



Coworking Space, Social Space Articulated as Working Zone in Millennial Era

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Abstract. This study focuses on the widespread use of using coworking space as a room to carry out office tasks. To analyze such phenomena, it employs a qualitative approach with library research methods. The concept of hegemony from Antonio Gramsci and the cultural circuit of Paul Du Gay combined with the two concepts of John Fiske's Economics serve as a theoretical basis to answer the formulation of the problem. The answer to the formulation of the problem is expected to open the public's perspective to determine to what extent a particular group of society is hegemonized by this new trend in the millennial era. Besides, it also examines the urgency of using this facility in carrying out company or agency tasks.

Keywords: coworking space, hegemony, public, social.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The existence of coworking spaces before the Covid-19 pandemic was quite well known, especially in big cities. The trend of offices or work spaces with this concept is often found in office areas located in the city center. In general, this trend is chosen by agencies or start-up companies which are dominated by millennial employees. This concept is an option because it is considered to provide many conveniences for both company owners and their workers. However, as time goes by, and the impact of the pandemic has begun to subside, there seems to be a shift in the function and meaning of coworking space itself. Nowadays, working spaces seem to be more synonymous with cafes or places to hang out than places of work. Working space has become a space for social interaction as well as a new commercial space with the rise of new cafes or hangout places that provide coworking spaces. Here there is a phenomenon of new socio-cultural formation that occurs from the rise of cafes with the concept of co-working space which then leads to a lifestyle. This is as noted by Zukin (1998) that lifestyle brings a new consumption space which is clearly visible in various public aspects such as eating places, boutiques, even food and including coffee places or cafes. Working from home which was then realized in the form of working in working spaces provided by cafes, became a new trend after the pandemic which then seemed to create a new

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hegemonic matter. Looking at this phenomenon, this paper tries to examine the culture of carrying out work in social spaces in the form of cafes with co-working space facilities from the perspective of anthropological studies, especially the aspect of Antonio Gramsci's hegemony. The reason for using this concept is because this is widely used by sociologists to study the phenomenon of efforts to maintain power of the dominant side in a broader sense in society. Of course, what is meant by dominant side here is not just the ruler who controls the government, but this refers to the party who dominates or controls other groups. This leads to a situation where hegemony is then deemed normal so that the dominant group can apply its ideology to non-dominant parties.

1.2. Problem Formulation

There are some discussions about cafes as places that provide space for social interaction, both in terms of the concept of the space, its function and from a cultural perspective, as well as writing about coworking spaces. However, several articles that I found mostly discussed about coworking spaces in terms of architecture, concept, and also the general function of the coworking space itself. Meanwhile, in this paper, the formulation of the problem raised is to look at coworking spaces from the perspective of sociological and anthropological studies of society, especially from the perspective of Gramsci's hegemony and the cultural circuit of Paul Du Gay et al., (1997) to see the extent to which society is hegemonized by the existence of coworking space in this digital era.

2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Understanding Cafes and Coworking Spaces

There are various meanings of cafe. It can be defined as a place to drink coffee where visitors are entertained with music or a place to eat with a simple concept which usually serves food and light drinks. Besides, according to Oxford Dictionary, Café can also be defined as a place where people may buy and drink and simple meals. Judging from this basic definition, it is clear that a cafe is a place to relax that provides food and light drinks.

If you look further, currently many cafes provide coworking space facilities with the aim of facilitating those who want to have a more relaxed working atmosphere. For some groups of people, carrying out work from a shared work space can increase work vitality and produce optimal results. This is because the atmosphere created by the social space in the coworking space is more open and allows them to be more creative and exchange ideas with people from outside the place where they work and does not cause boredom. Coworking space puts forward the concept of sharing. This atmosphere is created because in one shared work space there are various individuals, communities (Howell, 2022)

From this concept then question arises, how can a cafe be called a coworking space? It should be remembered that in co-working space terminology there is the prefix "co" which, in business matter, means Community, Connect and Collaborate (cited from.315

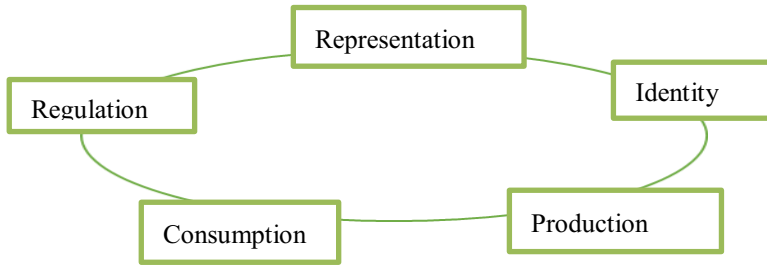
workvenue.com). From this it is clear that co-working spaces must prioritize these three concepts to make it different from restaurants or cafés in general. Community means building an existing community or group. Connect means building and expanding networking with several communities from various different professional backgrounds. Collaborate means creating cooperation between communities or companies with the same goal. Therefore, a cafe can be said to be a coworking space if it has these three concepts.

2.2 Hegemony and Cultural Circuits

The term hegemony basically refers to the domination aspect of the dominant group in a community. Hegemony itself is power over life values or norms which then become doctrine and are realized by the dominated group. The dominant class exercises a form of control through the concept of ideology by influencing the dominated group so that the lower group then unconsciously voluntarily supports the ruling party (Patria, 1999). Gramsci argued that hegemony is maintained through the use of cultural and intellectual power, which creates a power disparity between those who hold power and those who are dominated. Gramsci (1971) explains that the hegemony divides itself from the dominated subaltern through cultural influences that create power disparity. The process of establishing control itself is carried out persuasively by offering something that is liked by the public and then forming a new habit or lifestyle which is actually controlled by the authorities or in this case the capital owners. This is because hegemony is the supremacy of a group through intellectual leadership and moral power so that society becomes obedient by itself. In this way, hegemony can be interpreted as power or domination of the life values, norms and culture of a group of people which ultimately turns into a doctrine for other groups of society where the dominated group consciously follows it (Gramsci, 1975). The concept of hegemony connotes issues of power that lead to unwanted "imposition" under the guise of general consent. The term "social" is understood not as an object but as a field of contestation where various descriptions of self and other compete and surpass each other.

For Gramsci, hegemony means a situation in which a "historical bloc" of dominant class factions exercises social authority and leadership over subordinate groups by combining power with conscious consent. Gramsci also used the concept of hegemony to summarize variations in consumer lifestyles where ideology works by disrupting a person's world view. Thus, hegemony becomes more than just the dominance of certain ideas that benefit capitalism, it also results in the inability of people who hold certain beliefs to even believe that their own beliefs are in principle capable of being different.

Apart from Gramsci's concept of hegemony, the discussion in this paper also applies the modified concept of cultural circuits from Du Gay et al (1997) in Barker (2005; 71) which focuses on five levels of circuits entitled regulation, consumption, production, identity and representation which are related to each other. others in forming a cultural meaning which then becomes culture in society. In general, the cultural circuit described by Paul Du Gay and Stuart Hall is depicted in the following picture.



Cultural Circuit (modified from Paul Du Gay et al. 1997)

According to this model, cultural meaning is produced and embedded at every level of the circuit. The production of meaning at each level is necessary for the next stage in each circuit but is not determinative. At each moment there is a production of meaning that is articulated with the next moment without determining the meaning that will be taken or produced at that level. In terms of the use of social coworking spaces as a place for several groups to do their work, the connection between these five circuits is generally seen to start from a moment of regulation in the form of instructions to complete work that can be done not only in official office spaces, then causes these groups to adopt consumption behavior by using coworking space in cafes is a necessity. With the increase in the number of users of this shared space, capital owners become a group that tries to instill ideology by providing a comfortable and friendly place for these workers. This is what then forms a new identity for the community group which is a representation of millennials.

In this regard, we cannot be separated from topics that relate to the field of Economics. Here, John Fiske (1987) in Barker (2005:72) separates two economic concepts into the financial economy of production and the cultural economy of consumption. The financial economy of production is concerned primarily with money and the exchange of commodity value, while the cultural economy of consumption is concerned with sites of cultural meaning, enjoyment and social identities. In this case, financial economics of production does not determine or invalidate the power that audiences have as creators of meaning at the consumption level, although it cannot be denied that financial economics still "needs to be taken into account" in every cultural research.

The combination of the concept of hegemony with the formation of a culture that intersects with lifestyle, economic movements in relation to financial production and cultural consumption is expected to be used as a tool to process the data that will be presented in this paper to reveal the existence of a form of ideology that hegemonizes society in work culture in today's digital era.

3 Method

3.1 Data source

The data sources used in this paper are written materials related to the chosen theme. Written data sources such as printed and electronic articles about the phenomenon of using coworking spaces as workplaces are the primary data sources for this article. This source of information is then supported by secondary data sources in the form of reference books on culture and society, especially those related to the concept of cultural hegemony from Gramsci and the cultural circuit of Paul Du Gay et al. Apart from that, journal articles related to the phenomenon of modern cultural hegemony and ideology were also used as supporting material for additional information and as comparative material for this paper. The selection of data sources is closely related to the approach taken in the analysis of this coworking space.

3.2 Descriptive Argumentative data analysis

The analysis in this paper uses a qualitative approach to analyze the phenomenon of working from coworking spaces which are currently widespread. A qualitative approach was chosen because the main emphasis in this paper is the social processes and meaning that occur from social interactions that occur in society. This study seeks to find an answer to the question of how a social experience appears in daily life so that meaning is obtained (Denzin, 2009). The process of interpreting social phenomena is obtained from observations and also literature reviews which are used as a reference to get answers to the problem formulations presented in this paper, namely to understand the hegemony process that occurs from working activities in shared spaces or coworking spaces. This qualitative approach was then also collaborated with the library research method to obtain information by maximizing the use of existing facilities in the library such as reference books, journals, articles, periodicals and articles from print and written media as sources of information. Library study or library research itself is a series of activities relating to data collection methods through reading literature, recording and processing research materials carried out in the work space. magazines and articles from print and written media as sources of information. Library study or library research itself is a series of activities relating to data collection methods through reading literature, recording and processing research materials carried out in the work space. magazines and articles from print and written media as sources of information. Library study or library research itself is a series of activities relating to data collection methods through reading literature, recording and processing research materials carried out in the work space.

4 Discussion

Coworking space, according to an article in *bisnis.com* written by Afifah Rahmah Nurdifa (2023), was originally called Hackerspace. This term became widely known in 1995 in Germany with the emergence of a non-profit organization called C-Base which aims to build collaboration between networks of fellow members and general public meetings based on computer technology. However, the term coworking space only emerged and was actually used on August 9 2005 in San Francisco, United States. Many people believe this date to be the birth date of the first coworking space in the world. In Indonesia itself, the concept of coworking space was first brought into reality by creative young people from Bandung in 2010, which was marked by the establishment of Hackerspace Bandung. At a glance, it appears that the existence of coworking spaces in Indonesia is still relatively new. However, significant developments over the last 3 years prove that this shared work space is a solution amidst the need for office facilities whose rental costs are increasingly expensive. For this reason, many people are willing to spend a special budget to be able to use this facility as their workplace.

Completing office work is normally done in an office or company where someone works. However, the current trend for work is that in recent time many people do it in a work space that at first glance is more suitable to be used as a place to relax. In fact, the trend that occurred later, many equate cafes or places to eat and drink as places to work. If you look at the initial concept of a coworking space, there is nothing wrong with this concept, but the cultural movement that occurred later makes it common for those who have a representative workplace to use cafes as an alternative location to complete work under the pretext of wanting to find a new atmosphere. The term cafe here is used instead of using term coworking space as it is still questionable whether the place surely a coworking space. This phenomenon of community culture starting to become a habit in society that is inseparable from the role of citizen journalists, namely members of the community who disseminate news via the internet and social media platforms who are currently predicted to be the modern version of Gramscian organic intellectuals.

Society is starting to become hegemonized by a dominant group, namely capital owners who put investments to provide comfortable facilities, with a relaxed atmosphere and equipped with food and drink menus which will actually drain the visitors' wallet using that place as their working zone. The concept of coworking space, which initially was built as a paid "workplace" equipped with a canteen to make it easier for those who work so they don't have to go out to fill their stomachs with the aim of optimizing performance, then seems to have an inverted concept when viewed from the perspective of coworking space in this post pandemic era (Ceinar *et al*, 2021). They no longer spend money to pay rent, instead, they buy food or soft drinks at higher prices compared to prices in other places that do not offer a coworking space concept. This group of people voluntarily spend more money considering that they get more facilities, such as free internet access, a comfortable room, and furthermore the prestige or social label they get because they can afford to pay more in this exclusive place. This phenomenon then gradually creates a social gap for those who have to think hard if they want to set aside funds to be able to work at such places. They habitually feel that they

will become part of a different class of society even though they work in the same company or agency. Using cafes with coworking space facilities then becomes a lifestyle for some groups or groups which often makes them fall into groups of people who are classified as hedonists. Ironically, without them realizing it, they are actually slowly starting to become a non-dominant group of capitalists who continue to try to instill the ideology that those who use cafes with coworking space facilities as a workplace can make them part of society at a fairly prestigious level.

This is inseparable from the concept of society put forward by Zukin (1996) in the concept of "public culture" which is formed by private sector elites. According to Zukin, this gives rise to three problems, the first of which is that there will be a situation where only profitable sites will be built. Second, control or access to these 'public' spaces is in certain security regimes that openly exclude "undesirable" social groups, and third, there are efforts to control the entire environment through population flows and control over a certain symbolic culture that is conducive to trade and business activities (Barker & Jane 2021: 887-888), one of which is the emergence of coworking space themed cafes.

Being viewed from the perspective of the cultural circuit of Paul Du Gay and Stuart Hall, as briefly described previously, this circuit begins from the moment of regulation. The activity that initially was an alternative to face pandemic situation which required working from home, then was shifted to an alternative for overcoming boredom of staying at home. Another logical reason is for start-up companies that do not yet have a permanent work location, makes coworking spaces the best option that is profitable for both job providers and employees to complete work. This is because they don't need to rent a building to use as an office, which is definitely more expensive to rent. For employees, it is also beneficial because working in a coworking space creates an atmosphere that does not involve a hierarchy of positions as is usually found in conventional offices (Zhao, 2020). So far there are no problems with using coworking spaces as a working zone as long as the regulations or rules provided by the company can be implemented properly. This regulation then slowly but surely brings consumption behavior by using coworking spaces in cafes as a necessity, after they feel the comfort offered by the capital owners who built these facilities. Then, with the increasing interest and number of users of this shared space, capital owners began to offer this place not only to those who do not have a permanent place of work but also to those who actually have a permanent place but want a different atmosphere from their place of work. Through advertisements and promotions carried out on various social media platforms, they then became a group that tried to instill ideology by providing a comfortable and visitor-friendly place for these workers. However, of course this cannot be separated from the political and economic elements which they use as their main goal to facilitate the movement of their business.

In the phenomenon of urban society in this digital era, if related to the opinion of Steve Graham & Simon Marvin (1996), there are three key areas of analysis to explore the relationship between telecommunications and big cities, namely the first, the existence of functional and material tensions between the standardization of places in urban areas and mobility supported by telecommunications and electronic space; second, the social struggles that develop in fighting for opportunities to shape places in urban

society and electronic spaces; and third, the creation of problems surrounding social representation, identity and perception in big cities. The work culture of coworking spaces can be clearly seen that this can only happen in a community environment that has adequate digital facility support. This new cultural phenomenon would clearly not be possible if there were no digital facilities which are generally found more often in urban environments. This is because the situation in large cities generally combines elements of industrialization, work and pleasure. Doing work in a coworking space combines these three aspects with the label of still being able to feel the pleasure of doing work amidst the tough job competition in the current era of industrialization. What is an interesting phenomenon to study here is the emergence of groups which then use cafes with coworking space facilities as new hangout places labeled as working zones by calling them coworking spaces. Of course, this will create a new economic problem for groups of people who have middle-income jobs and are able to work in their own office or at home, but then under the pretext of wanting to get a new atmosphere and at the same time be able to interact and socialize with colleagues and colleagues from outside, this will result in cafe as a place to do their work. Here the role of each form of economy that occurs is clearly visible. The financial economics of production, which was initially the main intention of coworking space users, has turned into the main goal of providers of this place for their business because this is primarily related to money and the exchange of commodity values. On the other hand, the group of people who use this place are positioned in the consumerist cultural economy group in terms of cultural meaning in the form of comfort facilities and social identities that they get by spending an amount of money to pay for the facilities they get.

The form of hegemony that occurs is that they will voluntarily sacrifice their time in the form of minutes or hours that they have to travel to get to the cafe. Apart from that, they have to sacrifice energy in the form of energy that they have to expend to make the journey, and finally, of course they have to lessen their purse for the travel cost from their home or office to the location, and of course the cash to pay for the food and drinks they order. If this new culture continues to apply, this will be inversely proportional to the concept of the digital era which actually reduces the need for human mobility because everything can be done from electronic device. Large cities also reduce the need to transport people and goods across long distances. Since electronic technology has been able to overcome distances in an instant, it has created new networks and new understandings of space and time (Barker & Emma, 2021). The differences regarding the transformation of the internet into a commercially dominated complex are in contrast to the utopia of a free, open space where information exchange takes place. This is sometimes interpreted superficially by some groups of people as a new trend which is not actually the basic principle of providing coworking spaces. In such this, we have to look at things from two sides, namely sociospatially and geospatially, whichever is more important. The sociospatial side refers to spaces mediated by technology, while geospatial refers to the location of physical locations such as home, school, workplace. By looking at these two sides, we will be able to see this phenomenon more clearly to measure the urgency of completing a job in a coworking space in the form of a cafe, which many people do today. Will we just let ourselves be hege-
monized by new social behavior which will actually put us in a disadvantageous

position as a subaltern group controlled by the dominant group of capital owners if we make it a new trend or lifestyle? Of course, this can only be answered by each individual who lives a social life in society. By thinking wisely as part of the social community we will be able to read this phenomenon in order to avoid being trapped by current social trends that are not in line with each individual's concept of life. Certainly, this can only be answered by each individual who lives a social life in society.

5 Conclusion

The conclusion of this discussion shows that the use of coworking space as an alternative place to do office work has a positive function as long as it is carried out in accordance with needs and has strong reasons for using it as a work space that can support work performance. However, the current trend shows that more and more people, both space providers and users, are using coworking spaces as social spaces that are labeled as working zones. This is inseparable from the political economic game of capital owners to form a hegemony that makes them the dominant group and the user community as a subaltern group.

For this reason, it is suggested that there needs to be a more in-depth study, for example by conducting direct interviews with respondents from coworking space providers and users about the urgency of doing work from this place and their views on this new culture. In this way, it is hoped that a more in-depth discussion and more accurate analysis will be obtained, supported by the use of theory and appropriate approaches and methods.

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