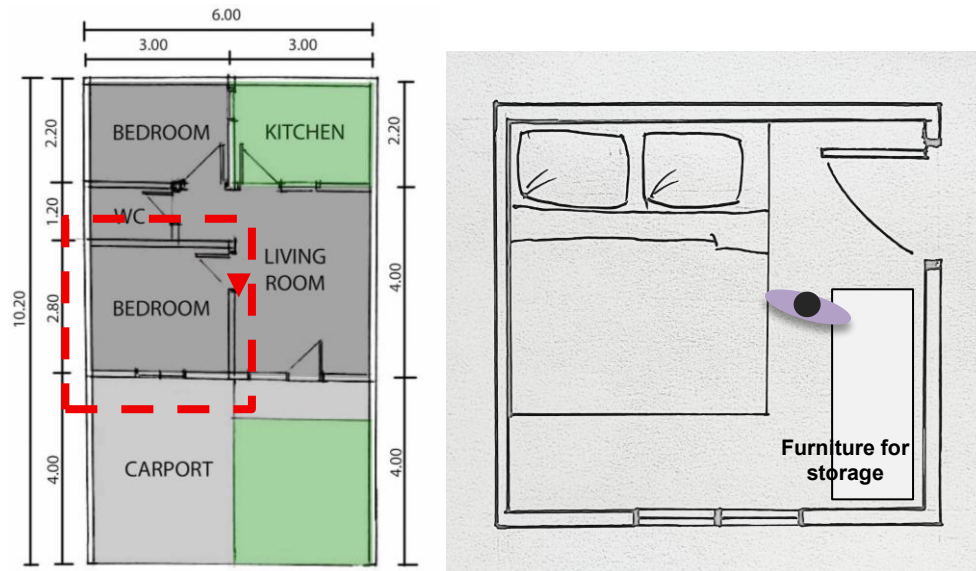


Figure 4.17 Comparison between the bed mattress and the overall bedroom size

An example for this explanation can be seen in Figure 4.17 (left), displaying a 30.6 m² house floor plan in a 61.2 m² plot of land. By the time this sample was taken, this house was occupied by a family with a newborn baby and a helper who lived with the family. The helper had her own bedroom with a single mattress at the back of the house, and the husband and wife with their baby used the bigger bedroom (marked with the box) with an approximate size being 2.80 x 3.00 metres. Considering it as a private area of the home, there is no evidence of the detailed layout setting of this room, but during the visit, participants who lived in this house explained that they had a big bed mattress, but were unsure if it was a queen or a king bed. When they allowed a quick look from the living room, the bed mattress appeared big enough to accommodate two adults, and there was also some furniture for their wardrobe and baby storage. Illustrated into a scaled image when a king-size bed is placed in the bedroom (Figure 4.18 – right), there is only adequate space left for movement and circulation (the oval shape represents a human's shoulder width). So, to place the furniture, the inhabitants' circulation space was inevitably compromised.

Another case is shown in Figure 4.18 (left), displaying a kitchen of a 36 m² house with a similar layout to Figure 4.17, which has complied with the national regulations' minimum standard by providing bedroom(s), communal space, a water closet for shower and toilet, and a kitchen. There is no further detail about which room should be fully enclosed by the walls, and it is very common to find developers allocating the kitchen space in a semi-outdoor area at the back of the house with very minimal installation.

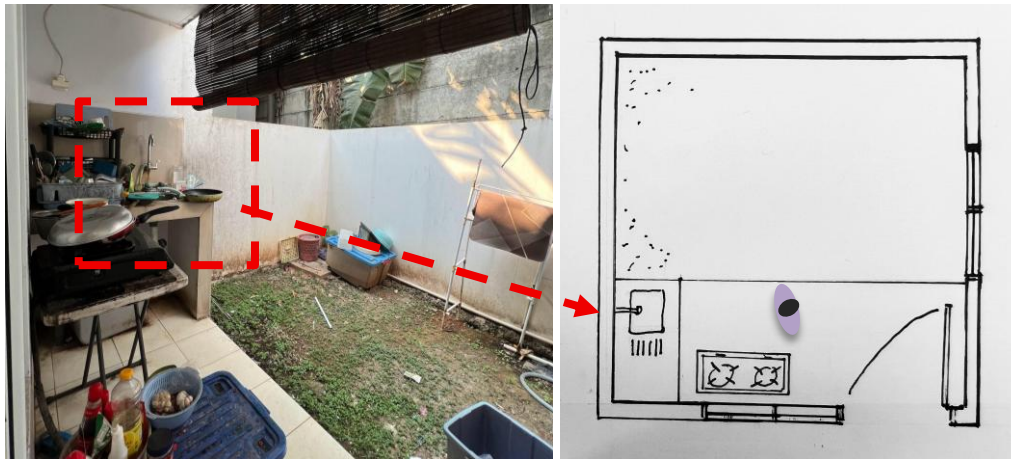


Figure 4.18 Insufficient kitchen installation

As shown in Figure 4.18 (left), the kitchen is located at the back terrace, and the only provided installation is a faucet for the sink, with no cooking area (marked with a box). Here, the occupants put their gas stove and put on a separate portable table on another side as seen on the layout illustration (Figure 4.18 – right). Using a portable gas stove is a common practice in Indonesia because installing a permanent cooktop is expensive; however, the developer of this house did not even provide an area to place it. Also, not every dwelling unit is equipped with a sufficient power supply for an electric cooker. However, placing a portable stove on a table because there is no dedicated space is not ideal. Even though there are no detailed standards, kitchen facilities like this example are considered incomplete.

In Indonesian houses, the amount of energy consumption that each household can use is limited based on their subscription category. The National Electricity Company, or *Perusahaan Listrik Negara (PLN)* in the original language, is the government-owned company that differentiates the amounts of power supply to different types of households. As listed by the official website of PLN (2025), the power capacity for subsidised houses is a maximum of 900VA, meanwhile the smallest commercial houses are usually set to 1,300VA subscription by the time of property handover. The highest capacity given to a house is 6,600VA and higher than that is for industry purposes. 1VA is equivalent to 1 watt, which means a 900VA house can operate electric devices up to 900 watts at the same time. When the usage exceeds the power supply, the house will experience an electrical short circuit. There will be no power for the house until the circuit breaker is switched back on. Even though adults are usually capable of performing this process, it is unsafe for someone who is not familiar with building electricity.

The higher power supply has a more expensive subscription fee and hourly rate usage. Households in the commercial houses may propose to increase their power supply if they are

willing to pay an extra price for the installation upgrade and the new rate. Staying with the supply given might be problematic as Greater Jakarta and Bali are humid with very warm temperatures, so an air conditioner (AC) is essential to keep the temperature comfortable. Gathered from the specification of electric equipment sold in Indonesia, the lowest AC capacity consumes around 400 watts (Aquaelektronik, no date) which is equivalent to 400VA. Also, Indonesians' staple food is rice, so every home has a rice cooker with energy consumption being up to 400 watts while cooking (Kumparan, 2024), leaving only 100VA energy left for subsidised houses and 500VA for other small commercial houses. Whenever there is an obstacle to operating basic domestic appliances because of the lack of energy provision, it indicates the home was designed below the 'standard'. Accordingly, the overarching understanding of substandard technical requirements in a home is where space for basic furniture and/or manoeuvres and the electric supply in individual homes are less than sufficient for daily operation.

This discourse from the technical perspective suggests that even though the home design has been aligned with regulations, it does not always meet the needs of occupants. First of all, different households may have different needs, and they may define 'sufficiency' in their own terms. They may also have different expectations of what facilities a home should provide, including their expectations about size. These differences highlight the importance of defining tiny homes considering occupants' varied perceptions. This will be discussed in the following two sections.

4.5 Social Definition

A lived experience framework emphasises the social construction of a phenomenon, in which narratives and individual understandings and interpretations are central. "Tiny homes?" Potential participants often repeated the term during the recruitment process. From their expressions, they seemed to be processing something in their minds associated with that term. Some of them merely echoed the familiar "tiny house" segment from the YouTube channel. The equivalent translation to the word 'tiny' in Indonesian language is '*mungil*', which means 'petite'. Sometimes, it can also be interpreted as 'very small with a little bit of cuteness'. "It's *just* small," said Mr. Young, a single man in his late 20s who lived alone in an 18 m² studio apartment in West Jakarta. His unit was the smallest unit found during the visit to tiny homes in the Jakarta area, but there was a sense of reluctance in using the word 'tiny' as if it had another meaning that he disagreed with. In Denpasar, Mr. Bass, a married musician who lived with his wife in a *kost* in Denpasar used a different word to emphasise the size of his home.

Being interviewed on his terrace with his double-bass standing tall in the background, he said, “small *indeed*,” when referring to his place. Looking at how these two participants described their homes, they preferred using the word ‘small’, but only ‘small’ is not enough to describe their homes, as there must be another word to express the meaning beyond ‘small’.

During the visits, interviews with participants and non-formal conversations with other local people met during participant recruitment, very few of them labelled their home based on terms associated with size. Many of them said words such as “I’m sorry for the small place” or “I’m sorry, the home is messy” as a polite gesture to welcome guests, but it required many probing questions to investigate their perceptions associated with size as the information about it is already embedded in the housing typology terms that are popular in the market and the first thing that formed participants’ definitions about their homes referred to the term they learned from the developer. As previously explained, the developers label their units for ‘landed house’ with ‘Type x/y’ with x being the area of the interior floor space and y being the land area. So, x and y are seen merely as variables. The difference between having a 30 m² home and a 75 m² home, for example, is just the size, but there is no difference in any given label as long as they are from the same housing typology or classification. For example, they would say, “This is a Type 36 house,” or “This is a ‘mezzanine house,’” if that was the term used by the developer, and there was no additional term that refers to size in the first place.

Similar expectations are also set for apartments or other types of ‘stacked houses’. When research participants said that they lived in a studio apartment, it was expected that the space was ‘smaller than usual’. Mr. Gun, the senior property marketing staff, shared during the interview, “Then, 36 (m²) was considered small, and then under 36. At that time, 27 already became a studio, and then 25, and then now 23, 21, and even 19! Now it’s going around 20-21.” From the developer’s perspective, he was expressing how far apartment sizes have been shrinking in the past few years. From the occupant’s perspective, Ms. Kota who lived in a *kost* in Jakarta’s business district area, commented that “Apartments are now so different from the older ones...so *small*... There was one I visited, and *I felt suffocated*. The space is so different from the older apartments (emphasis added to refer to the size).” People had constructed the normal size for apartments based on the past trend, which is not accurate anymore for the present context. So, apartments that were built recently are expected to have less floor space compared to apartments with the same typology in the past.

Despite their reluctance to label their homes as ‘tiny homes’, many participants acknowledged that their homes were, indeed, tiny through spontaneous comments or indirect expressions

during the interviews, especially after sharing their experiences living in their homes and realising that the space was insufficient for what they needed. Some of them briefly expressed, “what a small space!”, but others just giggled shyly, noting that there was not enough space for many things when they shared their experiences (discussed in Chapter 6). However, the selection process for potential participants was initially given to occupants of homes equivalent to 36 m² or less, *or* occupants who felt that their homes were tiny. With this categorisation, there might be a 36 m² home that was occupied by a single individual *or* occupants of homes bigger than 36 m² who felt their space was too small. Thus, not everyone agreed to see their homes as tiny. In fact, there were some participants who did not think that their homes were small at all, and a few of them considered their homes big. To elaborate this discussion, this section will examine those categories based on how participants acknowledge their homes as tiny homes, comprising: positive, neutral, and negative acknowledgements, referring to how they perceived the definition of ‘tiny’ for their homes. ‘Positive’ means they agree that their homes were tiny and ‘negative’ means that participants disagreed or did not feel that their homes were tiny. Some emphasis in *italics* is added by the author to mark interjections or tone.

4.5.1 Positive acknowledgements of tiny homes

Mr Bass commented about his home, “Small indeed,” which was one of the examples of how participants acknowledged the sizes of their homes as ‘tiny’. He labelled his home as *kost* even though the home appeared to be a conventional house. Although the facility was complete with some area for kitchen, bathroom, living room, and a small terrace, the house only had one bedroom, whereas conventional houses are usually set with a minimum two bedrooms. Having the plot of land area being 45 m² and the interior area being 30 m², Mr. Bass considered his home *indeed* smaller than small conventional houses. Initially, his comment came out when he was sharing his experiences about living in his home. He did not intend to label his home, but he wanted to describe the size of his space for sharing his experiences while living there. At another point during his interview, he said, “This is the bedroom and *a little of it*. I put the dining table and the refrigerator,” explaining that there was just a little more space beside the bedroom, but he managed to utilize it for the dining area.

The way Mr. Bass acknowledged his tiny home was subtle and indirect, and this pattern was seen in almost every conversation with participants who agreed that their homes were tiny, similar to Mr. Hody who claimed himself as a person who likes staying in his *kost* in Denpasar, Bali. He described that “the space to move is *just* from the bed to the toilet, or to the pantry, or to the terrace” because he could get to those places only a few steps away from his bed. In a different example, some participants expressed it as satire, as seen from Mr. and Mrs.

Handy's story, a married couple who had been living in their home in Bekasi for more than two decades. They were gazing at the ceiling when recalling the condition of their home at the beginning. At first, Mrs. Handy described their home objectively by its technical size, "So it was only 9 metres, 9 metres and the bathroom, how much is that? Twenty-one?" Her eyes were calculating the numbers in the air, trying to fit 21 m² as their home was built as a Type 21 landed house. Suddenly, her husband interrupted with a metaphor, "The original was *like a bird cage*. One bedroom and a *box of living room like this*." By comparing the house to a bird cage and saying that his living room was like a box, he articulated how small he believed his property to be. Similar to Mr. Handy, Mr. Bang used the term "*just about a little patch*" to describe the size of his home. He lived with a housemate in a place called a '*kostel*' with no shared area inside the unit beside the kitchen. The term itself comes from '*kost*' and hotel, and the unit looked smaller than other two-bedroom housing units in common. In another story, a participant in Serpong named Mr. Chief, suddenly burst into laughter after sharing the story of the moment of his house handover with the developer. "Just this living room, a bedroom, and a bathroom... After the handover, oh, the house was *just like this*," he shared in a disappointed tone, paused and then laughed ironically, implying that he agreed that his home was tiny and acknowledged it as a tiny home.

The acknowledgement of tiny homes also often came in expressions of complaints which came spontaneously when participants got excited sharing their stories, as told by Mrs. Iron, "My mother doesn't really like being here. It's *too tight* for her." She was very determined to accommodate her son and two daughters together with her husband inside her two-bedroom 'landed house'. When sharing about her own perspective, she also mentioned, "The space to move is *so narrow*." Another form of complaint was shared by Mr. Nanda, "It's *so small*! The shape is *like this*! So ugly!" He was mimicking his wife who initially refused to live in their home.

In some other cases, participants could be more straightforward expressing their agreement towards their homes being labelled as tiny homes. Mr. Japandi who lived in a 36 m² apartment in a busy area in South Jakarta, was a senior tour leader who had travelled and experienced living in many places in the world. He was familiar with the concept of tiny houses in the popular media, and he designed his apartment interior according to that style. "Theirs is a *tiny apartment*, but it's a little bit bigger than this. Theirs is 50 (m²). Here is 30-something (m²). That was what he said to describe a bigger unit in the same apartment complex, referring that 50 m² was already tiny for him. "We like *tiny house*," said both Mr. and Mrs. Trendi, whose home appeared modern with customised interior design in almost every corner which made it similar to houses in the Tiny House series on YouTube. The terms "tiny apartment" and "tiny

house” were spoken in English, showing that they adopted those words outside their native languages. Mrs. Nanda also cited “tiny homes” and “tiny house” when she spoke. These events illustrate that some Indonesians are familiar with the term and acknowledge tiny homes as an architectural style.

Without associating with a certain architectural style, some participants agreed to categorise their homes as tiny homes after realising how restricted the space they had at home. “*Wow! This place is small!*” Mrs. Adi interjected between her sentences while sharing how she, her husband and her son lived in her small apartment in South Jakarta. In such an opposite manner, Mrs. Poleng calmly and softly shared her daughter’s words to her before moving into their home in Gianyar, Bali, “Don’t bring much stuff, Ma, *because the house is small.*” Mr. Chi used the same expression as Mrs. Poleng, “The house is *small.*” He lived in an old neighbourhood in Bekasi where most of his neighbours had rebuilt their homes into two-story houses whereas his house kept its original construction with only some minor changes. Also, Mrs. Vill said, “*So tiny*”, after describing that her main home only had two bedrooms, a kitchen, and a terrace for other activities. She lived in a Balinese traditional family home with her husband and two children, where the bathroom is detached from the main home, but she shared it with her father-in-law, who lived in a separate home. Having this setting, her home was found as the smallest ‘landed house’ in this study, being only 30 m² including the terrace area.

Whether expressed directly or indirectly, most participants agreed that their homes were tiny, confirming a positive acknowledgement of tiny homes. From this group of participants, the history of being downsizers is prevalent, mainly seen from the comparisons between parents’ home and current home, as shared below:

“If I just come back here from my hometown, oooh, it’s small, right? (her tone was down) ...in my village, going to the kitchen usually felt far. We had to walk passing through several things. But here, we get in this room again, this room again, because it’s too narrow,”

- Mrs. Gigi, 45 m² landed house

“My bedroom (in her parents’ home) was actually much bigger than my apartment. My bedroom was 4 x 5 (metres). That’s just for the bedroom. This is... 3 x 7, including the bathroom and the kitchen. Meanwhile in my house, 4 x 5 was only for the bedroom.”

- Ms. Bebet, 21 m² studio apartment

Both Mrs. Gigi and Ms. Bebet were downsizers who moved to Greater Jakarta from smaller cities in Java Island, but they framed “tiny homes” in different meanings. Mrs. Gigi had bought a bigger home before she moved, and Ms. Bebet’s bigger home was her parents’ property. The tone made by Mrs. Gigi had an emotional sentiment as if she was disappointed by less space at home, or perhaps she had to release her previous bigger home and got a smaller one instead. On the other hand, Ms. Bebet described it in such a technical way, emphasising size details with no emotional tone. These two contrasts show that, besides the size, there are layers of definitions of tiny homes in the social context, especially when sentiments or emotions are involved in giving meaning to this housing segment. These examples show how definitions of ‘tiny homes’ are subjective and comparative, based on previous life experiences and housing trajectories, in these cases, occupying larger parental homes or living in less populous cities where getting larger homes is more feasible.

4.5.2 Neutral acknowledgements of tiny homes

As seen in the previous section, tiny homes are included in the formal housing sector regulated by the government and sizes are seen as ‘type’-varieties. Technically, the regulation has set the minimum size that will fit the minimum requirements. So, it is possible for some households who prefer living at the minimalistic threshold to feel that their tiny homes are ideal for a home size. The stories of these participants who live in different housing typologies represent this perspective.

Mr. Emi lived in a 36 m² landed house in a gated neighbourhood with his wife and his son. His home was a common private developer’s housing development with a facade and form that appeared in uniformity with his neighbours. The interior layout of his home was typical of the developer plan with two bedrooms, one small bathroom, one common area, and a little kitchen at the very back of the building (see Figure 4.17, p.67). Compared to the time when he grew up in his parents’ home, he was considered a ‘downsizer’, but compared to his recent experience, he was an ‘upsizer’. Apart from saying that the size of his parents’ house was “very big”, he was more interested in talking about the land that was “as big as a plot of rice field... I think it would fit badminton courts... three or four” and his family “could breed chickens in the backyard”, but he did not mention anything else more specific about the house. Before he came to Greater Jakarta for work and chose to reside in South Tangerang, he lived in a less developed city in Java Island and rented an unfurnished house. At that time, he was already married and had a son. He brought all his furniture and his family’s material belongings from his former place to the current home. He still had some space to place new furniture too.

Based on his estimation, his current home was bigger than his previous home. “Here, I feel a bit spacious,” he said. Even so, he did not feel that his current home was big. For him, it was “not too big, not too small.” His statements implied that the size of the land mattered more to him than the size of the building, but this also illustrates that participants who have experienced living in bigger or smaller properties may have a complicated and nuanced definition of the relative size of their current home, which is also expressed in the next example.

Ms. Dandy was single, worked as an architect and lived in an old two-bedroom apartment in North Jakarta with her former *kost*-mate who later became her close friend. Similar to Mr. Emi, she also had a history of living in her parents’ house that was bigger than her apartment, but the apartment was bigger than her former *kost*. Although she could be categorised as a downsizer, she refused to compare her current apartment to her parents’ house because “of course, the house is still more comfortable,” which means it was not a fair comparison. She stated that she “referred to the previous experiences” in the *kost*, identifying herself as an ‘upsizer’. As an architect, housing terminology mattered. Whether it was a house, an apartment, or a *kost*, they were all different. She refused to call her apartment or *kost* ‘home’ because for her, home must be in the form of a house, and to her, it was still her parents’ house. However, she shared a valuable definition about her apartment that was inseparable from her point of view as an architect.

“The status is apartment..., okay, not flat. It is still an apartment. Maybe, it is because *the size is not that small*, about 36 (m² – emphasis added),” she said. Her description revealed how ‘apartment’ and ‘flat’ are seen differently in Indonesia. Those two terms derived from foreign languages, whereas in Indonesian official categorisation, both are parts of what is called ‘stacked house’. From the way she described her place, she implied that apartments were placed higher in the ‘stacked’ housing hierarchy with generally bigger unit size and better building quality than flats. According to her story, the apartment where she lived was already built around 30 years ago. It looked old and less appealing compared to more recent apartment buildings. Also, having been built many years ago meant that this apartment was larger than the more recent apartments in the same areas which were part of a more recent trend of reduced unit size. “The beam structure also made more sense compared to current apartments that... *oppress the space for people... oppress the space inside*,” she contrasted the difference between apartments then and now by using the word ‘oppress’ to express how extreme the reduction in size had been. As an apartment unit, she did not say that the entire unit was big, but “actually the living room and the kitchen are quite big... If we wanted to arrange the space, it would be cozy for hanging out,” she said. Referring to the Time Saver

Standards for Residential Development (De Chiara, 1984, p. 470), the recommended size for a two-bedroom apartment is a minimum of 46.45 m², but her unit was 36 m². As an architect, she was trying to be objective by saying that her unit was “not that small” and specifically used the word “big” to describe some specific areas. Although she understood that her apartment was considered small by design standards, she still acknowledged her personal perception that several places in her apartment felt big enough for her.

A different story from Denpasar, Bali, came from Ms. Rocky. She only consented to having a home visit and non-formal conversations without recording, so information about her is described in the narrative. This single female in her late 40s lived in a small, gated cluster consisting of less than ten landed houses they called ‘*kosts*’. Each unit had exactly the same layout, comprising one small front room, one big central room, one bathroom with some extra space for a wardrobe, a kitchen, and a little backyard for the laundry area, with the total floor area being roughly around 30 m². There was no specific allocation for a bedroom, but since she lived with a big dog, she used the central room as her bedroom, and the dog was happy to be given the front room with his own mattress. That central room was the biggest area of the house, taking about half of the total floor space. Although living individually in a 30 m² home may seem more than sufficient, she did not think her home was big. Even though her private space was relatively large, having no specific space designated for a bedroom in the original layout made the house less than ideal. She also had to accommodate space for her big dog at home. In addition, she was the only single occupancy tenant there, whereas all of her neighbours shared their houses with other family members. For her, her home was not big, because the same size for a family – that she saw from her neighbours – would be too small. On the other hand, she did not really think that her home was tiny either because, compared to her neighbours, she did not feel a lack of space. This case suggests that rooms enabling particular functions and comparison to neighbours also influence individuals’ perceptions of size.

4.5.3 Negative acknowledgements of tiny homes

Most of the research participants were domestic migrants, and they came from a range of social classes. Some of them were found to have experience of living in much smaller homes or overcrowding at home in their earlier stages of life. There were also participants from a much lower socioeconomic background, where having a proper home in an urban area was regarded as a significant and positive achievement. For these participants, their tiny homes were considered big because their benchmark was the size or condition of their childhood home, or their sense of worthiness socioeconomically. Therefore, their perceptions contrasted

with those of some of the participants discussed above, who had experienced living in relatively larger parental homes.

Mr. River was the third generation of a family of domestic migrants who had moved to Jakarta City from another Indonesian island. He had mixed Indonesian ethnicities due to the migration history in his family, but he had always lived in the Jakarta area. He depicted his life story with his homes eloquently, expressing the struggle of living in an overcrowded house with a large number of family members to share the domestic space with,

“A row house. So, yeah, it's in Jakarta, people call it a row house. It was my grandmother's house. She had many children, so she parted the house. Let's say the land was 100 m² and there were eight children, she parted in the way that would be equal for eight units. It was nine with my grandmother herself. I used to live in one of the units, and I have six younger siblings. I'm the firstborn... It was in 1983 we moved to Tangerang. My father... he bought a house after he sold the house in a neighbourhood like this too... My father moved there but I still stayed in Jakarta in my grandmother's house. In 1986 after I finished my elementary school, I moved to Tangerang, to Kunciran... Until I get old like this, the types of my house have always looked the same. The house in Kunciran looks like my house now, but the size is now different. My house now is Type 22.”

He continued his story by recalling the time when the row house was still used,

“When we gathered there, the air felt so stuffy. There were three bedrooms, and it was a three-story house. But they have seven children! If each of them brought the whole family. Like myself, I have three children. Let's say... 7 x 3, it's already 21 just the grandchildren, plus the children and their partners. *So cramped!*”

He finished the story with a sad expression, but “*now is spacious*,” he said confidently about his current home, which had already been enlarged from 22 m² to around 45 m², and he lived there only with his nuclear family. From his words, there were two labels given according to popular housing terms in Indonesia, ‘a row house’, and ‘Type 22’, but he also said, “the types of my house have always looked the same... but the size is now different”. Referring to the formal definition of Indonesian homes (Section 4.3), what he meant was that, regardless of the labels, he had always been living in the cheap housing segment. Row houses targeted poor people, and Type 22 houses were the cheapest amongst other formal housing. However, he had enlarged his house, so he did not see it as small anymore. For him, his former row house was a tiny home, but not his current home. Even though technically the size might be

bigger, the ratio between the size and the occupants at his previous home were much tighter than his current home. His home was the smallest on the market at the time he bought it. After some renovations, it was still one of the smallest homes in the neighbourhood because other homes had become far larger. However, he did not experience overcrowding anymore and this affected his perception of size, so he disagreed to label his home 'tiny'.

In Bali, a story of another domestic migrant who came from a village in the northern part of the island to the busy Legian area. Mrs. Kleen worked as a laundry lady, and she worked from home. Her home location was very close to the beach, prime for business. Her identity was attached to laundry activities that had supported her and her family's life for years. She lived in a small, detached building that was initially designed for a store. Instead, she rented it for her home, where she ran her laundry business. Her place only had one main room and one toilet. She rarely left home because she did not need to. All her activities were already there. When she was asked for a comment about her home, she said, "*The place is big*, and it's right on the street." Regardless of any privacy issue or restrictions due to only having one room, she thought the place was big, even though on the actual size when it was measured, her place was only 6.5 metres long and less than 4 metres wide, with an extension to the terrace around 2 metres long, making the total interior space being 26 m² and the total land area being 34 m² approximately.

On the other hand, she owned a 'landed house' in her previous village, far from Legian or Denpasar. About that house, she shared that it was a "BTN house⁶" and it was "small". The house that she bought was built by a developer, so the minimum area must comply with the "Type" categories, which was supposed to be bigger than her current home. Even more, she mentioned that the house had "two bedrooms, two living rooms, and at the back there is a small bathroom." It was unclear whether the second "two" that she said was meant to emphasize the number of bedrooms or she meant that there was another room besides the living room because she spoke so fast, but it was clear that the house had two bedrooms, and any two bedroom house that was built by a developer would have bigger interior floor space than her current home. Otherwise, the project would not get permission from the regional government. However, she was sure that it was "smaller." Her description about the size was clearly inaccurate, but this interpretation is very interesting as Indonesians may define tiny homes in multiple ways which are not always associated with the factual size, but there might be subjective perceptions involved.

⁶ She meant a landed house built by housing developer

4.6 Cultural Definitions

Cultural influences, norms and practices are a key element in the lived experiences of tiny homes. Even though the case study locations took place in cities that have experienced massive urbanisation, participants who happened to live in those areas may have come from anywhere across Indonesia or even have experienced living in different countries. Also, there are cultural differences between the two locations of the case study, which were seen in the setting of participants' homes during the research visits. The cultural influences that shaped their frameworks about home are very diverse but also have patterns that are reflected in the conversations with the participants and the documentation of their homes.

4.6.1 The value of land

During colonialism, the Dutch took over the indigenous people's land for industry. Even until this year, some indigenous tribes who reside in remote areas are still facing disputes regarding their ancestral land against the Indonesian government. Thus, securing land ownership is important for Indonesians. Furthermore, Indonesia generally has fertile soil that is excellent for the plantation. Many types of seeds easily grow in Indonesian land. On a domestic scale, people who live in a landed house can grow fruits and vegetables in their front or back yard for their own consumption. Having this benefit, it is common for Indonesian people to pass down advice to buy a landed house and give less value to other types of housing without ownership of the land.

Mr. River, who previously shared his experience of living in an overcrowded house in Jakarta, compared his father's house with his own house,

“My (father's) house was Type 21 with the *size* being 6 x 10 metres: 6 for the width, 10 for the length. Now that type no longer exists, so this one is Type 22. The land is still 60 m², but it is 12 metres long and 5 metres wide. And they call the 'type' with a different name, but the *size* is still 60 m² (emphasis added).”

Apart from quoting the popular terms 'Type 21' and 'Type 22', he did not share any further information about the size of the house. He clearly expressed that the types did not really matter because what mattered was the size of the land. When he used the word “size”, he referred to the size of the land. Even from the way he could describe the difference of width and length ratio between his father's and his own 'landed houses', his value towards land was captured through his detailed memory and accuracy about the sizes.

Mr. Emi was also more interested in describing the size of the land rather than the size of the building when recalling his parents' home (see p.79-80) and his former rental home before he moved to Greater Jakarta. "Because my previous rent had no front, no front yard. So, the front yard was a shared road," he said, but his current home had a small front yard. Even though the floor area of his home was 36 m², the smallest in the neighbourhood, he refused to call it small because he had some extra exterior space in the front yard, something that he did not have before. While measuring his home, the overall territory of his land was around 80 m², only 20 m² above the minimum requirement for landed houses.

In Bali, regulations are mainly influenced by Hindu culture. Temples for prayers are intrinsic parts of domestic activities, which can be arranged in every individual home or shared with neighbours in a bigger setting. However, Hindu is not the only religion of Indonesian citizens in Bali, so this specific information is not explicitly written in the formal regulation documents. Even so, there were Mrs. Poleng, Mrs. Guru, Mr. and Mrs. Luki, and Mr. Deni who were all Hindus, and their homes were built in the smallest land area allowed by the traditional custom, which was 1 *are* (pronounced 'are-eu'). This is to ensure that every individual plot of land will have enough space to build a temple for prayer and a house together. 1 *are* is 100 m². People in Bali, including the developers, use *are* as the measurement unit for land area. Having homes at the lowest bar of permitted land area, they felt that their homes were small. "Because... the land is small, so as simple as that, the temple is small," said Mrs. Poleng, making sense of why her home was small for her.

Although there is no minimum standard for the size of the home interior, there must be at least one temple per individual plot of land. This temple needs to be outdoors as Balinese Hindus will place offerings in front of it, including burning incense in their rituals. This is considered non-negotiable for Hindus, and developers also need to comply with it to fit the market demand. Compared to the minimum requirement for land area in other parts of Indonesia, which is 60 m², 1 *are* is much bigger. To maximise land-use efficiency, the developers may include any residual shape into the plot of land and sell it as a unit for a landed house. As found in one home visited in Gianyar (Figure 4.19), the plot of land was in a trapezoid shape. Consequently, the developer had to customise the layout following the land shape. With some outdoor area dedicated to the temples, the floor area for the home was only around 40 m².

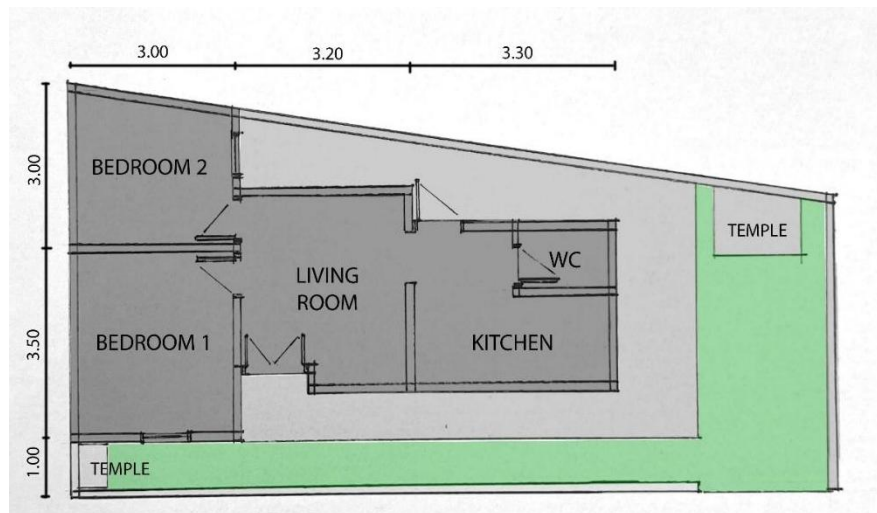


Figure 4.19 A tiny home in 1 are trapezoid land, Gianyar, Bali

Mr. Luki, who owned the trapezoid home and lived there with his wife and son, said that it was the developer who provided the layout. The house was labelled as a Type 45 house, so the interior floor space should be 45 m². A little cynical, he said, “We still have a big yard. If it’s measured, it could be one or two bedrooms there.” He acknowledged that the land that he had was spacious, but the developer could only plan 45 m² of interior space, which later became a little less in the realisation. On the other hand, he was also bound to his religious deeds to build temples. Even if later he could do housing renovations to add more floor space, his obligations to his religion will keep him from using all of the outdoor space for building.

The way Mr. Luki perceived that his land was big was also interesting since his plot of land was the smallest that was allowed in Balinese Hindu⁷ culture. This case gives an example of how religion can also be an important element in constructing participants’ understandings of the appropriateness and definition of the relative size of their home. Apparently, there was land that was plotted being less than 1 are for individual homes. “A cheap house... the land is 65 (m²), less than one are,” said Mrs. Kleen, the laundry lady, when describing the “BTN house” she bought in her village. She could not specify the size of the house, but she mentioned the size of the land, which gave more evidence on how some Indonesians value the land more than the housing building.

While having conversations with participants who were Balinese locals, the term ‘BTN house’ appeared several times. Before Mrs. Vill consented to participate, she said that her house was built on his family land and not a BTN house. She then explained that what she meant by a BTN house was a landed house in a neighbourhood built by the developers, where people got

⁷ Which might have different specific religious laws from Hindu in other regions, for example, India

mortgages from the bank. BTN itself is an abbreviation for Bank Tabungan Negara, an Indonesian bank that often offers mortgage loans. Even though the mortgage does not have to be dealt with by that bank, they use the term as a metonymy, so 'BTN house' in Bali refers to any landed house that was built by a housing developer. Referring to this, Mr. Deni, a Balinese participant who also worked in the construction field, gave information that developers in Bali had started to build housing in plots of land that were less than 1 *are* outside the Denpasar urban area, and this confirmed Mrs. Kleen's description of the size of her BTN house. Even though the religious custom does not allow it, these houses are still aligned with the national regulation, so they are legal. Going back to Mrs. Kleen's perception on size (see p.83), she may construct her definition of small based on the comparison to the smallest land area allowed by the Hindus.

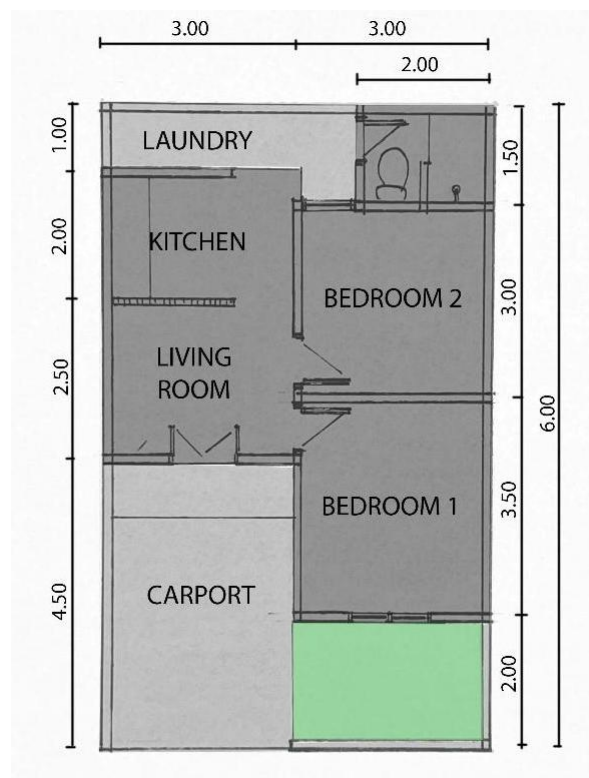


Figure 4.20 A tiny home layout for a plot of land less than 1 *are* in Bali

During another research visit, evidence of the shrinking plot of land phenomenon in Bali was observed at Mrs. Paya's house (Figure 4.20). She was a Muslim Balinese with a mixed ethnicity from another Indonesian island, so she was not bound to provide a temple in her house. The interior floor space of her house was 38 m², built in a 60 m² plot of land. During the interview, she mentioned "small" so many times, resonating the group of people who acknowledge their homes as tiny homes.

4.6.2 *Kost* and apartments as tiny homes

When research participants described the typology of their homes, home typology, the terms “apartment” and “*kost*” were used interchangeably, but when the site visitations were made, sometimes there was no difference found in the interior setting of a *kost* and an apartment. A participant in Bali claimed that his home was called an apartment, as proven by the signage in front of the building. But his housing type would be recognised as a *kost* in Jakarta. On the other hand, another participant in Bali labelled his home as a *kost* even though it physically appeared like a landed house. Previously, it has been explained that apartments are considered tiny homes due to the shrinking size phenomenon that gradually happened. The following discussion will explain more about the *kost* and its variety development until it can be equally functioned as an apartment unit.

Kost

“...but the type that fit within the budget was *kost*. Because the house is expensive, so I use *kost* first,” said Mr. Bang, recalling when he first moved to South Tangerang.

Derived from the Dutch word *in de kost*⁸, *kost* was interpreted in Indonesia as a boarding house for temporary lodging, usually for students or for new-entry workers who had not settled permanently with their jobs. Now, *kost* have been evolving to include various other types of housing units. Almost every participant had experienced living in a *kost* at least once in their life either as a student or a worker, and through conversations with them, the definition of *kost* could be diverse. Below are examples of participants who had experienced moving from *kost* to *kost* or from *kost* to apartments in both Jakarta and Bali (English words in italic are originally spoken in English by participants):

“Previously, I lived in a *kost*.... The size was quite big, around 3 x 3 (metres), and I was with my friend. The bathroom was next to it, not en-suite. It was a new building, so it was good. And then I moved to Cideng (Jakarta). There, I got a bigger room, about 5 x 5 with an en-suite bathroom. And the *kost* was like the Dutch houses.”

- Ms. Bebet, from *kost* to studio apartment in Jakarta

“But in Jakarta, it was eight years. But *mostly*, the previous ones were not like this, but like a house. This one is more like a *unit*, right. Yeah, a *unit*. So, there’s a personal

⁸ in English, it is similar to living in a family for a homestay

kitchen. When in Jakarta, it was like a *shared house*... So, it's just different, different in building types. For example, in Jakarta, mostly just like a *house*."

- Ms. Sesi, from *kost* in Jakarta to *kost* in Bali

"I was only staying at my brother's place, and moved to the 600,000 *kost* that, you know, the bed was just a layer of mattress down the floor. The toilet was also a squat toilet, okay.... My second *kost*...it was a million per month, but the room was *slightly* smaller than this, and there was no *water heater*. I was there until 2015, about three years.... So my current *kost* was 2.8 (millions) when I first came in. Meanwhile others could be 4.2 or even 8 millions! ...this is a *kost* for workers, different from *kosts* for students.... I feel that new studio apartments in Jakarta are already very small. So, I feel that now I live in a studio apartment."

- Ms. Kota, from *kost* to *kost* in Jakarta

While Ms. Bebet discussed the room sizes, Ms. Sesi emphasised the building types, and Ms. Kota talked about prices and facilities. Also, in different dialogues, Ms. Sesi and Ms. Kota shared similar information about "Mr. or Mrs. Kost", which is an appropriate and friendly way to call *kost* owners without having to know their names. Culturally, it indicates that renters can have personal interactions with the property owners, understanding that their *kosts* were owned by persons, not an organisation nor a system.

From these participants, there is some information to describe *kost*. First, *kost* is a built-to-rent (BTR) property, but in Indonesia, this segment is owned by individuals because the government and housing properties are built to purchase. Since the buildings used for *kost* are private properties, room and/or facility arrangements and tenancy agreements are made under property owner's authority. With rent as the only possible form of tenancy, *kost* is made as transitional dwelling considered the lowest hierarchy of home because the facilities can also be minimum. The *kost* unit can be just a bedroom with other shared facilities outside the individual units, or a bigger dwelling unit with its own individual kitchen and toilet like Ms. Sesi's home. These facility differences refer to the second definition of *kost* which may appear physically as either a housing unit or a shared house depending on the property type, whether it is refurbished from an old house from the Dutch colonialism era, a new building that is specifically built to rent, or even a collection of BTR small homes located in a gated cluster.

Mr. Bass from Denpasar, Bali, said, "Let's go play at *kost*" referring how he usually called his home when inviting his friends. His *kost* looked like a landed house, located within a gated

cluster consisting of about 20 housing units that shared the same postal address. Each house has a little green area for the front yard, but there was no specific plot of land per individual house. And the buildings were much smaller than the minimum regulation for landed houses with having only one bedroom in one house. The whole cluster itself was owned by an individual he called “Mr. Kost”, to whom he paid his monthly rent. With no specific plot of land and no possibility to obtain ownership of only an individual unit, the house is valued less than other small houses. And due to the similarity of the tenancy system to a *kost*, Mr. Bass’ home was also acknowledged as a *kost*.

The following figures show examples of *kost* varieties from participants’ homes, where the common types of *kost* are seen in figure 4.21 and Mr. Bass’ *kost*, which was actually an individual landed house in a smaller version, is seen in figure 4.22.

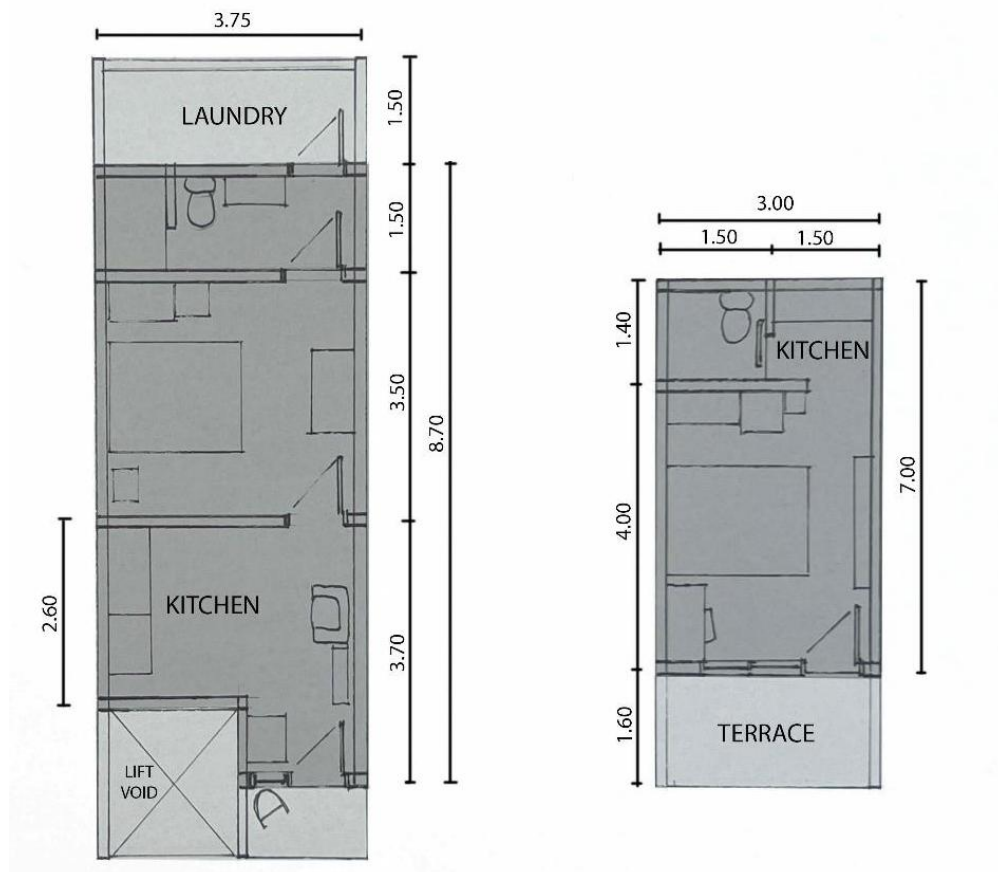


Figure 4.21 Common varieties of *kost* that can be found in Bali and Greater Jakarta



Figure 4 22 Mr. Bass' *kost* as a tiny house inside the cluster (left) and its interior layout (right).

From the layouts, it is seen that these *kosts* have less floor area than the smallest landed house permitted by the government, even though they provide facilities that are equal to other homes, such as a bedroom, bathroom, and a space for cooking. However, there is no formal document that regulates the design of BTR properties, so unequal facilities amongst *kosts* are common. These differences in *kost* facilities and size determine the rent prices and indirectly separate the renter profiles of who will typically rent a particular type of *kost*.

Especially in Bali, *kosts* that appear like landed houses are prevalent due to the nature of migration. Domestic migrants from different islands usually live in a *kost* as they are considered 'outsiders' who have no customary right to acquire land in Bali. Even though Indonesian citizens have equal legal rights to buy a property anywhere in the nation, this is not aligned with Balinese customary law that had existed before this national law. Thus, the local authorities in Bali may perform some ceremonies as compensation, making their pathways to homeownership more complicated compared to locals. Almost all Balinese participants shared this information during the interviews, indicating that understanding this cultural perspective is important for Balinese. Even though they were Balinese and Hindus who lived in Bali Island, they are also considered migrants because they had moved outside their ancestors' regions. Mrs. Guru used the word '*kost*' as a verb to replace 'rent'. She was sharing the story about her housing pathways including renting a house with her family, but she labelled the rented house as a *kost*. I had to reconfirm if what she meant was really a *kost* or she slipped the word unconsciously. She then explained that from her perspective as a Balinese, it was a *kost*. She understood that she actually rented a house, but the house was 1 *are*, and it was the smallest house allowed by Balinese Hindu law, so she automatically

associated it to a dwelling type that is less valued than a house, which was a *kost*. So, any rented housing property that is less valued than an ideal house for the customary standard in Bali can be considered a *kost*.

The third classification of *kost* is, the payment is arranged per room or per individual unit, and this is what makes the difference between a *kost* and a shared house in common. If the payment for the shared house is arranged for the whole house, Indonesian people simply call it a 'rented house', regardless of the occupancy arrangement. As seen from Ms. Sesi's words where she spoke in English to refer to a shared house, Indonesian housing terminology does not have an equivalent translation to 'shared house'. So, any housing property that is rented per individual room or individual unit can be called a *kost* unless there is another specific term to brand the room type. Mr. Young, a participant in Jakarta, had moved from *kost* to *kost* and then to an apartment, all were based on rent. He shared that he did the searching for *kost* and learned the details of the properties through a mobile application. When he viewed the unit onsite, he found that the unit was managed by the application company, and he could not figure out who the 'Mr. or Mrs. Kost' was. So, as long as the unit is individually owned, the owner has flexibility to manage the property by themselves or delegate it to a property management as the third party.

Lastly, the market segments for *kost* that can be diverse, signified by prices and facilities. As shared by Ms. Kota, she specified students and workers to classify the market, and by saying that she felt that her middle-priced *kost* was like an apartment, she deconstructed the interpretation of a *kost* as a budget housing type because there were other *kost* that were more expensive than hers. Moreover, some of Mr. Bass' neighbours lived in their *kosts* with their families with children. So, the market of *kost* can also be targeted based on the type of household, ranging from a single occupancy household to a family, similar to the setting of conventional houses. Even so, *kost* is still associated with a small housing unit and is placed in a lower housing hierarchy than an apartment. When sharing about her housing history, Ms. Dandy said that she moved from "a patch of *kost* to a unit of apartment". At another place, Mrs. Adi who bought an apartment looked for an affirmation for her decision. "I got a bigger space than *kost*, right? I moved from a *kost* to an apartment, and I got a bigger space." For these participants, moving from a *kost* to an apartment signified a bigger life achievement.

Summarising the definition of *kost*, a *kost* in the present context can be described as a housing unit within a building or a gated neighbourhood, where the whole property area itself is owned by an individual, so the only possible tenancy is through rent. The varieties of building names,

occupancy numbers, and other tenancy agreements are non-binding and are subject to settle between the renter and the landlord. Specifically in Bali, due to the high demand for lodging for domestic migrants intra- and inter-island, the management of kost is arranged in the regional regulation where kost are called '*Kost-House*'.

Apartment in Bali as a kost

The word 'apartment' is now acknowledged as a part of the Indonesian language, spelt 'apartemen', but its interpretations may be different from the definitions in English-speaking countries. Ms. Dandy (see p.80) explained her understanding of the difference between an apartment and a 'flat', and her statements were supported by KBBI, the Great Dictionary of Indonesian Language, implying a hierarchical difference between these terms in the Indonesian context. According to the dictionary, apartment is defined as a "dwelling (consisting of living room, bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, etc) inside one of the stories of a big and *luxurious* multi-storey building, complemented with various facilities (swimming pool, fitness centre, etc)" and a flat (spelled the same in the Indonesian language) is a "dwelling that consist of living room, bedroom, bathroom, and kitchen, built in rows in every level of a multi-storey building", or a "multi-storey building, parted for several dwellings (each is for one family)" (KBBI, no date, emphasis in parentheses added). It is very clear that apartments have a higher level of luxury than flats. However, Indonesian regulations only acknowledge 'stacked-houses' for multi-storey housing, so apartments and flats are classified under the same category: stacked-houses, as vertical housing built by developers.

Different from general interpretations in Indonesia, Bali acknowledges apartments as low-rise multi-storey housing owned by individuals. Bali's regulation sets the maximum height for any building as being 15 metres to ensure no other building surpasses the height of the regional Hindu temples (Bali Regional Regulation No 2, 2023, Chapter 100), comprising between 4-5 floor levels from the ground floor. This restricted the potential for housing developers to capitalise on housing units, but individual investors perceived a niche to create luxurious BTR properties. So, where apartments in Jakarta appear as large high-rise buildings sold by developers, apartments in Bali appear as smaller low-rise buildings that are individually owned. Since apartments in Bali are considered BTR, the tenancy system is identical to *kost*.

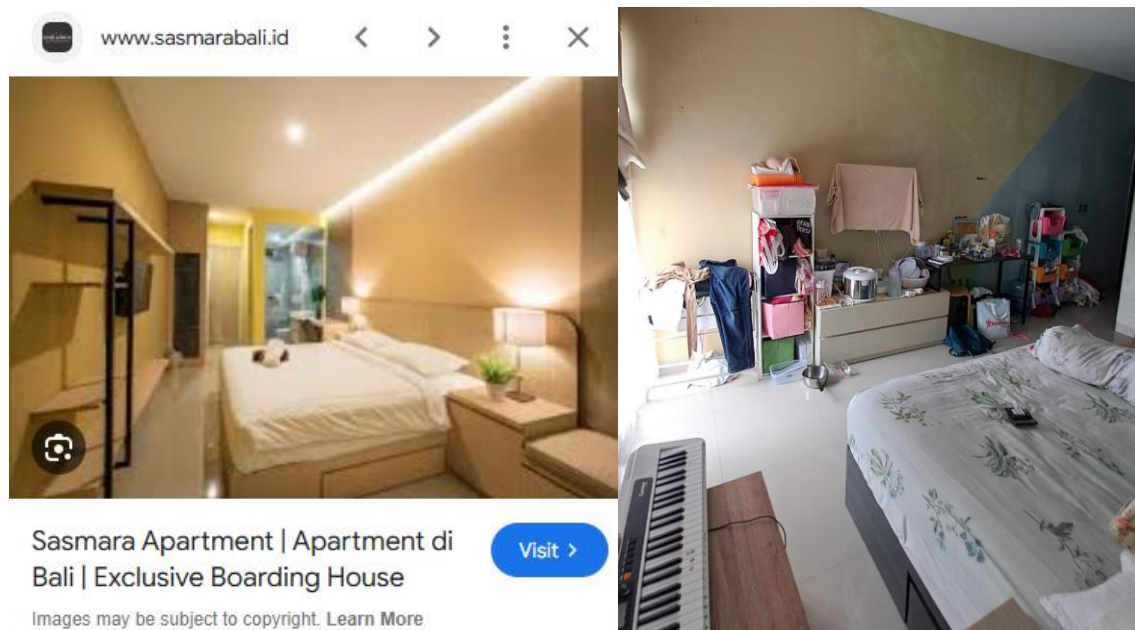


Figure 4.23 Comparison of the advertisement (left) and the reality (right) of the same apartment in Bali
Source: Google search capture, 2024 and participant's photo, 2023

Figure 4.23 (left) captures a shot from a Google result page when the search engine was displaying choices of apartments in Bali. The search was initially made for finding accommodation for this research fieldwork, but the result gave valuable information for understanding the concept of apartments in Bali. It shows that a property was labelled as both an apartment and an *exclusive* boarding house (author's italic). Linguistically, 'boarding house' is understood as a term to translate *kost* to English, regardless of *kost* varieties that can be extensive. It means, apartments in Bali are considered equivalent to exclusive *kosts*. By the time this information was collected, the rent price per month in that apartment was ranging between Rp 4,000,000-6,500,000 (approx. £200-325), and there were other apartments with higher rates up to Rp 8,000,000 (approx. £400). Meanwhile, the rate of the regional minimum salary was around Rp 3,000,000⁹. So, the word 'exclusive' on the branding was explained very clearly by the rent prices, which were far above the minimum salary. The advertisement image itself was coherent with the exclusiveness shown by the interior design theme that made the room look like a hotel bedroom, but the photo sent by a participant who lived there (Figure 4.23 – right) expressed the real-life setting of an apartment. The room was approximately as small as a common standard hotel bedroom, but from how the furniture and personal items were arranged, the occupants surely had dwelled in that room for a longer period of time than the usual duration of stay for a hotel. By using that apartment unit as a permanent dwelling, the occupants had lived in a tiny home.

⁹ Figures are per December 2023 when post-Covid19 property market bubble was occurring in Bali

Similarities and differences between kosts and apartments

From the discussions above, there are some intersected understandings between *kost* and apartments in Jakarta and Bali which describe their similarities and differences. The first is about *kost*. *Kosts* in Jakarta and Bali are understood as individually owned buildings that are commercialised for lodging purposes, and the definition of *kost* in the previous discussion is valid for both regional locations. Types of *kost* that are found in Jakarta are also found in Bali, but Bali has more varieties of *kost*, including those that are actually landed houses. So, not all types of *kost* in Bali can be found in Jakarta.

The second is about apartments, which are more complicated to describe than *kosts*. Both apartments in Jakarta and Bali comply with the understanding of the word 'luxurious' as described in the Indonesian dictionary, and it is the concept that anchors the definition of apartments in Indonesia. The luxury itself may be expressed by the size of the buildings, the number of shared facilities, the design quality of the interior furnishing, or the price. Both apartments in Jakarta and Bali offer individual housing units that can be used as a home for the occupants, and when those units are at the same size as or smaller than the minimum size of a house, the occupants also need to adjust to a tiny home living in their domestic space.

The main difference between apartments in Jakarta and Bali is the ownership status. A complex of apartment buildings in Jakarta is owned by a developer, and the apartment units are owned by individuals who buy the property from the developer. Then, individuals have the right to dwell or rent out their units to others. Meanwhile in Bali, apartments are owned by individuals, and they let out the rooms for rent. Technically, the apartments in Jakarta and Bali comply with different building regulations, because one is considered a 'stacked-house' and the other one is a landed house for commercial purposes. Even so, occupants who live based on rent, either in Jakarta or Bali, will need to arrange individual contracts with the owners. enters can arrange their stay in an apartment or a *kost* in the same way, and when the *kost* has the same room setting and facilities as an apartment, living in any of those typologies might be a similar experience, as happened to Ms. Kota, who felt that she already lived in an apartment even though her home was labelled as a *kost*.

To better understand the differences, similarities, or intersecting interpretations between *kosts* and apartments, a structured description is given in Table 11. In areas where land for building new landed houses is no longer available, people now reside in these types of housing. Even though these buildings cannot be defined as a 'home' in Indonesian linguistic interpretation, one of these might be the only option for people who live in highly populated urban areas. It might be tiny and non-landed, but it is still a home.

Table 13 Comparison of understandings between apartment and kost in Jakarta and Bali

	Jakarta	Bali
Apartments		
	Apartment in Jakarta Source: Setio, 2020	Bali True Living Apartment Source: agoda.com, 2023
	Arranged under the regulation about 'Stacked-Houses'	Arranged under the regulation about 'Kost-Houses'
	Appear as high-rise or vertical buildings, sometimes identified as a 'concrete jungle' in the urban context	Appear as low- to medium-rise buildings
	Owned by property developers	Owned by individuals
	Home units are marketed unfurnished and listed on the developers' websites.	Home units are marketed fully furnished, equipped with an AC. Many are listed in B&B and travel accommodation websites, equivalent to a hotel room.
	Individuals buy the units. Occupants can be the owners themselves or renters.	Occupants are renters
	Minimum facilities per unit: spaces for a bed, a common area, a kitchen, and a bathroom	Minimum facilities per unit: a space for a bed and a bathroom. The kitchen may be a part of shared facilities
	More luxurious than 'flats', but not necessarily exclusive in terms of price (no apparent evidence from participants who lived in apartments)	Express luxury through the branding 'exclusive' and the prices
	Branded under the name 'apartment'	May have several other names for branding, such as 'exclusive boarding house' or 'co-living'.
Kost		
	A kost in Jakarta Source: Sewa Kost, 2023	A kost in Denpasar, Bali Source: author, 2023
	Arranged under the regulation about 'Kost-Houses' and regulations related to tax and retributions	Arranged under the regulation about 'Kost-Houses'
	Emphasis on the typology: the interior unit may look similar to a studio apartment, but the overall building will remain smaller	Emphasis on the rental concept with various types of individual units

Appear as a spare room in a house, a shared house, or a building with multiple home units.	Appear as a spare room in a house, a shared house, a building with multiple home units, a house in which the size is not ideal for Balinese/Hindus customary standard, or even a mini-hotel.
Owned by individuals. Occupants are renters.	Owned by individuals. Occupants are renters.
Minimum facilities per unit: just a bedroom. (toilet and cooking facilities are shared outside the unit)	Minimum facilities per unit: just a bedroom
Maximum facilities per unit: spaces for bed, common area, kitchen, and bathroom. Similar to a studio apartment	No maximum facilities per unit. It can be as complete as a house.
Units can come furnished or unfurnished	Units can come furnished or unfurnished
Commonly marketed for students, the single working class, some couples, and very few families.	Markets for students, single working class, couples, and families are all prevalent

4.7 Conclusion

The previous sections in this chapter have explained the understanding of ‘tiny homes’ in Indonesia from various perspectives: official documents, architecture, and individual lived experiences that have shaped, and are shaped by, social and cultural understandings.

According to the Indonesian regulation, ‘tiny homes’ are not officially defined, but the existence of tiny homes has been recorded for decades, as the government allowed ‘very simple’ houses as tiny as 12 m² and a maximum of 36 m² in the 1991 ministerial regulation. Their prevalence was evident from this study, where some participants in Greater Jakarta lived in houses that were originally built with a 21-22 m² floor area. In Indonesia, housing is first categorised by the intended target users, whether it is going to be for the government’s purposes, specifically targeted to particular groups of people (e.g. displaced or poor people), or sold in the commercial housing market. The last category is the focus of this study, and the Indonesian government classifies it by economic value: ‘luxurious’, ‘middle’, or ‘simple’, rather than by size.

Because the formal housing classification is determined by economic values or prices, the size of the house at the time of sale is not the primary factor. Moreover, housing developers use different terms that are more familiar to Indonesians. Rather than specifying ‘detached houses’ or ‘row houses’, they generalise houses with a plot of land as ‘landed houses’. Nonetheless, the ideal criteria for tropical housing can only be achieved with detached houses, where openings for ventilation can be made on all walls. Also, developers use the term ‘Type

x/y , where x represents the floor area and y represents the land area (see p.61). These strategies enable them to sell row houses with smaller plots of land as individual homes and merely use ' x/y ' as varieties. Based on these classifications, tiny homes can be represented by several 'formal terms' as presented in Table 12.

Table 14 Tiny homes based on the governments' and developers' classifications

Government	Developers	Type 21/60	Type 30/60	Type 36/60
Luxurious		x	✓	✓
Middle		x	✓	✓
Simple (incl. subsidised housing)		✓	✓	✓
Very simple (no longer produced)		✓	✓	✓

Meanwhile, size details for housing in multi-storey buildings are not stated in official regulations, but the direct observation conducted in this study has discovered that the size of this type sold in the formal housing market had been shrinking down from 28 m² in the past decade to being as small as 14 m², aimed for single occupancy, and 12.6 m² as a built-to-rent *kost*, owned by an individual property owner. This finding serves as an architectural precedent which suggests that, without any specific regulation, there is a possibility of other apartments and *kosts* being smaller than those in this study, as developers may reduce the size over time based on their market projection without violating any law. Regarding this, the precedent of smaller houses than the permitted size in BSD (see p.65) indicates that developers are able to do this as long as they have a trade-off to compensate for the reduced space, such as a fully-furnished interior or better neighbourhood quality.

Although 'tiny homes' is not officially acknowledged in Indonesian housing, the direct measurements of the tiny home samples in this study indicate that the spatial aspects of a home can be confining. With price as the primary classification, the facilities embedded in the property are aligned with the selling price. When tiny homes are sold in the 'simple' housing segment, which is also the cheapest and the smallest, they will likely get fewer facilities than homes with larger floor space and/or higher selling value, including less provision for electricity power and minimum utility installations. Thus, besides the restricted space, 'tiny homes' can also refer to a very low energy supply and building utility given to the home unit.

Based on direct interactions with tiny home occupants, there are different understandings of tiny homes: one participant who lived in a smaller space felt their home was sufficient, while another participant with a larger home felt the space was too small. Not all participants thought of their homes as being either 'big' or 'small' in terms of their relative technical size. Frequently,

they formed their perceptions based on the ratio between space and the number of occupants, where households with more inhabitants felt their homes were smaller than households with fewer inhabitants. Nonetheless, participants' economies also influenced their perceptions towards space. Those who bought the smallest and cheapest homes in the local housing market still felt their homes were tiny, even after renovating and enlarging the floor space. In contrast, participants who were previously poor and lived in far smaller homes tended to feel that their homes were big after moving to larger homes, even though factually, the sizes were still equal to the technical classification of 'tiny homes'.

Unlike the general definition of official regulations and developers, Balinese-Hindu traditional laws also define housing regulations, stating that a Balinese home needs to have a minimum of 100 m² of land to ensure sufficient space for building a minimum of one outdoor temple and some space for worship. This makes the government's classification based on the National Law far too small. However, the government's standard is still valid nationwide and houses smaller than the Balinese minimum standards are also legally built in Bali. Since both laws are valid in Bali, there are two approaches to defining tiny homes. The first is the same as the government-developer classification that leads to occupants' perception of tiny homes, as discussed above. The second is the definition by Balinese-Hindu traditional law, where houses built on a 100 m² plot of land are already tiny, considering some area must be kept outdoors, and the area to build the house will be far smaller.

In summary, the orientation towards prices in the formal housing classification implies 'neutrality' regarding dwelling size, with no explicit suggestion of 'tiny homes' in national regulations or developers' terms. However, direct measurements of the physical homes have shown otherwise, and the existence of Balinese-Hindu traditional law contradicts the national official understanding of what 'tiny' is in housing size. Referring to Rapoport's study (1969), which exemplified different interpretations of home across nations, this finding among the Balinese suggests a more complex layer of interpretation within a single nation, shaped by multiple cultures. Also, there was considerable individual variation in how research participants perceived their homes, which resonated with Foye (2021), who recognised that individuals' experiences shape their perception of their housing. Understandings of the size of a home were thus, for research participants, related to the numbers of individuals occupying it as well as individuals' economies, beliefs, and housing biographies, as the current homes are set within these wider experiences, which have been captured more accurately within the 'lived experience' approach.

5. Drivers of Tiny Home Living

5.1 Introduction

This chapter investigates the reasons behind tiny home occupants living in their small dwellings. Although obtaining a place to live is widely understood as essential, this chapter examines the drivers of tiny home living. It is based primarily on interviews with tiny home occupants, complemented by a few professionals who worked on housing projects, namely architects and property marketing staff. The processes of scrutinising the data involved different layers of analysis, unmasking the meaning behind their verbatim statements. Those interviews produced thematic patterns and revealed that there was no single primary driver of tiny home living in Indonesia. Multiple aspects may overlap for one participant, and a single aspect could have different meanings for different participants. Where professionals could provide clear answers based on their expertise, occupants often gave indirect answers that required additional supporting information to interpret and understand.

Participants who were tiny home inhabitants were asked questions, including “how did you find this place?” or “what made you decide to live here?” Their answers may express budget restrictions as the driver of their home choices, but some had homes in premium locations, indicating that they were driven by another attribute attached to the location. Meanwhile, “location” could mean proximity towards particular destinations or a representation of social status. And ironically, participants from a lower economic class may say their homes were “cheap” even though they put all their efforts into paying off the mortgage. Those examples suggest that there might be another layer than the mentioned keyword that drove them into tiny home living.

There were also participants who never mentioned why they chose to live in their tiny homes, but they shared what they had been through in their lives and implied their motives within their life stories. In this case, knowing the backgrounds of each participant was valuable to peel one layer off the surface-level information, such as their ethnic origins, socioeconomic levels, and even religions. Thus, besides interview transcripts, this chapter also relies on the notes of participants’ expressions and voice tones during interviews and the congruence with their personal data and the situation of their homes during study visits.

Another challenging part of analysing the interviews was interpreting the contexts that participants did not speak about. However, their pauses, smirks, or cynical giggles during the conversations suggested insinuations that there were pre-set conditions that determined their housing options. So, I also collected information through policy and regulation documents, field observations, and discussions with people I met during the fieldwork, as well as staying updated with the news to better understand the local contexts, especially related to Indonesian traditional culture.

After scrutinising the data from various sources, I discovered that there were voluntary and involuntary processes involved in the drivers of tiny home living, but it was often possible to determine a main trigger that made the study participants decide to live in a tiny home as illustrated in this diagram below (Figure 5.1).

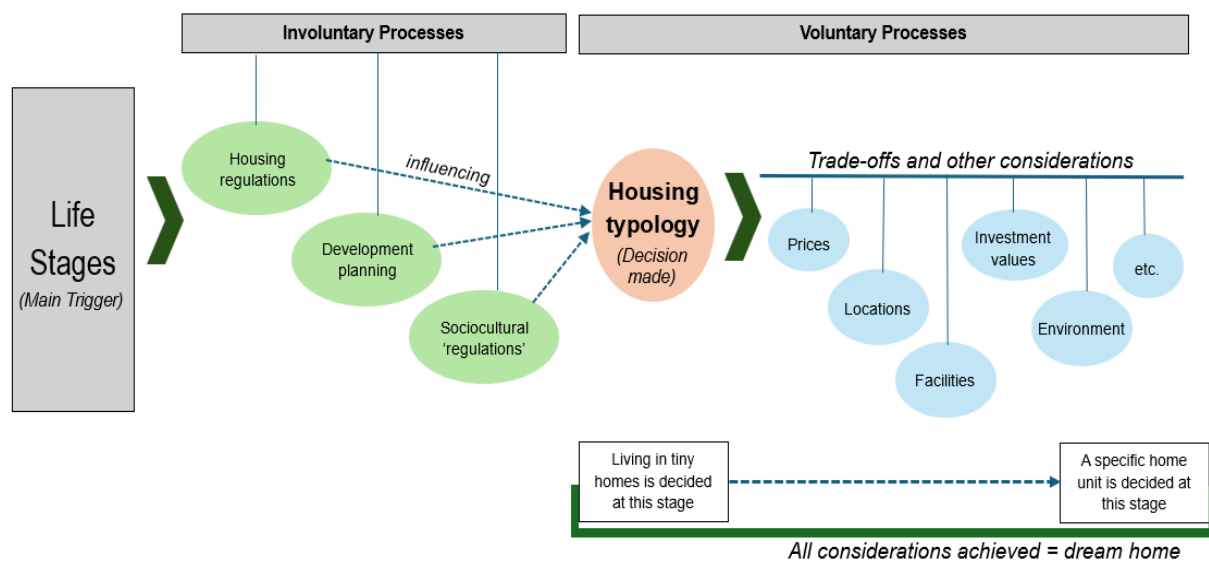


Figure 5.1 Diagram of drivers of tiny home living in Indonesia

While the diagram illustrates the process chronologically, the structure of this chapter discusses the drivers hierarchically based on the aspects that were of most significance, starting from the involuntary processes that pre-set housing availability choices, the life stages that influenced participants to get a home, and the voluntary processes that consist of considerations about bargaining and trade off aspects before the final decision making about living in the home. The first section (5.2) discusses the involuntary processes that conditioned housing choices in Indonesia, involving the government roles, the developers' roles corresponding with the housing markets and prices, and the existence of norms and beliefs that implicate regimes on household compositions. These aspects create societal expectations that influence individuals' housing choices. For example, a certain group may

specifically want to buy a landed house for their home, but another group may not have the opportunity to buy any property. The second section (5.3) examines the patterns of individuals' life stages that urged them to consider having their own homes. However, this part is closely related to Indonesia's norms and beliefs, that is discussed in the last part of the previous section (5.2.3). The third part discusses the voluntary processes involving multiple factors that become considerations in housing choices, and they are discussed in several sections (5.4 - 5.7), with each section focusing on one factor. Some participants may identify only one factor as the main driver because they had fewer choices, while others may have multiple factors and additional aspects to consider. Lastly, the concluding section (5.8) will summarise this chapter.

5.2 Setting Societal Expectations for Tiny Homes

Begun with introducing terms of property ownership in Indonesia, this section explores the conditions in Indonesian housing dynamics that narrow down housing choices and generate drivers for the tiny home elements of the housing system. The government and developers are interrelated in generating demand for tiny homes through their availability and affordability in the market price competition, whereas price predictability and sociocultural factors drive individuals towards a certain typology of tiny homes. Meanwhile, religious values influence when and with whom a household can be formed.

5.2.1 The agricultural influence on housing regulations

Housing regulations in Indonesia are closely related to the only National Law on agriculture (No 5, 1960), where the status of land ownership is the principal key in determining the right of land use. Some key points in this law that are relevant to this study are: acknowledgement of customary law as long as it is not conflicted with the nation's interests, classifying key land rights that are related into housing as: right of ownership, right to build (on leasehold land), right to build, right to use, and rent, and stating that ownership is only given to Indonesian citizens, 'leases' are only given for a maximum 30 years period to Indonesian citizens or companies that are established by Indonesian laws and are located in Indonesia, whereas individual foreigners only have the right to rent.

The right of ownership can be equivalent to freehold, granted to Indonesian citizens who buy a plot of land and become landlords, regardless of the land size. When someone buys a 'landed house', their ownership status is freehold because a house must be sold together with the land (National Law No.4, 1992). Other land statuses are not considered ownership

because the Indonesian words used in the law only refer to 'rights' for doing something, rather than owning something, such as older apartments that were sold as 'right to build'. Many recently built apartments are now sold as 'right of ownership', but this is not equivalent to freehold and is hard to comprehend from the Indonesian perspective, as the property unit is sold separately from the land. This law does not officially acknowledge 'lease', but it is acknowledged in Bali as 'rent' in a much longer term. Presumably, this is due to the many involvements of foreign investors and stakeholders in property in Bali. Since individual freeholders who become landlords have autonomy to rent their land, they can adjust the tenancy agreement as they wish, including the duration of the rent, as long as it does not violate the law.

5.2.2 The dynamics of regulation, developers and design development

The 1945 Indonesian Constitution states that "every citizen has the right to obtain and enjoy decent housing..." and this becomes the foundation for other laws that regulate housing implementations. As a democratic country, Indonesia's National Law (No.1, 1964, p.1) used the term "Indonesian socialist people" to encourage the spirit of cooperation called "*gotong royong*", an Indonesian key identity where people voluntarily help each other for mutual benefits, including being delegated responsibility for enacting housing provision (p.2). Meanwhile, the government's roles were to "support, facilitate, aid, stimulate," but not directly deliver housing provision (p.3). Practically, housing provision delivery is delegated to developers.

It was not until 2011 that the government started to take a more active role in housing provision. The updated document of the National Law stated that "the country is responsible for protecting the whole Indonesian nation through the enforcement of housing and settlement..." (No.1, 2011, p.1-b) and that "the government needs to be more proactive in providing and giving facilities and support in housing and settlement areas..." (p.1-c). The emphasis on the government programme is the 'settlement area', which is interpreted as a housing neighbourhood with clear geographical boundaries or a clustered housing complex. The document also confirms that the government has a key role in providing housing for those who work for the government or Low-Income Households (LIH) - originally quoted as *Masyarakat Berpenghasilan Rendah* (MBR). Meanwhile, housing for general citizens is classified as commercial housing, is to be delivered by private housing developers.

The more recent regulation from the Ministry of Public Works and Housing (No. 1, 2021) also emphasises that the government will focus on providing subsidised housing for LIH.

Subsidised housing is the cheapest housing type in the market, with the government setting a cap on the selling price, building size and land area, all of which are regulated by the Ministerial Decree (2023, pp. 5-6). Purchasers of subsidised housing are still required to pay a mortgage like other buyers of commercial houses in general, but the government may support some fees and ensure the lowest interest rate for the mortgage. Consequently, subsidised housing is built at the minimum standards requirements to suppress both the costs and the selling price, including having the smallest possible size. Therefore, all subsidised homes are considered tiny homes.

In Indonesia, LIH is different from 'poor people'. While LIH is defined by monthly wage, salary, or business income, 'poor people' are defined by monthly expenses per capita. LIH themselves might be a part of the middle-class people who earn above the minimum wage standards. However, LIH are still considered poorer than the average middle class because they reside in the lowest scheme of Indonesian formal housing and are eligible to have subsidised housing, whereas 'poor people' tend to live in the informal housing sector or might be homeless.

Another government approach to support housing provision is by creating a programme called TAPERA (Public Housing Savings) in 2016. This programme basically aims to create a collective fund to support the LIH in getting their first homes. The money is collected by deducting the salary of everyone who earns above the Regional Minimum Wage, including independent workers and foreigners with work visas (National Regulation No. 21, 2024, p.2). Many Indonesians think this programme is unfair because only the LIH are entitled to the benefits, but everyone else needs to participate. In addition, the house that is valid for getting support from TAPERA must have between 21 and 36 m² floor space and be built in a 60-200 m² land area (Government Regulation No. 25, 2020), which is the same as the conditions for a subsidised house; therefore, to be eligible, houses will be tiny homes. Despite the protests of Indonesian citizens, the government maintains this recent regulation, arguing that it is aligned with the value of *gotong royong* (Constitution Court Public Relations, 2024).

Through the size and funding restrictions of these programmes, the government therefore steers groups of Indonesian people towards tiny homes. However, tiny homes are not only produced for government programmes. As previously described in Chapter 4, any housing developer can build tiny homes and sell them to the market as 'commercial' housing because the size still complies with national regulations. Thus, the existence of tiny homes is prevalent

because both the government and developers build this segment as one of the main options in Indonesian housing markets.

The regulations for housing renovation are lenient in Indonesia, and it is usually given to the developers' authority. This situation was taken advantage of by an architecture bureau. In 2018, an architecture project called Expandable House gained international reputation for developing the concept of 'growing house' in Batam, Indonesia, advocating for the building sequence being in stages that followed the 'growth' of the occupants' needs (ArchDaily, 2018). The house began as a 36 m² one-storey building and later expanded into a three-storey building with 108 m² floor space (ArchDaily, 2020). Ever since, the term 'growing house' has gained popularity in Indonesia, and tiny homes have received more positive attention as they offer the potential to 'grow' when more space is needed in the future.

5.2.3 Development plans and negotiation with housing types and prices

During this research, it was common to find that participants had already set their housing typology in advance and considered the price afterwards. At the beginning, Mr. Maxie emphasised his typology preference by saying, "We searched for a landed house," followed by adding a condition about the house, "that was still affordable for us." Mr. Nanda, who happened to be Mr. Maxie's neighbour, also targeted the typology first and identified the location afterwards that matched his budget. "In Jakarta, the price must be different, far higher, and I can't afford a cluster there," he said. He worked at a technology corporation in Jakarta City and earned a good salary, but living in the city was still beyond his financial capacity.

Generally, the availability of housing types and the estimation of prices are very predictable for Indonesian people. Mrs. Gigi, who was originally from a different region in Java Island, could anticipate that she would find the housing type they were looking for: "We still lived there (Jepara, her previous town) and he (her husband) started to look. We didn't know about this area.... We wanted a cluster and at that time, there was no cluster here," said Mrs. Gigi, recalling the time when she was preparing to move to Jakarta's outskirts city. Even before she knew about the area, she could already project that what she wanted would be available.

As an illustration of the predictability of housing availability by typology in Greater Jakarta, Table 13 provides a comparison of the housing terms for the planning documents in 2022 for Jakarta City and South Tangerang, one of Jakarta's adjacent cities. Comparing the terms in both documents, it is implied that Jakarta City's current planning has more varieties of housing typologies, including vertical housing, whereas South Tangerang is more homogeneous. In

the Jakarta area, the availability of landed houses is spread across the outskirts and its adjacent cities, whereas apartments are concentrated in the city area. And since the meaning of ‘house’ in Indonesia is closely tied to the land, planning in all South Tangerang areas is predominantly typified by landed houses.

Table 15 Comparison of housing plans in Jakarta City and South Tangerang, Greater Jakarta

Jakarta City	South Tangerang
Source: Jakarta Governor Regulation No.31, 2022, p.144 ¹⁰	Source: South Tangerang Mayor Regulation No.118, 2022, p.38
• Public stacked houses (vertical housing used for social housing) • Commercial stacked houses (e.g. apartments and condominiums) • Stacked houses owned by the government, and for specific purposes • Landed houses • Flats (affordable and simpler version of apartments) • Urban village (informal settlements that coexisted inside the city)	• Sub-zones of very high-density housing (R1) • Sub-zones of high-density housing (R2) • Sub-zones of medium-density housing (R3)

Following the predictability of housing availability, prices of housing also appeared easy for participants to estimate. “We never wanted to buy a house in (Greater) Jakarta, alright. It must be far... because it must be on the outer side, even though it is in BSD or anywhere else,” said Mrs. Adi, who chose to buy a small apartment in Jakarta City with the same budget for a landed house in Jakarta’s outskirts. Ms. Kota also expressed how extreme the price gap could be between two different housing types with similar sizes. She had been living in Jakarta City for more than 10 years and always preferred to live in a *kost*. She rejected her friends and relatives’ suggestion to ‘upgrade’ to an apartment as the price was extremely high, “because there’s no guarantee! The prices of studio apartments in Jakarta near my office are around 1,2 Billion! Excuse me! It (the size) must be similar to my bedroom, so, are you kidding me? It’s crazy!”

In a calmer way, Mr. Young explained that researching the price for housing types per location was easy because he could filter his preferences on a website application:

“It depends on the location. Like in Bintaro, we can still get (rent) ...between 1.7 to 1.8 (million Rupiahs), but in Jakarta, in the city centre or South Jakarta, we’ll get more than 2.5 million. Even in Depok, you can still get (rent) around 850,000. And those help

¹⁰ Note: words in parenthesis are added to clarify the equivalent interpretation for general readers.

actually. With the apps, it's less difficult too if we like to move occasionally... In an apartment, for example, let's say that we buy an apartment. With the price of 700 million, we could get (buy) an 'okay' house in areas like Serpong or Tangerang city. But if we want to shift a bit for a convenient place, like maybe Daan Mogot city apartment. With the same 700 (millions), we could only get (buy) a studio-type apartment."

Rather than predicting, he did website research for accuracy. In the first part, he compared the monthly rent prices for a studio apartment unit in different locations in the Greater Jakarta area, from Rp 850,000 to Rp 2.5 million. Then he compared it to the scenario of buying it, where with the same Rp 700 million, he could get a landed house in Jakarta's adjacent cities (Serpong or Tangerang) or a studio apartment in Jakarta City (Daan Mogot).

Previous participants showed that for people who aim to get housing properties in the Greater Jakarta area, it is generally known that prices of small homes in the peripheral areas are equivalent to the prices of apartments in the Jakarta city area, either to buy or to rent. And for those who are not rushing to own a property, living in a *kost* could be cheaper than living in an apartment with the equivalent size.

In Bali, the section on housing development in the Mayor's planning document for Denpasar, Bali's capital city states "sub-zones R-2, R-3, R-4" (Denpasar Mayor Regulation No.1, 2022, p.17), which indicates that there is no level of "very high density housing" or "R-1" as in South Tangerang (Table 13), indicating that housing density in Denpasar is far less than in Greater Jakarta. However, this does not mean that housing in Bali is necessarily less problematic than in Jakarta. As a destination for tourism, Bali is internationally popular, and many foreigners have stayed long-term on the island. Moreover, the opening of international borders post-COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated property development in Bali, and housing prices have surged since then.

"That's crazy! ...For a house, the cheapest would be 350-ish to 500 million. That's with the mortgage, okay? Villas would be different, even more the private (developers) are also different. In Bali, it is well known that the land is the most, have mercy, the most expensive! ...The standard is no more below one Billion... I have a friend who offered three Billion! ...Canggu is even crazier... Canggu is up right now," said Mr. Jazz expressively. He had lived in Bali for more than a decade and had witnessed the growth of housing development in the area, but he had never seen such extreme housing prices there before.

Another sharp illustration was given by Mrs. Paya, who had to live outside the Denpasar administrative area in order to be able to own her own house. “Here, usually housing, the one that looks normal? It is quite pricey,” she said. By saying “the one that looks normal,” she referred to a landed house with a minimum land area being 100 m² as a minimum standard of Balinese house. Her home was built on a 60 m² plot of land that she considered it below ‘normal’. She was half-Balinese because her mother was from a different island, and as a non-Hindu, she was not bound to the rule to have a minimum 1 *are* of land for providing a temple, so she could live in a smaller land area. “I think, with that price in Bali, we could get two houses on Java island,” she added. Her opinion may sound subjective, but this data supports her opinion. A flash report from an Indonesian housing property website in August 2024 announced that Denpasar, Bali “consistently held the highest raise of housing price per year, being 19.8%, followed by Bogor (8.5%) ... Meanwhile in the Greater Jakarta area, besides Bogor, two cities scored a small raise, which are Depok (1.9%) and Tangerang (1.6%)” (Rumah123, 2024). The survey was conducted based on the listed properties on their websites. Bogor, Depok, and Tangerang are located on Java Island, and Denpasar is the concentrated area for urban development in Bali. So, people in Bali possibly struggled more than people in Java to purchase a house.

As a senior marketing leader for properties in both Bali and Jakarta areas, Mr. Gun compared them,

“In Jakarta, a tiny house is a necessity. In Bali, it is more about the way to get more profit...For Balinese locals, actually, it’s not that we don’t aim for, but the fact is... well, we’ve been selling since 2018 and there is no one (no local buyers)... The land price in our location is actually high, especially for the locals. And they know how much the market price is. So, they’re reluctant, no need to be near the seacoast... Back to the market. For example, we created the market, we made 7x15, 105 (m² landed house). It’s a bit weird because the average Balinese house is 3 *are*... The result is, Jakarta and Surabaya became our market targets, and sold out! ...Actually, the prices in Bali are considerably cheap, if not in the touristy areas, right? But the prices for the touristy areas are determined by the market, which means high, right? Overpriced, very, very high, so they moved.”

Mr. Gun’s description aligned with those of Mr. Jazz and Mrs. Paya. However, some Balinese locals, including research study participants, still bought even less than 105 m² houses in the

outskirts of the urban areas. Mr. Val, an architect whose projects were spread around Bali, testified,

“Several projects that came to me asked what if they had small land and they wanted to plot it with houses, small houses, small houses that maybe micro homes...some of them only asked for a living-dining and a bedroom... in one space. The bedroom might be on the upper level, and there is a separate bathroom under the same roof. They have started to market it. I don’t know if it’s for a short-term rent or what, maybe to compete with the hotels.”

Mr. Val’s explanation suggests that tiny homes have become a current phenomenon in housing development in Bali, but rather than becoming a segment of developers, the scope is smaller and within the capacity of architects’ individual projects.

5.2.4 Sociocultural regulations and norms on housing

Besides the predictability of housing availability and its prices, occupants’ social identities, especially their citizenship and marital status, influence their housing typology. The participants’ demography below gives some illustrations (Table 14).

Table 16 Demography of participants’ housing types

Case Locations	Typology	Number of Unit	Citizenship*	Household compositions
The Greater Jakarta area	Landed House	14	5 locals 9 migrants	13 families 1 married couple
	Apartment	5	5 migrants	3 singles 2 with housemate 1 family
	Kost and other units	2	2 migrants	1 single 1 with housemate
Bali urban areas	Landed House	7	2 originals 5 locals	7 families
	Apartment	1	1 migrant	1 family
	Kost and other units	7	7 migrants	4 singles 2 married couples 1 family

*Refer to the explanation on page 32.

There are significant similarities in this small sample between Jakarta and Bali, in that all local participants chose a landed house, all ‘single’ occupants live in an apartment, a *kost*, or a similar unit, and no migrant participants in Bali lived in a landed house. Although the number of participants is too few to generate an accurate conclusion, these similarities suggest a pattern in selecting housing typology, which might be shaped by sociocultural regulations. In

addition, the term 'single' in Table 14 refers to both home occupancy and relationship status, because those are inseparable in Indonesian contexts, and it will be explained shortly.

Housing in Indonesia is very much attached to family and marriage because there are multiple layers of correlation between the legal right of property ownership, marital status, and Indonesian citizenship. First of all, only Indonesian citizens can legally buy a housing property (emphasis added). Next, all the government's regulations state a house as "family development facilities", emphasising 'family' as a standardised Indonesian household. As Islam is dominant in Indonesia, the only path to build a family is through marriage, and most Indonesians comply with it.

According to the regulation set by the Ministry of Home Affairs (No.19, 2010), Indonesian ID cards display an individual's relationship status as 'married'¹¹, 'not married yet', 'divorced', or 'widow/er', which suggests the government encourages every Indonesian citizen to get married one day, as being 'single' is not officially acknowledged. However, there are Indonesians who remain single in their adulthood, and socially, Indonesians only differentiate 'single' and 'married' for civil partnerships. Whilst married couples are expected to share their home together, single people who are still dependent on their parents or in their retirement ages are expected to live with their family members or relatives, and adult single people of working age may live alone. If they have a partner, societally, they would be expected to live separately to avoid committing adultery. However, not every adult conforms to this expectation. This may be an explanation for why participants who were single lived in an apartment or a *kost*. Individual home units in multi-storey buildings are not as socially exposed or visibly prominent as landed houses, so there is flexibility to live with a 'housemate' without the risk of being taken to court.

There are likely to be different views within society, for example, some people who have liberal views may feel restricted as marriage must come first before living in the same home, but others with more conservative views may believe that a home must be available first before marriage. This was the case for Mrs. Handy, "The important thing was, I didn't want to have a husband without a home." It is evident, therefore, that home and marriage are correlated, and the existence of tiny homes supports this correlation. Especially for young couples who are still accumulating wealth, tiny homes help limit expenditure because they are cheaper, and for those who want to own a home, marriage is financially, legally and culturally beneficial.

¹¹ Which includes the processes of religious wedding and signing a civil partnership schedule

In terms of housing payments, Indonesia acknowledges a 'joint income mortgage' instead of a 'joint mortgage' for two or more parties, because the bank only uses the collective income for the financial appraisal, but there is only one name written on the property certificate. The bank usually approves this scheme between individuals who are registered as the same family, proven by a document named a Family Card, which describes the family structure. Again, it needs marriage to show the family structure. So, unless someone has a strong financial capacity to have an individual mortgage, they need a marital status to get a mortgage. Moreover, Indonesia only legalises marriage in accordance with the law from the religions, but Islam and Christianity, the top two of Indonesians' religions, only approve marriage within the same religion. All Indonesians are bound to this regulation, as everyone is required to have a religion written on the Indonesian National Identity (ID) card. So, most interfaith marriages are considered invalid in most Indonesian areas¹² and couples who are determined to do that may experience difficulties in administrative processes that involve marital status. "Because he's from Manado and I'm from Java and we have different religions, so it's complicated," said Mrs. Handy while sharing her story about her mortgage difficulties, revealing how different faiths add complexities to home ownership in Indonesia.

As the right to own a property is given only to Indonesian citizens, the customary law in Bali is very restrictive and can be more prominent than the national civic law. Even though according to the Indonesian constitution, the country has the highest control of land, Balinese people believe that all the land on the island belongs to their ancestors, and only their heirs have inheritance rights which allow them to use, sell or rent their land or property. With this exclusiveness given to Balinese, it has been common for migrants to rent a *kost* the first time they come to Bali. If they later decide to live permanently, they still have the right to own a property, but there will be extra costs as the process may include some traditional Balinese rituals and changing their National ID card with a newly registered home address. This also justifies the practice of leasing land in Bali as a means to avoid the change of land authority to 'outsiders', who can be domestic or foreign migrants.

Even though the demography of research participants indicated that none of them were domestic migrants who lived in a landed house in Bali urban areas, there were more varieties of household compositions which became evident during the study recruitment process, including: one potential participant originally from Sumatra island who had lived in his own landed house in the city of Denpasar with his wife and children for years, a young unmarried couple from Java island who lived together in an apartment, homosexual partners,

¹² It is valid in Bali.

intermarriage couples between different religions and different Indonesian ethnicities. For some conservative families, marrying a family member to a person from a particular ethnicity is forbidden due to past conflicts between some Indonesian ethnicities. Those potential participants cancelled their participation in the study for several reasons, ranging from calendar clashes to concerns that the interviews would expose them because they were socially controversial. Although Indonesian society may not accept them, they exist and need to remain subtle about their housing pathways stories.

Aligning with the layers of Indonesian sociocultural norms that influence housing regulations, the socially accepted condition for Indonesian housing is categorised in Table 15 below.

Table 17 Standardised Indonesian housing based on sociocultural norms.

Typology	Household	Tenancy	Home Location
Landed house	Family or spouse within a legal marriage	Homeownership	Same as the location stated on the National ID card

Combined with the government's suggestion that everyone should be married and homes are built for families, this standard represents the state's 'ideal' conditions for housing. Although there is no legal pressure for anyone to achieve this, other forms of housing, including non-landed houses and tiny homes, are seen as alternatives when ideal conditions are unachievable.

5.3 Changes in life stages

These societal expectations explain how the choice of tiny homes is framed for Indonesian people. The following sections explore the imperatives that trigger people to acquire or move into their tiny homes. In most cases, the imperatives correspond strongly with the sociocultural norms where relationship status interlinks with household formations. However, unexpected life events may also interfere and create urgency in making different housing decisions.

5.3.1 Relationship and family planning

Most married participants' housing pathways were related to their family planning, whether it was marriage or having children, as shared by Mr. Trendi, "I wanted to try to find a more permanent dwelling because I wanted to build a family." He then commented on his own answer being similar to other people, "Classic, that's classic." Mrs. Baik also gave similar accounts, "We were newlyweds, and we just wanted a small house, so it's easy to maintain."

She just learned to take care of her own home through marriage, and the tiny size helped her ease the burden. Mrs. Iron also said, “We just got married, and I just... I was determined to buy it (house) too.” Mrs. Handy described how crucial house planning was even before marriage. “We were still dating, and I just wanted to have a house. That’s exactly what I wanted... I signed the contract in October. We got married in November.” For Mrs. Nanda, having a house was important for raising a child. “We postponed conceiving until we settled. So, we really chased for a house.” Earlier, she lived in her previous *kost*. Her husband temporarily moved to her place after they got married until they found a home for their new family, but they had searched for a house even before they got married. Having another child motivated Mr. Chief to get a home of his own. “I started a family, and I took this house... Previously, I rented. It was the 3 of us. My first child was still very young... Now I have 2 children,”

In Indonesia, parents are still responsible for taking care of their children until they are married. A transformation of a child into an adult is recognised after the child is married or has the financial capacity to provide for someone else. Before marriage, it is normal for children to live in their parents’ home regardless of their age. Unless they move out of town for study or work, it is less likely to see children living in separate homes from their parents. Indeed, for many parents, their children choosing to do so would be offensive. If children live outside their hometown, they usually rent a *kost* or another unit for a single household until they decide where they want to settle, but they keep their domicile in their parents’ homes. So, marriage is a significant milestone in constructing Indonesian housing pathways.

For some female participants, this meant following their husbands’ plans. Patriarchal culture is prevalent in Indonesia, and Mrs. Sendu clearly expressed it. “In the beginning, I lived here because I followed my husband in our early marriage... Because my husband works in xxx, it’s close to here... Also, my husband has a plan to continue his studies. If I go with him, we will move too.” She performed her marriage through Taaruf, an Islamic marriage arrangement that is considered extreme for most Indonesian Muslims. Based on her Islamic faith, she believed that a wife is obliged to submit to her husband, including following his career stages. Mrs. Gigi also lived in her current home following her husband’s job. “...their father got a work placement in xxx”, she said. She always used the term “their father” instead of “my husband”, using the children’s perspective to lower her position as a partner. However, both husband and wife have equal positions in family discussions. “Both of us, earlier, did a survey in several places.” Mrs. Sendu emphasised that she thought about the home together with her husband.

There were also other study participants who lived in homes bought by their wives, such as Mrs. Iron. She used to be the breadwinner of the family, so she did not need her husband's approval to purchase a home. Mrs. Adi was another example. She already had her two-bedroom apartment before she planned for marriage. "I was thinking. I was still single at that time. Whether I'll get married or remain single, if I get married and, for example, I have one child, this will accommodate two adults and one child. So, I bought it here," she said. She liked the location of her apartment, so it was her husband who moved to her property. These cases illustrate the possibility of Indonesian females pursuing their housing aspirations without being pressured by patriarchal values.

5.3.2 Adulthood and leaving parental homes

Although Mr. Trendi believed that getting a home for marriage purposes is 'classic', there were other participants who did not include marriage as a key influence in their housing trajectories. Indonesian norms forbid single and unmarried individuals from cohabitation with another adult of the opposite sex. In this study, all the participants aged 30-40 years were married. However, not all those aged over or below 40 were married. There are two age groups that classify participants who are single: below 30 and over 40 years old. Mr. Japandi, Ms. Bebet, Ms. Kota, and Ms. Sesi were all unmarried until their 40s, but they had worked in a different city from their parents' homes for many years and had accumulated wealth. Even though society expected them to get married and buy a house to live in, they had made their own decisions about when to permanently leave their parents' homes, get their own homes, and where to live.

"I've been in South Jakarta for years, now it's time to at least have a place to take cover," said Mr. Japandi, sharing the tipping point of finding a permanent place of his own. He worked as a tourist guide and had built his network based in South Jakarta. Earlier, he was satisfied staying at his friend's place because he travelled more than he stayed at home, but as he got older, he wanted his own home. So, he bought a two-bedroom tiny apartment to share with someone else occasionally. His unit was very small for two people in different bedrooms, but the size would be sufficient for single occupancy. Ms. Bebet also bought a small apartment. After losing her parents, she inherited their assets, including her childhood home. However, she still managed to buy another property with her own money, so she owned two properties. Despite her decision not to move from her rented studio apartment, she could fulfil part of the social expectation to buy property in her adulthood.

In contrast to Mr. Japandi and Ms. Bebet, Ms. Kota said, "I don't want to have a commitment to buy an apartment... and I still like it here. So far, nothing that makes me want to leave.

Maybe if my job changes... maybe...". She understood that society expected her to own a bigger home, but she was still comfortable with her 18 m² *kost*. Even though she said, "Actually it was about the price... After I checked to the right and left, they're more expensive," her *kost* was expensive compared to other *kost* in general, but in turn others were more expensive than here. She had the money, but she did not think it was worth it because the price was too expensive for about the same floor size. She added, "In this age, I don't want to suffer... a proper place is home for me." For Mrs. Kota, improving her quality of life was more important than housing ownership, and she could have comforts that 'suited her age', suggesting a correlation of age and housing preference (Abramsson and Andersson, 2016). She still visited her parents' big house out of town regularly. She lost her mother a few years earlier, and she had sensed that she would take care of that house.

Ms. Sesi was similar to Ms. Kota. She also visited her parents' house occasionally in her hometown. She had often been unsatisfied with her employment situation and had moved to several cities for work, including Jakarta and Bali, where she had been for nine months when the study interview took place. She retained an aspiration of "getting a job in another city, or even in another country... more freedom, like, if I want to move somewhere, I can just move without thinking too much." She also said that initially, she "planned to stay at my relative's place, but they went on vacation" when she first landed in Bali for work. Then, she rented a *kost*. It was obvious that she still wanted to move, so she filtered down her housing options to a small home for rent.

Three younger participants aged under 30 lived alone and were not married yet: Mr. Young in Jakarta, Mr. Hody, and Ms. Fifi in Bali. Recruited in different places, all of them originated from Sumatra Island, which has a culture of supporting migration, with male children in particular expected to leave their hometown to be successful and then return to build their homeland. This tradition is seen as a positive way to teach children to be independent, and some other regions in Indonesia adopt it too, usually by sending children to pursue a higher education in a more developed city than their hometown. Sometimes children will stay in their new location or move on to further locations.

Mr. Young, Mr. Hody, and Ms. Fifi initially moved to Java Island to pursue their university education. Mr. Hody and Ms. Fifi later moved to Bali after graduation, while Mr. Young moved between cities in the Greater Jakarta area. With this cultural background, they chose homes based on their life pathways, and all of them had moved between different types of housing. Since they lived alone, they all sought a small place, but their preferences for tenure were different. Mr. Hody liked to move regularly. "Two years is maximum. I feel bored because the

place is small and the space is just like that. For me, it makes me feel bored,” he said. Even if he worked in the same area, he would move to feel a different environment. However, Ms. Fifi said the opposite thing, “I don’t think of moving... but I check the environment first.” Despite her plan to stay long-term, she had already moved about six times to get the one that suited her best. Later, she added, “I was also thinking of getting the empty (unfurnished) one because I want to invest in the furniture. If later I want to move, I can give it away to other people or resell it, because the price difference is quite big.” She already planned that her *kost* was just for a transient purpose, indicating that she was still looking for her ideal home even though at that time, she had not planned to move yet.

Mr. Young described, “My concern was, I actually had a thought of buying an apartment. I wanted to try first, because I didn’t have any experience living in an apartment... So, actually, I’m thinking between two choices: an apartment and a house. I’ve got the experience of living in a house in Bogor, also living alone there. I know the *vibes* (his original word) of living in a house, but in an apartment, not yet. So, before I decide, I want to try first to know whether it will be the wrong or right decision,” he giggled, laughing at himself because he sounded so serious. Later, he joked about how he felt so old because he already thought of buying property even though he was single. As a sales marketing person, Mr. Gun was confident that a single occupancy housing unit “is a need, and the market exists. There’s quite a lot of young people now who thought of living alone, right, because of that budget limitation.”

In Indonesia, marriage is associated with greater living costs because couples usually move to a bigger home. Not every landlord agrees to let a small housing unit for dual occupancy. Unless the married couple already own a property, they need to find a bigger home. Participants who lived in an apartment also said that their management fees were calculated based on the floor area of their unit. Consequently, living in a bigger home increased living costs, regardless of whether they shared the expenditure with someone else. So single-occupancy housing units become more attractive for those who want to live economically while staying single.

Mr. and Mrs. Maxie offered a different perspective. They were married but may not have any children because Mrs. Maxie wanted to be “childfree,” she said. They wanted to buy a home, but “the situation for now is, the ideal for us is just renting,” she added. “The first time after we’re married was in an apartment,” said Mr. Maxie. They did not like it, so they moved to a two-storey tiny home. The total floor space was 36 m² divided into two mezzanine levels. They were not satisfied with the design of this home, so they moved again to their current one-

storey tiny home. “We heard from our friends’ stories. They wanted to have a house quickly. And then a lot of them complained, apparently, there’s already so much to pay for the interest... Also, there’s one saying that it is better to save for a bigger down payment and then buy the house later. No need to be in a rush.” So, they were moving to different tiny homes to find the best type of housing that suited their preferences. Since it was just the two of them with a dog, they only looked for homes that were small.

These narratives revealed that many younger and older study participants lived in tiny homes because they were unmarried and lived alone. Both groups had passed the stage of moving from parental homes and had become independent in their life decisions that included housing pathways. While the younger group’s process was seen as a journey towards adulthood, the older group’s pathway was seen as a journey to claim their adulthood against the cultural context that is attached to the family hierarchical structure. Meanwhile, Mr. and Mrs. Maxie’s story showed that, for them, a relationship did not define a commitment to a housing mortgage. Rather, they continued to consider the best home type for them at different life stages.

5.3.3 Changing life circumstances

Sometimes, unpredictable and even unpleasant life events can force people to live in a tiny home. Mr. Hody nearly settled into a medium-sized landed house. He thought he could stay longer term there and enjoyed the bigger space, but he experienced a “*force majeure*... because I was softly kicked out. The rent used to be 2 million. Suddenly, it went up to five and a half million... only within two weeks!” he described in an angry tone, linking this outcome to the gentrification of his neighbourhood. His previous rented house was located in Canggu, an area that experienced a housing market bubble, and foreigners with much stronger currencies were dominating. What led Ms. Kota to find her *kost* was also triggered by the end of her previous tenancy, although in a different way: “My old *kost* was about to be demolished! The owner wanted to rebuild it as a townhouse, a small one. Then, I started searching again,” she said, explaining the nature of a *kost*, where the landlord has the full right to do anything with the property including discontinuing the tenancy.

Mr. Bang and Mrs. Poleng also experienced unpleasant life experiences that forced them to find a new home. Mr. Bang’s office was relocated to a different city. “It was like an exodus. There was a massive relocation, about 50 people,” he said. Since he relied on that job for his primary income, he lived in a tiny home to save money for commuting and to see his family, who lived separately. Mr. Urut was forced to move because he lost his job during the COVID-19 pandemic. “I thought I would get a job again. Until six months, it went beyond prediction. It

went chaotic,” he said, almost whispering to hide his sadness. He previously rented a *kost* as a typical tiny home for domestic migrants in Bali, but later he moved to a much smaller *kost* due to a sudden income loss.

While Mr. Bang’s and Mr. Urut’s approaches appeared straightforward, Mrs. Poleng explained her drivers implicitly through an emotionally charged story. She mentioned that her ex-husband literally “ran her away” because “my caste¹³ is higher, so he could not propose to me.” As a Hindu, her culture only allows couples from the same caste to marry each other. Their marriage was forbidden, but they still did it and got divorced afterwards. When they were married, she lived in her ex-husband’s family’s house. Unfortunately, her ‘betrayal’ by practising a forbidden marriage made her lose her connection to her former family. So, she lost her current home but could not return to her previous family home either. After disclosing further details of her life, including her post-divorce journey in another city, her retirement, sickness, and her daughter who also got divorced, the stories led to a conclusion that she and her daughter experienced divorces that made them want to keep a distance from their relatives. Her divorce and retirement also made her struggle financially. Her daughter, who still had a job, decided to support her, and living in a tiny home together is what she could afford to keep both of their lives running. Pragmatically, Mrs. Poleng lived in a tiny home due to a sudden financial decline, but the challenges from earlier in her biography related to her traditional culture were also a part of her drivers for tiny home living.

Rather than being interrupted by life events as in previous cases, Mr. River was triggered by the memory of his past experience, which raised his urgency to get a home. He said;

“Because of what? Since I was little until I had my own family, I’ve known how it feels to be the ‘don’t have’, how we always got kicked out of the house because of the rent. We often failed to pay the rent, so we had to keep moving. One time, I was determined to have my own house. And finally, *alhamdulillah*, it could happen even though it’s not easy... If we look back to our parents, I could have a house, my own house.”

In another interview, Mr. Chief explained the correlation between renting and the urgency of owning a home. He said;

“If we rent, we don’t know when we will need to move again. Sometimes the rent price surged up... We couldn’t afford it anymore, so we moved.”

¹³ Hindus’ social hierarchy, adapted from the Indian culture

The uncertainty of catching up with the price for the upcoming tenancy frustrated both of them, who had experienced moving between small row houses in crowded Jakarta, because they only had enough money to rent. Also, this made renting a home associated with poverty. For people like Mr. River and Mr. Chief, the most important factor was not the size of their property, but their home ownership status to mark the upgrade of their socioeconomic status.

5.4 Economic influences

This section explores economic factors as common considerations that form individual housing choices in general, both direct finances and related aspects of how the participants generate or spend money and time. Therefore, in addition to budget, housing prices, and individuals' finances, work proximity and transportation access are also included as economic factors that drive options for tiny home living.

5.4.1 Budget restrictions

Discussing budget restrictions with participants revealed that these varied between households, but were a major factor in housing trajectories. "It was difficult, not easy to find a house that matched our budget and so on, the location and so on... It was because the budget was the obstacle. Yes, budget," said Mrs. Paya. Mr. Bass also decided to get his current home because "the price makes sense," he said. Even though he wanted a bigger space, the budget became the limit, and he could only rent a one-bedroom *kost*. Even so, the price that made sense for him may not have made sense for somebody else. In fact, Mrs. Paya's and Mr. Bass' homes' costs were above average compared to similar housing types to theirs. Both of them also had decent jobs that enabled them to live well. Mrs. Paya's house might be tiny, built on a 60 m² land, but she hired a private contractor to build her customised design, which would cost more than the ready-built houses from the developers. Also, Mr. Bass could only afford to rent a *kost*, the lowest hierarchy of housing typology, but his *kost* was much bigger than other *kosts* in general.

Ironically, there were study participants from a lower economic class who thought that their homes were cheap. They worked in manual jobs and earned only enough for their lives, but they were happy with the price of their homes. For Mr. Chief, "I thought it was cheap and close to my work... I did the calculations with the bank scheme with my salary. It was possible to place instalments, so I made that decision." He considered the distance towards work, but he prioritised his affordability towards the price and the instalments because at "that time I didn't

earn much,” he said. His home was a one-bedroom landed house when he bought it, one of the smallest available on the market at that time.

Mr. and Mrs. Handy also bought the smallest type of housing in their neighbourhood. Mrs. Handy “...was thinking, buying a house was so cheap, the instalments were just 100,000.” Mr. Handy emphasised, “It was more to do with the small instalments.” “His income was only 280 (thousand Rupiahs), got cut 105 for paying for the house,” added Mrs. Handy again. Since they were confident with the payment, they “made a loan in 1999 to build this house (renovation)... Suddenly, he (Mr. Handy) got a layoff in 2005... I thought I would be able to pay later... Apparently, I couldn’t. Ouch! Until they held our letters. We got them back in 2012. Oh! That was ouch, so sad,” she recalled her sadness with a soft expression. The amount of money they paid for the mortgage was 37.5% of Mr. Handy’s salary, which exceeded the 30% rule of thumb of loan percentages in Indonesia (Yulius, 2025). They might feel their home was cheap when they first bought it because other prices were more expensive at that time, but they miscalculated and fell into debt.

Mr. and Mrs. Handy bought the house in the mid-1990s, and Mr. Chief signed his mortgage around 2000. “It was 36 million (Rupiahs) if you pay cash. Because we didn’t have much salary, we were given a 15-year mortgage. We paid... the Down Payment about 10,500,000. My monthly instalments were 207,000,” he explained. From those years to the present, the country faced inflation that raised the gap between housing prices and income rates. So, Mr. Chief could afford a mortgage based on the economic situation in the 2000s. Meanwhile, Mrs. Paya bought the land for her house around the pandemic in 2020, and Mr. Bass moved to his latest *kost* in 2021. A recent comparative study of global mortgage rates also listed Indonesia as the 4th least affordable country to buy a home, where it could take 563 monthly wages, or 46 years 11 months, to pay off a mortgage for a 100 m² home (Hoffman, 2024). Even though the study was based on a 100 m² home, the data illustrated the extreme struggle for Indonesian people in general to buy a home. Thus, it makes sense if Mrs. Paya and Mr. Bass felt less financially able to obtain their ideal homes. To get the mortgage range to 15 years, as Mr. Chief had, the developers need to reduce property sizes to align with the average Indonesian financial capacity. The same study found that it was now unlikely that people on a low income could afford a mortgage, unlike the situation 20 years ago.

In different cases, some participants simply struggled to afford a home. Mr. Tito was not eligible to get a mortgage contract with the bank, so he would need to provide cash or get another type of loan to own a home. He had an informal business at home as an internet cafe,

which was closed due to COVID-19. Then, every home started to have individual internet installation, which made his business decline. His wife shared, “He didn’t have a job at that time... only worked here (the internet cafe). He started to work when our son graduated, so they worked together. But he only worked for one year. He got sick just a day before he was supposed to sign the contract. The company refused to continue.”

Officially, the government allows home businesses, including internet cafes, as long as the procedures for getting permission are completed (National Law No.1, 2011). However, from the home observation, his home business seemed to be illegal because there was no proper ventilation and lighting in his home. There were two air conditioners, but Mrs. Tito said they were fake. “Only the fans, they have no machines... If anyone was smoking, we turned on both of those fans to push the smoke away,” she said, explaining that they used to allow their customers to smoke indoors in that room. “But inside there, no one smoked,” she pointed to the bedroom, showing that it was previously a part of the internet café. The interview took place in their common room, which was the primary room for the internet cafe, and they had no proper bedroom when they ran the business at home. “If we rented a shophouse, we couldn’t handle it,” Mrs. Tito gave a reason why her husband mixed the business and home together. He wanted to avoid the commercial rent rates for business, so he used a house instead. Mr. Tito confirmed, “Well, we’re not as capable as other people. Here it is already the cheapest, the rent here is cheap... Our hope is to have a house. No need to talk about the village. I have a house, land for building, but it’s in the village... but we live in the city. Our children go to school here.” What he meant by the village was a rural area in his hometown where he would inherit a family home, but he would need to learn different life skills to live there. So, they preferred renting a landed house and never planned to move, even after more than 10 years.

5.4.2 Labour market influences

It is common in Indonesian society for the stress and pressure of living in the Jakarta area to be described as ‘cruel’, derived from the title of a 1981 movie *Kejamnya Ibu Tiri Tak Sekejam Ibu Kota* (the cruelty of a stepmother is less than the cruelty of the capital city). Extreme traffic congestion, long commutes, and overtime have been normalised as consequences of working there, so people tend to reside in a place with convenient access to work. However, living in Jakarta City or in the peripheral areas offers strategic travel modes. Neighbourhoods in the peripheral areas are connected by toll roads and commuter train lines, which can be practical for both those who have private cars and those who rely on public transportation.

Obviously, more strategic locations are more expensive, but the price will remain affordable if the housing size is smaller compared to other houses in the same neighbourhood. Moreover, the living costs in the capital city of a country are generally more expensive than in other cities. So, negotiating expectations to live in a small space is inevitable unless households have a very strong financial capacity. However, Jakarta offers many housing choices for any socioeconomic class. People can choose between living in the city or peripheral areas, and between conventional housing or a modern unit. Whichever they choose, there will be various ranges of housing prices and qualities that meet their budget. Nonetheless, the interviews revealed that the most prominent reason for their choices was job location.

“Okay, maybe I can start with the job allocation. I got a work placement in Daan Mogot area, it’s not far,” said Mr. Young who had been moving several times. “I rented a *kost*. Also, it was because I got a project in Bekasi... Next, to Cipinang because the project changed the location, and I also moved... The tenure ended because I got a new placement, and I had to choose, and the placement is here.” When recalling his past experiences, he always chose his home locations based on work that had been moving within cities or districts in the Greater Jakarta area.

While Mr. Bang moved involuntarily because of a job relocation, other participants made their decisions voluntarily. Mr. Emi’s office allowed him to work remotely after relocation, but he moved to South Tangerang, still in the Greater Jakarta area, where his head office was located. He shared, “My office was in Jogja. By the end of 2021, it was centralised here, relocated... Here, everywhere is closer... the access, also public transport to the station is close. We can even walk... In Jogja, not everything was easy to go anywhere... Not that it was hard, it just felt far.” While he moved to a different city because of better transportation facilities, he still chose the home location based on the proximity to his office. “For me, 10 km is the maximum, but this is just 4 or 5 km from the office,” he said.

Ms. Dandy’s tolerance towards work proximity was less than Mr. Emi. “Errr... I must live near the office. So, err... initially, I’m here because it’s close to the office.” She lived in a small two-bedroom apartment right across from her office. As an architect, her work ideas sometimes came to her at night when she was already at home, so she also used her home for work. Since she associated home and office with work, she kept both in close proximity. Whenever she needed recreation, she would go further away from her home and office area.

Having previously stayed in a bigger *kost*, Ms. Bebet “...moved here because it was closer to my former workplace,” she said. Having learned that the apartment was located in a very strategic place, she continued to stay there. Even though she had changed her job, the

commute was still convenient for her who often went home by 9 or 10 PM at night. "With my work pressure now, I prefer here because it's like 20 minutes to everywhere... Transportation here is really easy. You just walk to the station, and if you're lazy, Grab or Gocar (Indonesian online taxis) are 24 hours. And everywhere is not that far from here. You want to go to the city centre, to Depok, to Bogor, or BSD are doable from here." She mentioned several adjacent cities in the Greater Jakarta area to explain that in Jakarta, accessibility is more important than proximity.

Mr. Maxie's story confirmed the importance of accessibility. Together with his wife, they chose to live in BSD, even though his new job made him commute daily to Jakarta city. Earlier, he lived in a different neighbourhood with a similar proximity to his office, but then he moved to get a better transportation facility. "I have to work in Central Jakarta, right? At that time, I rode a motorcycle and hurt my back... two hours each, four hours return... So, we searched for one near the station," he said. After he moved, the time travel might be similar, but since there was a regional train nearby, he could physically rest even if the time travel was long. And he was not alone. Mr. Nanda also mentioned, "The main focus is good access to the office... I would use the train, so I searched near the train station."

Mrs. Kota also "decided to find a closer one (home) to my office," albeit her landlord's changing tenancy made her search for another *kost*. She called her office location a "golden triangle area," as she worked in a reputable international organisation in Jakarta's central economic district. She searched for her *kost* using a website where she could filter the price range and the location. Although she said, "Actually it was about the price," budget was not her restriction as she compared it with the more expensive *kosts* in a premium area. She decided to live there because it was just a "walking distance" to her office.

Since Bali is infamous for the rare public transportation, getting to a reasonable distance from the work location is more essential than in Jakarta. People mainly drive or ride by themselves. Alternatively, they can use conventional or online taxis. Except for the bypass road, roads in Bali are narrow. So, people in Bali usually choose to buy a scooter and use it as their main mode of transportation. If they are unable to drive or ride, they will need to walk. With these options, proximity matters when commuting in Bali.

Ms. Fifi bought a scooter not long after she started working in Bali. The last time she moved "was because of the job location. Even though I was a freelancer, I was still attached to the contractor," she said. She worked as an interior designer. In her previous projects, she had to work together with a contractor who stayed in a permanent office, so she considered that office as her work location. "Now I'm totally free, so I'm thinking of a long-term," She explained that

she had become an independent designer and that this enabled her to work from anywhere. Apart from that, she only needed proximity to her daily needs.

Mr. Jazz also chose his home location based on his earlier job. “Why did I move here? Because I used to work at the Hard Rock Cafe... This is close to the Hard Rock Cafe. Everything was five minutes,” he said. He was hired by the Hard Rock Cafe as a permanent music performer at that time. Firstly, he rented a *kost* unit for himself. Later on, he got married to a woman who already had a son from her previous marriage. He also had a son from his previous marriage. Then, he rented two adjacent *kost* units and made them home; one for him and his new wife, and the other one for their two sons. The COVID-19 pandemic made him lose his job, but he had settled down in those *kost* units as a family. Luckily, he could get a new job located less than a 15-minute travel.

In Bali, it is more common for individuals to decide where to work after deciding where to live. With the post-pandemic trend of ‘work from anywhere,’ Bali has become a hub for digital communities and the younger generation, who choose a comfortable place to live so they can work productively. Despite that, job markets in Bali are predictable due to its tourism nature. Mrs. Kleen left her village and moved to the urban area, where she started her home laundry business. She actually struggled to pay the rent because she also paid instalments for a house in her hometown. Nevertheless, work opportunities for her were more available in the city. She said, “It is better than working outside, because I have to take care of my children.” What she meant by working outside was a regular job with structured working hours, and she would have to leave home to do it. She wanted to be a full-time mother for her children while working, so she used her home for a laundry business. What she needed was a good location. “It’s right on the street. There’s also neighbours. So, it’s good.” Her segment was laundry, something that everyone would do. By being right on the street, people could easily find her place, and by having neighbours, she would have potential customers.

Mr. Chang also said, “Bali is developing. For us, making money is easier than in Bandung or Jakarta. Opportunities here are still wide... For example, my wife is a makeup artist, right? In Bandung and in Jakarta, oh, it’s so cheap! But not in Bali. Many people who get married... if they’re middle-up (social class), they must go to Bali.” He decided to live in a tiny home in Bali primarily for a different reason (discussed in Section 5.5.3), but better job market situations strengthened his reasons to stay for the long term. Besides his wife’s higher income, he also had better possibilities for his job. “2022-2023, I’m very sure that nearly a thousand properties have been built in Bali,” he said. “Compared to Java Island, maybe not even a half... so I can keep being productive at 56 (years old).” He had a background in business and marketing.

With his skills, he took the momentum in the booming property market to earn income from sale incentives.

5.4.3 Financial strategy and Investment

As a form of mindful decision-making, some participants incorporated their housing choices with their wider financial strategy or investment. There were some participants who had stable incomes and were paying for two properties, whereas some other participants saw the value of owning property as a future investment.

Mr. and Mrs. Baik agreed to stay in a small home while preparing for a bigger property after their first child was born. "...but this is my friend's property. We don't have to pay to occupy this, but we don't feel good, so we pay half the average rent price. That's why we rent here," said Mr. Baik. He needed temporary support while still saving and preparing for his future home. Ms. Bebet also got a special deal because "this place belongs to my friend. We used to work at the same office. And because this place had always been empty since she bought it, she offered it to me; what if you stay here? It was like, I take care of her place and she gets the rent money." She called it "a 'friend price', it's never changed since eight years ago." Having such a kind friend, she could buy a new property. She admitted, "Living in this place is saving. I could take a bigger apartment." However, she also had a liability to take care of her parents' home as an inheritance. Both of her parents had passed away. She was the only child, so she was fully responsible for it. "I still pay for a house in Cimahi (her parents' home). Also, I still pay the instalments for an apartment in Rawa Buntu (the one she bought). Living here actually helps in keeping my expenses low," she explained. In total, Ms. Bebet needed to manage her expenses for three properties because she owned two properties, but she lived in a rented one. "When I bought that apartment, it was solely for investment. I don't plan to move from here," she said. While the apartment she bought would be her income source, her inherited home would be her holiday destination when she wanted to stay in a house with a garden.

Similar to Ms. Bebet, Mr. Bang voluntarily lived frugally because he was anticipating a bigger expense for moving his wife and daughter to the same city after his job relocation. He previously rented another *kost*, but later he found a different type of *kost* nearby. "Apparently it's cheaper," he said. He then decided to discontinue his former rent to move to a two-bedroom *kostel* (*Kost*-Hotel) with his colleague. Meanwhile, he was still supporting two homes, one for himself and the other for his family, who lived separately.

Anticipating future family expenditure also encouraged Mrs. Iron to buy a home. “So, by the time my children need more money for their education, I don’t think about the house anymore,” she said. She was forcing herself to buy a house within her financial capacity at a younger age to finish off the mortgage earlier. She could only afford a small, landed house at that time, but by the time the interview took place, which had already been around 20 years, the mortgage had been paid off.

For Mr. Chi, he stopped renting and bought a house because “the monthly instalment is the same as the rent price. So better that I own it. Even though it’s far, it’s my own home.” He then shared the history of buying his home. “I was still single, still alone. My brother bought this house, but he didn’t continue paying the instalment anymore. It would be wasted, so I continued the instalments... Because it’s too good to miss. I liked that it was cheap,” he emphasised. He called the house a “grant” because he only had to pay “half price.” He continued paying the instalments based on the old price when his brother bought it. The price was also cheap because the house was tiny. With his limited finances, he was still confident he could pay off the following instalments.

5.5 Social influences

This section elaborates on the social norms that have a more direct influence on participants’ lives. While the sociocultural aspects described earlier in Section 5.2.3 are interrelated with legal regulations, the social norms discussed in this section are less binding. Their implementation depends on individuals’ perspectives towards the social and cultural construction of these norms in Indonesia. One participant may evaluate a neighbourhood based on the sense of safety related to crime, while for another participant, their perception of its prestige value is more prominent. It would take another investigation to understand how all perspectives are formed, but the main aspects that contribute to tiny home living are explored in the following sections.

5.5.1 Family influences and attachment

For some Indonesians, it is important to listen to the words from parents, especially mothers. There is a proverb ‘the heavens are placed beneath mother’s feet’, and doing the opposite of parents’ advice will bring bad luck. Mrs. Iron believed this. “At that time, I was only thinking of my mother’s advice,” she said. Her mother gave her advice to prioritise her salary first to buy a house, and she did it willingly. “So, the history is... I didn’t know about this neighbourhood! Without a survey, I just went to the marketing office and decided to buy after my colleague...

Even at that time, I didn't know where the location was," she recalled her older time and laughed at her spontaneous decision to buy a house in her early career because her colleague did the same.

On the contrary, Mr. Baik's parents could intervene in their son's life even after they are adult or married. His wife was unhappy, as she said, "I personally want a simple one. I mean, just similar to this, but my parents-in-law want the big one, *"Your child will not be just one. It's not enough if you only have two bedrooms. What about the helper? She won't be sleeping with your child forever, because you will have another child for sure."* But that's from my parents in-law who push us to buy while we still only have one child. I was still pregnant at that time. The concern was that the price would be higher if we didn't rush to buy," Mrs. Baik was impersonating her parents-in-law's words, who set expectations that they needed a bigger home, assuming that she would have more than one child. Mr. Baik was quiet at first, but later he giggled bashfully. "Initially, we had another choice, ...but well... I don't know. My parents... I never... Only that time I felt the pressure that, *woo-woo-woo* (saying meaningless words), just here, just here!" expressed Mr. Baik while giggling again, frustrated with his parents' expectation. "Actually, a house like this is what I want," said Mrs. Baik about their rented, tiny home, which they had been living in for more than a year. However, they would have to leave and move to a bigger house that Mr. Baik's parents had approved. "Of course, there's loss. My wife must sacrifice the concept of her ideal dwelling," he acknowledged his wife's disappointment.

What Mr. Baik experienced was common in many Indonesian families. "Actually, we made a deal. Okay, we'll take this house. They pay for the Down Payment and the renovation, but the renovation is up to us. They agree," Mr. Baik shared his negotiation with his parents, and his wife added, "...for some of the design, I don't want too many bathrooms, but they *pushed* (her original word) to have three." The word she chose illustrated how much she felt pressured by her parents-in-law, who had more money, and she could only choose to obey to avoid tension in the family.

In other cases, some parents provide housing property while their child is still young, like buyers from Mr. Gun's property. "I'm buying for my children later. When they study or work, they already have a place in the city centre," he reinterpreted his customers in Jakarta. In Bali, Mr. Deni, whose parents bought him a house, shared his perspective. "Even though it was my parents' gift, I felt... less freedom for my wife," he said. This parental intervention sacrificed his wife's preferences too. Later, Mr. Deni's finances became more established, and by the

time the interview took place, he was awaiting the construction of his new and larger home, which he and his wife preferred.

Besides living up to parents' words, older siblings can also have a similar role to parents, especially if they take care of their younger family members financially. Indonesian culture also appreciates hierarchy. Someone who is older or stronger in finances may have more rights in making decisions, as experienced by Mr. Don. His older sister was married to a rich husband. They had several houses, and he had been living in one of those while his sister persuaded him. "You better live here close to me," he recalled the story of his home and quoted her sister's words, "What if you just buy it? It's better than paying rent here and there and always moving." He later continued. "No mortgage." I bought this house from my sister... I couldn't afford to buy a house, that's why I made the instalments to my sister." During the COVID-19 pandemic, he lost his job, but his sister's intervention helped him survive a moment of financial crisis. "It (the payment) was postponed... She has not asked me to pay the following ones," he admitted. However, family influences are not always about direct financial intervention. While sharing about his family, he also mentioned, "It's good to live with parents, to live close with parents. I also want to live close to my parent¹⁴. My parent now lives in Jakarta together with my younger siblings, two of them." Above all reasons, he wanted to live near his family members.

Mrs. Handy and Mr. Chi also showed similar attachment to their families. Mrs. Handy knew the neighbourhood of her home after "my cousin showed me". She "had a relative in Block A" and considered the other factors afterwards. Meanwhile, Mr. Chi planned to be neighbours with his brothers. He recalled, "We took two (houses). My other brother bought one at RT 10 (neighbourhood code), but it's sold now. He bought two. There were two at the back. So, there were three of us. If we gathered, there were three of us in the neighbourhood. We took 'em because they're close." Apart from one that had been sold, he did not talk about the other one or where his brothers lived afterwards, but the houses they bought were small and "they were cheap" so that he and his brother could arrange to buy houses in a similar time.

5.5.2 Environment and neighbourhood

For some participants, the most important housing consideration was the locality where they lived, which could be the geographical environment, the neighbourhood, or the neighbours. All participants who lived in a landed house mentioned 'cluster' or 'housing complex' when they shared their housing aspirations. In the Indonesian context, both terms refer to the same

¹⁴ Only one parent, but no gender was specified

concept: a neighbourhood of landed houses with a clear boundary that separates it from another neighbourhood, usually by a gate or a wall surrounding the neighbourhood area. Mrs. Maxie began to think about moving home after noticing that there were better neighbourhoods than her previous one. She used to sell food and make deliveries. She received a lot of delivery requests to a different neighbourhood, and she found that “apparently in BSD there’s a lot of clusters with smaller houses that are more liveable.” She explained that she only needed a small home to live with her husband and a dog. In Jakarta’s peripheral area, neighbourhoods with small homes are available mostly in clusters as a developer project.

“Of course, I couldn’t search in Jakarta because I wanted it (the house) to be inside a cluster,” Mr. Nanda expressed his pessimism about getting the house that he wanted in Jakarta City. “Even if there is, the cluster might be secluded, through small roads, and there will be a traffic clog in between. I don’t want it.” He then clarified his reason. “I have to work at the office, and my wife and I had decided not to hire a helper, ...and she planned to resign and stay at home. So, why I wanted a cluster, it’s to feel safe. Maybe there’s only us at home, or no one. So, it’s safe if we leave home.”

“We’re afraid because we were not familiar with this area, afraid that it was unsafe. In a cluster, there’s a security guard in the front. Usually, they ask at the security gate, who do you want to see? If it’s not a cluster, everyone can pass freely... sometimes, a motorcycle is stolen, but in a cluster, at least there’s security guards,” said Mrs. Gigi, who wanted a home in a cluster for the same reason as Mr. Nanda. While visiting participants’ ‘landed’ homes in Greater Jakarta, there was always a security post between the main road and the driveway to the neighbourhoods. When a neighbourhood is designed as a cluster, it is easier to manage the security system.

Mrs. Baik also associated the environment with security. “The environment is good, the security system is safe because the staff patrols every hour,” she said, but Mr. Baik was more concerned about privacy. “The housing complex was still quiet. Your business is your business; my business is my business. So, our privacy is protected,” he said. In contrast, Mrs. Handy chose her neighbourhood because “here it was more crowded.”

Mrs. Iron had predicted the likely nature of interactions before she chose the specific location for her home. She described it in detail,

“I actually did it on purpose... we would like to avoid having any neighbours across our house because the street is narrow and people might park their cars in front of the

house. I don't want to add another problem. If we have friends coming and they bring a car, I don't want to create any problem... We asked the person, "*Sir, where is the area that has no housing lots across the street?*" And he said, "*Oh, here! Here, ma'am. This!*" He showed it to me... One thing that I'm sure of is that I don't like nosey neighbours. I don't like a chatty neighbourhood with people across the street. I don't want it. And I'm not the type who likes to hang out. I just don't like it. I like being alone. If there's a gathering for a special event, that's fine occasionally, but I don't really like it. For me, it's too complicated... Enough interactions, not too much and not every day."

Mrs. Iron described Indonesians' interaction style in general as one that could be uncomfortable for some people who live in a cluster. The only way to avoid it is by living in a place where individuals are not easily identified, such as apartments. "I swear I'm so disturbed by nosey neighbours," Ms. Bebet chuckled, "Ya, I don't like nosey neighbourhoods, *lah!*" she said it again to point out that 'nosey' people existed in common neighbourhoods. "Well, it's *apartment life*," she said in English to talk about her housing choice, then she explained the term she just said, "You don't know what your neighbours go to and back from work. I don't know them in person, just greeting each other," suggesting that living in an apartment is less exposed than in a landed house in a neighbourhood. On the contrary, there are many identifiers for houses in the neighbourhoods, such as the paint colour or other decorations of the building, different building shapes for renovated houses, plant and tree arrangements, and potential for witnessing neighbours going in or out of the house, especially if they use a vehicle. Thus, selecting types of neighbourhoods affects the social interactions, too.

However, household characters in a neighbourhood are, to an extent, predictable through knowing the neighbourhood locations or the reputation of the developers. As Mr. Don said about his rich neighbour's family, "Living in this area is no longer proper for them. They have four cars and land in many places. Of course, it's not proper if they live here. They already have a lot of money! Why would they want to live here! This is for a standard class." He laughed and shared it as a joke, but his judgment was rational. When a developer can build housing with more aspects of environmental qualities, the prices will be more expensive, and this acts as a barrier to households from certain socioeconomic classes. Indirectly, it creates a hierarchy of neighbourhoods.



Figure 5.2 Comparison of three different neighbourhoods

The set of pictures in Figure 5.2 shows the variety of street widths in Greater Jakarta, which reflects the neighbourhood qualities. Referring to the Indonesian regulations that distinguish luxurious and non-luxurious homes, the width of the street inside the neighbourhood area typifies the neighbourhood's social hierarchy. In Bali, Mrs. Paya experienced mortgage rejection due to the insufficient width of the street. "The bank didn't approve the loan. The street is not wide enough. Well, the mortgage has some conditions for a minimum requirement of the width of the street, you know. So, it's like that," she said.

Obviously, providing more space for the public will cause developers to spend more budget to acquire the land. Consequently, housing prices built by developers who provide wider streets and more street facilities, such as pedestrian walkways, streetlights, and lines of trees, will be more expensive, but still desirable for some people. "And about this cluster, it's more to the consideration that the developer is popular, the *brand* is *trusted*," said Mr. Trendi, who lived in BSD and owned a house that cost above average in his neighbourhood. He valued the qualities of the environment, and he believed that reputable developers adhered to the design standards. With that thought, he prioritised investing in the neighbourhood over the size of his house. Even though he had a lot of money to buy a house in BSD, he could only afford the smallest type. Meanwhile, for Mr. Bang, "BSD is an elite neighbourhood. The price that is still affordable for us is outside of BSD." He shared his thoughts about a landed house he was looking to move his family to in the Jakarta area. He liked the location of BSD, so his search targets were as close as possible to BSD, but outside the border. He also had money, but BSD was too expensive for him. It is common to find two typical homes in two nearby neighbourhoods with contrasting prices because one belongs to a developer with a stronger reputation. Certainly, the more established developer has better offers in other aspects such as security, waste management or recreational facilities. "No cables in the sky," said Mr. Nanda, mentioning the rare benefit of living in BSD.

With this housing quality diversification, neighbourhoods may be seen to represent a certain type of socioeconomic class. Mr. Baik genuinely spoke about the reason his parents forced

him and his family to move to a different home. “For pride,” he said. “To be honest, I just say it openly, it’s also for pride. If someone asks where the house is, we can say Pondok Indah, even though it’s Pondok Pinang. It’s similar, at least there’s pride in it,” he laughed cynically. Pondok Indah is a famous area in Jakarta where many Indonesian celebrities and wealthy people live, near Pondok Pinang. By the proximity and similarity of those names, people will notice that he lives in a high-class housing area. Mr. Baik has shown that for some people, housing location matters in exhibiting social status.

5.5.3 Staying under the social radar

There was one participant in Bali who openly shared his life experiences, which revealed that people may also live in tiny homes as a form of social escape or to seek safety. He was Mr. Chang, a 58-year-old Indonesian citizen from a Chinese background. Despite his family's wealth, he was unhappy. “You have a big house, but you live alone. How would you feel?” he said. This led him to a “chaotic” life. “I started smoking at 8 years old... got the first tattoo at 11 years old...but now I have quit drinking and using drugs.” He also recalled the 1998 Indonesian riots, which targeted Chinese Indonesians. This dark tragedy of Indonesia included mass violence, robbery, murders, and the mass rape of Chinese Indonesian females¹⁵, and it still leaves a deep wound for many Indonesians, including himself. Carrying this racial trauma in his life, he admitted that he was “caught by a racism virus”, which strengthened his intention to leave his hometown. Then, he went abroad to study as a self-funded student, got two master’s degrees, returned, and became successful at work. Just a few years ago, he met a woman, whom he later married and had a daughter with. Since then, he started to think that he should stop his habits, but the only way to do it was by detaching from anyone in his previous social circle, including colleagues. “I resigned and I won’t work for six years,” he said this plan to his wife at that time. Driven by both his trauma and his intention to quit drinking and using drugs, his housing pathways led him to live in a tiny home.

Below is the summary of his interview,

“We started nomadic living from hotel to hotel. Lastly, we found this apartment and we felt comfortable, and we decided to stay here. I just wanted to celebrate birthdays. My wife’s is in November, my daughter’s is in December, and mine is in January. So, we planned to be in Bali for three months. Well, slowly we felt home... because I think there’s nearly no racism in Bali. Compared to my hometown... very intolerant. Even

¹⁵ Known as the May 1998 tragedy, which is significant in Indonesian political history. The disputed discourse on this issue still occurs while this thesis is written, as the current Indonesian Ministry of Culture denied that the mass rape happened in this tragedy.

until now, they still call me Chinese! Even though I was born there, I worked there, I got married there, my school was there, but why do they call me Chinese? What makes us different? So, that's one of the reasons why we moved here. I don't want my daughter to experience the same thing as me."

His decision to live in his tiny apartment was made spontaneously. He took a three-month-long holiday after resigning and was mentally prepared to live between hotels only for three months, but he prolonged his stay without a specific end date. Even though he was wealthy and had calculated his savings, he kept his life simple because he had been anticipating not having any income for six years for his family, apart from his wife's occasional freelance job. So, he continued living in an apartment with a similar room layout to a standard hotel room, but the costs were cheaper than staying in a hotel. Luckily, the post-pandemic developments in Bali brought him fortune. Exactly after not working for six years, he found an opportunity to work as a sales-marketing person. By then, he had become sober and ready to work again. "And why in an apartment? Because I like to socialise." The tenancy agreement of his apartment offers both short- and long-term stays. Since the room layout is typical of a standard hotel room, there were tourists or visitors who came for business purposes. With his talkative character, he approached them, built networks, and sometimes he got clients from there. So, for him, living in a tiny apartment in Bali was the right fit for all he needed: reducing living costs while not having a job, detaching from his previous social circle, being clean and sober, avoiding racism, and getting a new job.

Besides Mr. Chang, there was one participant in Jakarta who might represent socially controversial people, who was Ms. Dandy. She moved to a rented two-bedroom apartment after previously sharing a *kost* with her female friend, but after having more bedrooms, she still shared the bedroom with her. Society would accept this household composition since they were both female and they lived in a two-bedroom housing unit, assuming each individual would have a separate private life. Even if they were also romantic partners, they could go unnoticed as long as they kept their romantic behaviour discreet.

While Mr. Chang openly shared his stories, Ms. Dandy's story had a vague interpretation. However, these two stories illustrate that there are Indonesian people who need to get away from their existing social regime by living in a more secluded place. Especially for homosexuals, sometimes it can be life-threatening because it is against Islamic law, and some Islamic sects may persecute with radical punishment. Thus, tiny homes, especially apartments

and similar units, may provide a safe space for those who feel unaccepted or persecuted in their society.

5.6 Cultural influences

Culture has uneven influences on Indonesian people because different ethnicities have different customary values. There were two dominant themes from the interviews regarding cultural influences that drive Indonesians to live in tiny homes. The first is the migration culture for Sumatran males, and the second is the tradition of keeping traditional homes for the Balinese. Section 5.3.2 introduced the migration concept when describing the housing choices of participants under 30 years old, but the following section will explore this further. Throughout this study, there were only participants in the Jakarta area who represented this case, but they shared valuable information to understand cultural influences in Indonesians' housing aspirations.

5.6.1 Tradition of Migration

"I own it myself. I took this house. So, that time I worked in a company, a shoe industry... But that time I didn't earn much," said Mr. Chief, after revealing the price of his tiny home. He said the price was "cheap" and his neighbourhood was not a prestigious one, because his former job only gave him a limited amount of salary. "Because we're migrants," he repeated. "I'm from Medan (Sumatra Island). My wife is from Central Java... I moved here in 1995 as a migrant; I got married in... I used to rent, but started to take the house in 2000," he continued with several pauses because he forgot some details of the timeline. He thought that his status as a domestic migrant made him have fewer work opportunities than locals. He also implied that he did not have formal qualifications that could have taken him to a better job and a higher salary. However, as a male from Sumatra Island, he would strive to settle down as migration has been encouraged in their culture.

"I used to live across the transit hotel towards Kebon Nanas (Jakarta)... I thought I was just a migrant. If I kept renting, I wouldn't have anything in the end," he continued. Culturally, Indonesians pass the rights of land ownership through ancestral generations. Being from Sumatra Island, Mr. Chief would not have the right of land ownership in Java Island. After Indonesia formed its political system, the government declared that all land belongs to the government. The locals could sell their heritage land either to a company, an individual, or to the government itself, according to applicable regulations. By migrating to a different island, Mr. Chief would not be able to cultivate his inherited land, if he had any. For him, if he could

not get the land replacement, he would feel that he did not have 'anything.' Moreover, Mr. Chief's words had deeper meanings than land ownership. The Indonesian language uses the same word to translate 'rent' and 'contract', which is '*kontrak*'. For Mr. Chief with his background, 'rent' meant more than just a method of payment, but also transience associated with poverty and citizenship discrimination. "So, we're now the original inhabitants in this neighbourhood," he said. He bought his home directly from the developer when the neighbourhood was built, and it was important for him to be the first buyer of the house because that was how he could get an acknowledgement as an 'original inhabitant.'

While Mr. Chief was a first-generation domestic migrant, Mr. River could be the third or fourth generation. Even though his family had been living in the Jakarta area for a few generations, he never felt that he was a local because he did not have Jakarta's indigenous ethnicity in his bloodline mixture. "My parents are mixed from Sunda; Sukabumi, and from Aceh. From my mother's line, she is from Kalimantan and Sukabumi. So, I'm mixed. But my great-grandparents were originally from China, migrated to Tangerang, but I don't know where in Tangerang. When I tried to track it, maybe there's a line from their younger sibling in BSD," he struggled to define his locality because his ethnicity also derived from three different Indonesian islands, also another country. "Because they have passed away, people say that the family relationship is already broken. The closest is my neighbours," he added to express his desire to feel a belonging in one place. By living permanently in one place, he could build a relationship with his neighbours to replace his relationship with his former family members. The need for permanent living in one place led him to buy a house within his budget, which was the smallest in his neighbourhood.

5.6.2 Obligation to stay in Bali traditional homes

"From what I know, it is the son's duty to stay in the main house, the family house, for generations. Besides him, it depends on the agreement between them whether there's another house or if some of the brothers have to be out. If they're out without having any land, it's difficult, so I think tiny homes will get the market from it," said Mr. Val. Having worked for years in Bali, he understood much about Balinese culture. Mrs. Vill, who had always been living in the same neighbourhood since her childhood, corrected the term. "The father's land" was the term used to name the family house. The land has "no tax, because it is the father's land... It is forbidden to sell this; it must be inherited," she explained how strict the rule in her native land was. She was an indigenous local who still implemented the traditional rules. "Then everyone lives here, that's the original in Bali, because of my husband... My husband is the only son. If he had another brother, I wanted to move." She explained another traditional rule.

Her marriage to a man who had a duty to stay in his parents' house made her live with his parents, too, and she was bound to it due to Balinese patrilineal culture.

Balinese traditional houses usually have sufficient outdoor areas because they have to provide space for the family temple. There are also individual buildings for different functions, such as kitchen, bathroom, and additional chambers, connected through outdoor spaces. Mrs. Vill and her husband utilised one of those spaces to build a new home, even though it was small. "It used to be like a terrace... no walls," Mrs. Vill illustrated how the space looked before they built the house, but they built permanent structures on it with walls and a roof. As seen in Figure 5.3, the building was very small and looked more like a pavilion than a house, but it was their home to separate their privacy from other family members. "If I had financial blessings, I'd love to, because I have two children. If it's possible, just for the children first," softly and shyly she laughed while sharing her aspirations to move out. She also mentioned "BTN houses" to refer to common tiny homes near her home, and then she said, "No." She never thought about living in that home because she was already bound to taking care of the heritage land through her marriage. However, she still wished to buy one because one of her children would not be obliged to take care of the heritage and may live in a conventional home.



Figure 5.3 Mrs. Vill's home in Bali

Several Balinese participants commented on the obligation to remain in the traditional house. For Mr. Luki, "It's a burden... it will lead to strife, better live outside." Some participants chose to move out, even though it meant they would lose their status as a 'local'. "Here, we're all migrants," said Mrs. Guru, identifying herself and her neighbours, even though they were Balinese. She shared her story, "That's called sharing a household with parents-in-law in a big house. Whoever lives with a family will for sure experience friction. So, I *kost*. I *kost* with my

husband. These first and second children were with their grandmother in Karangasem.” Karangasem was her hometown, where her mother lived after she got married to her husband. She did not share the details about the friction in his husband’s family house, but it must be uncomfortable that she traded it off with living separately with her children because her *kost* was not big enough for all her family members.

Later, she and her husband accumulated money to buy a new home, but the process was not easy because they had to incorporate the traditional layout system into their new home. “I’m looking for a house that is facing the east or north, so it will be easier for the temple.... Balinese are strict, usually they request that the bathroom is not attached to the kitchen... the kitchen must be in the south.” Then, they had to customise the layout design, and their budget could only fit the smallest conventional house permitted for Balinese Hindus. The size was not ideal, but the family could live together. The family tension prompted her and her husband to seek a new home, and they downsized to make it happen. The illustration of how far the size difference between the traditional house and the ‘BTN house’ or the common landed house in Bali is shown in Figure 5.4 below:



Figure 5.4 Balinese traditional house (left) and common landed house (right)

Mrs. Poleng also recalled how she used to live in her ex-husband’s family’s house. “Six families, noisy, and yeah... it’s common. There’s gaps, arguments, and... jealousy... You know, many people,” she chuckled and laughed softly. Her ex-husband had four siblings, and their families lived together with their parents, making three different generations co-live in a large traditional house, which was common in Balinese families. Mr. Luki experienced a similar problem and explained the traditional law clearly,

“I have many brothers, so some must be out of the house. Usually, for Balinese, it’s the youngest son who stays in the house. If the house is big enough, we can all stay in the house. If not, some must search for... or else, you know, when we’ve had families, there will be some intrigues... So, it’s better that I search one out... It’s a family reason, because there are many brothers at home... We lived at home for a

couple of months, and our child was born. Because of one thing or another, we stayed at my mother-in-law's house. Our child was six months at that time."

Without explaining too detail, a family issue motivated him to move out. However, with Balinese patrilineal law, it would generate social shame for a man to live in his mother-in-law's house. His temporary stay there indicated that at that moment, he was struggling to find a home. While recalling his difficult moments, he joked to his wife, "She wouldn't think about it," he referred to the struggle of finding a home. "Girls don't think that far. She already had a serious partner, so it's solved." Then his wife admitted, "I had only stayed at my mother's family." Before she was married, her parents' house was her only home. After she was married, her home was wherever she lived with her husband. In the end, they bought a home by chance because someone else failed to continue the mortgage on a sold house. The house was still too small for Mr. Luki's ideal home, and he had to trade it off by losing his status as a local, but "for Balinese, even though they have gone as far as Mars, they will go home to their Balinese land. They cannot go far," he joked. Even if he moved to a different area, he kept his citizenship based on his former hometown, wishing that one day he could get his full rights again as a local there, including keeping the rights of his son, who would be the rightful heir of a portion of the father's land.

5.7 Privileged Choice to Downsize to a Tiny Home

Among the study sample, there were two participants in the Greater Jakarta area whose budgets were exceptionally higher: Mr. Japandi, who lived in a small apartment in South Jakarta and Mr. Trendi's family, who lived in BSD, Greater Jakarta. Their decisions to live in tiny homes were triggered by their life courses, just like many other participants, but both spent extra costs to hire designers to customise and furnish their homes. In Indonesia, most homes are usually sold unfurnished to keep the price affordable. Hiring an architect to design an individual home is also common, but hiring an interior designer to customise the furniture is not within most people's financial capacity. Meanwhile, Mr. Japandi and Mr. Trendi customised the whole interior of their homes with thematic designs based on their aesthetic preferences. Both of them downsized from their bigger parental homes and were financially privileged to meet all of their housing aspirations.

5.7.1 Practicality and convenience

Mr. Japandi explained why he chose to live there. "Because I had money, I took the highest spec," he said. His apartment was popular in Jakarta, where there were several towers with

different ranges of quality. He bought his own unit after experiencing renting his friend's unit at the same apartment complex, but at a lower level of luxury. "I remember when my friend bought a long time ago, the masterplan was just up to Tower T. When we finished renovating, well, there's another new tower next to it, like an additional tower... Maybe the demand was high, and the developer gave another supply," he speculated. By the time he bought his own apartment unit, the developer had launched a higher apartment class, and he bought a unit there. The price ranges were the most expensive in that complex, and the developer pampered their buyers with better facilities than other building towers. "The walls are not as thin as in... (other towers). And then, the facilities... The swimming pools are big, and the jogging tracks are good and serious. There's a playground for children, and it's shady... And then, there's the gym, sauna, the tennis court, and the basketball court. It's practical, we can fulfil a healthy lifestyle here without having to spend money on a gym membership," he said during the interview session. Afterwards, he made time to show his apartment environment. (Figure 5.5).



Figure 5.5 The swimming pools, jogging track, and playground in Mr. Japandi's apartment

He emphasised how convenient his life was, "It's practical, economical." He also shared his preferences for financing his property. "I didn't want a loan, I wanted to pay cash... I bought it within my capacity... I didn't know what I spent at that time was actually big or not, right... This was around 400 (million Rupiahs), it's already so far from my friend who got the price about 50s (m²) or... I think it was nearly 300 different. It's just so far within 8 to 9 years. So, I bought 400ish for a smaller size." He previously received an offer of Rp. 600 million for an apartment unit, but it was too expensive for him. He considered the rising price over time since the unit was built, but he still wanted to be able to pay cash. He was a Muslim who believed that charging interest on loans was forbidden. Therefore, he avoided any kind of mortgage and

preferred to pay “in one strike and no more mind burden,” which means he paid it with hard cash.

What he was looking for in the beginning was a practical living. “I look for convenience. I live in a big city with convenience to everywhere. In terms of transportation, accessibility, and then access to food and daily needs, it’s also provided... And I don’t work in an office, so I don’t need to get trapped with bad traffic, crowd, I can avoid those. Practical! I can also choose to go anywhere or decide what time I want to have appointments. Even for my clients, I think it’s impossible to make appointments in *rush hours*.” Because earlier he already tried living in his friend’s unit for several years, he had been familiar with the area, which for him was “close, you know! Not far from anywhere. Strategic position. And after I checked, I tried living here, ooh, comfortable! *I have set my heart to KC* (his apartment name),” he closed the sentence with some words in English.

He already felt convenient since he was still renting his friend’s unit. The first idea to buy his own home came when his friend thought of selling his unit, so he had to search for a new place. He already liked the location because “with all of the living costs in Jakarta, I found the cheap ones here... “Because at that time, I thought I had some savings. Rather than keep renting, well, my brain still had the ‘colonial concept’,” he paused for joking and continued, “Rather than spending my money only for renting, I’d better buy then. The money was ready.” By emphasising several times that he had the money, he expressed that he lived in a tiny home based on his own decision. His joke about ‘colonial concept’ explained that he learned that property investment was inherited from that era. The apartment that he bought was his second property. He already had a small landed house in a different area in Jakarta, but he found “becoming a commuter from my house... it’s tiring,” so he let his relatives, whose finances were weaker, live in his house for free.

On the other hand, his aspiration to live minimally was driven by the situation in his parents’ house. He showed some pictures of their home from his phone and said, “I’ve thrown away 90% of their stuff. I implemented the concept of ‘goodbye things’ for the house by making an agreement with my parents. Madame and Mister, I will ‘make a mess’ at your house. With all respect, so you won’t be angry one day, I am asking for your permission to disassemble this, throw this out. May I? My purpose is to make your life more comfortable in your later days, so you don’t have to worry about chasing mickey mouse and minnie mouse. So let me makeover this house with a minimalist concept,” he repeated what he said to his parents with humour. He swiped the images on his phone while explaining the makeover process. His parents’

house was big, and the pile of stuff post-decluttering filled a wide area of the garage. He was frustrated with his parents' habit of accumulating stuff, so he wanted to keep his home simple. "I don't need the furniture, just take everything out," he said when he bought the apartment unit from the previous owner. The price that he paid included the furniture, but he gave it away to make his apartment look simpler.

Overall, Mr. Japandi shared commonalities with other participants regarding the changing circumstances in his life that urged him to live in a home. He also had budget restrictions not to spend on a home that was overpriced. However, his financial capacity to buy a property in hard cash was above average for Indonesian people. "I graduated in '99 and have been *freelancing* since then... This is all from the *freelance* job," he said about his wealth. As a single who had been working in a good job sector for more than two decades, he could buy his housing aspirations, including getting a good home location with good access, good facilities, prices, and interior style based on his preferences. Also, as a devout Muslim, he could do charity by owning tiny homes. His preference to buy properties in cash enabled him to buy smaller properties in a shorter period of time. In the end, he owned two properties, where one was for his home and the other was for his relatives' home. His experiences with his parents' home, which was big and full of items, influenced him to have a simpler life. Thus, he downsized his home by choice, and with the financial privilege he had, he could fulfil all his aspirations on housing.

5.7.2 Tiny house is a dream home

Mr. Trendi was financially privileged and fortunate to give his wife a dream home. "I love this house because my dream came true," said Mrs. Trendi, and her comment was sensible. Prior to the interview, this couple sent a YouTube link from an official account of an architectural design company, capturing their house as their portfolio of a makeover for their 36 m² landed house, making it look spacious.

While Mrs. Trendi was busy with their toddler, Mr. Trendi shared most of the things about the house. He also spoke with mixed English and Indonesian languages. English words written in italic are his original words. "I was the first who moved to Jakarta for work... and I experienced living in a *kost*." He was still single at that time. By the time he planned to get married and get a permanent home, "I felt the air quality and transportation in Jakarta were not ideal, so I tried to search in its agglomeration, like a classic story," he said, referring to 'agglomeration' as Jakarta's satellite or adjacent cities. "For both of us, transportation is the primary thing. We understand that for this *kind of spec* here, the *existing* is a bit *overpriced*. But the connectivity

from central Jakarta to here via a one-line train is already a *big win*... So, finally we're bold to invest for the access," he explained the trade-off between the price and access, including the more specific criteria for the transportation mode. "Because I have lots of business in Central and South Jakarta, we searched for the access that is reachable with only one train."

He and his family lived in BSD, which was a popular neighbourhood for high-class Jakartans. He admitted that the price for his house was overpriced, but "looking from the public facilities, including the infrastructure, like the road, the waste, and there's no pole for power supply (which means visually disturbing), it's already good. We checked about the flood, and the waste management, everything is good, because of course it's BSD." BSD itself has a high reputation, and what he described was fair. "So, yeah, *for us* it's the most *perfect*. *And again*, if you see from the budget and value for money, looking from this spec, this house can be *overpriced*, but ...ah, we look from the *macro* sides, access and the environment," he emphasised aspects that he looked for in their permanent home which were around accessibility and environmental qualities.

Besides his general reasons, he also had personal reasons that influenced him to live in a tiny home. "Since the beginning, we didn't want a big house because we like *Tiny House*... We like to watch videos about tiny homes that incorporate several concepts in such tiny spaces. That fascinates us. Verticality, and multi-... one room can accommodate two functions, that's what *we're inspired* from YouTube, from the examples of the tiny homes... Both of us... our taste is less ornamental, less eclectic. We just like minimalist, *nothing too special*," he shared on behalf of his wife. On the other hand, he also had experiences that made him choose to live in smaller spaces. "In the past, I lived mainly in Surabaya, with my parents. Well, *yeaaah*, in that area... the land was big... but well, a house that big, ideally, I would need a helper... And then my parents, they had a *different approach*, so there were *lots of unused spaces*, so... That's what I felt. The house was big, but not optimal," he expressed his dissatisfaction with how his parents were overwhelmed with the space because their house was too big.

His wife also joined and described her childhood home, "My parents' house in Bintaro is quite big. And we don't have any helper for a house as big as that, so it is too tiring. My parents are getting old, they can't take care of the house anymore, so many parts are unmaintained, and some parts are decaying. Before I got married, I helped them clean the house. I felt so tired cleaning a two-storey house. It's quite spacious... That made me want to live in a small house or apartment. When we get married and have children, we don't want to live in a house that is too big. Because now, it is also difficult to find a helper for the house, so we want to handle it

ourselves. But if we handle it ourselves and we work too, it's impossible if the house is too big. It would be tiring to manage. So, since we were dating, we already talked that we would live in a compact house or apartment if we got married later."

Also, there was one period when Mr. Trendi studied abroad and "lived in the UK in a small apartment. It's apparently good. In Newcastle. It's easier to manage. So, I thought I would look for an apartment in Jakarta." He then tried living in an apartment, "but apparently there's a long line to wait for the elevator," he chuckled. His experience in the UK flat was incomparable to living in Jakarta apartments. "And yeah, the land certificate is not very clear," he added. Even though there is a certificate of ownership for the unit, the land ownership, which is important for him, is not as clear as a landed house. "And the neighbours too... I refer to the UK. I felt at that time living with the neighbours in an apartment was fine, but in Jakarta, well... in my tower, the neighbours were not nice. They smoked in the hallway, and then...dirty, and maybe for families, the *feel* would be unmatched. So that's why we looked for a *landed house* that feels *compact*," he continued, and Mrs. Trendi readdressed that "before we decided to sign for this house, we also did some surveys of some apartments in central Jakarta." Then Mr. Trendi spoke again, "If we want to rent, well, maybe if we rent, maybe it's ideal, but we're *classic*. We're *classic* people. We want to have an *asset*. And apartments that have value for money for us are not good in terms of location... what should I say, are less convenient for daily life. Like the line to use the elevator, and some facilities look unmaintained, and the social life with neighbours is... Ah, they live in an apartment, but they behave like... Ah, I don't feel good talking about it," he chuckled and did not finish his sentence. "It's less *apartment-ish*," he coined his own term to describe the gap to his previous experience abroad.

Conducting the interview with Mr. and Mrs. Trendi was one of the easiest among all research participants. Their sentences had good structure, and they took turns sharing their insights in such a clear and coherent way. There was an impression that they were highly educated and came from families with strong financial backgrounds. Thus, Mr. Trendi could provide a decent home for his nuclear family that matched his housing typology preference, value of property asset, and technical considerations, which made a good tiny home a privilege for those who have more money.

5.8 Conclusion

The drivers of tiny home living in the case study locations are nuanced by the dynamic correlation between housing 'actors': the government and their policies, housing developers,

and the inhabitants within the housing market. While utilising the correlation between those housing actors has been more widely applied within the international literature (Evans, 2018a; Batista and Farias, 2021; Carras, 2023), below is a summary of the specific dynamics in Greater Jakarta and Bali urban areas, with further discussion of the nuances of this topic in Chapter 7.

The review of Indonesian policy documents shows that Indonesia's agrarian law recognises homeownership only through freehold, which drives people to *buy* landed houses (emphasis added). The programme for Low Income Households (LIH) also implies a narrative that it is still better to own a small home than to rent a larger one. As their existence becomes increasingly prevalent, tiny homes are seen as something familiar or accepted norms of living in populous urban areas, rather than as a downsizing phenomenon. Although a participant from the developer marketing staff agreed that housing unit sizes have been shrinking, there was no record in participants' interviews of complaints about having to downsize because of that trend.

From the occupants' lived experiences, they were driven to their tiny homes by the lack of choice when their life course called them to move to a new home, whether through changing job locations, family planning, or other life events that may include traumatic and life-threatening experiences as a part of Indonesian political turbulence. While the explanation suggests similarity to the concept of housing pathways, where households can move from one to another due to personal life course (Clapham, 2005), the choices made by these research participants were due to constraints on the availability and accessibility of a range of housing types, with both voluntary and involuntary drivers relevant in the enactment of housing decisions. The main influence was the exorbitant housing prices, making people from both lower and higher economic classes have fewer housing choices, and they were only able to afford the small dwelling type in their desirable locations or neighbourhoods.

Furthermore, the investigation into the occupants' lives revealed more complex housing mechanisms involving finances and socio-cultural expectations. For some of them, the issue was not the shrinking space but the shrinking financial power, especially when they compared themselves to their parents' ability to purchase a house. A previous study in Depok, one of the cities in Greater Jakarta, revealed that housing norms and preferences are much influenced by parents, with detached homes being the most desired housing type due to their familiarity with their childhood homes (Adianto, Gabe and Farraz, 2023). However, the prices of detached homes today are far more expensive due to housing inflation. These participants

recalled being raised in bigger childhood homes, but later they had to downsize to afford homes that matched their budget. Most of them also came from cities with lower population density than Greater Jakarta or Bali, so they expected it would be challenging to find housing in the larger cities. Those whose lives were economically better than their parents' were happy just to own a home, but those whose parents were well established expressed disappointment at being financially unable to get the ideal home aspirations.

Moreover, tiny homes in Greater Jakarta also appeared in prestigious neighbourhoods, including BSD which targets people with more money (Roitman and Recio, 2020). So, tiny homes are not only for those who earn less than other people on average, but also for those with decent jobs. Even though the government may support LIH to buy subsidised tiny homes, there is no requirement or incentive to live in this housing segment, as it has always existed in the housing market. Regardless of the housing development and inflation dynamics that filter housing choices to the tiny homes segment of the housing system, all participants made their decisions voluntarily by considering multiple aspects that became their concerns.

Participants also exemplified those processes through deciding the housing type, i.e. between apartment or landed house, or amongst other aspects, such as budget, location, or environment. The trade-off was rarely made against the size. In contrast, there were societal expectations that appeared as obligations for participants. For example, married couples experienced more social pressure on home ownership, or adults who wanted a relationship without marriage may feel safer to live in an apartment to avoid being caught by neighbours. Nonetheless, apartments are considerably smaller than landed houses. The only trade-off against the size was found in cases in Bali, where participants wanted to detach themselves from the obligation to stay in the traditional house, but they still wanted to undertake their Hindu rituals. One Balinese traditional house is big enough to accommodate communal living for multiple families, so those who want to move out need to trade off the size for privacy.

Every participant compiled unique individual reasons that drove them to live in tiny homes, but the patterns showed that people who were socially marginalised (unmarried adults, same sex couples, detaching from traditional laws, etc.) had fewer choices than those who were socially accepted, because they complied with the traditional pathways of adulthood through getting married in compliance with religious and legal expectations. This latter group gained their independence to manifest their housing aspirations with their newly formed family and were free to decide where to live based on their pragmatic choices or other preferences.

Some participants also expressed their value on environmental quality. This was generally understood as the way facilities provided benefits to residents. Only some households in BSD mentioned about contribution to the environment through waste management. However, this does not mean that Indonesians have fewer concerns about environmental issues. Still, it suggests that consideration of the contribution to the environment in housing choices at an individual level tends to be a privilege for those with stronger finances, which resonates with previous arguments that motivations related to environmental values are considered additional after the economic values have been achieved (Mangold and Zschau, 2019; Vasseur, Sing and Short, 2022).

Concluding this chapter, even though tiny home living is practically driven by the necessity of having a home at a certain stage of individuals' life transitions, the overarching theme that shapes the housing mechanisms in these case study locations is the societal expectations, and the individual and collective narratives arising from them, that may limit housing choices, influenced by the government's narrative that induces more production of tiny homes. These two aspects frame Indonesian housing pathways, and people have options to comply with them or to find an alternative. For whichever group of people, tiny homes appear to be a common housing option, so they may disregard considerations about size and continue filtering other choices through attributes attached to the property, such as price, location, facilities, and other factors. People with more money will have more choices, but generally, in Indonesia, having strong finances is not enough, since there are sociocultural regulations that might be hard to get away from.

6. Experiences of Tiny Home Living

6.1 Introduction

This chapter examines how Indonesian people live in tiny homes by gathering information through observation during home visits, interviews, sketches, photographic documentation of their homes, and photographs from participants' own collections. Using a lived experience framework, these methods confirmed how dwelling in tiny homes was embodied in individuals, and the role of emotions, positionality and subjectivity in the very differentiated accounts of the research participants, which were often ambiguous and nuanced.

The study found that most tiny homes looked cramped with piles of items in some areas, suggesting that the implications of the tiny living space were evident. The study also revealed that there were contrasting narratives from research participants, oscillating between gratitude for, and frustration with, their living arrangements. Although the constraints of living in tiny homes were articulated, only a few participants expressed disappointment or complaints, whereas most of them expressed gratitude towards the home they lived in. It was also evident that most participants had adjusted to living in their tiny homes, and those who had previously lived in different tiny homes were more adept at aligning their expectations with the spatial capacity. The latter group also shared their previous experiences as comparisons to living in their current tiny homes.

Similarly to the previous chapter, there was also an 'unspoken part' during the interviews, and that was the geographical context, which was a tropical climate with a constant warm temperature and frequent heavy rain throughout the year. As a physical unit that protects inhabitants from the weather, Indonesian homes may serve different purposes from homes in non-tropical contexts. A definition of home as 'a place to keep us warm' may be literal for countries which experience winters, but it is metaphorical for the inhabitants of Java and Bali islands who can feel warm indoors or outdoors. As discussed in the review on tropical homes, openings like doors and windows are important to let the air flow into the interior and cool down the room temperature during the day. A triangular roof with an awning is also essential for protecting inhabitants from heavy rain and ensuring that rainwater flows downwards quickly to reduce the risk of ponding, leaking, or splashing onto the building envelope. So, experiences

of living in tiny homes, as well as home living more generally, can be different in varied geographical contexts.

The research findings in this chapter are presented primarily as a dichotomy between the advantages and disadvantages of living in tiny homes (Section 6.2) and the positives and negatives of adjustments the research participants made to live in tiny homes through negotiations and compromises (Section 6.3). Within this structure, each section will elaborate on the examples found from participants' experiences. Besides building the narratives from participants' interview transcripts, this chapter displays photo documentation taken during the visits to clarify or visualise the stories, or sometimes to complicate the 'observed reality' of home with participants' own stated perceptions. Lastly, a concluding section (6.4) will summarise the key findings of this chapter.

6.2 Advantages and disadvantages of tiny home living

After living in their tiny homes for a certain period, occupants will have encountered experiences that can be different individually, as what becomes an advantage for one person can be a disadvantage for another. Equally, individuals are likely to have experiences that they perceive as both positive and negative, especially for those who prioritise one value over another value as a trade-off. For example, someone might need to sacrifice a dedicated space for one activity but also feel happy because the home is easy to maintain. Thus, the discussion in this chapter should be seen as identifying clusters of similar experiences amongst participants rather than rigid categories that form advantages or disadvantages of living in tiny homes in Indonesia.

6.2.1 The advantages

Climatic advantages

Living in tiny homes requires adjustments due to space restrictions. Regardless of participants' previous home experiences, the necessity to make everything fit into the confined space they have is inevitable. However, being in a tropical climate makes the process less strenuous, as the constant warm weather conditions can alleviate individuals' concerns about the weather. Apart from periods of heavy rain or extreme heat, homes or any other buildings are not crucial for protecting people from the weather. The main implications of rain in Indonesia are flooding and leaking, which can affect homes of any size. Another implication associated with tiny homes is splashing. When there is no space to install an awning that is long enough to prevent

splashing, the affected area remains unprotected. However, the impact is minor as an awning is meant to protect the outdoor area, which is not the main part of crucial home activities. Further impacts from extreme heat are solved by air conditioning (AC), as most homes in this study relied on AC to keep the temperature comfortable, with the size of homes affecting how much energy is used to run the AC.

With this warm temperature, people can engage in activities both indoors and outdoors interchangeably. For example, when someone needs to pick up a private phone call and does not want any of the other household members to hear, he or she can have the conversation outdoors without any weather challenges. In another example, sitting under a shady tree during the day might feel cooler than being at home because the soft breeze of the wind could neutralise the tropical heat, as shown by a hangout place in one neighbourhood in Greater Jakarta (Figure 6.1). The neighbourhood was located next to a river, and some adult males from nearby homes liked to hangout outdoors by the riverside, so they collected money and built their own outdoor space where they could sit together as a group, feel the breeze, and listen to the sound of the gurgling water from the river or from the fish aquarium.

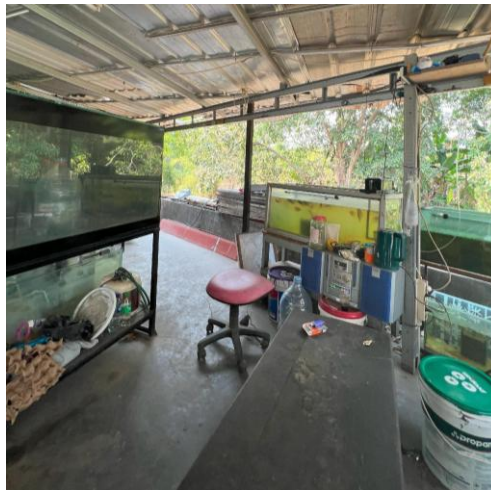


Figure 6.1 Shaded outdoor hangout place in a neighbourhood in Serpong, Greater Jakarta

In the interior setting, the ‘coldness’ of the floor tiles might feel refreshing, especially after returning from the warm outdoors. Indonesian people are accustomed to sitting on the floor, as it is embodied in the cultures of many ethnicities. There were many tiny homes in this study that had no sofa or permanent seating furniture in their living rooms. Sometimes they had a sitting mat or a carpet (Figure 6.2 – left), but it was also common to see bare floor tiles. Figure 6.2 (right) shows Mrs. Sendu’s living room, where she played with her toddler on the floor, while her husband used the desk and chair. So, having specific furniture in every room is not always necessary in tropical tiny home living.



Figure 6.2 Sitting area with a mat (left) and just floor tiles (right)

For those who live in neighbourhoods that provide playgrounds, children can play and socialise there throughout the year, so having a designated play area at home is not urgent. Mrs. Trendi recalled that it was more effective for her toddler to learn to walk in the playground across from their home. “I felt that a lot when he was about to learn to walk. Other children about his age were better, and I thought it must be because his space was limited. I started to bring him outside (the playground), oh, suddenly he walked so quickly!” she exclaimed, suggesting that her tiny space did not restrict her child’s development because of the easy access to wider safe spaces for play and development.

As windows and doors are important in the tropical climate, it is even more important for tiny homes. When the home is small, much space is taken up by items such as furniture, storage, or any other household equipment and personal belongings. And the more space taken for those things compared to the empty space for air circulation, the more the room temperature will increase. Letting the windows open enabled the circulation of the air flow and stabilised the temperature inside the home.

“If we don’t open it, it’s stuffy. The house is small, so if we don’t open the door, it’s stuffy,” said Mr. Chi. The first thing he or his wife did in the morning was to open their bedroom window and the main door to soothe the discomfort of feeling cramped inside the room. “If we open it, the air can flow, so it’s good, the air can circulate,” he added. While most of his neighbours had ACs to help cool their homes, he did not have enough money to install or to pay the extra bills for this. He also liked feeling close to the natural environment, so he kept the windows and the door open until he and his family members wanted to go to bed. “Others feel uncomfortable, they close (the doors) tight in the early evening. We don’t. We open it. It’s been like this since then... We’re used to it,” he explained. While visiting his home in Bekasi, east of Jakarta, the temperature was very hot, as it was consistently above 35°C from late morning

to evening during the dry season. Despite the heat outside, the temperature in his home felt a lot more comfortable compared to other tiny homes with no ACs in this study.

Fundamentally, having high ceilings and cross ventilation are crucial for tropical buildings, where two parallel sides of the walls must have openings for ventilation. Mr. Chi modified his home, but he managed to keep these two aspects in his home by raising the roof elevation and making a ventilation at the roof to let the air flow from the front of his home cross over (Figure 6.3 - circled). Mr. River also did a similar approach with cross ventilation (Figure 6.4). He said,

“Yes, this is for air circulation. If you cook here and there’s no air circulation, the smell gets into the inside. Yes. It has a window to the back just for the air circulation. So, I once closed it at that time with a transparent roof, but I thought it wouldn’t work. The air was too tight. It was hot without air circulation. And the smoke stayed inside when we cooked, so we decided to keep that open. The water gets inside when it rains, but it’s okay. I added a fibre roof so it’s not too... Well, if we forget to get the laundry when it rains, it’s not that wet.”

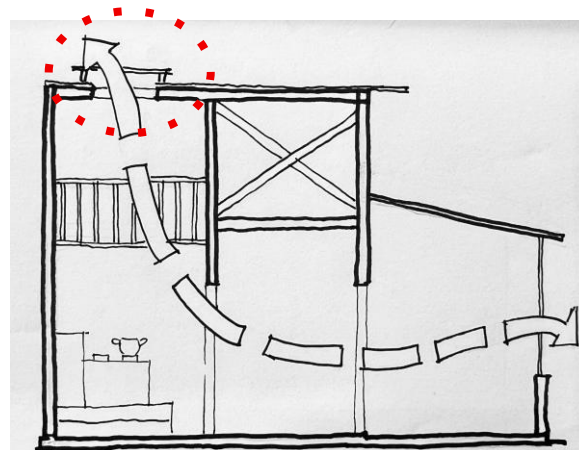


Figure 6.3 'Gap' on the roof of Mr. Chi's home

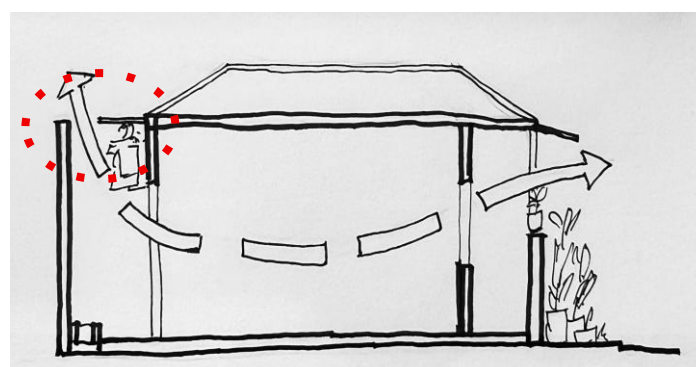


Figure 6.4 Mr. River's home's cross ventilation

While most of his neighbours who had modified their homes covered their back area with a roof or awning to utilise the underneath space, Mr. River left it open for ventilation, as it was close to the kitchen, and he wanted the smoke from cooking to flow quickly out of the house. Consequently, rainwater could get in and splash into his home because his home was tiny and the awning was narrow. To reduce the splash, he dedicated a small space just below the roofline to collect the rainwater (Figure 6.4 – circled). This little open space he preserved also saved his home when flooding happened because the rainwater was absorbed into the ground through it. Meanwhile, many of his neighbours' homes were flooded. He recalled when his neighbours were surprised that his house was safe. He was as surprised as his neighbours, as he could not explain the rationale behind that case, but it suggested that the availability of a little surface on the ground that can absorb water mattered. Other houses that were flooding had been renovated into much bigger homes than Mr. River's. With the same total area for the plot of land, they covered more land with concrete construction, leaving less space for the outdoors. This meant that they might have less ventilation and increased the risk of their homes being flooded.

Tropical design is also applicable for apartment buildings. Ms. Dandy was happy to get a unit in an older apartment building because, in her opinion, "...in apartments nowadays, they just go long without ventilation... It's just like this (stuck), just the door and the frame, we can't install anything else." Meanwhile, she liked her current apartment "because it's elongated and widened, you know? So, when we open the door, the wind can pass... And with the iron trellis, we can leave the actual door open, so the air can circulate... So, for the setting, for the design planning, we can say this one is better, even though visually it only looks like a box from the outside, there's no 'model'," she laughed. Even though she was used to the heat in Jakarta, she preferred "good natural air circulation". She admitted, "I don't like using AC, I mean, I can't be in an AC too long," which suggested the discomfort due to AC and poor ventilation building. Therefore, when good design effectively corresponds with the geographical climate and temperature, it can help mitigate several challenges of living in tiny homes.

Economic advantages

Participants who were also the owners of their tiny homes had made several modifications to their buildings. Many of them were the first buyers from the developers who got the homes with the smallest type, which were also the cheapest. Along with the growth of their finances, they could gradually modify their homes and gain more space, from minor constructions such as adding some awnings to shade their outdoor areas (Figure 6.5) to major renovations that

could change the building layout (Figure 6.6). The latter was prevalent during the study, which was enabled by the lenient regulations on housing renovations.



Figure 6.5 Awnings to cover the back outdoor areas



Figure 6.6 Sample of a recent home layout (left) and the traces of its original layout (right)
The green marks a former outdoor area without hard constructions on the ground

Mr. Chief shared that he had been planning a housing renovation since acquiring the property. His home only had one bedroom, but he had two children, so he knew he would need more space. “It just took a while to build... I already had the idea, but I had a budget constraint too,” he said. By the time he had the money for the construction costs, he admitted that he did not

proceed with the legal documents for his home renovation. “I knew that I should have got the permission, but almost every house here... no one checked anyway. The big, renovated houses there, they didn’t arrange permission. So, I had that thought. I don’t think anyone will check if the neighbours have no problem,” he explained. What he did was common in Indonesian neighbourhoods because the government rarely controls the practices of housing renovation.

However, reputable developers usually want to keep the appearance of their neighbourhood tidy with their design until all units are sold or until they have reached their desired profit. They have strict regulations on renovation for several years after the property is purchased, with restrictions becoming less stringent over time. “The rule was, we were not allowed to modify the façade,” said Mr. Nanda, recalling the time when he wanted to do the renovation project several years ago. He had to submit the design and revise it until the developer management team approved. “Now we can do it,” added Mrs. Nanda, emphasising that the regulations had changed, shown by the house next to theirs that had completely changed the facade. This demonstrates that developer regulations can limit the capacity of tiny home residents to make changes that will improve their experience of their homes, especially when they buy their homes as newly built properties. Nevertheless, with or without compliance towards regulations, starting with a landed tiny house may ease the financial burden for those who still aspire to have a bigger home on the same plot of land.

For those who lived in tiny apartments, the economic advantages were felt through reduced daily living costs. Previously, they had traded off their home size for a better location and a practical lifestyle that had saved them transportation costs, but after experiencing living in tiny homes, there was more to gain financially because their housing maintenance costs and bills were also low. As shared by Mr. Japandi, Mr. Young and Ms. Bebet, who lived in apartment units under different property managements, the charges for their management fees were all defined by floor area. By living in smaller units, their fees were cheaper. With this, Mr. Japandi could accumulate money faster and hired a professional interior designer, Mr. Young was feeling satisfied with his efficient spending, meanwhile Ms. Bebet could have more financial choices with her life in general “I think this is sufficient, because I still can save, I can travel, I can eat out and buy whatever I like,” said Ms. Bebet. With low housing costs, she could save more money to gradually upgrade her home interior. “Previously, there were only shelves for the kitchen, and I used one for the kitchen table,” she said. She also showed her new customised desk with caster wheels that enabled her to work from her bed. While people who lived in tiny landed houses changed the home layouts and enlarged the building, she gradually

modified her furniture to make her life more comfortable in a tiny studio. These examples illustrate that getting the cheapest type of home may help suppress housing costs in the beginning, so participants could accumulate money faster for other needs, including upgrading their homes.

Benefits towards social-communal values

The previous chapter described the hierarchies amongst neighbourhoods that reflected the social class of their inhabitants. Accordingly, people can predict the characteristics of their social environment from the type of neighbourhood they choose. Typically, homes in the same neighbourhood are sold or rented at about the same price, so people who live in the same neighbourhood usually share similar lifestyles or sociodynamic preferences. In this study, there were participants who were happy to have good interactions with neighbours and those who avoided interactions with neighbours, but most of them expressed satisfaction because they found similarities with their neighbours that could make them get along easily.

“And the neighbours on my left and right sides are nice, too, so we’re comfortable living here. They’re not nosey, we never have any arguments with them, we already make ourselves comfortable, so we don’t think about moving to another place even though it’s close to the river (indicating the threat of flooding)”.

Mrs. Iron, a landed house in a neighbourhood

“If people ask about fellowship in the neighbourhood that feels like a family, we have it here. So, we never have a problem like being jealous of the neighbours, because neighbours are the closest relatives. Whatever we do, your neighbours know. They listen, and they help too. That’s a principle to have close neighbours (with a serious tone). Also, we don’t look at people from any religion here. I don’t care if A is Islam, B is Christian, C is Buddhist. For me, I just think that we’re all migrants here, so your neighbours are your brothers.”

Mr. River, a landed house in a neighbourhood

“Every household here works in a band. If we make noises, we have the same profession, so no one will complain. In other *kosts*, it has to be really quiet.”

Mr. Jazz, a *kost*

“Sometimes I thought of moving, but I would miss the environment here (neighbours)... I mean there’s no discrimination here. No difference if we’re the same or different. We hang out together.”

Mr. and Mrs. Chi, a landed house in a neighbourhood

What those participants shared described the general value of Indonesian people with their collective culture, with its complexities. Social relations with neighbours are important, and differences are tolerable when there are similarities that can make people bond. For Mrs. Iron, having neighbours with characters or personalities that she liked was important to avoid unnecessary arguments. For Mr. River, as many home occupants in his neighbourhood were domestic migrants from smaller or less developed cities than Jakarta, the shared struggles as migrants unified him and his neighbours and made the differences of religious beliefs less important. Also, for him, the openness shared among neighbours was seen as a benefit rather than a threat to privacy, and he was happy to find ‘relatives’ in his tiny home neighbourhood.

For Mr. Jazz, similarities in activities were important. As a musician and a migrant, he might have specific habits that were not aligned with other groups of people. Renting a *kost* was a practical choice when he first came. At that time, there were more *kost* units to rent being prepared in his area. So, while his music network was expanding, other musicians from his community who were also looking for their new homes joined him as neighbours. Then, his *kost* area had become a small colony of musicians where they could worry less about making noises that might not be acceptable in other neighbourhoods. And for Mr. and Mrs. Chi, they emphasised the absence of discrimination. Ironically, by mentioning it, they implied that discrimination still occurred. Their family was the only household in the neighbourhood that received government benefits as ‘poor people’, which implied the possibility of discrimination due to being in a lower social class.

Previously in Section 5.5.3, the story of Mr. Chang revealed the history of persecution against a minority group of ethnicity and religion in his home island that made him move to Bali. Ironically, other research participants who lived in Bali implied that the so-called paradise island was not immune to discrimination. “They keep their distance from the migrants,” said Mr. Urut, referring to different behaviours exhibited by the indigenous residents during interactions. Mr. Bass also explained, “We were given some form as temporary inhabitants for resident proof.” Although it appeared discreet or without violence, it was still a form of discrimination, because legally, all Indonesians have an equal right to live anywhere in the country. With its collective culture, interaction with neighbours is unavoidable. Especially within

tiny home neighbourhoods, the proximity between one and another is close, and it would be hard for anyone to live 'under the social radar'. Thus, finding neighbours that match an individual's social values may increase the positive meaning of living in tiny homes.

On a micro-level, living in tiny homes may also foster stronger bonding within the household or among family members, as experienced by Mrs. Iron and Mr. Chang. Mrs. Iron shared that she and her children decorated the living room together during the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions because everyone's activities were centralised there. Coincidentally, the pandemic occurred several months after there was heavy flooding in the Jakarta area, which destroyed the furniture in her home. The home decoration project had strengthened their connections as a family, and they continued to use their living room as the centre of activities. Even though the room was narrow for the five members of the family (Figure 6.7 – left), they frequently gathered there on weekends for family karaoke.

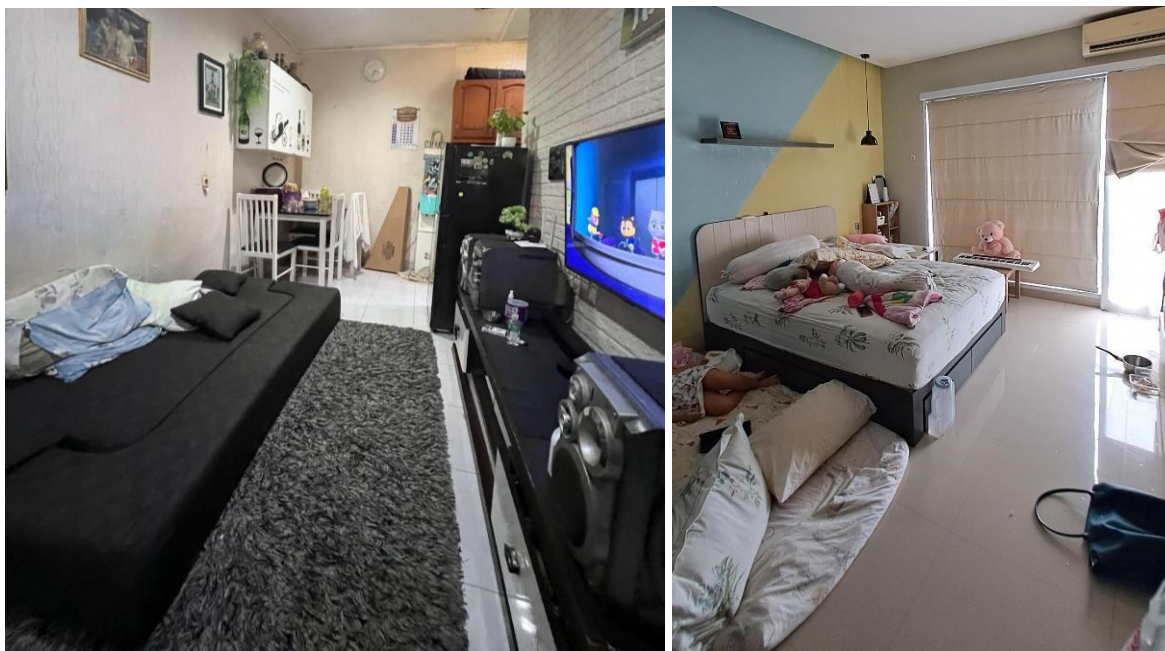


Figure 6.7 Mrs. Iron's living room (left) and Mr. Chang's apartment room (right)
Source: author (left) and participant's document (right)

Mr. Chang also built stronger connections with his family through living in his tiny home, but where Mrs. Iron's case was coincidental, his approach was intentional. Many years ago, he lived in a big house, but he felt lonely. Hence, he did the opposite. "Because it will be you and you again," he explained. Through living in the same room together (Figure 6.7 – right), he, his wife and his daughter could not get away from each other, even when they had arguments. And that was what he wanted, so they could know each other deeply. He said that he would

move later when his daughter started to need more privacy, but while she was still a very young child, he wanted to do this to spend as much time as possible with her.

Nonetheless, living in tiny homes still provides space for people who want to detach themselves from a particular social culture or want to live in a quieter neighbourhood. After moving out of her ex-husband's Balinese home, Mrs. Poleng was satisfied with her current tiny home "because I live alone now, just with the dog." Her voice was softer when she spoke, giving an impression of peace that she had finally obtained after moving to her secluded, tiny home. Ms. Kota, who labelled herself as someone who did not like to socialise, was also happy to live in a *kost*. Even though most Indonesians enact a collective culture where living within a community is expected, this lifestyle does not match every individual's personality, including hers. For her, living alone in a small *kost* was more suitable for her as she could control whom she would interact with. Her *kost* was exclusive, where the owner hired a security staff who could watch anyone who entered or left the property, and this setting made her feel safe, as no one would trespass on her privacy unless she gave permission for it.

Mr. Young had a similar perspective about social interactions in the neighbourhood. "So, if you ask me how it feels to live here, *alhamdulillah*, it is convenient. It is very convenient because other occupants are not nosey. The maintenance is also good," he said. For him, the primary indicator of his convenient life was having neighbours who could respect his personal territory, which might be easily trespassed on through frequent interactions. Meanwhile, Ms. Bebet could not disregard what she missed about her previous neighbourhood, even though she liked the convenience too. She said, "On the other hand, it's more difficult when you need help... If you live in a neighbourhood, the first time you ask for help is your neighbour, right? Here, you can't just suddenly knock at your neighbour's door asking for some sugar, but now we have Indomaret (minimart) 24 hours, right? So, I don't think there's a lack in *apartment life*."

When she said "apartment life" in English, she was referring to the fact that she liked her life better than before, when she still lived in a neighbourhood of landed houses. Even though the inhabitants in the apartment next to her could be considered neighbours, she did not feel that she could ask for quick help because they did not interact with each other. She acknowledged this as the less convenient part, but on the other hand, she also wanted to avoid the attachments to social life in her home environment. So, she still liked her 'apartment life' better.

In another story, Mr. Japandi shared a slightly different experience. One of the reasons he bought a tiny apartment was that he frequently travelled for work, and he did not have too many material belongings. He often only had a few days at home between his travelling schedules. With his lifestyle, he had a spare room and used it to host his friends from different countries or let his relatives stay when the unit was empty for a long period of time, and he enjoyed doing it. His story suggests that living in a tiny home can also provide wider benefits without compromising an individual's personal territory.

Convenient and less laborious maintenance

“Whereas an apartment is... apparently it is made convenient for people who like to live alone. They keep the area clean, our privacy is guaranteed, and not everyone can... even though it is not as secure as other apartments, because here you can get in with just one tap (household card), but I think it is a bit ahead with the security staff.”

- Mr. Young, a studio apartment

Mr. Young and all other participants in this study who were single were satisfied with their tiny home living with convenience as the overarching reason. All of them lived in a building shared with other people. There were landlords or a building management team who took care of the maintenance. As occupants, they only needed to take care of the tiny space inside their unit walls, but they could enjoy public or shared facilities without thinking of the maintenance. Even when there was a technical problem inside their unit, there was a procedure to report this, and the landlords or the maintenance team would resolve the issue.

Research participants who lived in apartments or exclusive *kosts* also mentioned positive things about security. They usually used a tap access card, so visitors could only get in if accompanied by the residents. Besides security, it also gave a sense of privacy because this system filtered people who were allowed to be in the residential areas. Beyond the practical maintenance procedure, security and privacy, further convenience was also provided through extra facilities offered by the management or landlords. Ms. Sesi mentioned that she could do laundry pick-up and delivery services through WhatsApp, and the maintenance staff changed her bed sheet every week. Ms. Kota's *kost* also offered cleaning facilities regularly, so she did not have to sweep her own bedroom floor. She was so satisfied with her tiny home that she always wanted to live there. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she could work remotely, and she stayed temporarily with her brother's family, “but after three-four months, and I was fine, I couldn't wait to get back in... I love this place so much!” she exclaimed with excitement.

Couples and young families mostly mentioned positive things about home maintenance, especially before their child was born. Mr. Trendi recalled the moments where there were only he and his wife in their home as a newlywed couple. “Two people in the house with this size is very *perfect*, optimum cleanliness,” he said, but when he was still single and lived in the same house alone, “30 m² is more than enough.” Mrs. Adi also shared that she enjoyed living in her apartment with her husband before their child was born because everything was manageable. At that time, they won a grant for a home decoration project from a well-known painting company because of their ideas about tiny home aspirations. Later on, their comfort changed after they had more family members. On the other hand, Mrs. Iron still appreciated the maintenance tasks even after she had three children, because she compared them to her parents’ house, which gave her more burdensome house chores. “I was actually happy, because in the past, it was tiring to broom the floor because the house was big,” she said.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Maxie could enjoy the tiny home beyond maintenance. She lived with her husband and a dog, and she had previously experienced living in different tiny homes. Since the current home was the best one for her, she thoroughly enjoyed being at home. “In a week, maybe I could spend three full days at home, not going out at all,” she said. Later, she talked about what she enjoyed together with her husband, “We can lie down and relax while watching TV. We couldn’t get it in our previous home. So, this is meaningful for us, because this is the place for our *quality time*.”

6.2.2 The disadvantages

Being at the bottom of the developers’ priorities

Tiny homes are the smallest and most likely the cheapest amongst other homes built by the same developer in the same neighbourhood. If the project is less profitable, it might get less priority, which can mean the timing of the building work or the amount of time spent on it, or being given low-quality building materials and finishing. For example, Mr. River “waited for three years” until he could get the keys to his home. “It was all just land, and the developer built it. But this is the last stage of the development. They built the back side first,” which was the initial location plan for the neighbourhood’s gate. Housing in Indonesia is available on the market once planning approval is granted, so people typically purchase before construction begins to secure the most affordable price. “In those three years, my wife and I often checked every week, thinking about when the project was going to be built. I was worried, maybe they wouldn’t build it, maybe they just took our money and ran away,” he added, indicating that housing scams do happen in Indonesia.

Taking advantage of people who really need to save on their budget by getting the early price, sometimes this scam targets prospective buyers of small homes because the scammer could set a cheap down payment fee. “Earlier, we tried to search for a subsidised house... Apparently, the developer was not right,” said Mr. Luki. Mrs. Guru and Mrs. Paya had also experienced this in their journeys to seek homes. “We did a down payment. The down payment was for subsidised housing... I finally got my money back,” said Mrs. Paya, then she paused to vent her emotion. “I already paid the down payment and should just wait for the construction, but they never did it... The developer should have been more careful. If it is not clear yet, they should not approve,” She regretted the poor implementation of housing practice in her area in Bali.

Mrs. Guru, who also fell victim to this scam, could not withdraw her down payment. Moreover, the next unit she aimed to buy had a problem. “The developer promised in Block E, but it didn’t pass (mortgage issue). They told me to wait because this block hasn’t started yet,” she said. She experienced a trust issue with the development, so by the time she signed another mortgage contract, she often checked the area of her future neighbourhood. “Almost every day when we came here, we saw a truck passing by, we were happy,” she said, recalling how uncertain she felt while expecting the construction.

Being sold at competitive prices, some participants complained about the quality of their building construction. “One thing that I couldn’t predict was the building quality and the quality of the water. So, about the water, I checked the reviews on Google. Sometimes worms come out of the water... not from the water, but I don’t know where from. Maybe from the ceramics... Also, the leaks... This! We just painted it over,” Mr. Adi expressed his complaints about his apartment. In a landed house, Mr. Emi shared, “I feel the wall is not solid... Sometimes I woke up at night and thought I heard people talking. Apparently, it was my neighbours.” While showing the rooms, he also mentioned some cracks on the wall and the trace of rainwater leak on the ceiling. According to his landlord, the house was new and “I am the first occupant,” he said, which implied that the developer did not produce good building quality. Meanwhile, Mr. Baik complained about the final treatments of the building that were not thorough, “The back area was just soil... It’s still leaking a bit if the rain is too heavy.” Even so, he did not want to complain because “in terms of the house and the environment, here is better,” which implied that housing qualities in general could be worse than that. Moreover, Mr. Trendi, who lived in a prestigious neighbourhood, was still not satisfied with his original building quality. “Maybe because this is a *mass-produced* house. So, the developers’ business is also *cutting corners*. Just build and sell, build and sell, so on,” he said with several terms expressed in English.

When catastrophes happened, Mr. Don described the disadvantages of being at the lower end of the hierarchy of the neighbourhood. Flooding often occurs in the Jakarta area. Responding to it, he said, “We’re not afraid of the flood from the river. We are afraid from the front. It’s like a tsunami!” What he meant by ‘the front’ was a higher-class neighbourhood near to his that was built without considering the environmental implications, and people from his neighbourhood experienced the flood water diverted from that area. Consequently, house prices dropped afterwards. “Sold. And they sold it very cheap,” said Mr. River, who witnessed many of his neighbours selling their homes after flooding.

When new construction happens near a neighbourhood, those with less money will experience the negative implications. “Behind us used to be empty land. It used to be a water reservoir before they built a school,” Mrs. Handy recalled her past story of her home. She used to be able to feel the shade of trees on that empty land. “We could use it to breathe, it’s cool in the afternoon,” she said, emphasising the meaning of that space amidst the tropical heat, but since the school was built, “They collect the water there, but the overflow goes here.”

Less space, less place(s)

Tiny homes obviously have less space than homes of more standard sizes, which means there is less capacity for either activities or for storing items. This created particular challenges for households with multiple occupants, as shared by some participants below.

Things had changed since Mr. and Mrs. Trendi had a baby. The space that used to be comfortable and ideal for the two of them became more chaotic and disordered. No matter how well they had planned their home, they still needed more space for the baby, including ‘auditory space’ when the baby was crying. However, their chaotic situation was affected by multiple factors regardless of space, as they were in early parenthood, where stress was common, and the sound of a crying baby could go through the walls and might still be disturbing even in a larger house.

For Mrs. Nanda, this problem still occurred even though they had passed the very early parenthood stress, and their children were no longer crying babies. “It’s so small! The shape is like this! So ugly!” she exclaimed. She even gave a score of 3/10 to show her level of dissatisfaction. There had been a debate with her husband, who wanted to buy a drum set for their older daughter to support her interest, but Mrs. Nanda wanted to postpone that idea because it would make their home too full. Mrs. Nanda insisted that even if the drum set could be disassembled into small pieces, there would be no space at home for it. She was expecting

that her husband could provide a budget for a home renovation to add more space first, and then she would agree to buy a drum set.

Where Mr. and Mrs. Nanda's daughter had to wait to practice playing drums at home, Mr. River's daughters had to find an alternative space to do their school assignments because there was no dedicated workspace or study space. They did it "in the front," said Mr. River, referring to the living room. "They don't want to do it in their room," he added. Both of his daughters shared their bedroom together, and the size was much smaller than the living room. It was unknown if their preference was influenced by size or other factors, but a conflict of activities would occur when one of the daughters wanted to work on her school assignments, but the other one or other family members wanted to watch TV, or when his son needed to sleep because he slept in the living room. "He has no bedroom," Mr. River said. Knowing that this was not ideal, Mr. River sent his son away to stay with his grandfather, who lived 30 minutes away by scooter. He said, "But he rarely sleeps here... My father-in-law lives alone, so he lives there." Even so, his son kept most of his belongings at Mr. River's home and frequently visited for a nap.

Having no other bedroom, Mrs. Vill also had to send her older son to a relative's house nearby when it was time for sleep. Because the place was near, her son would leave after dinner and return the next morning for breakfast before school time. She never locked the door, so her son could come in at any time. She laughed when she was asked about her safety concerns. She said that her house was unappealing, and no one would be interested in breaking in. Besides, she trusted that her neighbourhood was safe. Whereas Mrs. Kleen, knowing she could only afford a cheap, small place, left her firstborn son in her former village to be raised by her extended family and brought the other two children to live with her when she moved downtown. She sent money home regularly for her child's upkeep costs.

With its collective social culture, practices of a relative living together with a different household from the extended family are common in Indonesia, whether it is for a short visit or a longer stay, such as Mrs. Kleen's son, who lived with her relative in a different region. Depending on how close the bond is between the relatives, they will often take care of each other like their own family, including providing a space to live. In the short term, there is a social expectation to host a relative from out of town who stays over, and it can be considered rude to reject a visit from family members who need a place to sleep over. Although there is no social penalty to refuse, this social expectation still exists. "When there are nieces and nephews, I sleep with them inside (the bedroom) because they are still small. Outside (in the living room) is for my

husband and my father, there's a folded bed. And behind (in the other bedroom) is for my mother and my sister, or my grandma. So, the females are inside," said Mrs. Sendu, regretting her inconvenience at her current home when her family came to visit. Being from a middle class family, her parents' house had a 'guest bedroom' and a 'guest room', which was the first room after the entrance that looked similar to a living room, used to welcome guests, while the rest of the family members could stay uninterrupted in the living room located in a more private area, called 'family room'. For her, that was what a home should look like. However, there would be no space to provide a separate living area for guests in her tiny home, and she was disappointed. Nonetheless, she was ready with an extra bed, implying that this social expectation still guided behaviour, regardless of the actual capacity of the home in terms of its size.

While some families had to live separately with one of their children due to the lack of a bedroom, some families who still had sufficient bedrooms for all of the family members chose to use one of the bedrooms for storage because there was no other place to store household items. Mr. and Mrs. Adi's apartment had two small bedrooms, but they continued to have their son share the main bedroom with them. Before he was born, they used the other bedroom for temporary storage. Later, it became permanent. As seen in Figure 6.8 (left), a lot of items were placed on the bed in the room that was supposed to be a bedroom. Figure 6.8 (right) shows a bedroom in Mr. Chief's home. It was located at the back of the house and was supposed to be his daughter's bedroom, but she refused to sleep there and wanted to sleep in the living room, which was brighter and closer to her parents' bedroom. Hence, the living room became a multipurpose room, and the bedroom became a storage space for everything that had no designated area, from keeping items that were barely used to hanging clothes.

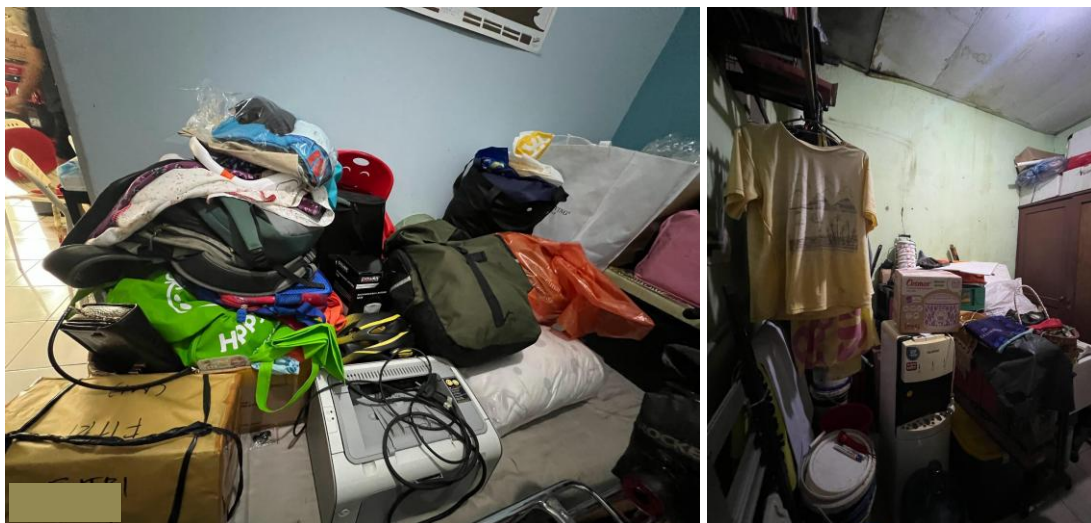


Figure 6.8 Mrs. Adi's (left) and Mr. Chief's (right) child bedrooms.

In Bali, married female participants complained that there was no place to put their ceremonial offerings. As part of Hindu religious observances, offerings of various sizes are always made. There are the small ones called *canang* for daily prayer and the bigger ones called *banten* (Figure 6.9). Ceremonies in Bali can happen once every few weeks, and the females prepare *banten* at home for the events. Mrs. Guru shared that preparing *banten* required careful planning. Foods in the offering need to be fresh, and they had to cook meals too as part of the assorted items in *Banten*.



Figure 6.9 Samples of *canang* (left) and *banten* (right)
Source: bali.com, 2025

“For the big ceremonies, it’s also difficult. Where can I place the *banten*? The space is so tight, so everything must be here,” said Mrs. Luki. Preparing *banten* also includes making baskets from woven or sewn palm leaves. Before the time for the ceremony comes, the baskets must be ready. Mrs. Luki wanted this process to be organised, so she did this task little by little on regular days between ceremonies. If she could produce more than her family needed, she could sell the extra to her neighbours, not as a business, but as a contribution to the communal offerings. Big ceremonies require group work amongst neighbours, and her tasks were related to the craftwork. With the space that she had at home, she did not have a dedicated space for this craft and her work tools, so she just put them all in the corner of her living room, and she was unhappy because the room looked untidy (Figure 6.10). “No place at the back... It looks dirty like this,” she said. Because *banten* contains food, it is common that females prepare it in the kitchen at the back of the house. Unfortunately, Mrs. Luki’s kitchen was not big enough for extra items.

Mr. Luki explained that “she wants a dedicated place for this, not in the guest room.” What he meant by guest room was the only living room in the house. As mentioned before in Mrs. Sendu’s experience, the concept of ‘living room’ in Indonesian middle-class houses is divided into ‘guest room’ and ‘family room’. By labelling the only living room at home as a guest room,

he suggested that the space was dedicated more to guests than to family. In another conversation, he shared that he spent most of his time at home inside his bedroom, where there was AC and a TV too. He also said that he and his son often played in his bedroom, too, which suggested that he merged the function of bed and 'family room' inside his bedroom.



Figure 6.10 Mr. and Mrs. Luki's 'guest room' with the pile of *banten* tools in the corner.

Clutter and voluminous items

With storage difficulties, piles of items can be seen overwhelming compared to the volume of space. Most participants navigated this issue through negotiations and compromises to the use of their space (discussed later in Section 6.3). However, some household essential equipment, such as kitchen utensils, food containers, and wardrobes, had to be accommodated. Even though the amount of these could be minimised, the storage provision was necessary to manage the household items. Unfortunately, most housing produced by developers is unfurnished without any closed cabinets for storage. Organising home interiors is a household's responsibility, but those with tight budgets often prioritise buying equipment before proper storage capacity. Additionally, individuals with less spatial intuition may misestimate how much space they have for storing items. Consequently, they might keep buying things based on their needs without having enough space to store them. Thus, piles of clutter appeared. As seen in Figures 6.11 and 6.12, clutter from participants' homes was mostly visible in the kitchen and the living room.



Figure 6.11 Clutter in the kitchen



Figure 6.12 Clutter in the living room

Mr. Don was one of the participants whose home was cluttered. He lived with his wife and three daughters, who were at different stages of childhood. He also said that all of them wore *hijabs*. This means their clothes also required more fabric to cover their extremities, which requires more wardrobe space. Moreover, there were four different females with different ages and sizes at home. “I want it organised. I want to make a shoe rack as a part of the plan, so things are not scattered like this. I have one, but it’s full. Well, I got more kids. I don’t know, maybe I’ll just buy it,” said Mr. Don about his ideal plan to manage the items at home. He felt that he had more varieties of items than other families because most of his family members were female and were stereotyped to have more stuff than males. “I want to stack, organise... I have a dream to make a kitchen set. Because if we have the kitchen set, the cooking pans can get into the rack, and it will look neat,” he said again. He realised that his home was untidy, but with the different needs of his family members, it would be difficult for him to eliminate some items. They would be “fighting over stuff, that’s inevitable. They’re children!”

Having a small space could also create a self-critical perception that occupants had too many items in their homes. With a cluttered living room and a child's bedroom that was used for

storage, Mr. Adi said that his home was “250% beyond my tolerance” because the piles of items were no longer manageable for him. He admitted there were things he barely used, but he kept them for safety, as he had learned from his father, such as pliers, wires, and other home and utility tools. Some might have been broken, but he could not manage to meticulously sort which ones still functioned well or not, or which ones were not needed anymore, because he could just go to a service when some things needed repair.

In a smaller home, a tiny studio apartment, Mr. Young criticised himself rather than commenting on the space restriction. “The challenge is, apparently, I have a lot of stuff!” he said. Although he personally took this as a positive challenge to his spatial creativity, there was not much space he could gain after several attempts at decluttering and rearranging the furniture layout. He followed home decoration references to use a clothes rack instead of a wardrobe, which was recommended for a tiny space. However, it still created a voluminous impression because the space was too small and there was no gap for circulation between furniture (Figure 6.13 – left). “At least I still have some space to move,” he said humbly, but it reflected how the spatial availability in his studio apartment was not ideal for him.

Facing a similar challenge, Ms. Bebet stated that her home was “50% over capacity” because of the items she kept. She admitted that she had some clothes that she could have got rid of, but she also needed to have some pairs of outfits that matched every type of weather for her work travel, mainly winter clothing. Her wardrobe was too small for thick and bulky winter clothes, so she stored them inside plastic containers and piled them next to her television (Figure 6.13 – right). According to her, she had adopted a minimalist lifestyle by gradually reducing a lot of items. However, she also wanted to look good professionally as a working-class woman, so she still kept a few pairs of shoes she liked and emphasised that she could not be more frugal than she already was.



Figure 6.13 Voluminous items in Mr. Young's (left) and Ms. Bebet's studio apartments (right)

"I am 24 hours at home. If what I see is not nice, I feel terrible," said Mrs. Sendu, who spent her daily life with her toddler while her husband was working. Even though a helper came every two days to clean their home, clutter still appeared because there was no dedicated storage. Unfortunately, they could not provide that because the home was rented and there were rules from the landlord. "Even though it's just a small thing, we call it off... I wanted to install a hanger for clothes, but I cancelled it because nailing is not allowed," she said. The only way they could provide storage was by buying moveable furniture that they could retain when their tenancy was over, but they still had an aspiration to buy their own home, so they wanted to save the money for it. Consequently, there were items all over the home. With the combination of the hot and humid weather, a small home filled with too much stuff makes the temperature rise, so Mrs. Sendu turned on her AC "almost 24 hours." Also, there was a construction project near her neighbourhood that had worsened the environmental quality. "I mean, just to get out of the house, the dust is extremely terrible," but inside the home, "you know, stuffy. There's that feeling... Talking about its comfort, it is *nooot* comfortable," she said, emphasising her level of discomfort.

Tendency towards overcrowding

Many of the tiny homes visited during this study had only one bathroom and a maximum of two designated bedrooms, which functioned well. A few landed houses had been modified, and research participants could add another informal bedroom by creating enclosed walls and a roof in their outdoor spaces, but those were still not enough to accommodate all their occupants and enable them to have individual bedrooms. Thus, children from most couple participants had to share bedrooms with their siblings.

"I am here (pointing at the master's bedroom), but it's not like that in the practice (they laughed together). The old one also likes to join us, the young one, too. So sometimes the four of us are huddled together... Just make it fit! Because the oldest one is still like a baby and wants to sleep together. Even more so, the youngest one, whereas he is actually in the uni."

- Mr. Handy

Mr. Handy demonstrated that co-sleeping between family members was seen as normal, even when the child had grown up. Rather than identifying it as a negative sentiment towards space restriction, he was expressing happiness about this warm family bond. However, the quality of their sleep would be questionable when four adults share the same bed. Ironically, that was not the only bedroom they had. There was a total of five people in their family, and he said four of them liked to co-sleep. There were two other bedrooms; one with no window but which

had AC, and the other one had a small window but without AC. Their middle child was the only female. She occupied the room with AC and always slept alone. Mr. Handy said that this habit only happened occasionally, but this suggested that thermal comfort might be more crucial than spatial comfort, as everyone wanted to sleep in the bedrooms with ACs.

On the other hand, the more people share a bedroom together, the more the temperature will increase due to the cumulative body temperature from everyone. Consequently, they will rely on AC to lower the room temperature, and this was admitted by Mrs. Iron, who paid high electric bills every month due to the frequent AC usage. There were five people in her home, where she shared the same bedroom with her husband, and all three of her children shared one bedroom. Her parents also regularly stayed for a short visit, which made a total of seven people in the house, but her home only had a floor area of around 40 m². With such conditions, she said that her parents would stay “only about a week” because “my mother doesn’t really like being here, too tight for her.”

Surprisingly, no research participants shared concerns about overcrowding or having too many people in the house, even though they knew their sleeping arrangements were not ideal. Moreover, a tendency towards overcrowding may not solely be judged based on the ratio between occupants and space, but also on how occupants perform their daily activities. Most of their routines gave the impression that their homes served as a nonstop running machine, especially in the morning. Mrs. Iron had an order about who had to wake up first and use the bathroom first, and then who had to prepare breakfast or wash the dirty plates, because everyone needed to take turns. They only had one bathroom for five people, three dining chairs, and a narrow kitchen. She had to discipline her family because if someone missed the order, it would ruin someone else’s schedule. Mr. Don also had a similar situation with extra complexity. Apart from the bathroom usage and breakfast preparation, the family had a morning prayer routine where the females did it at home, while he did it at the neighbourhood mosque. His wife had to wake up before 4 AM during school days to make all preparations, which impacted the amount of sleep she could have. Three of Mrs. Guru’s daughters also shared the same bedroom. There was also only one bathroom for the total of five people in the house. All her daughters were teenagers, and they had adjusted well to the chores and routines. The only thing that concerned her was the length of time they spent outside the home, but she was unsure whether it was due to their teenage phases or the lack of space at home.

Stress and frustration

Some participants appeared overwhelmed by the cumulative impacts of the lack of space on their daily routines and storage capacity. For example, Mr. Chief knew that he had stored too many things inside the unused bedroom. Years ago, his daughter had lived with his parents-in-law in another town, so the bedroom was empty, where he used to fill it with items that he planned to sort out later, but he never did until his daughter came back. His daughter also did not like the room and chose to acquire the living room as her bedroom, even though it was less private. As seen from the clutter previously in Figure 6.8 (right, p.164), the room was full of miscellaneous items, but he did not know how to make his home tidy again. “Well, I want to sort things out, but I’m confused about where to place things while I’m sorting out. I don’t know where to place the stuff that I might still want to use. I’m confused,” he said.

The research participants could become frustrated when the space issue was unresolved. For example, Ms. Dandy had mixed experiences as she had been transitioning from a small *kost* to a small apartment. “It’s still stressful to see,” said Ms. Dandy about the clutter inside her apartment. Having previously shared a home with a friend, she felt that she had a big space compared to her previous *kost* that was much smaller. She and her housemate used to centralise activities around the bedroom because their previous *kost* had no dedicated living room. After moving to an apartment, a common room that was planned for kitchen, dining, and living felt like an extra space. Rather than finishing that room properly, the developers had left the kitchen sink and pipe exposed and placed a desk next to it. (Figure 6.14 left – circled) They did not need any cookware because they always bought food from the food stalls on the ground floor of the apartment. On the other side of the same room, they placed boxes of their material belongings and some gallon containers of drinking water. She said they had never unpacked their items except clothes since they moved because they were unsure how long they would stay in that apartment. Nonetheless, they had lived in that apartment for more than a year. Ms. Dandy only smiled, judging herself for neglecting the pile of boxes in the living room. Later she recalled that her moving to that apartment was stressful because she was surprised by how many items she brought from her previous *kost*. So, she would only unpack a box if she really needed something from it (Figure 6.14 – right).



Figure 6.14 Ms. Dandy's kitchen area for a desk (left) and living room for storage (right)

A similar tendency was also shown by Mrs. Adi. Even though her husband said the things in their apartment had been '250% beyond his tolerance,' she admitted that she would not try any harder to make their home more comfortable. "Whatever we can outsource, we'll outsource, so we can rest," she said while laughing. She shared her family's schedule every weekday and weekend, which was full of work, errands and shifts to accompany their son with his activities. Living in the busy Jakarta City, they could spend three hours commuting every day. So, they would choose to rest when they had spare time. "Even if I could take a full month of sabbatical leave¹⁶, I would use the days for vacation," she said. Sounding tired and angry, she later expressed her regret openly, "That's it. I feel so tight... I shouldn't have bought this apartment. We should've just rented."

Mrs. Baik also expressed bitterness towards untidiness while saying, "It's because we want to move and we have no other place to put these, so that's okay." The verbatim transcription may give the impression that she had compromised her expectation, but she expressed it in an angry intonation. She may have said "that's okay," but it appeared to be beyond her tolerance. "There was something that I moved to the back because I didn't want to see it anymore. This is too, very full. I don't really like it... I like seeing things organised. Seeing this actually makes me feel dizzy because it is everything here and there. Not, not tidy," she continued with a firmer intonation.

There was a pattern of female participants expressing more frustration when their homes were untidy. Meanwhile, Mr. Don could laugh about it even though he "would be confused" when small items in his home went missing or "stranded in the toy box!" he exclaimed with a happy

¹⁶ Annual leave in Indonesia is approximately 12 total days per year. Longer than that is considered sabbatical.

smile. He also shared his disappointment when particular areas were not tidy. “Yes, it’s messy. Sometimes I’m upset because the dirty plates are not done. Why don’t you wash it? It’s so uncomfortable to see,” he said, imitating the conversation between him and his wife. “Sometimes I wash them. I intentionally washed them, and I asked her, “Will you wash them tomorrow?” She said, “No.” And then I scolded her! Well, I helped her, but sometimes she took it for granted. I understand that she’s tired taking care of the kids, but she likes to say “later, later, it’s still 2, 3, 4... four plates. And *boom!* When it’s piling up, then she wants to wash. I mean, she can wash them every two days, but she waits for three or four days,” he shared openly about what he viewed about domestic chores. Mr. Don admitted that he expected his wife to do the housework because his parents never asked him to do house chores in his family. For him, he was doing an extra kindness to help if he also took on the kitchen chores. He noticed that his wife must be tired because he said, “pity on her,” but rather than sharing the chores, he told his wife to go hangout with people from her Islamic community if she wanted to take a break. “It is what it is. I want to reduce, but the children... I’ve taught the children to wash the plate after they eat. Sometimes I remind their mother too, and also myself. But that’s my bad, too. “Even if we want to wash directly after we eat, sometimes we’re carried away, just do it later,” he laughed again. His story might imply why women tend to be more frustrated or stressed, especially when Indonesian culture still expects women to take most of the responsibilities for domestic chores (Kiram, 2026).

6.3 Adjustments to living in tiny homes

Whether deliberately or not, all participants had gone through some adjustments to living in their tiny homes, compared to either their parents’ homes or other previous kinds of homes. There were multiple modes of adjustments expressed in conversations or exhibited in their homes, and these can be categorised into negotiations and compromises. Negotiations included bargaining processes to solve the spatial issues while minimising detrimental outcomes, whereas compromises were seen as letting go of unfeasible expectations through rationalising other different values that were more important.

6.3.1 Negotiations

Hiring professionals

Thoughtful interior design for homes undoubtedly produced spatial benefits for the inhabitants. Mr. and Mrs. Maxie did not customise their home, but they had experienced living in different tiny homes and understood the importance of good layout design. Previously, their tiny home

had a mezzanine, but with the same total floor space, they could manoeuvre more freely in their current one-storey floor home. So, with better design, tiny homes could feel more spacious. Mr. Trendi and Mr. Japandi, who had more budget than other participants, hired professionals to optimise the tiny space and make their home interior look appealing with their preferred design styles. As a result, they gained more space as the design experts could make hidden or under-utilised spaces more useful.

There were a lot of modifications in Mr. Trendi's home, including creating a retractable bed that could also be a work desk when unfolded, installing hangers under the dining tables to hide the folded dining chairs, and creating a small attic space by lowering the ceiling of the entrance area. Although the height was not sufficient for an adult standing on its floor, the attic could function as a workspace (Figure 6.15). Meanwhile, Mr. Japandi customised the forms of his furniture to incorporate different functions together, such as extending his bed mattress board for a work desk and drawers (Fig. 6.16 upper) and merging some drawers with the base of his living room, in which he preferred to sit on an elevated floor (Fig. 6.16 lower).

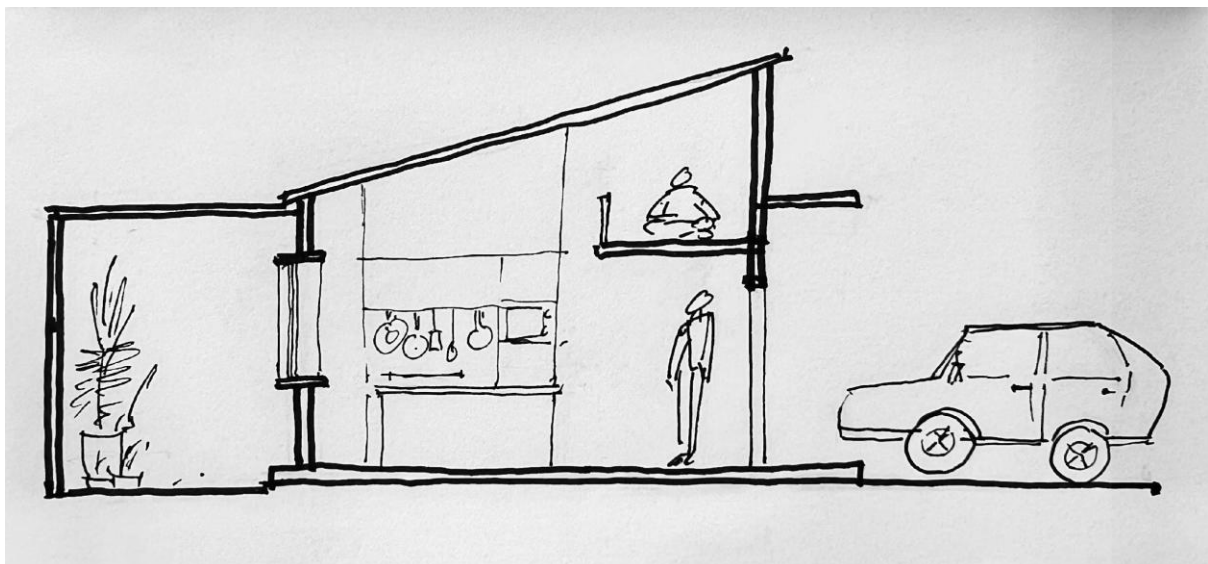


Figure 6.15 Utilising the attic as a workspace in Mr. Trendi's home



Figure 6.16 Bedroom storage (upper) and living room (lower) storage in Mr. Japandi's apartment

Whether to provide storage or to create multipurpose furniture, customised interior design was a generally more costly project because it was tailored to a specific requirement. With the high level of humidity in Indonesian climates, expansion and contraction frequently occur in buildings and furniture materials that are predominantly made of wood, which challenges the original design precision. Although the risks can be minimised by selecting specific types of wood, better quality materials are more expensive. Moreover, specific tools for the labour process and some types of hinges, especially for retractable furniture, are imported from different countries. Thus, customised interior design could be too expensive for many Indonesian people. For example, Mr. Trendi paid about Rp 1.4 billion for the house, including the legal fees, with the costs for the interior work being Rp 400 million, which could be the price of a house in a different location. Even so, hiring professionals still became an aspiration for some. Mr. and Mrs. Adi, who had been frustrated with their disorganised small apartments (see p.172), were saving money to hire an interior designer to solve the problems. Other than making space utilisation efficient, design professionals may also suggest strategies to help

keep the space neat and tidy. However, the implementation depends on the habits or home activities of the occupants themselves.



Figure 6.17 Mr. & Mrs. Trendi's child's bedroom with a retractable bed/desk
Source: participant's (left) and author's documentation (right)

The set of images above compares one bedrooms in Mr. and Mrs. Trendi's home with a retractable bed in an unfolded position, as an illustration of the condition of a certain room after being used for several years (Figure 6.17). The picture on the left was taken before they had a baby, and the photo on the right was taken during the fieldwork visit, showing the same space with far more items in it. The room was prepared for their son, who was still a toddler at that time, so it was temporarily used for miscellaneous items. When they were running out of space to store something, they would keep it in that room, but when their parents came for a visit and stayed over, they were able to quickly make the room ready as a bedroom again. They said that having their baby added more items and affected the appearance of their home, so they expected that it would be temporary.

In another example, living in a tiny space but with planned storage spaces made Mr. Japandi reflect on the meanings of material items at home. He liked things to be kept inside the storage spaces. Whenever he noticed he had too many things displayed outside these spaces, he would sort and give them away, mostly books. There was someone else who occupied the other bedroom. Even though the main storage for each bedroom was identically designed, one bedroom looked messier than another, which implied multiple possibilities; one's need regarding storage might be simpler than the other's, one's behaviours toward space might be tidier than other's, or the customised interior design only suited Mr. Japandi's personality but was less relevant for other people.

Organizing space

While hiring a design expert may still be an option, there are more feasible alternatives for participants with smaller budgets. For example, Mrs. Paya and Mrs. Nanda exhibited intuitive design skills by roughly planning their own spatial needs at home. Mrs. Paya drew her own layout plan ideas, where she considered the compass positions and notes on the strengths and weaknesses of her ideas. She created three design alternatives and selected one that would provide better air ventilation (Figure 6.18).

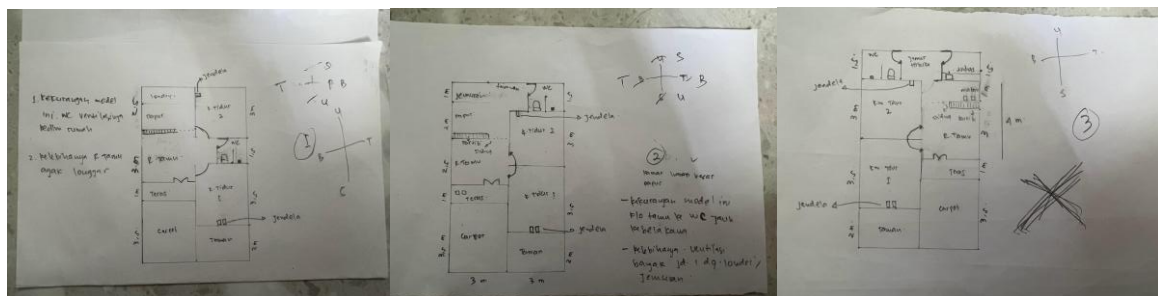


Figure 6.18 Mrs. Paya's original sketches of her home layout ideas
Source: participant's document

Well, I have a small house, but I don't want it to feel dark. The houses I surveyed mostly felt so dark, and I just felt like... like I was locked. Stuck, dark, locked, the end, like that. Usually, if I come to a house, from the front to the back is just bedrooms or a bathroom and done. So I want a house that, even if it's small, at *leeeeast* (expressive emphasis) I have a bit of a garden. I was also thinking about how to get the daylight in and reduce the electricity. Usually, people start to turn their lamps on in the late afternoon. At 5.30 (PM) or 5, it's dark if the door is closed, but here, sometimes it lasts until 6.30 because the daylight from the sun can come in through the skylight that I made.

- Mrs. Paya, a self-designed landed house

Her dissatisfaction towards 'the usual house' she surveyed, which referred to developers' mass-produced tiny houses, motivated her to design her own layout. She purchased an empty plot of land and requested that the construction company build the house based on her sketches. By mentioning that she could stay an hour later than her neighbours without artificial light, she implied that houses built by developers were not responsive to the natural setting, which could have been more energy efficient had they planned it better. She was not the only participant who was concerned about the daylight. Mrs. Nanda also replaced the developer's given door at the back of her house with a big glass sliding door (Figure 6.19 – left), allowing the daylight to penetrate to the whole main room, which merged the kitchen, living, and dining

area. “I definitely want the open space,” she said, explaining why the daylight was important to make the room feel ‘open’ or spacious. She also designed customised storage that fitted the refrigerator size and the slanted kitchen ceiling precisely (middle) and optimised the empty space between the walls near the bathroom door with vertical storage (right).



Figure 6.19 Mrs. Nanda's result from her design ideas in the main room

“Actually, I want it to look like a resort home, serious, seriously!” Mrs. Nanda exclaimed. She mentioned Instagram and Homes and Gardens magazine as her references because those media displayed design ideas to make tiny homes look beautiful. Adopting ideas from the Western media, she placed the washing machine in the kitchen, near the dining table. This is not common in Indonesian homes. Washing clothes is not usually done in the kitchen space, but is done outdoors to avoid more humidity from the water inside the home. Mrs. Nanda admitted that she disliked how the laundry activity needed to be undertaken, and she planned to move it to the outdoor terrace at the back of the house when she had the funds in the future, as she was already spending money on another renovation.

With less formal design skills, some participants were still able to solve their spatial challenges intuitively, especially when they needed more storage. For Mrs. Iron, the most important thing was to see less clutter, “It’s ugly with card boxes,” she said, and she had bought furniture with compartments to help all members of her family sort their own items (Figure 6.20 – left). She could also use the storage top as an ironing board, as there was no dedicated space for it. The challenge in her home was “we have thirty pairs of shoes. Our firstborn is a basketball player, so he has more shoes... We bought a storage unit for our shoes, but we had too many shoes, and the storage unit was broken. We thought again about how to make these organised, not dirty. So, we bought these (shoe bags - Figure 6.20 – right)”. Although she

could not reduce the number of items that could produce clutter, simplifying the visual appearance helped the room look tidy.

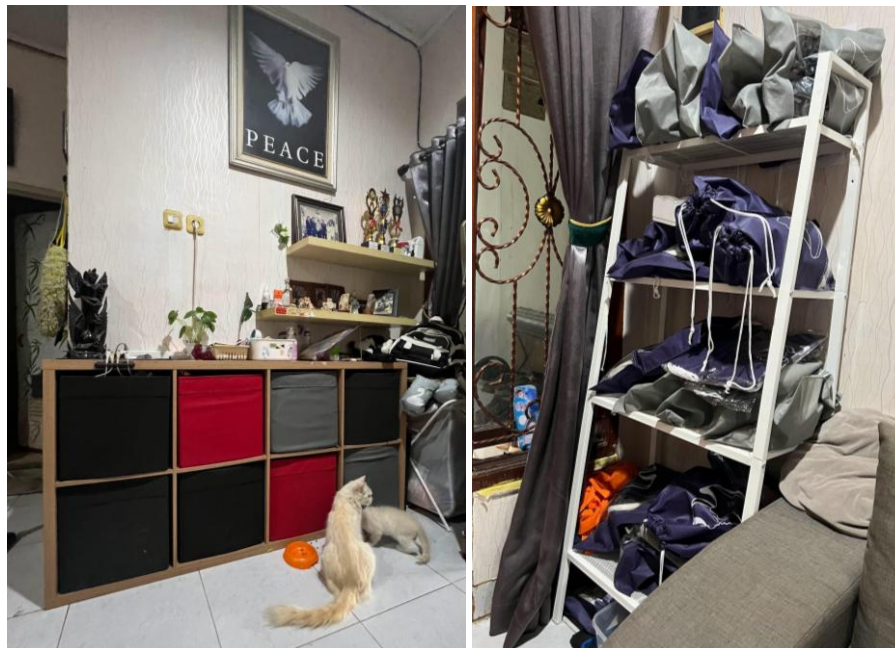


Figure 6.20 Mrs. Iron's furniture to compartmentalise her family's items.

Another intuitive example was finding empty hidden volumes for storage. No participants initially mentioned this during the interviews. However, when the spaces were identified, they only gave an expression and a simple term, such as “well, so?”, suggesting that they did not initially plan for creating those spaces. It was common to find storage above head height level, but the way some participants hid it from visible sight was unique, such as placing a cupboard between the structural column and the wall (Figure 6.21 – left), installing a plate under the ceiling (middle), or using the space between the ceiling and the roof deck (right).

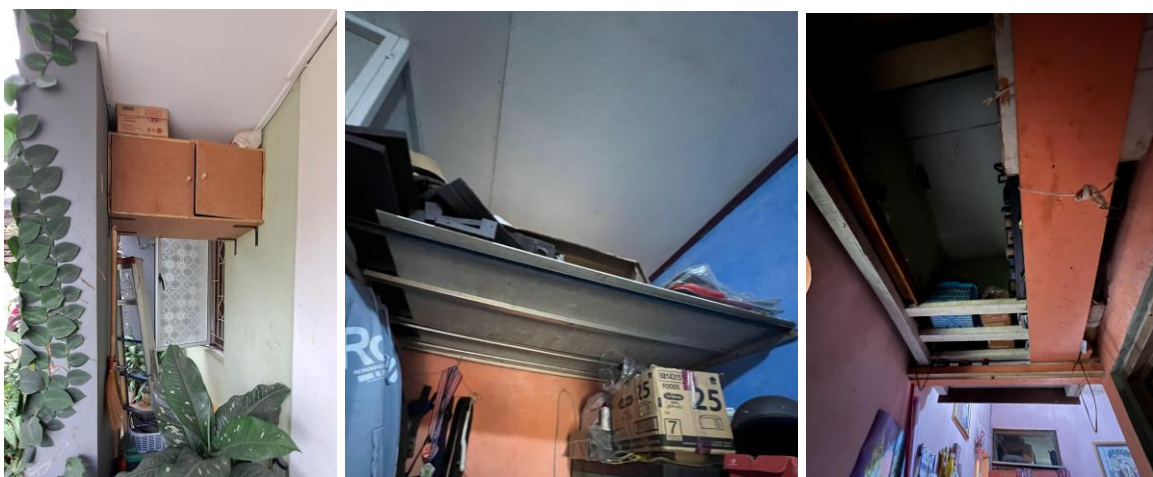


Figure 6.21 'Hidden' storage in participants' homes

Participants had also learned to be flexible in using their main living room. “This is a room for everything, watching TV, chatting,” said Mrs. Handy before her husband added, “Also for a dining room, living room, shop room, a room for doing everything,” referring to their 10.20 m² room where they could arrange a coffee table with some seats and a television set on one side of the wall. Mrs. Handy sold some breakfast meals that were displayed on the coffee table. She opened her house every morning and let people, usually her neighbours, come in and buy some food to go. After the business transactions were finished, they rearranged the room as a living room. Since all homes in this study had a maximum of one common room, it was found that multiple activities were often conducted in this room, including gathering with family members, eating, studying, watching TV, playing with children, sleeping, and even practising yoga.

Some participants who could not stand the hot weather centralised their activities in the room with an AC, usually the main bedroom, because they also needed a cooler temperature for sleep. “I need to work on my data tasks. I’ll go to my bedroom because the AC is there... And also, better, because the TV is there. I can write something or anything, mostly in the bedroom,” said Mrs. Paya. She knew that she would occasionally work from home. Her husband also did a night shift sometimes and would sleep during the day, so she prepared their bedroom for both work and sleep with a comfortable temperature. In her previous home, Ms. Sesi would often hang out in the kitchen because she loved cooking. Later, she had changed her preferences after moving to her current tiny home. “I don’t know. If there’s an AC in the kitchen, would I often be in the kitchen or not? But since the AC is here (bedroom), I like it here,” she said. She treated her bedroom like a living room where she could eat in bed while watching the television hung on the wall in front of it.

Where most participants arranged the spaces within the interior boundaries of their homes, Mr. Chi’s approach was unusual as he used his carport area as a terrace with seats and a coffee table, and he considered it a living room. Without worrying about security, he also placed some decorations. “Because there’s no more space,” he said, and “I actually like the outdoors... If I had money, I would give only half to the home. The house is just for sleeping, and my days are outside like this. So, my terrace would be the biggest... If necessary, the whole house should be a terrace!” he laughed. With the outdoor living space, he could extend his home interior beyond his building walls, but still within his land territory. He compared, “Other people move the building forward”, referring to his neighbours who filled their whole land for building upon renovations until it reached the edge of the road, as shown in Figure 6.22. Many participants also used this approach to gain some extra space outside their original

building walls, regardless of whether their action might trespass on other people's territory, which will be discussed in the following section.



Figure 6.22 Home extension until the edge of the road (sketch added from a different angle)

Inducing creativity

When spatial restrictions were perceived as a problem, seeking a solution was a natural response, and some participants demonstrated creative ways to address this issue. And when the budget was restricted, unthinkable ideas might appear as the outcome, as shown by Mr. Chi. He did not have much money for other things besides the necessities of his family, but one day, the roof structure of his home needed repair. Due to safety concerns, he fixed the roof with the simplest construction possible. Since he had to dismantle the roof structure, he constructed the new one at a time at a higher elevation, which gave more space for air circulation. He also did the construction by himself, so he could modify spontaneously and created a retractable roof to enable cross ventilation (Figure 6.23).

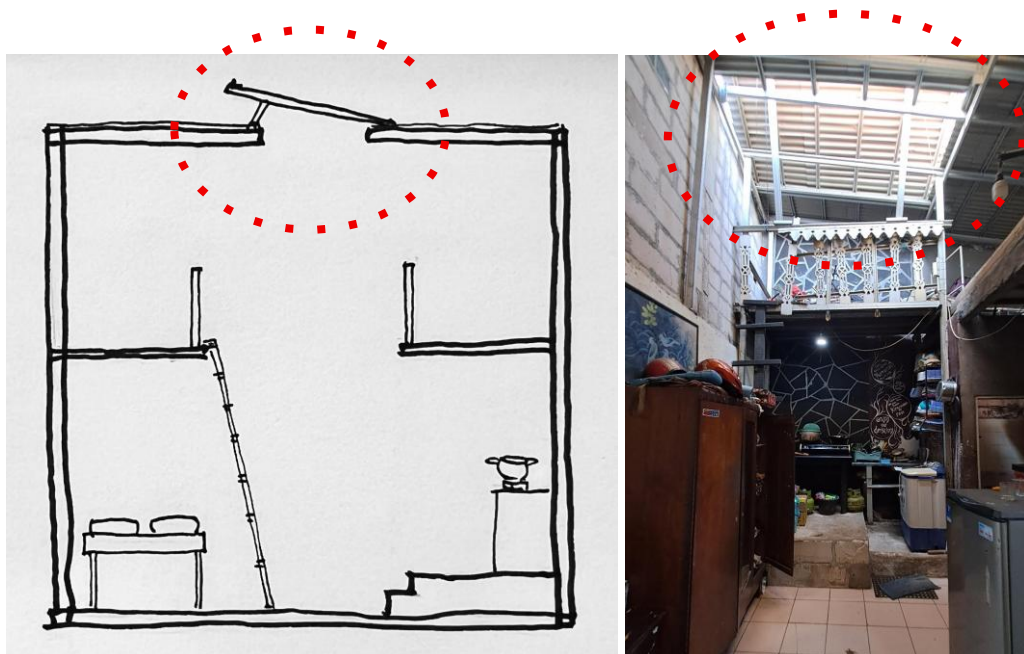


Figure 6.23 Mr. Chi's bale-bale and the retractable roof (circled) from different sides

After getting high ceilings for his new home interior, he added mezzanines on two sides of his home with ladders to access them. “I made 2 *bale-bales*¹⁷ up there, so we have many bedrooms,” Mr. Chi laughed. “One for each son, about the size of a single bed. It can fit,” he joked cynically, but he was also proud of his own work. Not only did he gain extra space for his sons’ future bedrooms, but he also improved the air circulation at home through his creative work. This also shows his desire to provide personal space for his household members, even though his home was small.



Figure 6.24 Mrs. Gigi's home decorations in the kitchen (top-left) and living room (other images)

Besides Mr. Chi, Mr. River and Mr. Handy also did the construction of their home renovation by themselves, which gave them flexibility because they could adjust the progress based on their financial and physical capacities. Meanwhile, in Mrs. Gigi's home, she said it was her husband who mostly worked on the interior decorations that were carefully thought out with

¹⁷ An area for laying in or hang out casually - spoken in a local language

items that were arranged in an orderly manner. She denied that she arranged to respond to the tiny space. For her, it was just her natural personality to keep things tidy, and the paintings on the walls were her husband's hobby. Even though she or her husband did not have any specific design concept, the arrangement corresponded nicely with the interior spaces. Similar to some other tiny homes, there was no furniture for the living room, but with the emphasis on horizontal elements of the painting, the room looked wider and more spacious. There was a sense that they organised it carefully to make the space comfortable for human movements, not only as a place for items or furniture. From the assorted images of their kitchen and other sides of the living room in Figure 6.24, it was evident that either she or her husband prioritised visual aesthetic values.

Living in the tiniest studio apartment visited in this study, Mr. Young had modified his furniture layout five times out of his curiosity to find the best fit for him. "I rearranged, rearranged because this compact space has challenged my creativity," he admitted. His work was related to visual design, so he was challenged to implement his knowledge in his own home. One of his goals was "how to make the TV look bigger" through visual illusion between the television screen and the background wall.

Informal extended space

When there was no more space in their land or rooms, it was common to see some activities being carried out outside the formal boundaries of homes, such as drying clothes on the street or storing footwear in the public corridor outside the apartment. Even where some participants reported that they had experienced, or knew someone else who had experienced, theft, it did not stop them using such practices, as if there were 'consensual acquisitions' of public space in the neighbourhood, implying that people could tolerate behaviours due to the understanding of space insufficiency for many households. Due to regular practices of unregulated home renovations, people in the neighbourhoods could also 'steal' the street space for private usage, as seen in Figure 6.25 (left). Houses in flood risk areas usually have an elevated ground level above the street. Consequently, they needed a ramp to get a wheeled vehicle in. Instead of making sure that the construction was not going outside of the house's territory, a participant used a part of the public street for one side of the ramp.



Figure 6.25 Informal extension of public spaces in tiny home settings

In addition, many houses lost their green spaces because occupants covered most of the ground with concrete for rooms. Some participants sought to compensate for this by placing pots of plants on the street side outside their fences, which made the neighbourhood street narrower. Figure 6.25 (middle) shows an example where there was a line of those pots of plants on one side and drying clothes on the other side. Even if the street was designed to enable two cars from opposite directions to pass through, technically, they would need to take turns to pass. Illegal street parking was also visible, yet only one participant talked about it. As a leader of his neighbourhood, Mr. Chief noticed that the designated carport in each house was not sufficient, and he used his authority to create a collective parking lot (Figure 6.25 – right). The location of his neighbourhood was far from the closest public transportation, and people relied on scooters or motorcycles for commuting. Yet, two-wheelers were forbidden on the toll roads, and the weather could be too hot in the middle of the day. So, most households also had a car, which they parked outside because the carport had been used for scooters, motorcycles, or bicycles.

“I didn't want the neighbours to complain... I gathered around people who had cars. We have a land that we can cultivate together. And I built a communal car park. There are two areas. The big one fits 21 cars, and the small one fits 3 cars. *Alhamdulillah*, everything runs well, and no complaints from the people in the neighbourhood.”

- Mr. Chief

The space taken for building the neighbourhood car park was supposed to be a green space, but there was never any evaluation from the local authorities regarding the environmental benefits or implications. However, this community project was acknowledged by the higher neighbourhood association as a good example in terms of solidarity within a neighbourhood.

Several participants also talked about the use of '*cul-de-sac*' or dead-end circulation spaces, whether as a street or a corridor. Mrs. Gigi allowed her children to play in the street. "Because my house is on a dead end, so it's not too crowded... Not so many people pass over," she shared. It helped her keep her home neat because her children were less dependent on playing with toys in the home. Where the practice at the street might be temporary because some cars still use the space for a U-turn, the interior setting gives more opportunities for individuals to privatise their dead-end circulation, as seen in Figure 6.26.



Figure 6.26 Ways to privatise '*cul-de-sac*' in the interior setting

The image on the left shows Mr. Urut's corridor with boxes of his possessions. He was an involuntary downsizer who still planned to move to a bigger home. He said he was ready if his landlord would charge him for using the corridor, but he refused to reduce any item that was valuable to him. Next to it is the image of Mr. Jazz's eclectic outdoor space. He lived in a *kost* where he initially rented one unit. There were two units at the corner facing a small courtyard, and he finally rented both after his son moved in. As a loyal tenant for more than a decade, his landlord trusted him to take care of his property. He only said that he would "make up" something. As a result, he transformed an empty outdoor corner into a seating area with a shade and full of decorations.

Without having a specific possession or activities located outside their property boundaries, some participants could also 'extend' their space by framing their own concepts. Mr. Don wittily claimed, "It is mine," referring to the badminton court in front of his house. It was a shared facility. He never used it for his personal needs, but his home had the closest access to it compared to his neighbours, so he was happy to think of it as part of his personal property. For Mr. Japandi and Mr. Bang, who lived in a unit inside a building, the views from their windows were their space extension. "This is my favourite spot (Figure 6.27 – left). I enjoy my

hallucination. I consider this to be Paris. When the sky is clear, we can see the mountain there. It's no longer Eiffel, but Tokyo Tower with Fujiyama over there (Figure 6.27 – right),” said Mr. Japandi cheerfully. Meanwhile, for Mr. Bang, the view of the swimming pool from his window made his home feel more spacious, especially when the pool was in use by many people, which made it feel and look like a busy living space rather than merely a view.

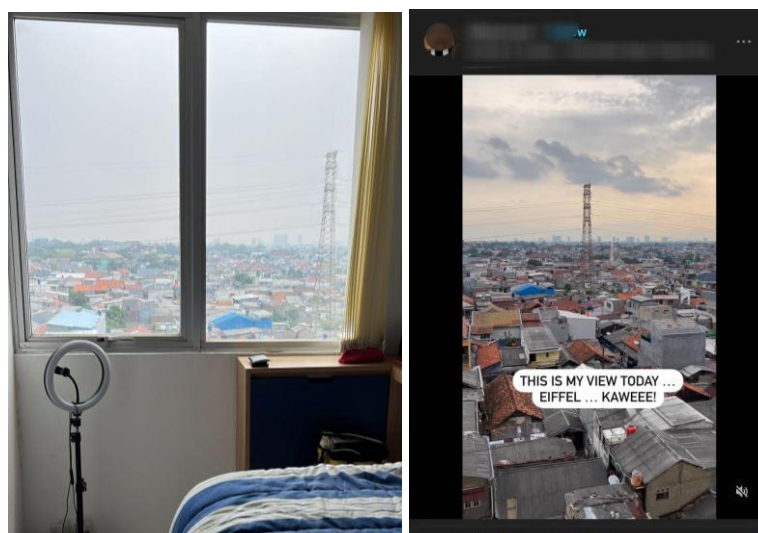


Figure 6.27 Mr. Japandi's favourite spot (left) and his 'Eiffel Tower' (right) viewed from it
Source: author's (left) & participant's documentation (right)

The stories above reveal the ways participants 'extended' their space, both physically and perceptively and how these could be permanent or temporary. For example, participants who dried their clothes on the street would bring their clothes back and clear the street when they were finished and participants who privatised shared corridors for their personal items could also move their possessions if necessary, but participants who took some part of the street to build a part of their driveway ramp were considered as making a permanent change to the public space. This is also similar to participants who perceived that they had a bigger space. Their perception might change if space changed, or if they changed their own imagining of it, such as Mr. Don, who could think that the badminton court was his so long as it was still there, while Mr. Japandi could pretend to be living in a different country, depending on the view he saw from his window.

6.3.2 Compromises

Managing expectations

"Well, if you ask about it, of course, it's a struggle. But I choose to enjoy it," said Mr. Don, representing how participants generally managed their expectations towards their homes.

Regardless of positive or negative experiences in their tiny homes, many participants had to accept a particular kind of discomfort to be able to fit into the tiny space, whether they were happy to do it voluntarily or it felt forced and unpleasant. My Paya laughed when she exclaimed, “Just consider that this is not a house, but a *kost* in a bigger form!” She experienced living in a *kost*, which was considered less valued than a house, so she thought that having her current home was already a better achievement, even though it was too small for her to be called a house. Ms. Bebet also acknowledged that living in a tiny home was “actually not ideal, but now, it is enough for me. Even though I have ideal thoughts about what my dwelling looks like, everything has to be aligned with what you are living now, right?” She still aspired to have a home where she could do gardening. Living with cats, she understood that her cats would need a play area that her studio could never provide. She was also unable to share a domestic life with another person, like she used to. “So yeah, you just live by yourselves. Even though... yeah, sometimes if you’re used to a nice and get-along-well neighbourhood and suddenly you become individualistic, that’s quite a feeling.” Without describing what the feeling was, she implied that she had managed to make all kinds of adjustments she needed to live in a tiny apartment.

Some participants compromised on their expectations by reflecting on their personal habits and voluntarily formed new habits to make their tiny home living work. While laughing at themselves for gaining weight since they lived together, Mr. and Mrs. Trendi shared that they never bought new clothes anymore. They joked that the lack of space motivated them to put on some exercises to keep in shape, as they only kept the space for their son’s clothes that would still be accumulating as he grew up. Meanwhile, Mrs. Maxie referred to the book ‘The Psychology of Money’ that helped her to be more selective with her purchases while adjusting to living with fewer items at home. Although she appreciated the process as her personal growth to re-evaluate what items mattered most to her, there were things that she would have kept had the space been bigger.

While some participants could ‘neutralise’ their discomfort of tiny home living, others who used to live in much bigger homes were struggling to manage their expectations and felt like they were making a significant sacrifice. Mrs. Sendu cancelled some purchasing plans because her husband disagreed. She said, “Actually the refrigerator is too small... Okay then, it should fit... The freezer is not big enough to stock food... so no need to stock a lot... Also actually I wanted to add a wardrobe because it’s too full. It is one wardrobe also for linen and a bed cover. My husband said just take the given wardrobe, so we don’t need another one, but for

me, it's not big enough.... So, clothes that are supposed to be hung are folded, it's unpleasant..."

The previous tenant left a used wardrobe and her husband preferred to use it rather than getting another one that suited their needs better. Also, because the storage issues were more important, other items she wished to purchase or retain were dismissed by her husband, including the curtain that did not match the size of the window and the door wire mesh for insect blocker that needed a repair. "For him, the most important thing is the function," she said, believing that it was her husband who made compromises, but it was herself who had let go of her expectations. Although her issues might be common disagreements that often happen between household members, some problems arose due to the implications of the restricted space.

"I felt like... I had to sacrifice several items there... Well, sometimes, hmm... but what else to do, it won't fit... We had a TV cabinet made of teak wood. I only brought the teak wood mattress board and a wardrobe cabinet, that's it. Those are the smallest and already take up so much space. But those were memories of our marriage. Those were the first things we bought, so we would feel so bad about leaving them. Oh, and there's one more, the vanity desk with a mirror. They are big, so my bedroom is stuffed... Apparently now we could only afford a small house... We left what's not urgent for us... I think for a while, it's already comfortable with this size. It's not urgent anyway."

- Mrs. Gigi, a landed house

Mrs. Gigi shared her story with several pauses and sad expressions. Occasionally, she tried to hold back her tears, especially when recalling the furniture. Her previous town is well known for furniture made of carved teak wood, which has high quality, beautiful and usually expensive. She sold her three-bedroom house filled with this type of furniture to get a two-bedroom tiny home in the Jakarta area. Even if she tried to present a happy face, she was grieving over some teak wood furniture she could not bring into her home.

Absence of certain facilities

Where some participants could organise their spaces to accommodate several activities together, some participants had to choose one function over another. A few years earlier, Mr. and Mrs. Adi had to provide space for their baby's needs because their living room was too small. "The sofa was gone when she got pregnant. We gave it away... because the kid would need some space to play," said Mr. Adi, followed by his wife, who said, "He was born and the

sofa was gone, replaced with a carpet. And it began with the fullness of the toys and everything else.” They eliminated some furniture to adjust to their son’s needs when he was a baby, so he could learn to walk and play indoors. Since they lived in an apartment, there was no chance to ‘extend’ their space to the outdoors. Taking their toddler son to the playground to train him to walk was also impractical, so they compromised with their ideal setting for a living room.

The absence of a sofa or dining area was also common in other tiny homes in this study. Even though some people felt comfortable sitting on the floor, such as Mrs. Vill’s family, who liked sitting on the terrace floor to eat or Mr. Japandi, who was accustomed to sitting on the floor because of his traditional culture, some participants still wished that they could have furniture to sit on. Mr. Emi was thinking of buying a set of sofas and wished he could find a smaller one, and Mrs. Paya was still saving her money because she knew she would need a customised sofa to fit her tiny living room. Temporarily, she used outdoor folding chairs to maintain a balanced size ratio of the furniture in the room (Figure 6.28 – left). Ms. Sesi also considered adding a dining table to her kitchen, so she could no longer eat in bed, but she was still figuring out the space for it. Meanwhile, Mrs. Maxie, who was finally able to ‘squeeze in’ a two-person dining table into the living room, found that it had changed the quality of the relationship with her husband (Figure 6.28 – right). Previously, she had never complained about not having a dining table, but having one made her and her husband share more conversations because they were set to see each other when eating together at the table, and they felt closer as a couple. This implies that the absence of a dedicated space to eat at home may have been a compromise in the quality of the relationship between household members.

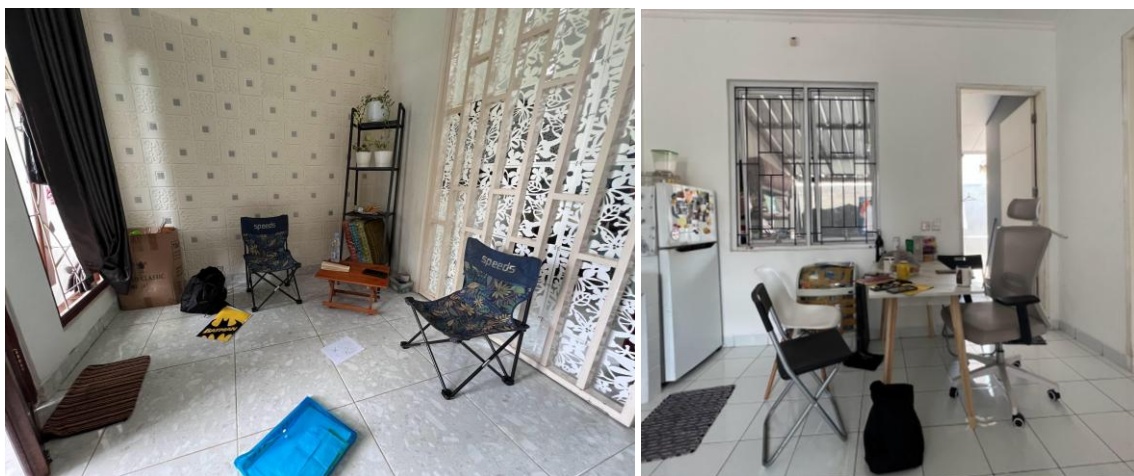


Figure 6.28 Mrs. Paya’s folding chairs (left) and Mrs. Maxie’s two-person dining table (right)

Another facility that was rarely found in tiny homes was an ironing board or a dedicated space to manage the laundry. Although many participants, especially those who lived by themselves,

preferred to pay for a laundry service to do the process from washing to ironing, this might be too expensive for households with multiple occupants. Moreover, there is a societal expectation for married women who stay at home to do this task for the family, and participants representing this group spoke about it. Even though her home already had a laundry machine and an outdoor area to dry clothes, Mrs. Nanda still complained multiple times that there was no comfortable space for her to do all the laundry processes. She did not elaborate on the details, but as a housewife, she did all the housekeeping tasks, including taking the dirty clothes and returning the clean ones to the wardrobe cabinets. Mrs. Gigi did not have a dedicated space for ironing, and she discovered that the clothes were not crumpled if she could sort the clothes as quickly as she could after the sun-dry while the heat was still on the clothes. Then, she only ironed occasionally, and she could do it on the floor, like many participants did. "Here, in this room," said Mr. Chief to show where his wife ironed the clothes, in the living room, on the floor. Male married participants rarely mentioned laundry or ironing tasks at home, but when they were asked, they gave a brief answer to acknowledge their wives' domestic tasks. This suggests the invisibility of domestic labour and also how the practical space requirements this may necessitate are also invisible.

Compromising privacy

"*Whatever, what privacy?*" Mr. Japandi spoke in English with a very strong tone. Indonesian language translates 'privacy' as 'a person' or 'personal', which in this study's contexts can be personal freedom, personal belonging, or personal space. Meanwhile, Indonesians are accustomed to living in communities or large families, and the boundary of privacy may also be defined based on a unit of family or community. "We're already private here. So, no need to have doors, just curtains, and it's safe... I am not looking for privacy. This is my private environment. People who come here are going to my private building... I just need the curtain to cover when I'm changing my clothes," he explained, implying a critique of privacy. He suggested that separation through doors or other physical building forms was required to create privacy. Even though he already felt private in his home, he still needed physical material to cover himself when doing a private activity. His two statements may sound contradictory, but he suggested the importance of physical boundaries to differentiate layers of privacy at home. As the owner of the apartment unit, he could decide who he would allow to enter his home to make sure no one interfered with his outer layer of privacy, but he still had a more intimate layer of privacy to protect.

During the interviews, there were almost no complaints about privacy issues, even for families with children. However, the results from the field observations suggested that there was less awareness of privacy rather than no issues of privacy. Mrs. Kleen's home showed clear

evidence of this. Besides the toilet, Mrs. Kleen had only one room in her tiny home, where she arranged both her laundry business and her family's dwelling. Even though she had carefully blocked the view of her home area with some furniture, her customers could peek and see how the bed mattresses were placed adjacent to one corner of the room. She shared one mattress with her two sons, where her husband used the other mattress for himself, but none of them had any individual private area for anything except the bathroom. She said that her husband spent most of his day at work, and he worked a lot because they had a mortgage to pay for. She was also busy with the laundry business. The private part of their home was just for rest, and she said that there was no privacy issue at home.

Many participants who were parents also arranged for their children to share a bedroom with siblings or with them. Mrs. Guru had one bedroom for all three of her daughters. She complained that her firstborn often went home at night, but she said it was because she was a teenager. Mrs. Iron also only had one bedroom for her son and two daughters. She separated their mattresses with a bunk bed. "The girls use the upper bed, and the boy uses the lower bed... He has actually spoken to us about this. He wants his own room, but we have explained." She was sure that her son understood. Even though he was rarely at home, it was because he was actively involved at church, not because of privacy issues." When their brother leaves, one of my daughters sleeps in the lower bed... They can get a little privacy when one of them is busy at church," she joked, but she later admitted, "I feel it lacks privacy now, especially for the children." Meanwhile, in Mr. Chi's home, there was no bedroom for the children "because there's no more rooms. We're stuck here. It's only 60 metres to the end," he mentioned, referring to the total area of his land including the outdoors. They had the mattresses, but they leaned them against the wall. "One is down there and the other one, you need to pull it up, for sleeping. It's that small... It's too tight if we lay them down," he explained. Like the participants cited above, he did not address any issue with his sons' privacy. However, all interviews in this study were performed with adults. Even though there were children who were older than 18 years old in the family, only the parents took part as research participants to represent the whole family, so there was no direct perspective from the children, whose privacy may have been compromised.

Justifications through more appreciated values

Whether to make themselves feel better or for sincere reasons, many participants said they could disregard their discomfort of living in a restricted space for other values that they appreciated more. The most significant value was gratitude, as a part of their religious practice. "My first impression was *alhamdulillah*, I have a home," said Mrs. Chi, whose husband already bought a tiny home before they were married. "*Alhamdulillah*," added Mr. Chi, "we are grateful

for this condition, we are not renting, so it's okay." Mrs. Gigi also shared similar expressions, "*Alhamdulillah*, I feel at home... The Arabic word '*alhamdulillah*' was frequently used by most participants in Greater Jakarta to emphasise that their gratitude towards their God surpassed their complaints about their home. Sometimes, they also correlated their gratitude with religious activities that took place at their homes. "Happy, because here... this house is used for Quran recitation every Thursday night or Saturday night... So, yeah, *alhamdulillah*," said Mrs. Tito. Mrs. Sendu, who was sad about having to downsize to a tiny home, expressed gladness knowing that her landlord used to host a religious gathering there, whereas Mrs. Gigi correlated the religious activity with the thermal comfort. "*Alhamdulillah*, because this is used for Quran recitation, so it feels cool." She used the word 'cool' to describe a comfortable temperature to contrast the heat and humidity of the tropical climate. Because she felt calm during religious practices, she was no longer bothered by the hot weather.

Participants who were not Muslims did not use the word '*alhamdulillah*', but some of them expressed gratitude. "The most impressive thing is just to have a home. I'm already grateful for it," said Mrs. Guru. Mrs. Iron also said, "Well, what can I say? I can only be grateful to have this house." She sounded 'cranky' when expressing these words, which implied that there was a societal expectation to be grateful under unpleasant circumstances. Also, the similarity of Mrs. Guru's and Mrs. Iron's expressions as homeowners suggested that buying a home was a difficult achievement for them, and they wanted to appreciate the milestone. However, not every gratitude was expressed straightforwardly. For example, Mrs. Tito said, "Other houses are beautiful, but I feel at home." Rather than expressing her dissatisfaction with the look of her home, she showed how, for her, what she felt personally about home was more important than the home's appearance.

Participants also took pride in their homes as a form of expressing their identity. For example, Mr. Don wanted to be seen as a "building material person," so he modified his home facade with an unusual material. "What is that? Is that wood? No, it's GRC¹⁸!" he exclaimed proudly. "I mean, to make it look different. Like people say, how come the house of a project guy looks like this? I feel ashamed. It's my prestige! My neighbours knew that I worked with construction projects," he explained. Meanwhile, Mr. Jazz chose to define his home as a "gallery". He was a musician, a drum collector, and a composer. Sometimes, he helped repair other musicians' drums, too, so his home was full of drums and other musical collections (Figure 6.29). For him, the word 'gallery' gave a positive meaning, and it was closely associated with his personality

¹⁸ Glass Reinforced Concrete, a building material

as an artist. He could think of the piles of musical instruments at home as an art piece rather than as clutter, and it would make him happy living in a tiny home.



Figure 6.29 Some corners at Mr Jazz's 'gallery' tiny home

Sometimes, participants stated that overcoming barriers or responding to a moment of crisis took precedence over values. For Mr. Urut who downgraded to a tiny home because of a sudden unemployment, “for temporary survival, it’s okay,” for Ms. Dandy who was overwhelmed to organise her items, “as long as the bed is still clean, that’s enough, not a big deal”, and for Mrs. Kleen who came to the urban area for a better economic situation, living in her tiny home was “better than in the village... but if we want to live, we have money, right, maybe we have to hold on,” she said. Even though she realised that her family could have a bigger home in the village, she chose to ‘hold on’ to live in her tiny home to stay closer to her laundry market.

Creating future expectations

With many expressions of gratitude, only a few participants mentioned negative experiences about living in their tiny homes directly. However, many of them shared future aspirations about their homes more fluently, implying that they might have compromised with some dissatisfaction about their homes. Many homeowners wanted to do a renovation to reorganise their space. Examples included Mr. Don and Mr. River, who wished they could do another renovation like their neighbours to add an upper floor for their children’s bedrooms. Mrs. Adi wanted to hire a professional interior designer to reorganise her apartment layout and storage. Mrs. Iron wanted to build a room in the current outdoor area to separate her son’s bedroom from her daughters’, and Mrs. Gigi had also been thinking about buying the house next to hers that was on sale to double the size of her home.

Sometimes, planning a renovation was also influenced by the surrounding neighbours. Where Mr. Don and Mr. River did not want to feel left out by their neighbours, Mr. and Mrs. Nanda’s reason was more associated with an urgency to protect their privacy. Their home was

surrounded by neighbours' homes, which had been elevated to become two-story buildings. From the pictures below (Figure 6.30), it is seen that their neighbour's home had windows facing their backyard. They felt uncomfortable knowing their neighbour could see their activities, but there was no protection from the regulations. Thus, the only way to regain their privacy was by adding a barrier to block their neighbour's view, which would require construction work.



Figure 6.30 Neighbour's windows facing the backyard of Mr. and Mrs. Nanda's house (different angles)

For renters, those who felt their homes were too small thought of moving to a bigger home. Mr. and Mrs. Baik were preparing to move, Mr. Chang had targeted when his family would need a bigger home based on her daughter's growth, Mr. Urut was trying to get a stable income after losing his job so he could move to a bigger *kost*, and Mrs. Sendu was clearly unhappy with her tiny home and wanted to move to a bigger property. The conversation topic she shared the most was about activities she could not do or items she cancelled buying because there was no more space at home. Being influenced by patriarchal culture, she did not say straightforwardly that she wanted to move, but she mentioned that she was expecting that her husband would be relocated and mentioned that living nearby her parents' home neighbourhood would be better because houses there were not tiny.

Some participants who seemed to be satisfied with their homes also still had future aspirations about their homes, but they addressed it as their children's responsibility. For example, Mr. Chi already created '*bale-bales*' and raised the roof level, but he did not place a partition to create a private bedroom for his sons. "Later, when they're big and need privacy, they can

make some partitions, make bedrooms,” he said. He did the construction by himself during the renovation, and it was enough for him. He still let his sons sleep in an open area without any dedicated room, expecting that one day his sons would think of their own way to build bedrooms for themselves. Mr. Handy also did the renovation by himself, and he had covered all of the ground with building construction. Now he wanted to enjoy his life. “Just make it happy,” he said, “We had fixed the house for our old age. What else do we want? Buy another house? There’s no way we would do it... With our age, let the children decide later.” Being in his mid-50s without a permanent job, he did not earn enough money to finance the house, but his first and middle children had earned their own income and contributed to the family’s expenses. If the house needed another work, he would need his children to help pay for the costs, so he would let his children decide.

6.4 Conclusion

The sections in this chapter have shown that, by investigating the lived experiences of tiny home living in these case study locations, navigating spatial challenges has emerged as a dominant theme, with a tendency to expand their home area or modify their interior layout to gain additional space. While navigating the challenges, themes associated with Indonesian geography and environment, religious values and cultures appear throughout the study.

A key finding was the participants’ struggles to keep having the space for what they need at home, and they did it through any possible ways, regardless of ethics and laws. Some participants who were more educated, earned a better income, and/or lived in a more reputable neighbourhood were able to undertake home renovations with permission and gain extra space. Unfortunately, the absence of ethical enforcement at the policy level may also lead to spatial encroachment that can compromise public spaces or negatively affect the environment, as shown by participants’ neighbourhoods where people can extend their territory to the street or build on the green space in their individual land that were supposed to be the rainwater absorption areas. Unlike the reflections from tiny home occupants towards environmental values in the international studies (Ford and Gomez-Lanier, 2017; Vasseur, Sing and Short, 2022), this study has shown otherwise.

On the other hand, being located near the equator seems to minimise the challenges of Indonesian tiny homes. It allows homes to have considerably smaller spaces than homes in non-tropical climates, as thick wall insulation is not required to keep the interior warm. With the consistently warm climate, some activities are doable outdoors, and Indonesian people

are less dependent on physical buildings in their homes. Also, they are not attached to furniture, as Indonesians traditionally sit on the floor, which helps cool the body when the weather is too warm. Further discussion of this topic appears in Section 7.4.1.

In addition, participants in this study reflected the characteristics of Indonesian people who have varied desires about the levels of privacy and social interaction, with some being very open with their neighbours and wanting a lower level of privacy compared to others. This also includes the understanding of crowding and privacy between household members, where there were very limited concerns about privacy when allocating younger children from the opposite sex to the same bedroom. While it has been known that the values of privacy can be varied in different cultures (Hall, 1969; Rapoport, 1969), these geographical settings and social norms have been important positive features in enabling many participants to adjust to living in tiny homes.

Participants also faced numerous challenges that were not evenly distributed among household members. Households with less economic capacity tended to face additional challenges, whether being entitled to only a little energy provision for the house, experiencing discrimination as 'low-class people', or, in Bali, being stereotyped as migrants, as they were mostly renters who could not afford to own a property. Meanwhile, households with more money could hire a design professional to transform the challenges into creating an aesthetically pleasing appearance. However, households' finances did not always correlate with the intensity of their struggles, as some participants who could buy their own apartments in Jakarta explicitly reported stress due to excessive clutter. Some participants also exhibited higher expectations of the privacy levels and idealised floor space for particular rooms, so those who live with fewer inhabitants may experience more stress than those with more.

There was also a tendency among many participants to 'mask' their struggles with gratitude, shifting their focus from the negative experiences to the positive aspects of having a home, which affected their perspectives on the intensity of the challenges they encountered. Such reflection was made based on religious beliefs and could make them genuinely feel happy living in their tiny homes despite their struggles, especially when they oriented their values towards the kinship in the neighbourhood, the amount of savings they could collect after living with smaller bills, or general satisfaction that their current tiny homes were better than their previous homes that had been even smaller.

Hence, an understanding of tiny home living experiences in Indonesia needs to include the contexts of its geographical settings and socio-cultural nuances that form the life values of Indonesian people. The latter part is where 'lived experience' has been an effective approach to generate information. Especially in urban settings, such as Greater Jakarta and Bali, where people from numerous Indonesian ethnic backgrounds can live in the same area, people may have contrasting expectations of home, including how they perceive privacy, ideal dwelling size, and the acceptable ratio of household members to floor area. Nonetheless, the challenges of tiny home living in Indonesia are not merely technical issues of space sufficiency; they are also significantly shaped by cultural values and social norms that influence expectations of domestic life. The study confirmed that attitudes towards, and assessments of, tiny home living, revealed in the narratives of the research participants, were articulations of the personal, psychological and social regimes within which individuals live their lives; eliciting both self-critique and self-affirmation in their reflections on how they dwelled in tiny homes. It also revealed how positive, negative or more neutral perceptions of tiny home living were driven by a range of factors that could not be reduced to a technical or objective measure of the size of a home.

7. Responses to the Global Trend of Tiny Homes

7.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the relationship between this research and the existing studies on tiny homes discussed in Chapter 2, and further discusses the findings of previous empirical chapters to fill the gaps in existing knowledge, as presented in Section 2.3 (see p.21-24). Since previous studies were predominantly conducted in European countries, America, and Australia, and some in Asian countries with climates different from Indonesia, some contexts are very different from Indonesia and/or vice versa. However, housing crises are occurring in many nations; and where the existence of tiny homes is prevalent in a country that faces very significant housing challenges, there may be similarities found between countries. Correspondingly, this chapter classifies the reflection between this and previous studies.

The conceptual framework in this study produces themes on social, economic, cultural, technical, and housing policy perspectives related to the gaps in the definition, drivers, and experiences of tiny home living. Meanwhile, responses to previous studies can be mixed across themes or topics within the empirical chapters. Therefore, this chapter is presented as a comparative discussion in three main parts, focusing on how the findings relate to the conceptual framework. Topics related to the definition, drivers, and experiences of tiny home living are discussed in each section without explicit mention.

The first part is the shared commonalities between the prevalence of tiny homes in this study and in previous studies, which are presented in Section 7.2. This section discusses what makes tiny homes such a global trend, also the shared experiences between households who have lived in these homes. The next part, Section 7.3., classifies the nuances and differences of tiny home living in this study thematically. The themes were generated from the similarities between the topics in this study and those in previous tiny home studies. Nonetheless, this study has shown some outcomes that might be slightly different and contribute to a nuanced understanding of tiny homes in a broader context, or distinctions that may indicate specific issues or characteristics of tiny homes in Indonesia, which are described further in Section 7.4., before being concluded in Section 7.5.

7.2 Common trends

The main commonality in studies of tiny homes is that their existence is closely attached to the dynamics between the developer and housing market, where official regulations are involved in creating a path to tiny home production and occupation. There are also similar experiences reported amongst tiny home occupants in many existing and current studies regarding the challenges of living in a confined dwelling space. However, despite these challenges, research participants found some positive meanings after reflecting on the impact of tiny homes and their wider environmental and financial aspects.

7.2.1 Housing crisis and shrinking domesticities

The prevalence of tiny homes in Greater Jakarta and Bali suggests that these two locations share the trends of shrinking domesticities with many other countries as cases presented in the book *The Growing Trend of Living Small*, which is strongly driven by “corporate greed” where developers create the market for tiny homes to maximise or ensure their profits (Harris, Nowicki and White, 2023). The conclusion of Chapter 5 highlights that the main driver of tiny home living in this study was general life courses, such as transitions from living in parental homes to getting their own homes, marriage, and having children. No participants deliberately planned to live in a small space, and all of them, with their different socioeconomic levels, expressed financial constraints that narrowed down their housing choices to the smaller types. This suggests that the growing trend of homes that are designed at the Indonesian bare minimum standard is driven by external factors apart from the households. The information from the developer marketing personnel in this study has demonstrated how housing developers gradually reduce dwelling sizes to close the gap between housing prices and affordability, enabling home seekers to obtain property ownership as promoted by the Indonesian government (Sodiq, 2025). Hence, the developers can produce more dwelling units within the same total building or land area, compared to many years ago before this trend started, to accommodate more people with homes and to potentially capitalise on the market selling.

As practised in America (Evans, 2018b) and Hong Kong (Lau and Wei, 2018), the intention to ensure that homeownership is affordable to some segments of the population may have been assessed according to the local housing market context, levels of demand and income profiles, different types of potential buyers, and the need to generate profit. However, the implementations are problematic as the targeted home seekers are not always the buyers. In Jakarta City, small apartment owners are mostly mid-upper-class citizens who purchased the units for investment or for their children. With their small size, these properties become cheap

for people who can afford larger properties, but prices can increase exponentially when the market is buoyant, including the prices of other properties in the surrounding location. With no regulation that controls the market movements and prices, the benefits tend to go to investors and the developers as the properties are no longer affordable for the market groups who the homes were originally aimed at.

On the other hand, the rising number of single households and adults who choose to be unmarried and/ or childless also creates a market for tiny homes. Many participants from this study who were single or only lived with their spouse expressed satisfaction with their tiny living. Even though most of them were renters, they acknowledged their places as 'home' and had no plans to move to another property in the near future. This reflects the fact that for some households, the immediate use value of a property is more important than the investment value, which suggests that tiny homes can be a niche market for these household compositions (Mutter, 2013), which also explains why the mid-upper class investors are interested in buying tiny properties, shifting the home seekers from targeted buyers to targeted tenants.

However, this dynamic is also induced by the government, which requires a 20 per cent contribution of the developers' expected return from selling, in the form of subsidised housing or cash (National Law No.1, 2011). Developers are also under pressure to reach the markets, so they practice the 'contemporary housing tactics' where housing is used as an "instrument of profit" (Atkinson and Jacobs, 2016, p. 96) or "financial asset" (Harris, Nowicki and White, 2023, p. 267). Consequently, the price may keep rising as long as there are buyers. With the National Regulation that suggests the minimum standard for a dwelling unit is 9 m² per capita, the size may shrink even more as found in South Korea and Hong Kong, where micro apartments have become common in city centres (Lau and Wei, 2018; Manifesty, Min and Kim, 2023).

Consequently, home seekers who are not able to meet the prices in the housing market need to find a less strategically beneficial location or lower building specifications to purchase properties within their budget. Although this mechanism makes sense, most research participants in any location and from various economic classes could only afford the smallest home in their areas due to financial constraints. Also, their housing typology, location, or tenancy preferences had been compromised before they searched for their properties. None of the participants in Greater Jakarta who aspired to own a landed house thought of finding the property in Jakarta City, but all participants who aspired to live in Jakarta City lived in a

kost or an apartment. Similar segregation also occurred in Bali, where Balinese participants who aspired to get their homes as freeholders and first-time buyers needed to seek properties in the urban sprawl areas, as properties in the urban centres were excessively expensive due to the involvement of foreign markets with the currency that is incomparable with the local currency. So, unless they have obtained the property from parents, as one of the participants in this study had, affordable homes in the most sought-after locations in Bali may only be available through rent. These challenges illustrate how housing aspirations in the Greater Jakarta and Bali urban areas change due to the dynamics of the housing market that restrict housing choices, which correspond to similar challenges faced in the UK (Preece *et al.*, 2020). This may indicate that the current housing crisis has not only shrunk the space of properties, but also their affordability and choices of individuals, as tiny homes appear as one of the outcomes of the housing market where prices are seemingly out of control.

7.2.2 Struggles with the confined space

Another significant commonality of tiny home living is that the challenges of living in confined domestic spaces can be frustrating when occupants fail to adjust their domestic behaviours and expectations. Resonating with a previous study on living in small homes (Preece *et al.*, 2023), many participants in this study had already downgraded their expectations before they started moving into their current tiny home. Some participants sold or left their furniture from their larger home or anticipated the implications of downsizing by preparing a customised home layout design before their homes were ready to use. Some other participants did not prepare anything, but they postponed buying certain furniture or cancelled purchases once they moved in and adapted to their new consumption constraints. However, not all participants had clear home expectations due to patriarchal influences, for example, Mrs. Chi and Mrs. Luki, who relied on their husbands' decisions. Their adaptation processes were made gradually after they encountered challenges in their new homes after marriage.

With different levels of awareness of the likely challenges, participants had varying levels of readiness to experience tiny home living. This study revealed similar mechanisms of spatial adaptation to living in confined spaces, as those found in the existing literature, although the prevalence might be different. The most common strategy was making a certain space multipurpose (Gronostajska and Szczegielniak, 2021; Li and Wu, 2021). However, rather than relying on convertible furniture, participants in both Greater Jakarta and Bali relied on the open floor and portable items, such as carpet, folded chairs, and even bed mattresses that could be stood up against the wall. Convertible furniture that is commonly seen in Western tiny homes was only found in one home owned by Mr. Trendi, which was identified as the most expensive

tiny home in this study. Urist (2013) reported that occupants became tired of folding and unfolding their furniture to enable the room's multi-purpose use. This scene was also depicted during the visit, as the furniture was folded and the room was full of scattered items, making it difficult to unfold.

Specific attention was also given to storage. As Indonesian houses are generally not built with dedicated storage units or space, occupants need to provide their own storage or manage how they store items. In their study, Lau and Wei (2018) reported that storage difficulties were significant in tiny home living. Although some participants managed this through reducing their material belongings (Meissner, 2019; Foreman, 2021) or using creativity to make more space (Preece *et al.*, 2023), the successes of those strategies were only partial. In this study, some participants openly shared their stress about this issue, and their home situations reflected their stories. Meanwhile, some other participants concealed this challenge, expressing gratitude for their situation because their cultural beliefs perceived articulating complaints as a negative act. Regardless of their words, many homes looked full of items and messy, implying that the occupants had difficulty organising their space. Moreover, some evidence of disproportionate clutter in several homes indicated that there were more items than the space could accommodate, or the size of the space was insufficient to facilitate the core requirements of domestic living. This may suggest more serious housing issues that would be worth further research, which could be related to overcrowding, as the implications of living in a confined domestic space or hoarding may be hard to detect if the space is small.

7.2.3 Positive orientations towards tiny homes

The review of the literature found examples of advantages of living in tiny homes in various aspects, from energy and housing consumption (Huebner and Shipworth, 2017; Stieß, Umbach-daniel and Fischer, 2019; Nezzi *et al.*, 2022), practical housekeeping (Foreman, 2021) to community values (Shore, 2014). Many participants in this study also shared similar positive comments related to less demanding house chores, feeling good about being less consumer-focused, and cheaper housing bills. However, these positive expressions came together with the bittersweet processes as participants changed their habits due to some restrictions. As such, it was difficult to frame these positive experiences as advantages, but they acknowledged that there were positive experiences behind the challenges. For example, the regulation from the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (No.28, 2016) allocates only a small amount of electric supply to tiny homes, risking electrical shortages due to overconsumption. Even though there are options to apply for a higher supply with extra payment, not everyone chooses to do that. Some participants chose to consume only a little

energy to keep their bills low. Even though this could be restrictive for most people, one family in this study relied on low energy bills to keep their benefit from the government as a poor family, which suggests that tiny homes have the potential to support people who are financially disadvantaged, whether they have no homes (Cumberbatch-Pearson, 2020) or have no resources to run their homes, as experienced by this research participant.

Atkinson and Jacobs (2016, p.139) described how wider social environments and relationships may be prioritised by residents over the actual physical dwelling. This is also applied in this study, as a lot of participants expressed their satisfaction with their neighbours and the quality of the relationship with their family. Stories of conflicts on taking turns using the bathroom and the rigid order of morning routines were shared with laughter, implying that they were joyful living in their homes and could disregard the size for other advantages. Nevertheless, these positive reflections appeared when occupants overcame their adaptation challenges, suggesting the importance of reframing the narrative of 'ideal' homes (Harris and Nowicki, 2020) to succeed in tiny living.

7.3 Nuances and differences

This section describes how studies of tiny homes in Indonesia contribute to the wider discussions on tiny homes. The discussion in this section is structured by themes found in the topics on tiny home studies. The first two sub-sections investigate the difference in the societal norms and regulations that shape tiny home living and its mechanisms, revealing that besides the 'downsizers', tiny home occupants can also be the 'upsizers' who previously lived in a tinier dwelling than their current tiny homes. The next subsection locates the typology of tiny homes in Indonesia based on previous studies. The last two sub-sections are explored based on the lived experiences of tiny home occupants, which expose Indonesians' distinctive understanding of privacy and crowding, and the resistance towards official regulations that is expressed through encroachment.

7.3.1 Common or alternative housing

With their prevalence in the case study locations, tiny homes were perceived as a common housing typology without comparative size being particularly emphasised by residents - the small size, in other words, is viewed as quite normal. The Indonesian regulations generally classify housing based on the levels of luxury or the provision mechanisms, such as subsidised, government-owned, or individually owned, through to commercial housing markets (National Law No. 1, 2011, Government Regulation No. 12, 2021). Thus, sizes are

perceived as neutral variants as long as the building is neither perceived as poor housing nor a mansion. The range of socioeconomic classes represented by participants in this study also indicates that richer and poorer households both may live in tiny homes because that is what they can afford in different places.

The absence of a specific aspiration towards small living or downsizing also indicates that tiny home living in Greater Jakarta and Bali occurs due to general processes of individuals' housing pathways. All the study participants lived in their tiny homes because they were driven by common changes in life stages, whether getting a permanent home for their families or changes in their job localities. They chose their homes based on considerations similar to general housing preferences, such as prices, locations or accessibility towards labour markets, neighbourhood facilities, and environmental qualities. Many occupants who lived with their families had enlarged their homes and/or maintained aspirations to live in larger homes in the future. This suggests that they did not intend to live in tiny homes, but they had to as the housing choices they could make in their geographical area had become more constrained.

Furthermore, the Indonesian government recently raised the maximum income level, which sets the criterion for Low Income Households (LIH) designation. These individuals are entitled to receive privileges to buy subsidised housing with an equivalent size to tiny homes. In one way, this suggests that the government encourages more people to live in tiny homes, but in another way, it also indicates the rising number of middle-income individuals who previously could afford to access their own homes without the government's support, but who are now struggling to finance their homeownership. For example, the current figure for LIH in Greater Jakarta is Rp. 12 million per month, compared to previously Rp. 7 million for single persons or Rp. 14 million from previously Rp. 8 million for married couples (Ministerial Decree of Public Works and Housing, No.22, 2023; Erfendi, 2025). This LIH indicator is much higher than the regional minimum wage in the same area, which ranges from Rp 4.9 to 5.7 million (Idris, 2024), and the range of average net income in different areas in Jakarta City (between Rp 5.4 and 7 million) (BPS, 2023). As a comparison, the figures shown for Bali are Rp 9 million (single) and Rp 11 million (married) for LIH income indicators, Rp 2.99 million for the regional minimum wage, and the range of average net income in Bali urban areas is between Rp. 3.3 to 3.4 Million per the latest data in 2023 (BPS, 2024b). These figures reveal that an individual who earns double the minimum wage or the average income can still be included as LIH. These figures are presented in Table 16.

Table 18 Comparison of Indonesian financial indicators

Location	Range	LIH income indicator (2023)	LIH income indicator (2025)	Average Net Income ¹⁹	Regional Minimum Wage ²⁰
(Greater) Jakarta	Min	7,000,000	12,000,000	5,400,000	4,900,000
	Max	8,000,000	14,000,000	7,000,000	5,700,000
Bali (urban)	Min	7,000,000	9,000,000	3,300,000	2,990,000
	Max	8,000,000	11,000,000	3,400,000	

(figures are in Indonesian Rupiahs, rounded for readers' comfort)

As affordability is compulsory for subsidised housing, this illustrates the gap between the prices of affordable housing and the purchasing capacity, a feature found in contemporary housing markets in many nations, which 'traps' a greater number of home seekers into purchasing homes that are equivalent to subsidised housing. Thus, tiny homes become common housing in both case study locations and apparently in many other cities in Indonesia.

This is the opposite of what is described in the existing literature, in which living in tiny homes is perceived as being against the common housing norms, such as in North America where tiny home enthusiasts wanted to oppose the idea of big American homes (Mangold and Zschau, 2019) or to "delegitimise conventional housing consumption" (Summers, 2022). Also in Germany (Vasseur *et al*, 2022), the Netherlands (Glumac, 2021), and Australia (Tucker *et al*, 2024), the evidence of moveable tiny homes reflected the aspirations of nomadic living. Tiny home living also attracts those who want to partake in minimalism (Meissner, 2023), environmental sustainability (Ford and Gomez-Lanier, 2017) or degrowth movements (Alexander and Shearer, 2023), making tiny homes seem an alternative form of housing for groups of people with particular values (Butt and Stephenson, 2018; Wotton, Skates and Shutter, 2018).

The contrast between cases in Indonesia and many countries in the Global North generally signifies the disparity between developed and developing countries, where developing countries tend to have weaker economies and higher urban population density. Especially in Greater Jakarta, there are fewer housing choices due to its population density, so producing more of the smallest permissible dwelling units becomes a practical and logical policy solution, making 36 m² dwellings look 'normal'. However, its prevalence in the built environment does not mean that the sizes of tiny homes are accepted in Indonesia's "spatial norms" (Sandberg, 2018). In Bali, the customary law still protects a minimum land area of 100 m² for an individual

¹⁹ Based on actual earning per month from main job and side job(s) if any

²⁰ Based on the regulation about monthly take home payment of a full-time job as an employee

house, which is 40 m² larger than the standard set by the National Law. So, tiny homes are found in areas where the customary law is negotiable by the National Law or within individual landlords' territories, where housing is built as collective small dwelling units to rent as *kosts*. The scope of the National Law on housing size does not include regulation of *kosts*. Meanwhile, the specific Bali Regional Regulation about *kosts* (No. 24, 2013) stresses the orderliness of the tenancy and pro-social behaviour, not the size. Since 'normal' in Bali means having a plot of land bigger than 100 m², living in any dwelling type that is about that size or smaller will be considered below normal for the Balinese population. On the contrary, inter-island migrants who live in Bali might perceive an extremely smaller dwelling size as normal since most of them live in a *kost*. Thus, even though tiny homes are common in Indonesia, only some people have negotiated the spatial norms to perceive the size as a normal standard of dwelling size. Some other people, represented by the Balinese participants who enlarged their tiny homes, may perceive it as being below normal rather than seeing it as an alternative.

7.3.2 Nuances on housing mechanisms

Apart from homelessness issues, many previous studies associated tiny homes with downsizing (Riegler, 2011; Evans, 2018a; Sandberg, 2018; Costlow *et al.*, 2020; Trambley, 2021), and Foye (2021) recorded binary mechanisms of downsizing as voluntary and involuntary. However, none of the research participants in this study declared that they voluntarily downsized because they wanted to experience tiny home living. Many of them were downsizers, but they expected to downsize as a consequence of their trade-offs, such as getting a better neighbourhood, better building qualities, better location for transportation access, or simply getting a better peace of mind as people whose living choices are not aligned with Indonesia's societal norms.

In several cases, people lived in tiny homes as upsizers. Some participants in this study came from lower-income groups, who had increased their financial capacity and were then able to buy cheap tiny homes that were still bigger than their previous homes. Although this can be contrary to the dominant understanding whereby economic pressure narrows down housing choices to the smaller-sized housing segment, this means that people can also live in tiny homes because they offer greater or additional choice of housing outcomes compared to their previous circumstances. On the other hand, people from higher economic classes may downsize involuntarily even though technically they have more choices, because they set a higher bar of personal housing preferences. The diversity of social classes and layers of housing choices shows that tiny homes in Indonesia are a melting pot where individuals and

households from different backgrounds and different housing aspirations are unified in the same small domestic space.

Existing literature also refers to tiny home living as a movement (Ford and Gomez-Lanier, 2017; Roy, 2019) and a previous study in Indonesia suggested that the Tiny House Movement was similar to the concept of living in Jakarta's urban villages, as both are underpinned by the concept of small dwellings, less consumptive living, and more connection to nature and the environment (Anggraeni and Herlily, 2020). However, the latter study showed an incomparable housing mechanism as urban villages are considered high-density organic settlements for lower-income groups, and those who lived in the studied village resisted eviction as they had no other place to live due to their lack of finances. Rather than being a part of the discussion on Tiny House Movements, this study might be closely associated with informal housing or housing related to poverty. Meanwhile, the 'movement' expressed in other studies displays a lot of evidence that people trade off the size of their domestic space for supporting the environment or practising their personal values, such as minimalism, sustainability, or freedom of living anywhere, as described in the earlier section where tiny homes are seen as an alternative.

There is a strong impression that these 'movements' are driven by internally shaped aspirations. In Indonesia, there are also groups of people who strive to fulfil their life aspirations through tiny homes, even though the ideas are shaped externally by societal expectations and culture. The existence of unmarried adult participants who live alone, unmarried cohabiting partners, and same-sex partners represents these groups. Even though they refused to participate in this study due to individual safety concerns, understanding that these groups exist provides insights into tiny housing choices. For these groups, tiny homes seem to be a reasonable and rational choice regardless of whether they have more money to live in a bigger home or not. With Indonesia's inseparable association between household composition and marital status, they are only allowed to live alone and thus need less space than common Indonesian homes that are projected to facilitate a nuclear family.

The contemporary decline in marriage rates in many nations also occurs in Indonesia. Apart from the socioeconomic or psychological reasons or fear of being trapped in patriarchy (Gustianda, 2024), another study suggests this trend is related to Islamic values, as the intention is not to contradict marriage, but to be better prepared for it (Sya'ima, Widiyanto and Zainal Arifin, 2024). This pressure becomes challenging for unmarried couples. On the other hand, practices of cohabitation are prohibited. Even though it has occurred in Indonesia since

the Dutch colonisation era with the term '*kumpul kebo*', the term has pejorative meaning as it is a common practice by couples from lower economic and less well-educated classes (Anindita, et al, 2023), and being caught practising '*kumpul kebo*' may be humiliating for people from higher social classes. Also, a study in a law journal in Indonesia suggested criminalisation for cohabitation as it was considered immoral, which is measured by the community's disagreement towards undesirable behaviour (Sulistiyono, Purwadi and Hartiwiningsih, 2018). A later study mentioned that the legislative penalty had been published, but enforcement of it varied in different localities (Sholikah et al, 2024).

Situated between the reluctance to marry and the penalty risks of cohabitation, some adults who were financially stable chose to live in dwellings that were designed for single occupancy to reduce the risk of penalisation, even though, factually, they may receive occasional visits from their romantic partners. For them, living in a single-occupancy dwelling was a way to keep their standpoint - disagreement with the pressure to marry, but also reduce the stigmatisation for '*kumpul kebo*'. As adults who have accumulated wealth from the years of their work, they preferred to use their money for upgrading other parts of their lives, such as upgrading to a better quality tiny home or buying another property, as done by Ms. Kota and Ms. Bebet, who belong to this group. For them, living in tiny homes opened a path to freedom and autonomy amidst the social pressure of marriage and its consequences.

Meanwhile, issues on LGBT in Indonesia have always been controversial discussions between the religious and human rights perspectives. Although the prejudice towards LGBT individuals also appears in many societies around the world, the majority of the Indonesian population is strongly opposed to LGBT lifestyles (Yustikaningrum, 2018) and has arranged several agendas to oppose minority gender and sexuality (Rodríguez and Murtagh, 2022; Thajib, 2022). Instead of seeking support from the government, LGBT groups have fought for their rights to be protected through the private sectors (Ridwan and Wu, 2018). However, there is no pathway in any Indonesian bureaucracy that gives them the same opportunity to cohabit legally. In their study, Ridwan and Wu (2018) quoted "Being young and LGBT, what could be worse?" in the title of their article that discusses the struggles of this group in Indonesia. As a discriminated group, they have limited choices for many things, including housing, and it was safer to live in environments with minimum interaction with neighbours, which are *kosts* and apartments that are produced in sizes that are getting smaller over time. Potential participants from this group refused to be interviewed for this study as they were afraid to be identified through their stories, but their existence was more prevalent in Bali. Most of them came from Java Island, where violence against this group still occurs. By migrating to Bali, they not only

sought a safer place, but they also strived to be acknowledged in society. The availability of tiny dwellings at various design prices enabled them to find 'home' in a less discriminatory environment.

The struggles of unmarried and LGBT groups show how tiny home living is important in supporting people who are still fighting for their acceptance in society, including those who face racial discrimination, as experienced by Mr. Chang in Bali. Although the Indonesian social system may never fully accept these groups, their involvement in housing practices also becomes movements that are equivalent to those promoting sustainability or minimalism that have been popular in the early trend of tiny home living.

7.3.3 Typology and tenure

With the many terms referring to tiny homes, such as micro-flats, nano-apartments, tiny house, co-living, mobile homes, and other names, Shearer and Burton (2019) have previously classified a typology of tiny homes. In Indonesia, the regulation for housing is only set for permanent buildings. Using or modifying a transportation vehicle as a permanent home is prohibited, but it is allowed for recreational dwelling. In Bali, campervans or RVs can be found in areas that are close to nature, as a part of rental tourism facilities, or owned by individuals who have an interest in this lifestyle as a recreational activity. This mobile dwelling is categorised and taxed as a transportation vehicle, so it is against the law to use it for housing. Even though some people might use it as a permanent home illegally, there was no evidence of this found during the fieldwork observation in Bali. Since it is not used as a primary dwelling, this study did not collect data from this typology.

Equivalent to Shearer and Burton's classification, all tiny homes within the scope of this study were permanent buildings within a community, as there were always other tiny homes nearby in the same neighbourhood or building block. The first type is 'landed' houses. By forms, they appear like tiny home villages to support the homeless in America (Mingoya, 2016; Turner, 2017; Greene, 2019; Evans, 2020; Jackson *et al.*, 2020), which are similar to subsidised housing in Indonesia. Besides this governmental programme to support LIH, similar housing forms and sizes also appear in Indonesia's commercial housing market, sold as freehold. Aligned with the government's programme, the ownership of type is set as the ultimate achievement of a housing career. Owners who live in this type aspire for a permanent home, and renters are associated with transient purposes, and this is expressed by this research data, where occupants who lived in landed houses were mostly owners and permanent dwellers.

The second type is dwelling units within housing blocks, either flat or apartment, which are equivalent to micro-apartments that have been popular in big cities in America, Asia and Europe (Soub and Memikoglu, 2020), micro-flats in Hong Kong (Lau and Wei, 2018) or shoebox units in Singapore (Tan, 2011). This type is sold through ownership but is less preferred for the primary property, as its strongest legal right cannot be equivalent to freehold. Many people buy the unit to invest and rent it to newcomers who seek a temporary home while progressing in their housing career. However, the land scarcity for new housing in the city centre areas, particularly in Jakarta City, has driven the regional planning regulations to induce the development of this type. Thus, people negotiate their homeownership expectations, too. In cases in Jakarta City, tiny apartments were lived in by the owners or renters, with long-term tenancy or permanent residence in this typology.

The last type is tiny dwelling units within a Built to Rent (BTR) property, which can be recognised with different names like *kost*, exclusive boarding house, or co-living. Based on the regulation (ICLG.com, 2024), BTR property owners are individual freeholders or landlords who lease their land to another party, so either individuals or private companies may run the management. In Greater Jakarta, *kosts* that are equivalent to tiny homes are comparable to studio apartments, whereas in Bali, *kosts* may appear similar to landed houses as they target potential long-term dwellers, but the sizes are smaller than the smallest landed houses built by housing developers. The regulation in Bali specifies *kost* as a rent unit for Indonesian citizens (Bali Regional Regulation No. 24, 2013) to protect Indonesians who seek a long-term dwelling, not being priced out by foreigners using a stronger currency. Other labels for this type, including tiny villa and apartment, are marketed for anyone regardless of their nationality. This segment is relatively expensive for Indonesian locals and includes hotel-like units, co-living, clustered apartments, or cottages. Micro-housing, discussed by Bergan and Dufty-Jones (2023), refers to this housing segment, where tiny homes appear as a “tourist retreat type of co-living housing” with “all-inclusive service”. A Bali-based architect interviewed in my study, who received offers to design tiny home villas, also supported the view that this particular segment has become a recent trend. Although often marketed for tourists, one participant in this study had been living in this type of home for more than five years. Based on the patterns of participants’ housing pathways, any tiny homes in Bali can be suitable for short- or long-term dwelling depending on each individual’s preferences and intention to live in Bali.

A more recent study conducted by Garcia (2024) compared three types of tiny homes in America, labelled as Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), tiny home, and micro-apartment. Referring to this classification, only micro-apartments shared similar characteristics to Indonesian tiny homes, whereas Garcia's ADU and tiny home are not identified in this study. Meanwhile, Indonesia's landed houses, which are sold in the formal housing sector, have not been represented in any of the previous studies of tiny homes, and this may indicate that Indonesian tiny homes have their own uniqueness as a commercially produced segment by major housing developers. The following table locates where tiny homes in Indonesia are represented in existing studies of typologies of tiny homes (Table 17). The columns presented in italics show which types of tiny homes are prevalent in this study.

Table 19 Identification of tiny homes in Indonesia based on existing typology

Source	Type	Characteristics	Identification in Indonesia
Shearer (2019)	<i>Mobile (fully or partially):</i>		
	Type 1a	- Tiny house on a trailer - Moves from construction site to permanent or semi-permanent site in urban or rural land - Legal as a “caravan” or RV, varies depending on location - Size: around 20m²	Not identified in this study, arguably due to the illegal status of using vehicles as home.
	Type 1b	- Relocatable tiny house, moved to site then fixed or semi-permanent: prefab, cabin, shipping container tiny house. - Legal as primary/ ancillary dwelling on own / rented land - Size: larger than 1a; mostly <40 m²	Developed in Indonesia as innovations in building construction materials, but not represented by this research participants
	Type 1c	- Fully mobile dwellings: caravans, boats, trucks, tents. - Legal to park, time permitted on council - Size: smaller than 1a & 1b	Identified in Bali and possibly in other eco-tourist areas for temporary purposes, but not a part of this research scope.
	<i>Permanent (non-mobile):</i>		
	Type 2a	- Purpose built tiny house/ cottage - Fully legal - Generally in a rural/ rural residential area - Size: <50 m²	Identified in Bali, mostly as individually owned air BnB, but not a part of this research scope.
Garcia (2024)	Type 2b	- Converted non-residential building: shed, garage, barn - Attached to a larger property - Legal, but councils differ widely - Size: <70 m²	Not identified in this study, but might exist depending on the main property owner – not specifically regulated
	Type 3c	- Tiny house village: apartment complex/ cottage/ townhouse in an intentional or co-housing community. - Fully legal in many countries - Located from city centres to rural and regional areas - Size for individual' private space is <40 m²	<i>Prevalent in this study and wider areas of Indonesia; this type is represented by this research participants with much smaller individual's private space</i>
	Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)	- Fixed foundation - Tenancy: owner - Legal in residential areas depending on local regulations - Could live full-time - Size: 500-1000 sq. ft. (46.5-93 m²)	Similar to Shearer's Type 2b, not identified in this study
	Tiny-Home	- Mostly built on a movable trailer - Tenancy: owner - Legal with conditional uses, often not allowed in residential areas - Could live full-time - Size: < 400 sq ft. (<37 m²)	Refer to Shearer's Type 1a and 1c, not identified in this study
	Micro-Apartment	- Most often on a regular foundation - Tenancy: renter - Legal in dense downtown areas - Could live full-time - Size for individual: 200-400 sq.ft. (18.5-37 m²)	<i>Prevalent in this study, but property ownership is also available in Greater Jakarta; this type is represented by this research participants</i>

Source: Shearer and Burton (2019), Garcia (2024) and author – emphasis added in italic

7.3.4 (Un)Privacy and crowding

While previous studies have identified challenges of privacy and crowding, research participants in this study did not report these as particularly significant issues. Indeed, one participant emphasised that he did not need privacy in his home apart from when he changed clothes (see p.190). Conceptually, the word 'privacy' does not exist in the Indonesian language, so the interpretation might be different from English contexts. In his book *The Hidden Dimension*, anthropologist Edward T. Hall (1966, p.144) compared the concept of privacy in several countries and found that even though the Japanese do not have the word for privacy, they express it through their concept of *zen*, as an empty spot where individuals can find their own self-discovery. In this study, several families exhibited concerns related to privacy, as there was no private room for children or no private room at all because of the open space concept. Hence, the study found that children had less privacy than parents but the only concern for privacy was stated when male and female older children shared the same bedroom, which implied the importance of gender separation for children who have reached puberty.

This study has shown that the value of privacy at home is important in determining what is appropriate or not for others to see, such as activities in the bathroom. Apart from this, there is no privacy between occupants expressed through spatial settings. Even so, the boundary of privacy is constructed differently in each household. One participant still tried to put all of their children together inside one bedroom, even though some of them were old enough to drive, but some other participants let one of their children sleep in the living room to separate them from their sibling(s). When privacy is often associated with personal space or less crowding (Altman, 1975, p. 192), this suggests that some individuals place a higher value on privacy than others. Even though privacy may not be seen in the physical space within the home interior, some narratives in which participants chose home locations in the quiet corner of their neighbourhood, or chose to live in tiny apartments rather than landed houses to avoid interaction with neighbours, indicated that they acknowledged a similar concept of privacy to that understood in the English term as the right of "being private and undisturbed" (King, 2004). Discussions about older children who were rarely at home also indicated that there were expectations of privacy that participants' homes could not provide. Thus, they created their own spaces outside.

This study has also shown that participants were aware of potential overcrowding but were able to mitigate it. When there was a lack of space to accommodate a household member, they compromised to live separately. Even though some homes felt more crowded than others,

the actual difference was less significant, as it usually happened in 4-5 occupant homes with similar sizes. This implied that participants could identify a point where the level of occupation was tolerable or not, even though it was subjective depending on their perceptions towards how crowded their home was or should be.

On the other hand, previous studies reported that crowding had implications for noise, and the proximity between areas made the smell of cooking stay everywhere (Shearer, 2019). Apart from the struggle of not having enough space to store items, case study participants did not share any significant complaints associated with overcrowding. Considering that the sizes discussed in previous studies were similar to participants' homes, this suggested that participants in this study had a greater tolerance for living in tiny domestic spaces, which may have been built from cultural values. For example, it is common to hear the sound of the *azan*²¹ from the mosques five times a day all over Java Island, including the Greater Jakarta area, and this may influence the tolerance for noise levels. Also, within a strongly collective culture, people are used to sharing spaces, which may influence the tolerance for the sense of crowding at home.

Nonetheless, the absence of overcrowding in this study does not mean that this issue does not exist in Indonesia's tiny homes. Overcrowding itself has been an issue in Indonesia, especially in Jakarta City's informal housing, where it can be as extreme as having to take turns to sleep (Volix Media, 2023). Aside from the minimum permitted size for housing, the Indonesian Ministry states the threshold of sufficient living area to define 'liveable' homes being 7.2 m² per person (Ministerial Decree of Housing and Infrastructure No. 403, 2002). Having less space than that is considered overcrowding, but all of the participants' homes had a bigger space larger than this for each of their household members. However, as reported by Indonesia's national press (Laksono, 2025), the most recent Statistics Indonesia stated that 34.75% of Indonesian households dwelled in unliveable homes. The government monitors this issue as a broader concern about poverty, but it is not associated with the trend of the shrinking domestic space that is produced by commercial housing developers.

7.3.5 Resistance towards regulations

With the government allowing commercial developers to produce tiny homes, home seekers who can only afford that type are 'forced' to accept the built products. In contrast to cases in other countries where there have been political and/or social movements in response to declining housing sizes, such as in Vienna where the size reduction in housing standard was

²¹ A prayer call for Muslims, often with a loudspeaker on the roof of the mosque.

resisted through political movement (Lilius, Friesenecker and Krankl, 2023) or in Canada, America and Australia where there had been approaches to legalise Tiny House on Wheels (THOWs) (Wenban, 2018; Lessard, 2022), there have been no organised or collective protests about the standard of housing size in Indonesia. The exception is in Bali, where the traditional law forbids Hindus to live in a size smaller than the minimum permitted by the government. However, the reduced space allowed by the government means there are more opportunities to provide housing in particular neighbourhoods, which is desirable for people who live in high-density areas. Especially for people who aspire to have a landed house, even though the building size is very small, they still have land territory that they can cultivate as freeholders. Moreover, there is no regulatory requirement to build a house with a certified architect, as shown by one participant who designed her home layout and hired a construction team to build her house. Thus, as long as the land is owned, there is scope for flexibility in creating spaces for individual homes.

As discussed in the previous chapter, many tiny homes in the form of a landed house have been renovated, indicating that many people bought tiny landed houses with the aspiration to renovate them in the future. Even though there are legal procedures for home constructions built by individuals (National Law No. 1, 2011), renovations often occur informally due to weak law enforcement. Moreover, the Indonesian Ministry of Public Works only emphasises the building codes for houses on main roads (Government Regulation No. 16, 2021), which are usually large and not suitable for tiny homes. So, the orderliness of renovation depends on the neighbourhood management, which can be under the charge of a developer or based on community agreement. In other words, there are no rigid rules on renovations as long as other people in the community agree with them.

The space extension to the outdoors practised in some participants' neighbourhoods indicates the insufficiency of space based on the government's standard, but rather than negotiating through legal approaches, it is more practical to expand their domestic space informally within their territory or within the community's territory as a shared space. This informal expansion is similar to 'quiet encroachment' that has been found in studies of slums, but was also practised by the middle class in the Philippines, Serbia, and Mozambique, who experienced housing shortages (Bartels, 2020). While the regulation is lenient in Indonesia, the disagreement on the spatial sufficiency stated by the government can be expressed through enlargement against the building codes.

The concept of expanding spaces to the outdoors and the possibility of being illegal in those tiny landed houses are also similar to the THOW movements. As seen in media portrayals, many THOWs are equipped with convertible and portable furniture that can be moved outside the main home. When they are parked in a natural setting, there will be no boundary to their outdoor territory as they use the public space. Compared to the boundaries of tiny landed houses in Indonesia that are set by the size of their plot of land, THOWs have more flexibility to expand their space. Even so, THOWs' outdoor expansion is not considered encroachment as their moveable nature only enables temporary use of the public space, unless they intend to live permanently in one place, which is considered illegal in several areas (Shearer, 2019).

7.4 Specific characteristics of Indonesian tiny homes

The last main section in this chapter discusses the uniqueness of Indonesian tiny homes that was not found in previous studies. The most significant one is the climatic conditions of Indonesian geography that are incomparable to other case studies that were predominantly conducted in non-tropical countries. The next is the regulation of the Indonesian housing's minimum standard, which is far lower than that of other countries, and its correlation to the nation's poverty. Lastly, the final topic in this section describes the challenges and implications of tiny homes in the case study locations and potentially in wider Indonesian urban cities that are associated with social and environmental aspects.

7.4.1 Geographical/ climatic contexts

There is an impression from previous discussion sections that tiny homes in Indonesia are more acceptable as a normalised domestic space compared to other Western countries, in which studies of tiny homes have been undertaken. Amidst the struggles, the study participants have also shown that many of them could adapt well to their confined domestic space. Nonetheless, the Indonesian climate may ease this adaptation process. The spatial consequence of tropical buildings is the necessity to have high ceilings to mitigate the heat, but this has no implications for the floor area. With no requirement for heating insulation, all tiny homes in this study had thin walls. This meant that, with the same land area taken for building a home, there was more interior floor space in Indonesian homes compared to homes in subtropical climates. To achieve equivalent interior floor space, less land area is needed for Indonesian homes.

Different cultural orientations towards furniture also reduce the necessity of space in Indonesian homes, as shown by participants who were comfortable with sitting on the floor to eat or to lounge in the living room. Also, the long hours of daylight enable more functions to be conducted outdoors, which may reduce the need for interior space further. Thus, only the bedroom, bathroom, and living room need to be kept indoors and protected within the walls and under the roof. On the other hand, the tropical temperature requires a tall ceiling to keep the heat at a higher level, and it can make the space under the roof too warm to inhabit, but this issue is preventable with AC and proper exhaust ventilation. With all of these advantages, it makes sense for Indonesian regulations to state less floor space as the minimum dwelling size.

7.4.2 Policy tactics to camouflage poverty

The evidence from the national regulation also has shown that in the early 1990s, the ministerial regulation had supported the development of 12-36 m² homes (Ministry of Public Works No.54, 1991), suggesting that tiny homes in Indonesia had emerged far before this trend arose in Western countries. Even though it is understood that Indonesian homes can be smaller than housing in subtropical or non-tropical countries, the comparative data presented in Table 18 shows that housing standards are 14 m² per person for the first four people in France and Italy, and 20 m² in Spain (Appolloni and D'alessandro, 2021). Those figures are around twice the Indonesian standard, which is 9 m² per person (Government Regulation No. 12, 2021). Their study also showed the standard size for studio apartments is 28 m² for a single occupant in Italy, which was similar to the size of studio apartments in Jakarta more than ten years ago.

Meanwhile, this current study in Greater Jakarta and Bali showed that many landed houses were built without adequate space for kitchens, which is included as a compulsory space for a home unit (Regulation of the Ministry of Public Works No. 5, 2007, p.9) and a studio apartment in Greater Jakarta was found to be as small as 14 m² for a single occupant. Even though tropical buildings require higher ceilings, the differences with most of the European countries studied are not significant. Arguing that all humans around the world share similar anthropological dimensions, this contrast implies the insufficiency of floor area standards given by the Indonesian government.

Table 20 Comparison of minimum floor areas between countries

Countries	Min floor area per inhabitant (m2)	Studio Apartment area (m2)	Min ceiling height (m)
France	14 m2 for the first 4 people	-	2.20
Italy	15 m2 for the first 4 people	28 m2 for 1 occupant 38 m2 for 2 occupants	2.70
Spain	20 m2 including common areas (living room and kitchen)	20 m2 for buildings existing prior to the Decree in 2012 (Cataluna)	2.50
The Netherlands	18 m2 for new buildings 10 m2 for existing buildings	-	2.60
Indonesia	9 m2 for commercial homes 7.2 m2 for 'liveable' homes (incl. common areas)	from data collection: decreasing trend from 27 to 14 m2	2.70

sources: Minister of Housing and Infrastructure (2002), Appolloni and D'alessandro, (2021) and author's data collection (2025)

Moreover, the gap between the minimum sizes for commercial housing and for defining liveable homes based on the Indonesian regulation is not significant, being 9 m² per person for the general commercial housing and 7.2 m² per person as one indicator of 'liveable' homes in the context of tackling unhealthy homes (Ministerial Decree of Housing and Infrastructure, No.403, 2002), which is just 1.8 m² difference. As additional information, the indicator of liveable homes is used by the Indonesian government in the context of evaluating housing quality that is closely related to poverty, but not as a design standard. In another country, the Netherlands also classifies two categories for minimum floor area, the minimum tolerance is given to existing buildings and is still larger than Indonesia's commercial homes. Comparing all of these figures, homes with 9 m² per person are closer to the classification of 'unliveable' homes in Indonesia rather than to other minimum standards in other countries. The renovations that were undertaken beyond regulatory control also made middle-class neighbourhoods look visually similar to informal housing. In addition, the floor area of subsidised housing may not exceed 36 m², as retrieved from the Indonesian Legal Documentation and Information Network (Ministerial Decree of Public Works and Housing No 22, 2023). Since the standard of 'liveable' homes, subsidised and informal housing are associated with poverty, some tiny homes in the commercial housing sector may also indicate poverty, and this was evident in this study where a few participants did not generate income anymore due to job market adversities, but only one could be officially identified as sufficiently 'poor' in order to qualify for government's benefits.

Besides dwelling size, the government's concerns for Indonesian housing are heavily focused on other aspects of 'liveability' in their own terms, which include home ownership status, sanitation, proper roof materials, water resources, and electricity, as reported in Statistics Indonesia on housing indicators (BPS, 2024a). Moreover, it has been described in Section 5.2.2 that the Indonesian government has declared that their housing focus is aimed at Low-Income Households (LIH). Houses in the commercial sector are subject to the developers' responsibility upon the permit. So, tiny homes in this sector may be neglected by the government's attention. In relation to LIH, the government recently increased the threshold to be considered LIH as an eligibility to purchase subsidised housing (Ministry of Housing and Settlement No. 5, 2025). While LIH is measured by "financial ability to build or obtain a liveable house" (Ministry of Public Works and Housing No.1, 2021), this recent data indicates Indonesians' purchasing power to provide homes has been weaker, as there are more people who need the government's support just to purchase housing with bare minimum standards. This increasing threshold of defining the LIH also indicates that more Indonesian people can only afford subsidised housing, rather than helping those who are far under the LIH threshold and homeless to get a home, suggesting that these regulations potentially camouflage the poverty level in Indonesia.

7.4.3 Challenges and Implications

The discussion above reveals challenges and implications associated with tiny homes, particularly in terms of social and environmental aspects.

Firstly, the National Law itself acknowledges a household as a family only (National Law No.1, 2011), limiting the housing choices of citizens with different household compositions. While the concept of a family is strongly related to religious marriage, there are many other households that are not represented by this definition. The case studies in the Greater Jakarta and Bali urban areas have shown that tiny homes can be the choice for these underrepresented groups, including older adults who remained single and unmarried partners or same-sex partners who refused to be exposed. Since this housing segment has become homes for these groups, there is a challenge to create a socially safe housing environment for them, which may not be accomplished legally through regulations.

The next challenge is to address the unequal practical rights to housing between domestic migrants and locals, particularly in Bali. Apart from 'the Indonesian rich' who can buy any property in the country, Indonesian citizens from different islands who come to Bali for work generally have fewer housing choices as they are directed to live in '*kosts*', whether as a single

occupant or as a family with children. Even though the forms of '*kosts*' can be similar to landed houses, their sizes are smaller than the smallest landed house permitted by regulation. Since *kosts* belong to an individual owner, the liveability of the homes is influenced by the owners' preferences and rules. According to the senior property marketing staff who participated in this study, developers cannot build tiny homes in the commercial housing segment like in Greater Jakarta because the size is too small for Balinese customary law. Meanwhile, the smallest homes according to the Balinese standard are too expensive in the urban areas, so they are built in the peripheral areas with less expensive land value, creating urban sprawl. These houses have become tiny homes for most Balinese locals who downsized from their much bigger family homes and called themselves migrants because they moved from their family land. Even though they are Balinese, the community may give a higher tariff for the local tax than the original locals because they are still considered 'outsiders' (previously discussed in Section 4.6.2). One study participant who had Balinese ancestry but identified as an inter-island migrant shared that she had to pay for a ceremony because she and her husband, who was not Balinese, were considered unclean. Even though she was unsure if it was because of her citizenship status or because they were newlyweds,²² this is evidence of discriminatory practices in housing pathways in Bali.

This tiny home study has also revealed the outcome of lenient monitoring of building codes at the neighbourhood level that enabled housing renovations outside regulatory control. This may impact the environmental qualities of the neighbourhood. The government has set regulations on the building setback towards the street line, the maximum ground floor area, and the maximum height of the building to consider the environmental qualities (National Law No. 28, 2002, p.7). The same law also states that buildings must consider the architectural aspects of the neighbourhood, including its visual appearance (p. 8). Based on the same law, the penalty for the violation would include building demolition (p.21), but the multifariousness of the building forms found in tiny home neighbourhoods in Greater Jakarta implies that there is no control over building customisation, including that which may endanger the environment. It is generally known that the more ground surface is covered by construction, the less area there is to absorb the rainwater. Particularly in Greater Jakarta, which is geographically prone to flooding and has experienced multiple disastrous floods, enforcing building regulations would be beneficial for the environment.

On the other hand, not every homeowner with rights as freeholders is aware that such a regulation exists. Some study participants, including the chief of a neighbourhood community,

²² Related to a traditional belief that marriage involves sexual activities that are considered unclean.

clearly stated that there was no regulation on renovation as long as people in the community agreed. Some other participants have also covered their green spaces for additional rooms or an indoor kitchen because those facilities were not accommodated by the initial home design, and they may not be held fully responsible if they were unaware of the building codes. Moreover, the simplicity of tiny home construction enabled some participants to do their home renovation themselves and avoid the paperwork process that might have been needed had they hired formal construction workers. Although this lenient control gives flexibility and ease to homeowners to expand their homes as they need, it is at the cost of greater flooding risk, particularly for those who live in Greater Jakarta.

The National Law itself states that the evaluation of building quality for houses is given to homeowners (No. 28, 2002, 18). In practice, the neighbourhood community may take over when the houses are built in a neighbourhood. The neighbourhood chief in this study has given a positive example of how he used his power to clear up the untidy street parking and reallocate it to a public park, but the challenge now is to spread the awareness of renovation to prevent further environmental catastrophes, such as prioritising vertical over horizontal spatial expansion (which can block rainwater absorption). With the possibility of similar success, this approach is worth practising at the community level. When the governmental sector is unreliable, Indonesia's higher education institutions can spread this information through their community service programmes.

7.5 Conclusion

Both studies in the Global North contexts and in the Greater Jakarta and Bali urban areas have shown that policymakers have a key role in building the narratives of housing in general. Those narratives can lead to the growing tiny home production, whether as common housing projects from developers or as alternative dwellings when households can only afford homes at the bare minimum size recommended by the nation's design standards, or even smaller. Although some individuals choose to live in tiny homes without financial constraints, most cases are driven by the disparity between housing prices and household finances, as the market sets these prices with minimal intervention from official authorities or the government. While shrinking the dwelling size may be a solution to meet the demand and shorten the gap between household finances and housing prices, this action is prone to capitalisation by property investors, especially in high-density urban cities where smaller homes are massively produced to meet the demand for housing units, e.g. Greater Jakarta. When this happens, the group of people who were originally targeted as buyers may be marginalised because housing

prices increase too quickly after those investors buy the property with their available money. In Indonesia, this issue has enlarged the number of citizens who are entitled to buy subsidised housing, which is tiny. This implies that the housing policies in a certain country greatly affect the prevalence of tiny homes.

The most significant nuance that distinguishes this study from other studies in Global North contexts is that socio-cultural aspects strongly influence individuals' housing mechanisms and their orientations towards, and practices of, tiny home living, and this includes belief in certain religions that justify discrimination. While discrimination towards specific groups of people happens in any country, the targeted groups that are prone to discrimination in Indonesia are wider. Hence, some people seek a home not only for dwelling purposes, but also for their sense of safety from social judgments or even physical threats. With housing prices already less affordable for Indonesian people, this issue adds another layer of restriction on their housing choices, ultimately leading them to tiny homes.

The discussion on the Indonesian characteristics has shown that living in tiny homes in the tropical climate seems to be easier than in the non-tropical climate, but some other countries in the Global North also have more convenience in having mobile tiny homes that offer a lot of freedom. Nonetheless, even though living in tiny homes may bring positive returns in various aspects of life, the challenges of dwelling in such a confined space still exist, and these may affect the overall well-being of the inhabitants. Both studies in the Global North and this study revealed struggles in organising spaces for storage, and this can cause stress, as experienced by participants in these studies. This suggests a correlation between the storage system in tiny homes with the occupants' satisfaction or even health. However, no study has been found on this topic that specifically uses tiny homes as research objects, which would be a potential area for future research.

This chapter has also demonstrated that different countries may have their own definition of tiny homes by typology and have different size thresholds to label a dwelling 'tiny'. These differences, especially shown by the standards in housing regulation, suggest inequality in defining basic requirements for dwelling. All humans share similar anthropometry. Hence, the minimum sufficiency of space shall be similar, e.g., the differences in size between single bed mattresses across countries are insignificant. The fact that the Indonesian regulation for minimum floor space per inhabitant can be half of the European standards indicates two opposite things: the Indonesian minimum standards might be far too low and less than sufficient for the inhabitants, but on the other hand, Europeans might still have some extra

space to reduce if they need to shrink the size even more in the future. As the trend of shrinking dwelling spaces is ubiquitous, comparative studies on this topic would be a contribution to wider tiny home studies globally. These comparative studies should be informed by recognition of the importance of the lived experience of these shrinking dwelling spaces, and by the complexity and differentiation within this, which means that a technical or legal definition of appropriate dwelling size is only one partial element in understanding what form of housing is required.

8. Conclusion

This thesis has explored the lived experiences of tiny home living in Indonesian urban areas, particularly in Greater Jakarta and Bali, framed by a wider investigation of the definitions and drivers of this form of dwelling. It has addressed gaps and nuances in existing international studies of tiny homes as a form of shrinking domesticities. This final chapter summarises the findings from each chapter and their contributions to broader studies, including directions for future research and reflections on the research process.

8.1 Understanding the definitions, the drivers, and the experiences of tiny home living in Indonesia: empirical contributions and responses to research questions 1-3

The definitions

Based on this study, tiny homes in Greater Jakarta and Bali urban areas are seen as common housing for Indonesian people from any social class, age, and ethnic background. The terms for housing typology found in this study are 'landed house', 'apartment', and 'kost'.

In the formal regulated housing sector, the Indonesian housing policy term does not recognise 'tiny homes', but this housing segment is understood in two contexts: as subsidised housing targeted at Low Income Households (LIH) and as an option in the commercial housing sector, with the smallest permitted size under Indonesian National Law. Both refer to housing with 36 m² or less of floor space, designed to fit an Indonesian stereotype of a family, which is composed of two adults and children. Recently, the government changed the LIH threshold, making Indonesians with higher incomes eligible for this housing scheme. As more Indonesians are classified as LIH, people with less housing finance and those with much stronger finances now live in similar-sized housing. The shared experiences of all participants (Chapter 5) who faced financial constraints and chose tiny homes provide evidence that tiny homes are widely produced in various types and price ranges to meet this demand in any neighbourhood, making this housing type common in the neighbourhoods of Greater Jakarta and Bali, and it looks 'normal' for anyone to live in tiny homes.

However, being 'common' or 'looking normal' does not mean that this size is normally accepted. Chapter 4 has shown that, even though the government does not officially acknowledge 'tiny homes', architectural measurements and responses from many

participants, including some with slightly larger floor areas, have shown that their living space was insufficient. Moreover, this study found evidence of commercial housing clusters built even smaller than the Indonesian national standards, and apartment sizes in Greater Jakarta have been decreasing over time. Where some participants perceived their tiny homes as 'big', they had previously experienced adversity in much smaller homes. Thus, tiny homes may personally be 'bigger' for some people, but they remain 'tiny' from the technical understanding and the perception of most inhabitants. Therefore, within the narratives of a lived experience framework, comparative and individual aspects are key, with individuals comparing their dwelling with their previous housing experiences, with other key comparator groups such as family and friends, and with wider collective housing norms and expectations.

From a cultural perspective, especially under Balinese-Hindu traditional law, their minimum housing standard is slightly larger than that defined by Indonesian National Law. With this understanding, Balinese participants who lived in the smallest permissible homes under their traditional law perceived their homes as tiny and regarded all small housing built in accordance with the National Law as even tinier. This understanding is shaped by the cultural necessity of the Balinese and their obligation to prepare religious offerings at home. In Chapter 6, some Balinese participants shared their struggles with having insufficient space for their offerings, even though their homes complied with traditional law.

Accordingly, tiny homes in Indonesia are recognised from cultural, social, and technical perspectives. Although this housing segment is not acknowledged in the policy terms, its association with LIH and households' finances suggests that tiny homes may also be recognised as having lower economic value than larger homes in the same neighbourhood.

The drivers

Given its prevalence, household participants mainly chose a tiny home because a key life transition at the time urged them to get a home, and their available options were limited to various versions of tiny homes. With the overall trend of rising housing prices, Indonesian people, whose housing choices are already directed toward tiny homes due to budget constraints, choose the type of tiny home they want based on their personal preferences and considerations. From this perspective, tiny homes appear to be a constraint in housing choices that may force Indonesian people who previously lived in bigger homes to downsize. However, it is notable that some tiny homes also appear to support LIH, who may have previously lived in informal housing, and some participants in this study represented this group. It appears that their lives have improved because they can finally access housing through the formal housing

sector. Therefore, even as housing choices shift toward tiny homes, households encounter different housing mechanisms that can be seen as either lowering or elevating their housing aspirations, depending on their individual housing biographies.

From the occupants' perspectives, societal, cultural, and religious expectations influenced their choice of the type of tiny dwelling that would be their permanent home. The stereotype of the nuclear family as an idealised household construction led them to prefer living in a landed house in a neighbourhood. Meanwhile, discriminative sentiments against adults who remain single, uneven acceptance of domestic migrants, and even threats to some minority groups and people whose life choices are not aligned with religious values, drive them to choose alternative housing, either an apartment or a *kost*. It must be acknowledged, of course, that some people do not fit within the general category because they were relatively detached from social expectations or able to ignore the negative sentiments. For example, participants who lived in a tiny apartment with their nuclear family in Jakarta City, due to its strategic location, and young adult singles who lived in a *kost* merely for practical reasons.

The experiences

Navigating spatial challenges has become the overarching experience of tiny home living in the case study locations. Some households with two or more children also indicated compromised privacy. However, those challenges were mostly evident visually rather than in participants' narratives. Participants whose tiny homes met their practical and social needs were mostly happy living in them. Those needs would include a good location, a good environment, the expected type of neighbours, the expected level of privacy, and generally more advantages than disadvantages. This happiness was mostly expressed by participants who lived alone. They acknowledged their challenges, but the autonomy of living alone and the practicality of having a small space surpassed the unpleasant experiences. For participants who lived with their families, their expectations of privacy tended to be low and started to become a concern when children of different genders had to share the same bedroom in their late teens. The value of gratitude expressed by a significant number of them also suggested that they might be genuinely satisfied, or, on the other hand, that religious values forbade them from expressing dissatisfaction even when they felt it. Without being explicitly spoken, the photo documentation of many participants' homes clearly showed their struggle in managing and storing household items, but only a few participants explicitly shared their complaints and regrets about their homes.

Some participants in this study previously lived in bigger homes. Their adaptation to living in a smaller space was naturally supported by the tropical warmth, which allowed them to live with less furniture and utilise the floor. Some tiny homes in this study did not have furniture for the living room or a dedicated dining area. Their only common space was the living and dining room, where everyone sat on the floor or used small foldable chairs. Although this setting was not ideal for those who still wanted space for a sofa, the lack of specific furniture did not disrupt their main activities in that room. This indicates that living in tiny homes may be easier in tropical settings than in countries with extreme seasonal changes.

Reflecting on the definition of tiny homes in Indonesia, being prevalent, common, and receiving positive sentiments from occupants does not mean this housing segment can be accepted as a standardised housing form. Indeed, the prevalence of tiny homes is induced by government narratives that rationalise small housing standards, thereby justifying their production by housing developers. However, this study has shown that challenges related to spatial insufficiency exist, are inevitable, and not every household can adapt well to them. Therefore, the tiny home segment in Indonesia needs to be clearly distinguished from standardised housing to ensure the market is aware of its potential spatial challenges.

8.2 Responses to the global trend of tiny homes: theoretical knowledge contributions and responses to research question 4

Chapter 7 has examined the similarities and nuances between the trend of tiny homes in Indonesia and in other countries, and identified the specific characteristics and challenges of tiny homes in Indonesia. Similar to other countries, the prevalence of tiny homes results from the interplay between market demand and housing supply. When an area is populous and the land area for housing is rare, it is practical to cut down dwelling size to meet the demand quantity, especially when Indonesians only value houses with land as the idealised form of housing. The struggles of navigating spatial confinement were similar across countries where tiny home living was studied.

Addressing the gaps between studies in Indonesia and other regions, there are contributions to theoretical knowledge on studies about tiny homes:

In terms of typology, the study of tiny homes in Indonesia has discovered a built-to-rent property called '*kost*'. Indonesia does not legally acknowledge built-to-rent property in their official documents, but there are regulations for *kost*. The meaning of *kost* itself has changed

from 'transient housing for students or early career workers' to 'a long-term home for professional domestic migrant workers'. As discussed in Chapter 4, this provides further evidence of the more widespread, permanent use of tiny homes.

In discussing tiny homes as an alternative housing option, this study examined how Indonesian linguistics and agrarian law shape their meaning. Because the Indonesian language refers to 'home' as 'house' that is built on a plot of land, this understanding makes multi-storey housing, such as apartments and *kosts*, seen as an alternative housing option with less value than 'landed houses'. Whether the size is measured by floor area or land area, and whether 'home' is known as a house, a flat or apartment, or a *kost*, the legal definition only acknowledges property ownership fully in freehold status, which can only be obtained through 'landed houses'. Thus, apartments are seen socially as an alternative home, regardless of size. No one can own the land individually, although they can own a specific unit. Moreover, even the lower value is given to *kosts* as the tenancy is only available for rent. Although many people in Greater Jakarta consider their apartments their primary homes, and many people in Bali have lived in their *kosts* for years, the value of these homes is lower than that of an 'ideal home' in the form of a house with an individual plot of land.

This thesis has also identified nuances in housing mechanisms and perceptions of privacy and spatial crowding among tiny home inhabitants. Although social, cultural, and religious values strongly influence these aspects of Indonesian tiny home living, some Indonesian participants showed detachment from those values and adopted more practical approaches to housing, often similar to those described in Western literature. Moreover, the reluctance of some people in the latter group to participate in this study suggests that there may be a larger group of households whose housing practices are not influenced by those values. This is important, as Indonesian culture is often perceived in contrast to Western culture. Meanwhile, in urban contexts, this suggests there are likely shared values regarding housing mechanisms between Indonesia and the West that are worth exploring.

In response to housing policies, some studies in the Western literature have documented approaches to legalise mobile tiny homes and resistance to the government's plan to reduce housing standards. In Indonesia, there is no record of movements in response to housing standards regulations, but there is disagreement over government-set spatial standards, as evidenced by practices of encroachment in some tiny home neighbourhoods. However, in June 2025, after the data collection for this study ended, the Indonesian government announced a plan to produce 18 m² subsidised housing, followed by an exhibition of the mock-

up units, showing the smallest house being 14 m² instead of 18 m², including a kitchen, toilet, bedroom, and living room. This plan received widespread protests from Indonesian citizens, concerning the spatial insufficiency that would be worse than the houses built by the Dutch during their colonial era, which were 15 m² with shared kitchens and toilets outside the unit, as reported by BBC Indonesia (Hajid, 2025). The plan was finally cancelled in the following month due to the massive protests. This was the first time – in my lifetime – that the government-regulated dwelling size had provoked such protests. This surely illustrated that the potential extent of reduced dwelling space could be a major controversial issue when promoted by the Indonesian government. This also implied that Indonesians could resist the government's housing standards when the sizes were considered too restrictive. In this case, Indonesians seem to have greater tolerance for living in tiny spaces than other tiny home dwellers in Western literature. It also reveals the limitations of governmental and regulatory mechanisms to shape and determine many individuals' dwellings and lived experiences of housing.

Overall, in international contexts, the findings from this study will contribute to a larger dataset in housing studies concerning tiny homes, which will benefit academic study and further housing research.

8.3 'Lived experience' as a research approach: methodological contributions to housing studies.

Using 'lived experience' as an approach in this study led to a wide-ranging exploration of tiny homes, including their typology, trajectory, and experiences of their occupants within the Indonesian formal housing sector in the Greater Jakarta and Bali urban areas. Besides capturing information during data collection, this approach allowed the generation of housing biographies through *in situ* home observation, where the inhabitants were present and able to explain the stories of their homes and their own stories while residing in their homes chronologically. Also, when participants' narratives alone were unreliable for generating data, combining visual information could confirm or contrast their narratives and improve the accuracy of the research data. Thus, the information generated was extensive and valuable for producing robust and rigorous research based on empirical data.

While this approach was previously used in pedagogy (Van Manen, 1990) and social policy analysis (McIntosh and Wright, 2019), this study demonstrates that adapting lived experience as a research approach was effective for collecting diverse, unique individual housing data.

Thus, in the academic and research fields, the implementation of lived experience in this study will also hopefully contribute to housing studies conducted using complex qualitative methods, especially those that focus on empirical data generated primarily from interactions with households, whether through interviews or other participatory research methods.

Aligned with the needs of housing studies to include knowledge from ordinary residents and people who have direct housing experiences (Allen, 2009; Flint, 2011), a significant amount of this research data was collected through direct interactions with individuals who were open to showcasing their homes while sharing their intimate stories related to their homes, enabling both verbal and non-verbal information to be recorded as research data. In this study, this approach helped capture individual housing biographies and identify similarities between housing mechanisms in Indonesia and those in the Western literature, showing that, despite social and cultural expectations being the norm, the lived experiences of some Indonesians were more practical than influenced by those expectations. This suggests that lived experience will be beneficial to contemporary housing studies, where housing trajectories can be dynamic and generalisation towards a single theory may compress the data saturation, especially in urban contexts where diversity in social, economic, and cultural values is apparent.

Especially for housing studies in Indonesia, which is more dominated by quantitative approaches, this research has contributed to filling a significant gap in research methods as described in Chapter 2. While advanced qualitative research is rarely found, this study encourages more housing research that better accommodates households' generated data, and enables a more robust understanding of the factors shaping their lived experience and orientations towards this experience, rather than the statistical data commonly available.

8.4 Contributions to practice

Through learning from the lived experiences of tiny home occupants in this study, several insights emerge about adapting to living in confined spaces that may or may not be applicable in other contexts. For instance, some participants in this study reframed spatial restriction as design creativity, a pattern that may be replicable in other contexts. Other participants focused on non-spatial aspects, such as neighbourhood quality, relationships within the household, and attitudes of gratitude, to increase their overall satisfaction with their tiny homes despite the spatial constraints. This pattern may also be replicated by any other tiny home inhabitants who agree on those non-spatial values. In contrast, some strategies may not be applicable in

other contexts, such as sitting on the floor without furniture or designating an outdoor kitchen without a proper building envelope (walls and roofs). These examples may not be appropriate in countries that experience extremely cold temperatures.

The study findings also have implications for housing stakeholders in the Indonesian context, such as reviewing housing policies related to controlling housing capitalisation, examining housing design regulations to ensure that each home is equipped with adequate basic kitchen utilities, storage, and circulation space, and enforcing the law implementation and housing education at the neighbourhood level to avoid environmental degradation as a result of organic encroachment or illegal housing renovation.

Furthermore, this study revealed unethical housing renovation practices that could harm environmental quality, particularly when homeowners cover all of their land with buildings, leaving no area for rainwater absorption. Correlated to this, some participants reported flooding in their neighbourhoods. While law enforcement is ineffective or weak, it is encouraged that housing practitioners, the academic and research community, and Indonesian officials disseminate their knowledge through programmes that reach the neighbourhood level to educate residents and individual homeowners across Indonesia about the environmental consequences of housing renovation initiatives when not done appropriately.

8.5 Limitations and future research directions

Nevertheless, this study has limitations, including findings that are not discussed due to the thesis's scope and constraints. For example, the contrast between participants' gratitude and the explicit messiness of their homes, as displayed in Chapter 6, leaves the understanding of those households' experiences partially explored, as the full understanding would at some point require scrutinising the anthropological and cultural aspects of Indonesian people, which are beyond the scope of this research. However, several findings suggest potential future research topics that remain relevant to tiny homes and housing more broadly.

Since this study focuses on the formal housing sector, it does not include certain segments of tiny homes that are evident in field observations. For example, there are tiny accommodations for tourism facilities and an experimental project by a research participant who was an architect, who used leftover construction materials to build a tiny house. However, there is no evidence of lived experiences in his project. Another participant working on product innovation

with residual waste shared his project, branded as 'microhouse', built with sustainable and recycled materials, but he only produced one unit for a competition. No one has actually lived in it. Although these units have not been tested for habitation, the interest shown by participants in creating such projects indicates that awareness of the trend towards smaller dwellings is increasing and is likely to grow further. Furthermore, the presence of campervans for recreational mobile living in Bali also suggests the potential for further development of tiny homes, despite the current legal status of this housing type in Indonesia.

As mentioned in several previous chapters, there was a group of tiny home occupants who refused to participate in this study because they avoided neighbourhood surveillance due to their identification as unmarried couples and same-sex partners. This study was also conducted in areas that are destination targets for migration, which meant that most recruited participants were identified as domestic migrants. Apart from reflecting the limitations of the methods discussed in Chapter 3, this indicates that the demography of Indonesian tiny homes is broader than that represented in this study. While the lived experience approach may capture the data, the time constraints on conducting the fieldwork prevented the processes from being implemented. Nonetheless, their experiences regarding housing mechanisms, related to societal expectations, are worth further investigation.

As discussed in Chapter 6, all participants in this study experienced varying degrees of difficulty navigating spatial challenges. While this thesis evaluated the advantages and disadvantages of living in tiny homes and how occupants adjusted to the space constraints, there are broader topics that warrant more specific research. The struggles or stress associated with spatial challenges suggest implications for inhabitants' well-being. Similar to the overall satisfaction reported by these research participants, which derived not only from the physical homes but also from environmental, community, and other non-physical aspects, the overall well-being of living in tiny homes also has potential for further study. Using examples from this research data, measuring the volume of items and furniture in tiny homes to determine the ratio of stored mass to available clearance in the habitable area, addressing reflective questions about inhabitants' well-being, or getting more in-depth conversation with participants to investigate if the gratitude was a part of the culture or may have been generated after a certain experience of distress, may offer promising methodological approaches.

Chapter 7 presented a comparative table of the minimum standards of dwelling space between Indonesia and several European countries. While this served as a benchmark for analysis, there is a clear need for future comparative studies on housing standards that are more

relevant to Indonesia, specifically within Asia or Southeast Asia. These regions may experience similar tiny home phenomena due to shared tropical climates or the socio-economic characteristics of developing nations.

Lastly, the experiences of tiny home living suggest a connection to gender studies in the Indonesian context. It was shown in Section 6.2.2 (see p.173) that only female participants addressed complaints about the difficulty of performing some domestic tasks when there was no space to store specific home equipment. There were also married female participants who only spoke from their husbands' perspectives about the journey to finding their tiny homes, with some of them declaring that they did not have any housing aspirations apart from those of their husbands. Although patriarchal culture is common in Indonesia, this research data may potentially generate different findings when participants' data is analysed through a lens of gender studies.

8.6 Reflections on the research process

Drawing on my personal experience of downsizing and observing shrinking housing sizes in my hometown over the years, I approached this study with the expectation of finding more technical data and explicit information to shape my academic research. I chose my own country and cities that I was familiar with, thinking that I understood the characteristics of the people and the cultures well. Contrary to these expectations, I gained a deeper understanding of the social and cultural values of people in my nation and was confronted with the extent to which these values predominate in shaping Indonesian housing practices. Participants in this research originated from most of the major islands in Indonesia; as migrants to Greater Jakarta or Bali, their sociocultural perspectives could represent Indonesia in general. However, the observed tiny homes were located only in the two case study localities. Consequently, I noticed I used 'Indonesia' and 'Greater Jakarta and Bali urban areas' interchangeably, even though one refers to a country and the other one refers to the specific case study locations.

Conducting fieldwork in these locations has exposed me to the cities' population densities and the implications for housing production and demand. This study has shown that there are beneficial outcomes of tiny home living for populous urban contexts. Not only can production be more cost-effective, but it can also accommodate more people and alleviate housing shortages when prices are affordable in the market. I personally agree with tiny home living in the context of sufficiency and being mindful of the environmental footprint produced by housing and its implications for future generations, but I disagree with the normalisation of tiny home

sizes as the regulated sizes in official housing standards. It is evident that tiny home living is not for everyone. It offers more advantages for people who are determined to simplify their lifestyle, especially for one or two members of the household. Apart from this group, tiny home living has led to real struggles with interior space management among household members. The study has also identified further implications for the environment.

Lastly, the compilation of the lived experiences shared in this thesis has also revealed practices of inequality and discrimination in everyday life that may complicate individuals' housing pathways. Without having to experience disaster or war, some people seek homes for safety as if they were refugees whose homes had been destroyed. Only this destruction is caused by social discrimination. I purposefully employed a narrative writing style to engage a broader audience, making a special appeal to Indonesian people. Amidst the current struggles with housing finance, I argue that social discrimination should be the least obstacle to finding a home in one's own homeland. As a final closing, I dedicate my thesis as a channel to give voice to my participants' housing aspirations that previously went unheard.

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Appendices

1. Information Sheet



Defining and Understanding Experiences of Tiny Home Living in Indonesia

Participant Information Sheet (resident)

You are being invited to take part in a research project. It is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

About the project

This project is carried out as PhD research in the University of Sheffield, UK, supported by The Indonesia Endowment Fund for Education from the Indonesian Ministry of Finance. The goal is to support the continuous housing development in Indonesia through generating data from the lived experiences of Indonesian tiny homes.

This project aims to:

- Understand the tiny home living in Indonesian context
- Explore the rationales, motivations, and everyday realities of tiny home living in Indonesia
- Provide perceptual values and post-occupational evaluation that contribute to further studies on the minimum size of Indonesian tiny homes

Why am I being asked to take part?

This study is aiming to speak to people, 18 years old or older, who are living in different kinds of tiny homes in Greater Jakarta, Denpasar – Bali and their peripheral areas, including small apartments, 'kost', and conventional detached homes). Preferably, those people have lived in their homes for minimum of three months to have experiences to share. You are contacted as someone who may be living in one of these kinds of properties.

What does it involve?

The researcher would like to arrange a time to make a visit to your home and speak to you in person about your experience of living in your home, and how you came to live there. This research will also involve a documentation of the physical data of your home through sketching, measuring the layout and take photos to support the data. The physical data will be collected within the communal areas (living room, dining area, kitchen, etc.) and from the exterior of your house. The measurement and documentation will last within 30 minutes and the conversations will take place between 45-60 minutes, depending on how much you want to share your experience. If you are comfortable, the researcher would like to carry out an observation of the natural setting of your home for another 30 minutes. The total duration of the visit will not exceed 2 hours.

For Jakarta area, the visits will take place between September – October 2023 and for Denpasar, Bali area, the visits will be carried out between November – December 2023.

Can you compensate me for the time that it takes?

Yes, we will provide an e-commerce shopping voucher valued IDR 300,000 (= £15) to appreciate your participation and to compensate you for the time involved in speaking to us. This will be sent to your registered phone number used for the e-commerce application. You will need to sign a receipt to indicate that you have received this voucher.

Do I have to take part?

No, you do not have to take part in the research. You can change your mind and withdraw from the research at any time until the research has been published (estimation time: September 2026). You may also take part partially, e.g., you want to take part in the interview, but you do not allow your house to be visited.

How will you use the information that I provide?

Your given data is only used for academic purposes only within the University of Sheffield, UK. The conversations during the visit will be recorded and replayed for a transcription and the result will be identified with case number as your pseudonym. This process will be carried out by the researcher to ensure the data confidentiality. The data will not be shared beyond the researcher and supervision team and your identity will not be revealed. There will be a consent asking your permission to keep your data for further research, but if you do not give permission, your data will be destroyed after the end of this project.

The outcome of this research will be a PhD dissertation writing, academic articles and conference presentations. For those purposes, this study will only use the generated data where none of the participants can be identified individually.

Will what I say be confidential?

Your name, details of your address, or anything that may identify you, will not be disclosed in any output of this research. Whenever an identity is required to write a narration, you will be identified with a pseudonym, for example "Case 17, Denpasar". However, there is always a chance that you could be identified by someone who knows you especially if you come from the same neighborhood.

Who is the Data Controller?

The University of Sheffield will act as the Data Controller for this study. This means that the University is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.

Who is funding the project?

The Indonesia Endowment Fund for Education from the Indonesian Ministry of Finance.

Who can I contact for more information, or to make a complaint?

If you require any further information about this work, please contact: Setiamurti Rahardjo, PhD Student, University of Sheffield, srahardjo1@sheffield.ac.uk.

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the research and wish to make a complaint, please contact the research supervisor (Professor John Flint, john.flint@sheffield.ac.uk).

If you feel your complaint has not been handled in a satisfactory way, you can contact the Head of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning (David Robinson, david.robinson@sheffield.ac.uk).

If the complaint relates to how your personal data has been handled, you can find information about how to raise a complaint in the University's Privacy Notice: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general>.

Data protection statement

This project has been submitted to the University of Sheffield's Research Ethics Committee. Further information can be found in the University's Privacy Notice: www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general.

2. Consent Form



Defining and Understanding Experiences of Tiny Home Living in Indonesia

Consent form

Thank you for your interest in taking part in this research. Please read the points below, and sign at the bottom of the page to indicate your consent.

Please tick box if you agree

- ☐ I have received a participant information sheet, which I have read and understood, and I have had the opportunity to ask questions
- ☐ I understand that I can stop the interview (without giving a reason), and ask questions at any time
- ☐ I understand that I can withdraw from the research anytime including after the interview and up until the research project is finished (estimate time: September 2026)
- ☐ I give permission for researcher to visit my home and have conversations there
- ☐ I agree to the audio recording of the interview
- ☐ I give permission for researcher to measure the layout of my home through the communal areas (such as living room, dining area, kitchen, etc) and the exterior of the house
- ☐ I give permission for researcher to make documentation of my house through photos / sketches / photos and sketches (circle your preference)
- ☐ I give permission for the academic research supervisors and any university colleague who provides technical assistance for transcription to see fully anonymized information from the interviews in research outputs. I understand there is always a chance that I could be identified.

My photos can be used:

As a basis for discussion during the interview

Yes ☐ No ☐

In academic reports, publications, and other dissemination / impact activities associated with the study

Yes ☐ No ☐

Archiving

I give permission for anonymized transcripts to be stored in a data archive upon completion of the project, in line with Research Council UK guidance (if permission is not given, research data will be destroyed in the end of this project – September 2026)

Yes ☐ No ☐

_____ Name (participant)	_____ Signature	_____ Date
_____ Name (researcher)	_____ Signature	_____ Date

3. Participants' Demography

No	Cases	Participants	Citizenship	Household			Age Range				Ownership		Typology			Floor Area (m2)					Length of Stay				Occupation						
				Single	Dual	Family	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Own	Rent	Landed	Apart	Kost/Unit	10<x≤20	20<x≤30	20<x≤30	40<x≤50	enlarged	≤ 1 year	1<x≤5 years	5<x≤10 years	>10 years	unempl oyed	tempora ry-term	lower level	middle level	upper level		
1	Jakarta 1	Mr. Don	Local			1		1			1		1				1		1												
2	Jakarta 2	Mr. River	Local			1			1		1		1				1						1		1						
3	Jakarta 3	Mr. Chief	Migrant			1			1		1		1				1		1				1								
4	Jakarta 4	Mrs. Iron	Migrant			1			1		1		1				1		1				1				1				
5	Jakarta 5	Mrs. Gigi	Migrant			1		1			1		1					1				1					1				
6	Jakarta 6	Mrs. Sendu	Local			1	1					1	1					1			1					1					
7	Jakarta 7	Mr Handy	Migrant			1			1		1		1				1		1				1		1						
8		Mrs Handy	Migrant						1														1			1					
9	Jakarta 8	Mr Chi	Local						1													1			1						
10		Mrs Chi	Migrant			1		1			1		1						1				1		1						
11	Jakarta 9	Mr Tito	Migrant						1										1				1		1						
12		Mrs Tito	Migrant			1			1				1	1					1				1		1		1				
13	Jakarta 10	Mr Adi	Migrant					1			1											1						1			
14		Mrs Adi	Migrant			1		1										1				1					1				
15	Jakarta 11	Ms Bebet	Migrant	1				1				1					1					1							1		
16	Jakarta 12	Mr Trendi	Migrant				1				1							1				1						1			
17		Mrs Trendi	Local			1	1						1								1				1						
18	Jakarta 13	Ms Dandy	Migrant		1		1					1						1			1					1					
19	Jakarta 14	Mr Young	Migrant	1			1					1			1					1						1					
20	Jakarta 15	Mr Baik	Migrant				1					1	1								1						1				
21		Mrs Baik	Migrant			1	1														1						1				
22	Jakarta 16	Mr Emi	Migrant			1	1					1	1					1		1						1					
23	Jakarta 17	Mr Maxie	Migrant				1					1	1						1		1					1					
24		Mrs Maxie	Migrant		1		1											1		1					1						
25	Jakarta 18	Mr Nanda	Migrant					1			1		1					1					1					1			
26		Mrs Nanda	Migrant			1		1										1					1		1						
27	Jakarta 19	Mr Japandi	Migrant		1				1		1			1				1				1					1				
28	Jakarta 20	Mr Bang	Migrant	1				1				1			1		1				1						1				
29	Jakarta 21	Ms Kota	Migrant	1				1				1			1	1					1						1				
Total Greater Jakarta				4	3	14	10	10	9	0	11	10	14	5	2	2	9	6	4	9		4	6	8	11	6	6	8	7	2	
30	Bali 1	Mr. Chang	Local			1				1		1		1		1						1							1		
31	Bali 2	Mrs Poleng	Local		1					1		1	1					1		1						1					
32	Bali 3	Mrs Guru	Local			1		1			1		1					1		1							1				
33	Bali 4	Mrs Vill	Original			1		1			1		1				1						1		1						
34	Bali 5	Mr Luki	Local					1			1		1							1							1				
35		Mrs Luki	Local			1		1												1				1							
36	Bali 6	Mrs Paya	Local		1			1			1		1					1				1					1				
37	Bali 7	Mr Deni	Original			1		1			1		1					1		1			1						1		
38	Bali 8	Mrs Kleen	Local			1		1				1	1				1						1				1				
39	Bali 9	Mr Hody	Migrant	1			1					1			1	1					1					1					
40	Bali 10	Ms Fifi	Migrant	1			1					1			1	1					1					1					
41	Bali 11	Mr Jazz	Migrant						1			1					1										1				
42		Mrs Jazz	Migrant			1	1														1				1						
43	Bali 12	Mr Urut	Migrant		1					1		1			1	1									1						
44	Bali 13	Ms Sesi	Migrant	1				1				1			1	1				1							1				
45	Bali 14	Mr Bass	Migrant	1				1				1			1					1							1				
46	Bali 15	Ms Rocky	Migrant	1					1			1			1						1						1				
Total Bali urban area				5	3	7	3	9	2	3	5	10	7	1	7	5	5	2	3	2		1	11	4	1	1	3	6	5	2	
TOTAL OF DEMOGRAPHY				9	6	21	13	19	11	3	16	20	21	6	9	7	14	8	7	11		5	17	12	12	7	9	14	12	4	
Professional Participants:																															
47	Developer	Mr. Don	quoted on the empirical chapters																												
48	Developer	Ms. Re	information was used to build the narratives																												
49	Architect	Mr Val	quoted on the empirical chapters																												
50	Architect	Mr Didi	information was used to build the narratives																												