


What they should have talked about in human rights cities: The advocacy of overlooked disability rights in Wonosobo, Indonesia

Dhimas Bayu Anindito ^{1,2}

¹Department of Architecture and Planning, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia

²Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis, University College London, United Kingdom

* Corresponding author: dhimasbayuanindito@ugm.ac.id

25 August 2025

Abstract: This article examines the contested integration of disability rights within the human rights city framework of Wonosobo, Indonesia, through the conceptual lens of “overlooked-ness.” By engaging with scholarship on urban politics of human rights and vernacularisation processes, the study highlights how small Global South cities adapt and reinterpret international human rights norms amidst institutional and socio-economic limitations. Wonosobo—a peripheral, agrarian municipality—has positioned itself as a pioneer of human rights localisation, despite limited resources and low economic performance. Drawing on the case of persons with disabilities (PWD), the research investigates how rights are negotiated across institutional boundaries, between top-down branding initiatives and grassroots-led advocacy. The analysis reveals the fragmented yet dynamic role of local actors, including government agencies, civil society organisations, and educational institutions, in shaping inclusive governance practices. While Wonosobo has received national and international recognition as a human rights city, this status contrasts with the limited integration of PWD rights in practice. The study argues that “overlooked-ness” not only describes the peripheral positioning of certain cities in global discourses but also serves as a heuristic for understanding the power asymmetries embedded in the localisation of human rights. By foregrounding the case of Wonosobo, this article contributes to decentring Global North-centric models of human rights cities and offers new insights into how marginalised cities and populations co-produce alternative imaginaries of inclusive urban governance

Keywords: *disability rights, human rights city, overlooked-ness, right to the city, person with disability*

Introduction

Determining whose interests human rights struggles serve across global cities is complex, given the political dimensions of the human rights regime. The interplay between human rights imaginaries and the practical realisation of the right to the city underscores tensions between national and local governments (Friendly, 2013; Gilbert & Dikeç, 2008; Purcell, 2002). Political membership, often defined at either national or urban scale, shapes how human rights are exercised. In response, some cities organically declare themselves “human rights cities” to uphold rights that national governments may overlook (Soohoo, 2016). This phenomenon also reflects challenges in aligning human rights advocacy with its institutionalisation at the national level (Grigolo, 2019).

Despite growing literature on human rights cities (Grigolo, 2019; Nijman et al., 2022; Oomen, 2016), the term “human rights” may appear overly idealistic or even politically sensitive, even in Global North cities (Oomen, 2016). Establishing a City Charter of Human Rights is a lengthy process, influenced by epistemic communities advocating for human rights and the political commitment to broader participation (Merry, 2006; Salah Fahmi, 2009). Research on human rights cities remains primarily focused on the Global North, leaving limited representation of Global South cities despite the intricate relationship between urban development and human rights implementation in these contexts (see Parnell & Pieterse, 2010; Purcell, 2007). The manifestation of human rights regimes at the urban level can be understood

through the mobility of human rights policies across cities—what Bunnell (2015) refers to as urban inter-referencing effects. However, human rights cities evolve as spaces committed to ensuring equal rights for all—producing "prototype cities" or "imagined antecedent cities" through replication, where the contextualised dynamic in human rights cities adoption needs to be understood. To challenge the prevailing Global North-centric discourse—where human rights struggles have a more extended institutional history (Grigolo, 2019; Oomen, 2016)—examining Global South cities provides an opportunity to understand how human rights cities transfer, mutate, and localise in new forms, a process known as human rights vernacularisation (Merry et al., 2010; Soon & Yi, 2023) that might hopefully create a reciprocal discourse of human rights city (see Snyder, 2025).

Understanding this process, particularly in small and intermediate cities, requires adopting a perspective of “overlooked-ness” (Nugraha et al., 2023; Ruszczyk et al., 2021). This concept helps capture the lived realities of cities that are underrepresented in human rights city literature while fostering comparative analysis (see also Bunnell, 2015; Robinson, 2005). Applying “overlooked-ness” to human rights city research involves examining power dynamics—who holds power, where it originates, and how it is reproduced (Nugraha et al., 2023). Additionally, the production of human rights city imaginaries in overlooked cities should be understood as a contested process shaped by grassroots movements and epistemic communities operating through urban networks and personal connections, which in turn might lead to the different yet parallel urban inter-referencing practices done by municipal government and the grassroots actors (see also Anindito & Amjad, 2022; Karman et al., 2022).

To illustrate the use of “overlooked-ness” in analysing human rights cities, this study investigates the contestation of mainstreaming the rights of persons with disabilities (PWD) within the multi “overlooked-ness” of a human rights city in the Global South. The case study focuses on Wonosobo, a small city in Indonesia, and analyses how PWD rights are integrated into human rights city implementation and their broader contribution to human rights governance. Wonosobo is an important case for several reasons. First, it is a small peripheral city in Indonesia, contrasting with widely studied Global North cities such as New York, San Francisco, Montréal, and Barcelona (Davis, 2018; Grigolo, 2019; van den Berg, 2016), as well as larger Indonesian cities like Bandung (Karman et al., 2023). As a typical Indonesian small city, Wonosobo has a low economic performance, relying mainly on agriculture and extractive industries, and is one of the poorest municipalities in Central Java Province (Anindito & Amjad, 2022). Despite these challenges, the Wonosobo Regency Government has adopted human rights city branding at both national and international levels, positioning itself as a pioneer and best practice model in Indonesia—referred to as the “Wonosobo Model” (Komnas, 2018; Masitoh, 2023; Zuhroh, 2020). Furthermore, Wonosobo was among 21 municipalities and regencies in Central Java province who received the Human Rights City Award from the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, apart from being acknowledged—along with Seberang Perai of Malaysia—by World Human Rights City Forum (WHRCF) to be successful models of human rights city (Khusein, 2016).

This success, however, contrasts with the relatively limited discourse on Wonosobo as a human rights city—locally termed *Wonosobo Ramah Hak Asasi Manusia* (*Wonosobo Ramah HAM*). The city’s human rights agenda primarily focuses on five areas: senior citizens, mothers, children, PWD, and environmental protection (Anindito & Amjad, 2022). This study focuses specifically on the position of PWD to illustrate how human rights cities can become localised within specific sectors representing marginalised populations. Notably, Wonosobo’s education policies strongly emphasise PWD’s rights, with municipal government and private education providers actively supporting inclusive education, despite the violations of disability policies in Indonesia (Marutama et al., 2023). The human rights city framework in Wonosobo is thus an assemblage of government and civil society actors, including PWD representatives. Examining the contested understandings of human rights in Wonosobo through the tensions between top-down branding initiatives and grassroots advocacy—an interplay of multi-actor assemblages shaping the city’s identity—will be beneficial in understanding the everyday urban practice of international human rights regime (Pierce et al., 2016).

The following sections include a literature review summarising ongoing academic discussions on the right to the city and human rights city, PWD rights within human rights cities, and the application of the “overlooked-ness” concept to understand human rights city. The Methodology section follows, leading to the Results and Discussion, which explore the power relations in human rights city imaginaries, the translation process of PWD rights into local governance in a small city context, and the interplay between top-down and bottom-up approaches in shaping human rights cities. The study concludes with a reflection on the “overlooked-ness” concept and its implications for future research.

Positioning PWD within a human rights city: The difficulty of avoiding being overlooked

The right to the city and human rights city

Within the contemporary global network of cities, the rise of human rights governance and the pursuit of Henri Lefebvre's *Le droit à la ville* (1968), or the right to the city, exemplify the multiscale diffusion of normative frameworks (see also Aalbers & Gibb, 2014; Purcell, 2006). At the global level, human rights emerged from civil rights struggles in the United States, particularly in the context of Black Americans' fight for equal political rights (Grigolo, 2019). Over time, these struggles amalgamated into a global human rights regime, compelling nation-states to align with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international conventions. At the urban scale, the right to the city has functioned as a catalyst for spatial contestations, resisting the neoliberal urban agenda that prioritises market-driven development over social justice (Harvey, 2012). However, spatial politics are inherently contentious, as multiple actors engage in competing struggles over urban space (Purcell, 2002), as exemplified in movements advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities (Batavia & Schriner, 2001; Kempin Reuter, 2019; Priestley et al., 2016). The differentiation between aspirational and everyday practice of the right to city might be emphasised by the formal and informal mechanisms underlying urban life (Priestley et al., 2016).

A human rights city is an urban jurisdiction governed by human rights principles (Grigolo, 2019; Oomen & Baumgärtel, 2018), where the institutionalisation of human rights—including the right to the city—is often more viable than at the national level. Beyond facilitating knowledge transfer among cities, human rights cities might also mediate interactions between different levels of government within a nation. As human rights cities integrate international human rights norms into urban policy frameworks (Oomen, 2016), their designation places municipalities on the global stage, reinforced by both municipal authorities and civil society actors to ensure compliance with international human rights standards (Buerger, 2016; Davis, 2018; van den Berg, 2016). While transnational initiatives exemplify these efforts (see García Chueca, 2016, for the European experience in Barcelona), specific cases in the United States reveal the role of designated human rights city coordinators who function as repositories of data and strategic resources (Davis, 2018). This interconnectedness among human rights cities, whether through cross-scalar knowledge exchange or policy replication, illustrates the phenomenon of "antecedent cities," wherein cities are positioned along an imagined trajectory toward becoming the "ideal" human rights city (Soohoo, 2016; also see Bunnell, 2015; Phelps et al., 2014). This notion is particularly salient, as antecedent cities play a pivotal role in embedding moral imperatives within urban policymaking—an approach conceptualised as "moral urbanism"—constituting the ethical foundation of the human rights city (Darling, 2016). Furthermore, this perspective holds implications for national governments, as bottom-up approaches are increasingly recognised as complementary to top-down governance in implementing human rights cities and identifying key enablers for their success (see Anindito & Amjad, 2022; Pestova, 2016).

Conversely, top-down approaches have also facilitated the replication of human rights cities, particularly within neoliberal governance frameworks where cities are selectively positioned as viable candidates for human rights city status. The localisation—or vernacularisation—of human rights norms necessitates not only political commitment but also robust legal frameworks to sustain human rights regimes, with top-down mechanisms often proving effective in implementing such frameworks within multilevel governance structures (see Frate, 2016; Starl, 2016). However, empirical evidence suggests that national-level policies remain insufficient in fully institutionalising human rights at the municipal scale. One primary challenge is framing human rights (see Oomen, 2016). In Indonesia, for instance, national policy mandates municipal governments to uphold specific rights—such as the right to healthcare, education, decent work, and legal identity—but does not extend to a comprehensive human rights agenda in urban governance (Karman et al., 2023). Fiscal constraints and deeply embedded socio-cultural traditions further complicate the translation of human rights principles into municipal policymaking (Boulos & Barbera, 2023; Grigolo, 2016; Turok & Scheba, 2019), as evidenced in the case of Wonosobo (Anindito & Amjad, 2022). Additional challenges arise from conflicting interests and institutional frictions among local actors, including intra-governmental tensions and misalignments between municipal authorities and civil society organisations (Karman et al., 2023; also see Anindito et al., 2022; Karman et al., 2022, for the multilevel governance challenges in deliberative policy making process in Bandung). These tensions may foster scepticism towards civil society organisations, despite their critical role in ensuring the accountability of human rights city initiatives (Karman et al., 2023; Soon & Yi, 2023). Addressing these structural limitations necessitates sustained political commitment, particularly through regular reinforcement of human

rights principles among municipal officials, civil society actors, and the public—ensuring the longevity and effectiveness of human rights city governance (Frate, 2016).

The struggles for the rights of PWD

Historically, the rights of PWD could have been seen from different lenses (see Ballard, 1997). The first lens is the medical model of disabilities, which defines disabilities as individual impairment that obstructs individuals from doing their daily activities; thus, it is a medical condition that needs to be treated first before the person can fully engage with society (Marutama et al., 2023). As time progressed, the social model of disabilities was developed, which deems the social construct and external factors as limiting the capacity of PWD (ibid.). Regarding the inherent flaws of both models—seeing PWD as a medical condition for the medical model and finger-pointing social constructs for the latter, successful advocacy of civil society organisations in the United States of America contributes to the birth of human rights model of disability (ibid.), which signify the equal human rights between PWD and those who are not.

Although the implementation of human rights for PWD and how they are integrated in the Indonesian policymaking are progressing, they are still limited, as several evidence insinuate that PWD are segregated from those non-disabled citizens (see Maryanti et al., 2021). This situation stemmed from the Dutch colonial era, where later a Special School (*Sekolah Luar Biasa*) for the PWD was established during the Soeharto administration (Marutama et al., 2023). This special school—equal to elementary and high school—is even further categorised into several types: school for people with visual impairment, deaf people, people with mobility impairment, and people with emotional and behavioural disorder, among others (Maryanti et al., 2021); providing an entry point for school-aged persons to think that PWD needs a specific treatment to join the society, if not a medical fix. Another evidence of segregation is the enactment of the Handicapped Act in 1997, whose legal intent leans towards the medical model of disability (Marutama et al., 2023). This situation is somehow exacerbated by only the ministerial regulations and circulars related to the rights of PWD being made, which arguably does not suffice for a strong legal foundation for the overall implementation process. However, gradual transformations are being made in the nation, including the substantial growth of special education (Maryanti et al., 2021) and tailoring the needs of PWD in other aspects of physical urban development. To summarise, it is far from engaging PWD actively in daily life, as they have limited education and employment in the short term and political process of decision making in the long term (Kempin Reuter, 2019).

Various efforts seek not only to define the rights of PWD within the framework of the right to the city, but also to create spaces where they can actively contribute to policymaking. At the same time, although PWD participation can be understood along a spectrum (see Arnstein, 1969, on the Ladder of Participation; Fung, 2006, on the Democratic Cube), scholars have raised concerns about the persistent inadequacy of their representation (Hammel et al., 2008; see also Rowe & Frewer, 2000, on public participation evaluation). This debate aligns with the concept of political citizenship, as PWD generally exhibit lower levels of political engagement than their non-disabled counterparts, although there is no best practice yet as it is to be investigated (Guldvik et al., 2013; Hammel et al., 2008; Milner & Kelly, 2009; Morgan, 2023; Priestley et al., 2016). However, distinctions should be made between social participation and substantive political engagement—where the latter entails involvement in political parties, organisations (Guldvik et al., 2013), or even political discourse (Milner & Kelly, 2009). Issues of representation are also closely linked to PWD's position in the labour market and their access to social recognition, respect, and prestige (Guldvik et al., 2013). As they continue to be perceived as having lower status than their non-disabled peers (Hammel et al., 2008; Morgan, 2023; Opini, 2010; Priestley et al., 2016), their ability to participate meaningfully in public decision-making remains constrained.

The rights of PWD, nevertheless, are important in the discourse of human rights city. Many practices in the Global North countries have exemplified the construction of disabled-friendly infrastructure and public facilities and the inclusion of PWD in specific commercial sectors, all thanks to the advocacy of interest groups and civil society organisations (see van den Berg, 2016). Nonetheless, in the Global South countries, the juxtaposition of urban developments based on the rights of PWD may be contrasting. Despite the relatively high economic progress in several cities (Davis, 2018; Soohoo, 2016), many consider that urban development does not necessarily lean on the rights of PWD. For example, there have been many notions that seemingly put half-heartedly into infrastructures such as human rights parks (see Farkhana & Rahdriawan, 2018), where it merely represents several disability-friendly park furniture, i.e., wheelchair ramps (Anindito & Amjad, 2022). Others may argue that the tactile path on the pedestrian is not accommodating the needs of those who are visually impaired, particularly due to the low fiscal capacity

of the local government to provide an up-to-standard pedestrian way in the first place (see Davis, 2018; Kempin Reuter, 2019; Marutama et al., 2023). Furthermore, looking at people with neurodiversity who receive variously intense stimuli from urban environments, Vanolo (2023) also emphasises the importance of urban design as a trenchant weapon in creating a sensory-friendly city for them. Overall, providing the means by which PWD can decide what is best for themselves will signify a more practical manifestation of human rights city; particularly enabling them in policymaking (Kempin Reuter, 2019; Priestley et al., 2016).

The concept of “overlooked-ness” in understanding human rights city

The concept of “overlooked-ness” (Nugraha et al., 2023; Ruszczyk et al., 2021) is essential for critically examining the human rights city framework as a paradigm in urban development. This lens enables a deeper analysis of the power relations that shape human rights cities, the epistemic processes underpinning their knowledge production, and the role of grassroots urbanism in shaping their discourse—considering the historical yet collective struggles of activists and policymakers in manifesting human rights principles (Grigolo, 2019; also see Calzada et al., 2023; Purcell, 2013). First, by understanding the power relations within human rights city imaginaries, the inclusion of diverse urban populations, particularly persons with disabilities (PWD), can be directed to challenge the dominance of capitalist urban production, which manifests in contemporary urban paradigms such as smart cities (see Hollands, 2008). However, before the participation of PWD can be rendered impactful, it is essential to investigate the power structures shaping human rights cities. This effort requires identifying key actors whose power and interests define the conceptualisation of the human rights city (see Nugraha et al., 2023; Ruszczyk et al., 2021) as research on the inclusion of PWD in urban policymaking remains nascent (see Kempin Reuter, 2019; Vanolo, 2023)—further empirical evidence are necessary before comparative analyses of power relations among human rights cities can be effectively conducted.

Second, the knowledge production processes that inform the design of human rights cities require critical analysis (see Nugraha et al., 2023; Ruszczyk et al., 2021). The long-term sustainability of the human rights city imaginary depends on its alignment with broader urban development frameworks (Parnell & Pieterse, 2010; Sabchev, 2023). Institutionalising human rights through urban policies and legal mechanisms—beyond merely establishing a Human Rights City Commission—ensures the practical realisation of this vision (Boulos & Barbera, 2023; Bris & Weill, 2024; Can, 2023). Furthermore, despite the realities of formal and informal planning processes (Sorensen & Sagaris, 2010), one could argue for structured mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation in human rights cities, encouraging inclusive citizen participation in policymaking processes (Ballard, 1997). As the designation of a human rights city risks becoming symbolic rather than an enduring collective endeavour to uphold equal rights in urban context, formalising knowledge production through institutional mechanisms while cultivating the agency of grassroots organisations is vital for sustaining this vision (Friendly, 2013; Merry et al., 2010).

Finally, “overlooked-ness” serves as a crucial analytical tool in assessing the transfer of best practices in human rights cities (see also Bunnell, 2015; Phelps et al., 2014), illustrating how urban inter-referencing not only acknowledges the influence of antecedent cities but also enables the adaptation of international human rights regimes to local contexts, and vice versa (Karman et al., 2023). Additionally, networks of epistemic communities within and across cities can illuminate bottom-up strategies that complement top-down interventions in human rights city development (Anindito & Amjad, 2022; Oomen & Baumgärtel, 2018). This premise underscores the role of smaller cities in knowledge production and their engagement with national-scale human rights city initiatives (see Wesely et al., 2020). Such an approach supports the argument that the right to the city must also encompass the right to define urban identity—whether by branding a city as human rights-oriented or enabling marginalised groups, including PWD, to advocate for recognition within policymaking processes (Vanolo, 2017).

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative approach. Data were collected using multiple methods. In-depth interviews were conducted with eight respondents (see Table 1), selected through snowball sampling. To ensure the trustworthiness of this qualitative research, the study adhered to the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Ahmed, 2024). To establish credibility, the researcher contextualised the study within the pre- and post-activity periods of the Wonosobo Local Human Rights Commission (LHRC). The researcher’s positionality as a native of Wonosobo provided

foundational knowledge of the local context and municipal government structures. To minimise personal bias, data triangulation was applied by incorporating multiple data sources, including interviews with government officials, LHRC members (who also serve as leaders of civil society organisations), a teacher from a special education school, and two alumni of the school with disabilities (see Table 1).

Table 1. List of respondents.

| Respondent | Gender | Affiliation(s) | Interview Date |
|------------|--------|---|-----------------|
| A | Female | Wonosobo Regency officer | 25 January 2021 |
| B | Male | Wonosobo Regency officer | 9 April 2021 |
| C | Female | Local Human Rights Commissioner of Wonosobo Regency; Vice Chairperson of <i>Ikatan Disabilitas Wonosobo</i> or Wonosobo Disability League | 20 May 2023 |
| D | Female | Local Human Rights Commissioner of Wonosobo Regency; Coordinator of <i>Paguyuban Pegiat Lingkungan Asri (Papelink)</i> Wonosobo | 23 May 2023 |
| E | Male | Teacher at <i>Sekolah Luar Biasa</i> (Special School) Dena Upakara Wonosobo | 30 July 2023 |
| F | Female | Alumna of <i>Sekolah Luar Biasa</i> (Special School) Dena Upakara Wonosobo | 3 August 2023 |
| G | Female | Alumna of <i>Sekolah Luar Biasa</i> (Special School) Dena Upakara Wonosobo | 3 August 2023 |
| H | Female | Wonosobo Regency officer | 4 August 2023 |

Transferability criterion was confirmed through in-depth interviews to gather comprehensive understanding. The interview topics for government officers and LHRC members (Respondents A–D, H) focused on establishing the LHRC, its activities before and after its dormancy, and its relationships with government offices and civil society organisations. Similar topics were tailored for Respondents E–G, with additional questions addressing the state of special education in Wonosobo and the current livelihoods of alumni from the special school. Interviews with Mayor Afif Nurhidayat as the current Mayor of Wonosobo Municipality and two additional LHRC members were planned but ultimately cancelled due to scheduling conflicts. Additional insights were obtained from notes taken during a focus group discussion (FGD) organised by *Lembaga Bantuan Hukum* (LBH) Masyarakat on 14 April 2021. This FGD facilitated knowledge exchange between Wonosobo and Bandung municipalities regarding implementing the Human Rights City initiative. The discussion highlighted contrasting approaches: a top-down model in Bandung and a bottom-up model in Wonosobo. Furthermore, a desk study was conducted by reviewing official documents, including presentation slides, reports, and local regulations about Wonosobo’s Human Rights City status, alongside relevant official statistics. For the dependability criterion, the interview questions were made consistent across respondents, and equivalent wording was used to verify the stability of responses. The collected data were analysed using content analysis and descriptive qualitative methods. Interview notes were interpreted, systematically coded, and grouped into categories that informed the study’s findings. These findings were then synthesised in the results and discussion sections to address the overarching research question. Finally, to meet the confirmability criterion, the analytical outcomes were reflected against existing literature and presented at a scholarly conference focused on “overlookedness” (see Acknowledgement section).

The “overlooked-ness” of PWD within an overlooked human rights city

Power relations within Wonosobo Human Rights City: Contestations of collaborators

This section focuses on the power relations in the making of Wonosobo Human Rights City (see Nugraha et al., 2023; Ruszczyk et al., 2021), where such imaginary emerges through a dual trajectory, both institutionally driven and locally situated. From a top-down perspective, the initiative aligns with the national human rights agenda as articulated by *Kementerian Hukum dan Hak Asasi Manusia* (Ministry

of Law and Human Rights), which institutionalised *Rencana Aksi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia* (Human Rights National Action Plan) and Ministerial Regulation of Law and Human Rights 25/2013 outlining the criteria for Human Rights Municipalities. Within this framework, Wonosobo was among 21 municipalities and regencies in Central Java recognised with the Human Rights City Award (Khusein, 2016; Mulia, 2021). However, beyond the national recognition, Wonosobo—alongside Seberang Perai in Malaysia—achieved international validation from the World Human Rights City Forum (WHRCF) as a paradigmatic case of local human rights implementation. This global acknowledgment served as a catalyst for the establishment of *Festival Ramah HAM* (Human Rights Festival) in 2015, positioning Wonosobo as a vanguard in the vernacularisation of human rights norms within the Indonesian urban governance landscape (Anindito & Amjad, 2022).

Concurrently, the materialisation of the human rights city framework in Wonosobo was intrinsically linked to the imperative of addressing entrenched socio-economic vulnerabilities. By 2014, the municipality exhibited structural predispositions conducive to human rights governance, including a history of religious tolerance—particularly as a site of Ahmadiyya presence despite broader patterns of persecution—an absence of sectarian and racial conflicts, and an emergent ecological stewardship ethos (Khusein, 2016). Moreover, SLB Dena Upakara, a Catholic-affiliated special needs institution specialising in education for children with speech impairments, underscored Wonosobo’s latent capacity for human rights city. These endogenous attributes provided the institutional capital necessary for the municipality to embed human rights principles through formalised mechanisms of governance and policy intervention, apart from the resources, supporting data, and the knowledge of mainstreaming human rights to everyday government practices (Boulos & Barbera, 2023). The declaration of Wonosobo Ramah HAM by former Mayor Abdul Kholiq Arif at the 2014 WHRCF in Gwangju, South Korea, signified the official commitment to operationalising human rights as a governing ethos, further highlighting the pivotal role of mayoral leadership in city-level human rights institutionalisation (Anindito & Amjad, 2022; Ward, 2016). Nevertheless, this commitment also represents an informal planning process (Friendly, 2013), particularly as human rights city is not ubiquitous in Indonesian planning literature (Anindito & Amjad, 2022)—suggesting that Wonosobo human rights city is differential from political commitment itself (see also Bris & Weill, 2024; Starl, 2016).

Following this commitment, regulatory instruments were enacted to establish human rights governance within Wonosobo’s municipal framework. The promulgation of Local Regulation 5/ 2016 on Wonosobo as a Human Rights City was complemented by the issuance of Mayor Regulation 30/2017, establishing *Rencana Aksi Daerah Kabupaten Wonosobo Ramah HAM* (RADHAM) 2017–2021 (Wonosobo Human Rights City Local Action Plan, 2017–2021). Institutional safeguards were introduced, including forming the Local Human Rights Committee (LHRC) and the Wonosobo Human Rights City Desk, each serving distinct governance functions. While the LHRC—comprising municipal officials and civil society representatives—was tasked with overseeing RADHAM implementation, policy synchronisation with the national human rights agenda (*Rencana Aksi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia/RANHAM*), and advisory functions, the Human Rights City Desk, positioned within the Municipal Secretariat, was mandated with executive-level coordination. However, by 2023, the LHRC had become functionally dormant due to the absence of a renewed mayoral decree¹, leading to the de facto dissolution of its operational structure. Former members resumed individual advocacy initiatives, such as disability rights activism under *Ikatan Disabilitas Wonosobo* (Wonosobo Disability League) and *Himpunan Wanita Disabilitas Indonesia* (Disabled Women Union Indonesia). In contrast, others engaged in environmental activism through civic engagement in public space maintenance. Meanwhile, key personnel from the Human Rights City Desk were reassigned to new bureaucratic roles (Anindito & Amjad, 2022), reflecting a broader institutional inactivity in sustaining the governance infrastructure for human rights city implementation.

Referring back to the “overlooked-ness” concept (Nugraha et al., 2023; Ruszczyk et al., 2021), the building of Wonosobo human rights city imaginaries is dominated by government initiatives. This finding is evident because the agenda building, i.e., the five nexuses of Wonosobo human rights city, is entirely based on the development agenda of poverty eradication (Anindito & Amjad, 2022; Mulia, 2021). As urban impoverishment is present in both Global North and Global South cities (Brown, 2013; Parnell &

¹During the study, the current term of Mayor Afif Nurhidayat only spans 3 years, from 2021 until 2024. This situation follows the national policy of Simultaneous Local Executive Election (*Pemilihan Umum Kepala Daerah/Pilkada Serentak*) in 2024 that will elect the President, Governors (provincial level), and Mayors (local level). However, Mayor Nurhidayat—who was also the Head of the Local House of Representatives during the declaration of Wonosobo Human Rights City—cannot be interviewed, thus supporting our arguments.

Pieterse, 2010; Turok & Scheba, 2019), this issue further prompted Wonosobo Municipality to declare the regency as a human rights city—gaining international tractions through such a city branding initiative (Anindito & Amjad, 2022; Khusen, 2016; Mulia, 2021). Despite the limitations of human rights nexuses in Wonosobo that focus more on individual rights (see Parnell & Pieterse, 2010), nevertheless, the representations of PWD in LHRC moderate the government-dominated human rights city discourse. Here, the right to the branding (see Vanolo, 2017) is exercised through two channels: the existence of nationally influential special education institutions and disability rights activism led by PWD representations themselves (see Soon & Yi, 2023). Despite the dormancy of LHRC in Wonosobo nowadays, it implies that the importance of human rights cities is not in its institutionalisation, but instead whether the discourses and struggles regarding the right to the city are still there—in this case they are led by the activists and CSOs focusing on different rights that lead to the right to the city (Kuymulu, 2013; Masuda & Bookman, 2018; Mayer, 2011; Merry et al., 2010; Weinstein & Ren, 2009), particularly the rights of those with disabilities (Priestley et al., 2016). All in all, this top-down and organic city branding regarding human rights city (see Anindito & Amjad, 2022) portrays the contestations between the international regime of human rights and its vernacularisation to urban context through the selective approach in approaching human rights emblematic to Wonosobo Human Rights City, which is partial to the “overlooked-ness” of Wonosobo as a Global South periphery city.

Mainstreaming the rights of PWD: Curbs on circumstances

This section focuses on producing human rights city imaginaries in the overlooked city of Wonosobo as a contested space (see Nugraha et al., 2023; Ruszczyk et al., 2021). Following the termination of the LHRC’s tenure, the rights of persons with disabilities (PWD) remain insufficiently addressed. During their term, Respondent C undertook several initiatives to enhance the accessibility of public spaces. Under LHRC’s oversight, technical assessments were conducted to evaluate and improve accessibility, resulting in the construction of ramps, tactile paths on pedestrian walkways, and queue displays in government offices. However, recommendations advanced by Respondents F and G—both affiliated with *Gerakan Tuna Rungu Indonesia Wonosobo* (Indonesian Deaf People Movement, Wonosobo Chapter)—to install notification bells in public transport systems to assist deaf passengers have yet to be implemented despite consistent advocacy efforts since 2018. Consequently, while some infrastructural modifications have improved access for individuals with visual and mobility impairments, accommodations for the deaf community remain neglected.

In the domain of education, Respondent E highlighted that government initiatives have aimed at fostering inclusive schooling in Wonosobo, thereby integrating PWD into mainstream educational settings. Since the late 1990s, inclusive education has been institutionalised in SMP Bhakti Mulia, a private junior high school, and SMA 1 Mojotengah, a public senior high school. However, gaps persist in providing special education at the elementary and junior high school levels, which fall under municipal jurisdiction. To address this, the Wonosobo Education Office established the *Unit Layanan Disabilitas* (Disability Services Unit) in 2022, tasked with monitoring and resource allocation for PWD in primary and secondary education. Despite the absence of a comprehensive legal framework and constrained municipal funding, this unit facilitates teacher training in special education principles, coordinates psychological assessments, and promotes curriculum adjustments tailored to PWD needs. Additionally, it tracks educational outcomes, though the planned monitoring and evaluation mechanisms remain inoperative due to delays in legal formalisation.

The municipal government’s advancements in inclusive education contrast with the pedagogical framework employed at SLB Dena Upakara, a prominent Catholic-affiliated special needs institution specialising in education for deaf people. Since 1938, the institution has adhered to the *Metode Maternal Reflektif* (Maternally Reflective Method/MMR), a medically oriented approach emphasising spoken language acquisition over sign language, either *Bahasa Isyarat Indonesia (Bisindo)* or an international one. This methodology mandates rigorous speech training for four years, during which participants undergo intensive supervision and are prohibited from marrying. While MMR has enabled some alumni to develop spoken communication skills, its strict prohibition of sign language, including natural sign language² remains contentious on the premise that it ‘silences the deaf’. Beyond academics, SLB Dena Upakara equips students with vocational skills in sewing, culinary arts, and personal grooming, facilitating post-

²Natural sign language includes hand and facial gestures for simple activities, such as sleeping and eating. Respondents E, F, G, and H explained this definition.

graduation employment opportunities. These skills are channelled through Mute Area, a school-managed business encompassing a beauty salon and cafe operated by alumni, which has since been institutionalised as ³PROTECDA³ Ltd.

Despite their methodological divergences, both the Wonosobo Education Office and SLB Dena Upakara converge on key priorities, particularly in promoting workforce integration for PWD, which should pave the way towards more meaningful participations from them in political processes (Parnell & Pieterse, 2010; Priestley et al., 2016). The Education Office has documented cases of PWD advancing to higher education and securing employment in public services, aligning with SLB Dena Upakara's emphasis on economic self-sufficiency. However, neither institution was engaged in policymaking by the LHRC. While some LHRC members advocated on intersecting issues such as economic empowerment and gender-based violence affecting women with disabilities (Anindito & Amjad, 2022), inclusive education was not a central concern. Respondent E noted that former Mayor Abdul Kholiq Arif invited SLB Dena Upakara to the Wonosobo Human Rights City declaration but failed to engage the institution in subsequent policy discussions. Similarly, Respondent H described Municipal Regulation of Wonosobo 1/2021 on Education as a synthesis of national policy directives and local realities, shaped by personal networks between municipal officials and the deaf community rather than LHRC intervention—emphasising the importance of epistemic communities and coalition for human rights activism (Calzada et al., 2023; Grigolo, 2019; Purcell, 2013).

Systemic barriers persist in advancing disability rights within Wonosobo's human rights city framework. The LHRC retained exclusive agenda-setting authority within its five thematic priorities, leaving PWD rights inadequately addressed in RADHAM implementation (Anindito & Amjad, 2022; Mulia, 2021). Limited budget allocation and bureaucratic rigidity further hindered LHRC's capacity to integrate disability rights into municipal governance (Boulos & Barbera, 2023; Merry et al., 2010; Turok & Scheba, 2019; also see Oomen & Baumgärtel, 2014; Purcell, 2002). Respondent A underscored the structural inefficiencies within the LHRC, particularly the exofficio status of its leadership, which impeded program execution (see Boulos & Barbera, 2023). Moreover, the absence of intersectoral coordination exacerbated institutional stagnation, undermining accountability mechanisms (Soohoo, 2016). Governance fragmentation further complicates policy implementation, as disability rights frequently intersect with provincial and national jurisdictions—particularly in special education—which again emphasises the tension between international human rights regime and human rights city (Friendly, 2013; Gilbert & Dikeç, 2008; Purcell, 2002). Ultimately, the LHRC's role has been mainly limited to interpreting and disseminating human rights discourse across municipal sectors. This responsibility arguably exceeds the feasible scope of a single administrative term (Frate, 2016).

The duality of top-down and bottom-up approaches to the human rights city: Commonalities and collective actions

This section refers to the catalysis of the works from grassroots organisations and networks of cities to address the inequalities in cities (Nugraha et al., 2023; Ruszczyk et al., 2021), which are somehow congruent to human rights cities. The interplay between diverse approaches to disability rights advocacy highlights both complementary efforts and persistent oversight within Wonosobo's human rights city framework. The dormancy of the LHRC and Wonosobo Human Rights City Desk, once key epistemic communities (Anindito & Amjad, 2022), has compelled former members to revert to independent advocacy efforts. Despite the absence of strong political commitment from the current Mayor, Respondents A, B, and H maintain that policymaking in Wonosobo remains inclusive, responsive to local activists and citizens. For instance, public facilities for individuals with mobility impairments have been developed through the advocacy of Respondent C. At the same time, Respondent H said that the Disability Services Unit under the Education Office provides a hotline for consultations and reports related to disability rights. Within the education sector, a contestation between medical and social models of disability is evident among SLB Dena Upakara, the Education Office, and civil society organisations. Fiscal limitations and concerns from PWD regarding specific needs, such as hearing devices for the deaf, challenge the claimed incremental progress in expanding inclusive urban facilities.

Knowledge transfer regarding PWD rights extends beyond Wonosobo, fostering intercity collaboration within Indonesia. The Ministry of Law and Human Rights provides guidelines for municipalities aspiring to human rights city status, while civil society organisations facilitate knowledge-sharing initia-

³An acronym from 'Productivity Training and Education Center for the Deaf Alumni'.

tives. Rather than striving to become the ultimate precedent (see Bunnell, 2015; Phelps et al., 2014), municipalities seek to refine their own human rights governance models. Wonosobo's early designation as a human rights city has positioned it as a knowledge hub, exemplified by establishing the Wonosobo Human Rights City Desk. In 2021, *Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Masyarakat* hosted a webinar comparing human rights city practices in Wonosobo and Bandung, underscoring the unique challenges small and metropolitan cities face. Additionally, SLB Dena Upakara's pioneering educational method for deaf students has influenced pedagogical approaches in other special needs institutions. Similarly, the Disability Services Unit within the Wonosobo Education Office has served as a model for other municipalities, particularly small cities with limited financial resources. These developments underscore Wonosobo's role as an innovator in disability rights (see Wesely et al., 2020), reflecting the positive outcomes of decentralised regional governance and multiscale policy processes in Indonesia (Talitha et al., 2019).

However, Wonosobo's positioning as an overlooked spatial entity, coupled with the marginalisation of PWD within broader human rights frameworks, complicates disability rights mainstreaming. As a predominantly agrarian municipality, human rights discourse has historically been peripheral within Wonosobo's development priorities (Anindito & Amjad, 2022), where this study emphasises Wonosobo's human rights city's focus on individual rights (see Parnell & Pieterse, 2010). Human rights localisation manifests differently across two cities—whereas in Bandung, regulations on residential infrastructure ensure adequate housing rights, in Wonosobo, human rights discourse primarily serves as a strategy to combat impoverishment. Furthermore, Bandung's epistemic community has matured into an effective government watchdog, actively engaging in policy oversight. In contrast, Wonosobo's reliance on the LHRC for human rights governance has resulted in limited civil society participation and weak monitoring mechanisms. Although the right to branding (Vanolo, 2017)—through top-down and bottom-up approaches—has been exercised to implement human rights city, unlike Bandung, which integrates human rights into deliberative policymaking processes (Karman et al., 2022), Wonosobo lacks robust evaluation frameworks and sectoral synchronisation. Consequently, despite pioneering human rights city status and disability rights advocacy, Wonosobo—and the rights of PWD—continue to face systemic neglect (see Ruszczyk et al., 2021).

Conclusion

This article seeks to understand the dynamics created by the contestation between the mainstreaming of the human rights city principles for persons with disabilities (PWD) and the overlooked situation of Wonosobo urban development through the lens of “overlooked-ness” (see Nugraha et al., 2023; Ruszczyk et al., 2021). The conceptualisation of Wonosobo as a human rights city unfolds through a dual trajectory: an interplay of top-down institutional arrangements and bottom-up, locally embedded practices. On the one hand, the right to branding (Vanolo, 2017) is deployed by both state actors and civil society organisations, positioning Wonosobo as an archetypal node of human rights vernacularisation (Anindito & Amjad, 2022). On the other hand, the municipality's internal political economy—marked by grassroots-led efforts in impoverishment reduction, environmental stewardship, and interfaith harmony—alongside educational modalities such as PWD based education policies and the existence of SLB Dena Upakara, has enabled human rights discourse to take root despite limitations in administrative knowledge and institutional capacity (Boulos & Barbera, 2023). Nevertheless, this emergent discourse remains anchored in an informal planning paradigm (Friendly, 2013), evidencing the marginal status of human rights city within Indonesian urban planning literature (Anindito & Amjad, 2022).

Initially, institutionalisation took a formalised route with Local Regulation 5/2016 and Mayor Regulation 30/2017, which produced Wonosobo Human Rights City Local Action Plan (RADHAM) 2017–2021 and established the Local Human Rights Committee (LHRC) and Wonosobo Human Rights City Desk. However, the expiration of LHRC's mandate in 2023 without renewal dismantled this architecture, reverting the responsibility for disability advocacy to decentralised, civil society-based initiatives (Anindito & Amjad, 2022). Though the inclusion of PWD in LHRC once created opportunities for co-governance, institutional asymmetries in agenda-setting—particularly the centrality of impoverishment as a developmental goal—have reinforced a state-centric modality of human rights city (Brown, 2013; Mulia, 2021; Parnell & Pieterse, 2010; Turok & Scheba, 2019). Nevertheless, the persistence of disability rights activism—from both educational institutions and grassroots actors—sustains Wonosobo's engagement with the right to the city, even in the absence of formal institutional continuity (see Kuymulu, 2013; Mayer, 2011; Merry et al., 2010; Weinstein & Ren, 2009).

The disjuncture between symbolic commitment and practical inclusion is especially visible in implementing disability policies. While infrastructural upgrades such as tactile paving and ramps were introduced during LHRC's operational period, longstanding recommendations for accessible public transport by disability groups remain unaddressed. Parallel educational developments reflect a fragmented epistemic field: the Education Office's Disability Services Unit—established in 2022—has facilitated teacher training and psycho-educational assessment, albeit within a fragile legal and financial framework. In contrast, SLB Dena Upakara continues implementing a medicalised pedagogical model that privileges speech over sign language. Despite its contentious epistemology, this pedagogical model has yielded job opportunities for PWD through Mute Area and PROTECDA Ltd. However, neither this institution nor the Education Office was systematically integrated into LHRC decision-making structures. These exclusions exemplify the fragmentation of human rights governance and the limited permeability of formal policy spaces to non-state knowledge systems (Calzada et al., 2023; Grigolo, 2019; Purcell, 2013). Obstacles such as intersectoral disconnection, fiscal inflexibility, and bureaucratic inertia (see also Boulos & Barbera, 2023; Merry et al., 2010; Oomen & Baumgärtel, 2014; Purcell, 2002; Turok & Scheba, 2019) have further reduced RADHAM's responsiveness to disability justice.

Nevertheless, Wonosobo has become a node for intercity learning, as shown in city-to-city exchanges and the influence of its disability governance models on other small municipalities (Wesely et al., 2020)—an urban inter-referencing effect that is prominent in decentralising Indonesia (see Bunnell, 2015; Phelps et al., 2014). However, its status as a human rights city remains paradoxical: structurally fragile, politically marginalised, and conceptually peripheral compared to more deliberative and inclusive governance models, such as in Bandung (Karman et al., 2023). Despite its pioneering branding, Wonosobo Human Rights City framework remains anchored in narrowly defined rights and lacks robust evaluative and integrative mechanisms. As such, PWD rights—though symbolically championed as the spectre of human rights city (see Vanolo, 2017)—continue to be structurally vulnerable and persistently overlooked (Oomen, 2016; see also Nugraha et al., 2023; Ruszczyk et al., 2021).

Despite no responses from several targeted key informants—particularly the current Mayor and other LHRC members—and the research scope that is only focused on the education and public infrastructure sector, this article contributes to the dearth of overlooking practices in ensuring the 'proximity-based' rights to the city, particularly of those who have disability (García Chueca, 2016; Neubeck, 2016). It is also reinvigorated that the role of epistemic communities here becomes integral to the human rights city planning and management (Grigolo, 2019; van den Berg, 2016; Ward, 2016). Furthermore, tying local contexts and communities to human rights city implementation also ensures its sustainability, while at the same time connecting to the international human rights regime (Karman et al., 2023; Snyder, 2025; Soon & Yi, 2023). The Indonesian and Global South contexts here should also enrich the ongoing debate on the human rights city implementation (Grigolo, 2019; Nijman et al., 2022; Oomen, 2016) along with the debate between medical, social, and human rights model of disability (Ballard, 1997; Guldvik et al., 2013; Hammel et al., 2008; Marutama et al., 2023; Milner & Kelly, 2009; Morgan, 2023; Opini, 2010), as it is the means of countering the overlooking practices through knowledge production and the dynamics of small cities (Nugraha et al., 2023; Ruszczyk et al., 2021). In summary, enabling the PWD within the policymaking process to claim their rights to the city should always be the goal; rather than overlooking and letting them—with their limitations, get discriminated against daily by social constructs—fending off for themselves.

Acknowledgement

The author extends his gratitude for the respondents who allowed him to share their narratives of urban politics of human rights. Earlier version of this article was presented at the Overlooked Cities in Asia Conference in Bandung, Indonesia, a conference series from Urban Studies Foundation, of which the author is grateful for the insightful comments and reflections provided by the participants. The author is indebted to Marwa, Albert Wirya, Mireille Marcia Karman, and Koes Amalia Azzahra Putri for their valuable comments upon the writing of this article. The author also thanks two anonymous referees for their feedback.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Funding

This study is partially supported by *Bantuan Pendanaan Akselerasi Pencapaian Indikator Kinerja Utama melalui Program Studi Universitas Gadjah Mada 2023* (Contract Number: 75/UN1/ PIKA/Set.PIKA/ PK.02.01/2023).

References

- Aalbers, M., & Gibb, K. (2014). Housing and the right to the city: Introduction to the special issue. *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 14, 207–213. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616718.2014.936179>
- Ahmed, S. (2024). The pillars of trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Journal of Medicine, Surgery, and Public Health*, 2, 100051. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.glmedi.2024.100051>
- Anindito, D., & Amjad, R. (2022). Exploring city branding in wonosobo: How the tale is told. In *Routledge handbook of urban indonesia* (pp. 261–275). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003318170-23>
- Anindito, D., Sagala, S., & Tarigan, A. (2022). E-musrenbang: A digital framework for local participatory planning at the community level. *International Development Planning Review*, 44, 191–216. <https://doi.org/10.3828/idpr.2021.5>
- Arnstein, S. (1969). A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 35, 216–224. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944366908977225>
- Ballard, K. (1997). Researching disability and inclusive education: Participation, construction and interpretation. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 1, 243–256. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1360311970010302>
- Batavia, A., & Schriener, K. (2001). The americans with disabilities act as engine of social change: Models of disability and the potential of a civil rights approach. *Policy Studies Journal*, 29, 690–702. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1541-0072.2001.tb02122.x>
- Boulos, S., & Barbera, M. (2023). Obstacles to and opportunities for protecting human rights at the city level: The case of madrid city council human rights plan (2017–2019). *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 27, 659–684. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2022.2142213>
- Bris, C., & Weill, P.-E. (2024). Do local authorities take human rights seriously? lessons from the french case. *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 28, 1138–1158. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2023.2281438>
- Brown, A. (2013). The right to the city: Road to rio 2010. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 37, 957–971. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12051>
- Buerger, C. (2016). *Contested advocacy: Negotiating between rights and reciprocity in nima and maamobi, ghana* (B. Oomen, M. Davis, & M. Grigolo, Eds.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316544792.009>
- Bunnell, T. (2015). Antecedent cities and inter-referencing effects: Learning from and extending beyond critiques of neoliberalisation. *Urban Studies*, 52, 1983–2000. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098013505882>
- Calzada, I., Pérez-Batlle, M., & Batlle-Montserrat, J. (2023). People-centered smart cities: An exploratory action research on the cities' coalition for digital rights. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 45, 1537–1562. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07352166.2021.1994861>
- Can, A. (2023). A tale of two cities: Comparison of istanbul and san francisco through right to housing. In Eds. (Ed.), *Urban politics of human rights, cities and global governance*. Routledge.
- Darling, J. (2016). *Defying the demand to 'go home': From human rights cities to the urbanisation of human rights* (B. Oomen, M. Davis, & M. Grigolo, Eds.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316544792.008>
- Davis, M. (2018). Design challenges for human rights cities. *Columbia Human Rights Law Review*, 49, 27–66.
- Farkhana, F., & Rahdriawan, M. (2018). Kajian tata kelola penyediaan taman kota ramah ham di kabupaten wonosobo. *Jurnal Pengembangan Kota*, 6, 96–107. <https://doi.org/10.14710/jpk.6.2.96-107>
- Frate, B. (2016). *Human rights at a local level: The montréal experience* (B. Oomen, M. Davis, & M. Grigolo, Eds.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316544792.005>
- Friendly, A. (2013). The right to the city: Theory and practice in brazil. *Planning Theory Practice*, 14, 158–179. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649357.2013.783098>

- Fung, A. (2006). Varieties of participation in complex governance. *Public Administration Review*, 66, 66–75. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2006.00667.x>
- García Chueca, E. (2016). *Human rights in the city and the right to the city: Two different paradigms confronting urbanisation* (B. Oomen, M. Davis, & M. Grigolo, Eds.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316544792.007>
- Gilbert, L., & Dikeç, M. (2008). *Right to the city: Politics of citizenship*, in: *Space, difference, everyday life*. Routledge.
- Grigolo, M. (2016). *Towards a sociology of the human rights city: Focusing on practice* (B. Oomen, M. Davis, & M. Grigolo, Eds.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316544792.016>
- Grigolo, M. (2019). *Human rights city*. Routledge.
- Guldvik, I., Askheim, O., & Johansen, V. (2013). Political citizenship and local political participation for disabled people. *Citizenship Studies*, 17, 76–91. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13621025.2013.764219>
- Hammel, J., Magasi, S., Heinemann, A., Whiteneck, G., Bogner, J., & Rodriguez, E. (2008). What does participation mean? an insider perspective from people with disabilities. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 30, 1445–1460. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638280701625534>
- Harvey, D. (2012). *Rebel cities: From the right to the city to the urban revolution*. Verso.
- Hollands, R. (2008). Will the real smart city please stand up?: Intelligent, progressive or entrepreneurial? *City*, 12, 303–320. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13604810802479126>
- Karman, M., Widian, R., & Yazid, S. (2023). Challenges in norm-localization at the city level: The case of localizing the human rights city concept in bandung, indonesia. *Asian Affairs: An American Review*, 50, 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00927678.2020.1850222>
- Karman, M., Yazid, S., & Widian, R. (2022). Deliberative democracy in action: The case of musrenbang in bandung, indonesia. *Asian International Studies Review*, 23, 113–136. <https://doi.org/10.1163/2667078X-bja10015>
- Kempin Reuter, T. (2019). Human rights and the city: Including marginalized communities in urban development and smart cities. *Journal of Human Rights*, 18, 382–402. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14754835.2019.1629887>
- Khusen, S. (2016). Kebijakan pemerintah kabupaten wonosobo menuju kabupaten ramah hak asasi manusia. IN *RIGHT: Jurnal Agama dan Hak Azasi Manusia*, 5, 408–452.
- Komnas, H. (2018). Implementation of human rights cities in indonesia [www document [accessed 3.19.25)]. In *Komisi nasional hak asasi manusia - komnas ham*. url. <https://www.komnasham.go.id/index.php/news/2018/11/16/686/implementation-of-human-rights-cities-in-indonesia.html>
- Kuymulu, M. (2013). The vortex of rights: ‘right to the city’ at a crossroads. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 37, 923–940. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12008>
- Lefebvre, H. (1968). *Le droit à la ville: Société et urbanisme* (Second Edition.).
- Marutama, A., Tsaputra, A., & Pradipta, L. (2023). The influence of disability models in indonesian past and present: Disability rights law-making and policymaking. In S. Robinson & K. Fisher (Eds.), *Research handbook on disability policy* (pp. 202–216). Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781800373655.00023>
- Maryanti, R., Nandiyanto, A., Hufad, A., & Sunardi, S. (2021). Science education for students with special needs in indonesia: From definition. *Systematic Review, Education System, to Curriculum. Indones. J. Community. Spec. Needs. Educ*, 1, 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijcsne.v1i1.32653>
- Masitoh, I. (2023). Buku wonosobo ramah ham, wujud komitmen jadi kota hak asasi manusia [www document [accessed 8.10.23)]. *Tribunjateng.com*. URL. <https://jateng.tribunnews.com/2023/07/16/buku-wonosobo-ramah-ham-wujud-komitmen-jadi-kota-hak-asasi-manusia>
- Masuda, J., & Bookman, S. (2018). Neighbourhood branding and the right to the city. *Progress in Human Geography*, 42, 165–182. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132516671822>
- Mayer, M. (2011). The “right to the city. In *Urban social movements*. Cities for People, Not for Profit. Routledge.
- Merry, S. (2006). Transnational human rights and local activism: Mapping the middle. *American Anthropologist*, 108, 38–51. <https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.2006.108.1.38>
- Merry, S., Levitt, P., Rosen, M., & Yoon, D. (2010). Law from below: Women’s human rights and social movements in new york city. *Law Society Review*, 44, 101–128. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5893.2010.00397.x>
- Milner, P., & Kelly, B. (2009). Community participation and inclusion: People with disabilities defining their place. *Disability Society*, 24, 47–62. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687590802535410>

- Morgan, C. (2023). The experiences of disabled people in the united arab emirates: Barriers to participation in higher education and employment. *Disability Society*, 38, 421–444. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2021.1930520>
- Mulia, Z. (2021). The political dynamics on development process of human rights cities: Lessons from south korea and indonesia. *Ind. J. Pol. Studies*, 1, 88–106. <https://doi.org/10.15642/ijps.2021.1.2.88-106>
- Neubeck, K. (2016). *In a state of becoming a human rights city: The case of eugene* (M. Grigolo, Ed.). Oomen. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316544792.014>
- Nijman, J., Oomen, B., Durmuş, E., Miellet, S., & Roodenburg, L. (2022). *Urban Politics of Human Rights*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003315544>
- Nugraha, E., Wesely, J., Ruszczyk, H., Villiers, I., & Zhao, Y. (2023). Overlooked cities: Shifting the gaze in research and practice in global urban studies. *Cities*, 133, 104044. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2022.104044>
- Oomen, B., & Baumgärtel, M. (2014). Human rights cities. In A. Mihr & M. Gibney (Eds.), *The sage handbook of human rights* (pp. 709–729). Sage Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473909335.n39>
- Oomen, B., & Baumgärtel, M. (2018). Frontier cities: The rise of local authorities as an opportunity for international human rights law. *European Journal of International Law*, 29.
- Oomen, B. (2016). *Introduction: The promise and challenges of human rights cities* (B. Oomen, M. Davis, & M. Grigolo, Eds.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316544792.002>
- Opini, B. (2010). A review of the participation of disabled persons in the labour force: The kenyan context. *Disability Society*, 25, 271–287. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687591003701181>
- Parnell, S., & Pieterse, E. (2010). The ‘right to the city’: Institutional imperatives of a developmental state. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 34, 146–162. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2010.00954.x>
- Pestova, N. (2016). *The human right to water in the city context: Insights from domestic litigation* (B. Oomen, M. Davis, & M. Grigolo, Eds.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316544792.010>
- Phelps, N., Bunnell, T., Miller, M., & Taylor, J. (2014). Urban inter-referencing within and beyond a decentralized indonesia. *Cities*, 39, 37–49. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2014.02.004>
- Pierce, J., Williams, O., & Martin, D. (2016). Rights in places: An analytical extension of the right to the city. *Geoforum*, 70, 79–88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2016.02.006>
- Priestley, M., Stickings, M., Loja, E., Grammenos, S., Lawson, A., Waddington, L., & Fridriksdottir, B. (2016). The political participation of disabled people in europe: Rights, accessibility and activism. *Electoral Studies*, 42, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2016.01.009>
- Purcell, M. (2002). Excavating lefebvre: The right to the city and its urban politics of the inhabitant. *GeoJournal*, 58, 99–108. <https://doi.org/10.1023/B:GEJO.0000010829.62237.8f>
- Purcell, M. (2006). Urban democracy and the local trap. *Urban Studies*, 43, 1921–1941. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00420980600897826>
- Purcell, M. (2007). City-regions, neoliberal globalization and democracy: A research agenda. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 31, 197–206. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2007.00714.x>
- Purcell, M. (2013). To inhabit well: Counterhegemonic movements and the right to the city. *Urban Geography*, 34, 560–574. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02723638.2013.790638>
- Robinson, J. (2005). Urban geography: World cities, or a world of cities. *Progress in Human Geography*, 29, 757–765. <https://doi.org/10.1191/0309132505ph582pr>
- Rowe, G., & Frewer, L. (2000). Public participation methods: A framework for evaluation. *Human Values*, 25, 3–29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016224390002500101>
- Ruszczyk, H., Nugraha, E., & Villiers. (2021). Overlooked cities: Power, politics and knowledge beyond the urban south. In I. (Ed.), *Routledge studies in urbanism and the city* (First Edition.). Routledge, Taylor Francis Group.
- Sabchev, T. (2023). Urban politics and the human rights city: The case of bologna. In Eds. (Ed.), *Urban politics of human rights, cities and global governance*. Routledge.
- Salah Fahmi, W. (2009). Bloggers’ street movement and the right to the city. (re)claiming cairo’s real and virtual “spaces of freedom. *Environment and Urbanization*, 21, 89–107. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956247809103006>

- Snyder, J. (2025). Vernacularizing human rights: A review essay: The complexity of human rights: From vernacularization to quantification by philip alston (ed., Ed.). *paperback. Journal of Human Rights*, 0, 304–314. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14754835.2025.2456828>
- Soohoo, C. (2016). *Human rights cities: Challenges and possibilities* (B. Oomen, M. Davis, & M. Grigolo, Eds.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316544792.015>
- Soon, E., & Yi, W. (2023). Vernacularising human rights in southeast asia. In E. Hansson & M. Weiss (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of civil and uncivil society in southeast asia. oxford* (pp. 312–328).
- Sorensen, A., & Sagaris, L. (2010). From participation to the right to the city: Democratic place management at the neighbourhood scale in comparative perspective. *Planning Practice Research*, 25, 297–316. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02697459.2010.503424>
- Starl, K. (2016). Human rights and the city: Obligations, commitments and opportunities: Do human rights cities make a difference for citizens and authorities? two cases studies on the freedom of expression. In B. Oomen, M. Davis, & M. Grigolo (Eds.), *Global urban* (pp. 199–219). The Rise of Human Rights Cities. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316544792.012>
- Talitha, T., Firman, T., & Hudalah, D. (2019). Welcoming two decades of decentralization in indonesia: A regional development perspective. *Territory, Politics, Governance*, 8, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21622671.2019.1601595>
- Turok, I., & Scheba, A. (2019). Right to the city’ and the new urban agenda: Learning from the right to housing. *Territory, Politics, Governance*, 7, 494–510. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21622671.2018.1499549>
- van den Berg, E. (2016). Making human rights the talk of the town: Civil society and human rights cities, a case study of the netherlands. In B. Oomen, M. Davis, & M. Grigolo (Eds.), *Global urban* (pp. 44–63). The Rise of Human Rights Cities. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316544792.004>
- Vanolo, A. (2017). *City branding: The ghostly politics of representation in globalising cities, routledge research in planning and urban design*. Routledge.
- Vanolo, A. (2023). Autistic cities: Critical urbanism and the politics of neurodiversity. *City*, 27, 190–208. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13604813.2023.2178273>
- Ward, J. (2016). From principles to practice: The role of us mayors in advancing human rights. In B. Oomen, M. Davis, & M. Grigolo (Eds.), *Global urban justice* (pp. 81–100). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316544792.006>
- Weinstein, L., & Ren, X. (2009). The changing right to the city: Urban renewal and housing rights in globalizing shanghai and mumbai. *City Community*, 8, 407–432. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6040.2009.01300.x>
- Wesely, J., Filippi, M., & Johnson, C. (2020). Intermediate cities as urban innovators: An analysis of disaster risk management in santa fe. In H. Ruszczyk, E. Nugraha, & I. Villiers (Eds.), *Overlooked cities. routledge* (pp. 85–105).
- Zuhroh, A. (2020). *Human rights cities in indonesia*. International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development.

Biography

Dhimas Bayu Anindito is an assistant professor in the Department of Architecture and Planning at Universitas Gadjah Mada. He was trained as an urban planner at Institut Teknologi Bandung and read smart cities and urban analytics as a Chevening Scholar at University College London. His research interest lies in the intersection of public participation, urban governance, platform urbanism, and pertinent analytical techniques to investigate them. Currently, he is a doctoral candidate at Centre of Advanced Spatial Analysis, University College London where his research delves into digital geography and participatory practices in Indonesian urban governance.