



Evictions in Jakarta Through  
the Lens of the Media

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**Abstract:** Studies of evictions in Jakarta often focus on the evictions process, its impacts, and the justifications given by the Jakarta administration. However, these studies often fail to discuss the role that the Indonesian mass media plays in facilitating the discussion surrounding evictions. To address this gap in research, we use a traditional qualitative discourse analysis and Wordle, a visualization tool, to analyze *The Jakarta Post's* news articles over a twenty-year period. From this analysis, we conclude that evictions in Jakarta are justified by a need to dredge rivers, that replacement housing remains a common form of compensation, and that resistance methods increasingly involve legal means. Furthermore, we offer a step towards understanding the past and current state of evictions in Jakarta.

**Keywords:** *Jakarta, Eviction, Discourse, Wordle, Media*

## **Introduction**

### **A. Evictions in Jakarta**

At 30.5 million people, Jakarta, Indonesia holds the second highest urban population in Asia (Illsley, 2016). This urban population continues to grow, creating a greater need for public and private land. Within the past few decades, real estate development and large infrastructure projects have transformed Jakarta's landscape and displaced local communities from their land. Today, Jakarta has become synonymous with displacement as the government evicts residents to accommodate the increasing demand for land. The Indonesian government, namely the governor of Jakarta, has authority to decide when, where, and how evictions, which disproportionately impact the urban poor, are executed in the city. Government justifications for these evictions frequently draw upon ideas of sustainability and cleanliness, as well as the desire to transform Jakarta into a more modern, resilient, and global city. Although these rationales are common to recent Jakarta administrations, the nature of these rationales and of evictions themselves have changed over time. Key actors in the evictions process include evictees, NGOs, the Indonesian military (TNI), protesters, police, and public order officers enforcing Jakarta Regulation No. 11/1988—the Public Order Law (Sheppard, 2006). The Indonesian mass media, particularly the news media, plays an indirect role in the evictions process by propagating images, ideas, and discourses through its reporting.

### **B. Context Within Which This Research Took Place**

This study took place within the Jakarta Collective: a group of professors, PhD candidates and undergraduate students (the authors) affiliated with the University of California, Los Angeles Department of Geography who research Jakarta, Indonesia. The initial aim of the study was to provide background on media representations of evictions to the Collective. Throughout the study, this group provided feedback to the authors regarding the methodology and analysis. Their research and expertise thus played a fundamental role in the development of this project.

## Literature Review

The current literature surrounding eviction and displacement in Indonesia primarily explores (1) the evictions process and (2) the rationale behind evictions. Those studying the rationale behind evictions often fail to take into account the role that mass media plays in legitimizing, problematizing, and propagating these rationales.

### (1) Evictions Process

The evictions process refers to the way evictions are initiated. The literature suggests that this primarily occurs through the concept of eminent domain, which is when “state power is used to abrogate property rights in the name of what is declared a higher societal priority” (Leitner and Sheppard, 2018). The Indonesian government frequently asserts eminent domain, seizing land from inhabitants in the name of public interest (Cuadra, 2015). In doing so, the state dispossesses people of their land (Davidson, 2016).

### (2) Rationale Behind Evictions

The most prevalent reasons that the Jakarta government and courts cite for evicting residents and clearing slums are building a world-class city, preventing flooding, improving pollution, and addressing the public interest.

#### A. A Global City

The agenda of transforming Southeast Asian cities such as Jakarta into global cities with clean, modern infrastructure and green space has been widely recognized in urban studies scholarship (Dick and Rimmer 1998; Colven, 2017; Bunnell and Miller, 2011). In order to fulfill this aspiration, environmental improvement and beautification must occur (Ghertner, 2011). Aspirations of a global cosmopolitan city date back to the late 1980s, and Indonesia is one of the few domains where neoliberalism has become a “political slur” and carries a negative connotation (Bunnell and Miller, 2011). Neoliberalism provides cheap labor that enables cities to conform to this notion of environmentalism

and development, facilitating evictions (Cuadra, 2015). Creating a world-class city thus falls into the context of globalization and other emerging global cities around the world. In Jakarta, it is a dominant justification of development, and, necessarily, evictions (Mahadevia and Narayanan, 2008; Colven, 2017).

### B. Flood Management

Flooding of the Ciliwung River and other waterways in Jakarta has long threatened the city's residents and infrastructure. Waste and pollution increase sedimentation, reducing the amount of water the Ciliwung can hold and increasing the drainage flow from upstream (Firmansyah, n.d.). Since many informal settlements are built in water-catchment areas along riverbanks, slums have become associated with flooding and environmental concerns (Van Voorst and Padawangi, 2015). The urban poor along Jakarta's rivers and waterways contribute to pollution and clogging of these flood-prone areas (Van Voorst and Hellman, 2015). Rather than viewing them as vulnerable to water hazards such as floods, the Jakarta government perceives these slum communities as putting themselves at risk by adopting behavior that worsens the situation (Texier-Teixiera and Edelblutte, 2017). Because of this, Jakarta's flooding problem has entered the realm of politics as the government uses flood management as a justification for clearing settlements (Padawangi and Douglass, 2016). Slum areas are also considered unhygienic and as restricting public access to waterways, necessitating "green evictions" by the government to build a consumptive and clean city (Cuadra, 2015; Ghertner, 2011; Batra, 2006).

### C. The Public Interest

Lastly, slum clearance is often framed as being in the public's best interest. Batra (2006) argues that slums indicate that a city is not developing fast enough and therefore slum dwellers should be removed. This explanation can be broadly understood as the driving reason for slum removal as a notion of "public interest" or "public good" (Du Plessis, 2005; Ghertner, 2011). Gautam (2009) and Du Plessis (2005) further explain that the poor are seen as a threat to public health, implying that removing

them will make the city a better place. Using public interest to justify evictions is not a recent development; in a 1995 article, Leckie (1995) notes that “virtually no eviction is carried out without some form of public justification seeking to legitimize the action.” These rationales are designed to generate sympathy for the evictor and depict the evicted as deserving of such policies (Leckie, 1995). Because the government often fails to properly inform populations threatened by evictions and involve them in discussions, the extent to which evictions benefit the “public good” remains unclear (Wijaya, 2016; Du Plessis, 2005). The question remains: if “public interest” is used to legitimize evictions, why are the rights of affected citizens denied (Gautam, 2009)?

This literature review of evictions in Jakarta provides an overview of how evictions occur and the reasons why they are undertaken. However, an important factor influencing both the process itself and the public perception of the process — media representations of evictions — has yet to be explored in an academic context. By providing a visual timeline of the long-term discourses surrounding evictions as they are represented in *The Jakarta Post* and qualitatively analyzing articles from a given set of years, this paper seeks a greater understanding of the legitimation of these rationales.

## **Methodology**

### **A. Newspaper Selection**

The two major English language newspapers in Jakarta are *Jakarta Globe* and *The Jakarta Post*. On *4 International Media and Newspaper*'s list of top Indonesian newspapers released in 2016, *The Jakarta Post* ranks second (“Top 100 Newspapers by Web Ranking,” 2016). This list was compiled using three factors: Alexa traffic rank, Google page rank, and an engine called the Majestic SEO Referring Domains (*The Jakarta Post*, 2014). Another newspaper, Kompas, was ranked first; however, it was not possible to perform an analysis of Kompas because it is written in Bahasa. *The Jakarta Post* was selected for analysis with its wide audience, popularity, and reputation in mind. We opted to focus our study on only one of the prominent English-

print Indonesian news media sources in order to control the scope of the data archived. Furthermore, *The Jakarta Post* provided the most easily accessible archives.

#### B. Data Collection/Archiving

Articles from 1997-2007 were accessed at *The Jakarta Post* office in Jakarta by Emma Colven, a UCLA Department of Geography PhD candidate. The year 1997 was chosen arbitrarily as a starting point because this was the first year for which articles were available. For each year, all articles including the word “eviction” were collected and archived. The articles for 2008-2016 were accessed through *The Jakarta Post*’s website (thejakartapost.com). Using the website’s search engine, articles for each respective year were accessed through a search for “Eviction, [year]”. All articles that were found through this search were collected, organized by year, and archived. The articles were then evaluated to determine their relevance to the study; they were included if they mentioned the root word “evict” and/or any of its derivations (such as “eviction”). Articles that did not mention any of the administrative units within the Jabodetabek metropolitan area were removed from the archives and excluded from the data. Consequently, although the majority of articles included in the study are about Jakarta itself, several are on the subject of other cities within the greater Jabodetabek region (e.g. 2014’s “Tangerang needs river normalization: Mayor”). The total number of articles collected and visualized by year can be found in Table 1.

#### C. Qualitative Discourse Analysis

Qualitative discourse analysis refers to analyzing text, in this case news articles, to describe and understand what is happening on the ground (Mogashoa, 2014). While we have data and articles for each year from 1997 to 2016, the qualitative discourse analysis was performed for the year of each gubernatorial administration featuring the most coverage of evictions. (Refer to Table 2 for the time periods in which each governor was in office.) The exception is Sutiyoso’s period in office, from 1997 to 2007. Because Sutiyoso held the position of governor for over



| <b>Year</b> | <b># of Articles</b> | <b># of Pages</b> |
|-------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>1997</b> | <b>25</b>            | <b>32</b>         |
| 1998        | 16                   | 21                |
| 1999        | 2                    | 4                 |
| 2000        | 6                    | 6                 |
| 2001        | 23                   | 31                |
| 2002        | 52                   | 64                |
| <b>2003</b> | <b>124</b>           | <b>172</b>        |
| 2004        | 46                   | 51                |
| 2005        | 19                   | 14                |
| 2006        | 13                   | 11                |
| 2007        | 34                   | 39                |
| 2008        | 32                   | 34                |
| 2009        | 12                   | 12                |
| <b>2010</b> | <b>20</b>            | <b>25</b>         |
| 2011        | 16                   | 16                |
| 2012        | 14                   | 13                |
| 2013        | 24                   | 41                |
| <b>2014</b> | <b>32</b>            | <b>51</b>         |
| 2015        | 66                   | 100               |
| <b>2016</b> | <b>89</b>            | <b>142</b>        |
| Total       | 665                  | 879               |

**Table 1:** Total number of archived articles mentioning evictions

a decade, the year with the most articles during his first term of office was chosen, as well as the year with the most articles during his second term. These years were 1997 and 2003. Based on the number of articles in each year, the following years were selected to be read and analyzed: 1997 and 2003 (Sutiyoso), 2010 (Fauzi Bowo), 2014 (Jokowi), and 2016 (Ahok).

**Table 2:** Governors of Jakarta and the dates they took and left office

| <b>Governor</b>               | <b>Took Office</b> | <b>Left Office</b> |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Sutiyoso                      | 10/6/1997          | 10/7/2007          |
| Fauzi Bowo                    | 10/7/2007          | 10/07/2012         |
| Joko Widodo (Jokowi)          | 10/15/2012         | 10/16/2014         |
| Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok) | 11/19/2014         | 05/09/2017         |

Taking samples from each political administration highlights the distinctions that exist between each governor's approach to and relationship with evictions, allowing for the association of certain regimes with particular justifications, practices, and discourses. Another benefit of taking a sample rather than examining all the years is that changes in themes and topics become more dramatic and noticeable. Because year-to-year variation may be gradual, these changes would be less clear if all years were read in succession.

To perform the qualitative discourse analysis, all articles were read once without any annotations or notes. Then, a second read was performed with a coding scheme in mind. The coding categories were identified from persistent themes during the recent history of evictions in Jakarta and were developed after the first read with the guidance of professors from the Jakarta Collective. The following themes were incorporated: rationale

for evictions, compensation and relocation for affected residents, and protest and resistance from residents. With the coding scheme in mind, it was possible to actively focus on certain themes and topics during the second read. At this time, notes and annotations were also added in the margins (see Appendix 1). These can be found in Section 4 of this paper.

#### D. Wordle

After the data were collected and archived, the articles determined to be relevant for each given year were converted into lower-case and pasted into Wordle, an online visualization tool that creates word clouds which represent the frequency of words. The application automatically removes common English words such as “a,” “an,” and “the” from the visualizations. With these removed from the visualization, other words which were deemed irrelevant to the study were manually removed. The list of words to remove, which can be found in Appendix 2, was used as a general guide to accomplish this task. The list was updated throughout the study and was developed in consultation with the Jakarta Collective. Words removed from the Wordles included informational words common to the majority of relevant articles, such as “eviction” and “administration.” Administrative words used by *The Jakarta Post* (such as “News”), common prepositions (“around,” “along”), and common verbs and their derivations (such as “evict” and “live”) were also manually removed, as were words used during the coding process. The removal of these words allowed for the identification of distinct trends in *The Jakarta Post*’s framing of these evictions.

Further changes were made to the data itself. For each year, the phrase “public order” was found and replaced with “publicorder.” This allowed the important distinction between instances of “public” and “publicorder” to be more clearly visualized in the Wordles. In the context of evictions in Jakarta, the phrase “public order” is significant for two reasons. First, the Public Order Law of 1988 and its reiteration in 2007 are frequently cited as a rationale for evictions, as they place restrictions on land use without permission. Second, public order officers — who are given authority by the Public Order Law — are often those

carrying out the evictions and are notorious for their brutality. “Public order” has thus become synonymous with violence and repression. Because Wordle separates phrases and displays words based on frequency alone, without the change, this phrase would be indistinguishable from “public.” This is important because “public” is associated with evictions in the public interest, as when land is cleared for public parks and green spaces.

#### E. Limitations

The first limitation of the methodology stems from the usage of *The Jakarta Post*'s online search engine to collect data. Although the website provides the total number of results for each search, only 100 articles — 10 pages of 10 results — are displayed and accessible per search. (In the case of years for which more than 100 articles were collected, such as 2016, the excess articles were gathered from search results for other years, as results are not restricted to articles written in the searched-for year). The search results are organized by date, but because only 100 articles are displayed, it is unlikely that all articles ever written about evictions in a given year are included. The algorithm by which articles in the search results, yielding as many as 2,250 hits for 2016, are selected and displayed as the 100 results is unclear, although it is possible that popularity plays a role. Additionally, slight changes in the search terms, such as using “evict” instead of “eviction,” yield different results (for example, “evict, 2009” and “eviction, 2009” yield 10 results and 66 results, respectively). There is no way to be certain that articles have not been excluded from the study due to this flaw in *The Jakarta Post*'s search engine. The high degree of variation present in the data as well as the distinction between the frequency of words and the frequency of articles in which a given word appears are also important to keep in mind.

The greatest limitation of the qualitative analysis methodology is its dependence on previously identified themes. Information that is otherwise important might be skimmed over by the reader in an attempt to validate preconceptions and ideas. Additionally, there was difficulty coding certain sentences into categories. At times, articles would describe an event that touched

on three areas of interest, such as rationale, compensation, and resistance at once. Consequently, it was not possible to code a sentence as a single category. Writing about such overlap was also difficult, as explaining the same event in all three sections seemed redundant and repetitive. This was a weakness in the approach of dividing the analysis into thematic sections.

In addition, selectively reading only five years of data led to inevitable gaps and discontinuity. When a project is introduced in one year, and the subsequent year is not read, there are gaps in reporting the story. For example, *The Jakarta Post* addressed the river dredging project in 2010. However, the years 2011, 2012, and 2013 were not analyzed, so relevant details to the project that may have given more insight into the research questions were excluded. As another consequence, major events that occurred in years not read were excluded from the study. For example, there was a major clash in Kampung Pulo between residents and public order officers in 2015, which may have given insight into the theme of protest and resistance. However, this was not accounted for because 2015 was not one of the years of analysis. Thus, the methodology and time constraint of the study creates inevitable gaps in the narrative.

The Wordle methodology features its own set of limitations, many of which are consequences of the manual and subjective nature of the creation process. Although our best effort was made to remove irrelevant words from each visualization, it was not possible to manually remove the same set of words every time. This was further complicated by the fact that some years have significantly more or less articles than others. The list of words to remove is thus best thought of as a general guide that was used to remove extraneous words and visualize relevant information more prominently rather than a precise, uniformly applied tool. To illustrate, while 1997's Wordle includes an "april" that was missed during the removal process, the word cloud still clearly shows that "commission" and "apartments" appeared relatively frequently in media discussions of evictions that year.

As evident in Table 1, the number of articles that comprised the sample is highly variable across years archived, ranging from as few as two in 1999 to as many as 124 in 2003. The number of

articles has a significant impact on the Wordle for a given year, as the visualizations of years including low numbers of articles may reflect the word choice of one or two authors in relatively few articles. In years with fewer articles, single articles that frequently use one word may be disproportionately represented in the visualizations. It can be argued, however, that Wordles which are heavily influenced by one article still function as representations of the discourse for that year if relative frequency of usage is one facet of discourse.

Relying on a single source — *The Jakarta Post* in this instance — presents further limitations. *The Jakarta Post* does not provide comprehensive media coverage of evictions of illegal kampung residents but rather extensively discusses certain high-profile incidents. We have studied one particular and influential media outlet with a specific agenda and target audience. What can be reported and how it is reported remains dependent on the dominant political structures.

These limitations suggest that the methodology used to create this data is not without fault and, as a consequence, that the Wordle visualizations might not be representative of the media discourse for each year. Despite this, the visualizations still provide valuable information that suggests what the bulk of articles for a given year discuss with the greatest frequency. Thus, the sample gathered can be regarded as potentially imprecise at times but nonetheless yielding valuable insights and data.

#### F. Triangulation of Wordle and Traditional Discourse Analysis

We view Wordle as a useful preliminary tool to explore key themes and trends in the articles. The visual representations provide an overall survey of the data and offer insight into the complexity of the eviction process, making clear the different actors involved and the dominant discussions that color each year. To maximize Wordle's strengths, we use the Wordle visualizations in conjunction with traditional discourse analysis. By using two different methodologies to mine and analyze the same data, we engage in triangulation — a research method whereby data is verified through more than one methodology. This allows each methodology to provide distinct insight into trends that might not



**Table 3:** Qualitative analysis notes, 1997.

| 1997. Category:             | Findings  |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Rationale                   | 1988 Public Order Rule (deems squatters' land as illegal), rudimentary reasons such as pig stable construction, one mention to a transit system, river becomes of interest after Sutiyoso takes office. |
| Compensation and Relocation | Widely disputed, squatters demand compensation and receive none; considerable discussion over low-cost replacement apartments, but there is little supply to match the demand.                          |
| Protest and Resistance      | Peaceful, no injuries or death by police.   |

For 1997, 25 articles were collected and analyzed. The Wordle functions as an introduction to the narrative of evictions in Jakarta, with the main themes being “apartments,” “project,” and “commission.” “Apartments” establishes the importance of replacement housing in the discourse surrounding evictions. More specific elements of this discussion were identified in the qualitative analysis, such as the fact that demand exceeded the apartments offered by the administration to some residents as compensation. “Project” illustrates that evictions are frequently rationalized as being a necessary step in the undertaking of development projects by both the public and private sectors. “Commission” refers to the National Commission on Human Rights. Also known as Komnas HAM, the commission appears in each of the case years studied, demonstrating the close connection between human rights abuses and the evictions process in the discourse surrounding evictions. In 1997, as many as 250 evicted residents from Depok and other areas in the Jabodetabek region used Komnas HAM as a form of resistance as they squatted on the grounds of the office for five months in protest of the administration’s failure to provide adequate replacement housing. Although it does appear in the articles as a gubernatorial justification for eviction, “publicorder” is not visible in the Wordle for this year. “Public” on its own appears more frequently in the data, suggesting that the public interest rationale — i.e. public parks, public projects, and public infrastructure — and the



relationship of the public with evictions were important facets of the general discourse in 1997. We also note the importance of the river in relation to evictions; in November’s “Administration has bold plans for city slums” article, Sutiyoso expresses his plans to work with the State Ministry of Public Housing to “rejuvenate slum areas, especially those on state land on riverbanks” (*The Jakarta Post*, 1997). An interesting feature of this Wordle is the appearance of “brothels.” The city administration has occasionally justified slum clearance on moral grounds, evicting “dirty” red-light districts and replacing them with “clean” public spaces, as in Tangerang in 1997.

**Figure 2:** Wordle, 2003.



Jakarta Post: “Eviction, 2003.” 123 articles.

**Table 4:** Qualitative analysis notes, 2003.

| 2003. Category:             | Findings   |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Rationale                   | Prevent river flooding, minimize traffic, and stop squatters from occupying illegal land.  |
| Compensation and Relocation | Land that is developed is used for commercial purposes, such as sports complexes and malls, but not much discussion over land for apartment complexes. |
| Protest and Resistance      | Protest and resistance becomes more intense and complex as physical clashes between squatters and police become more violent.                          |
| Other Notes:                | Scale of evictions evidently increased.  |

2003 features the most articles on evictions, 124, of all of the years for which data was gathered. This year, during Sutiyoso's second term in office, was marked by several high-profile evictions. These include Muara Angke in North Jakarta, in which a community of fishermen actively resisted the government's numerous attempts at eviction, and Cengkareng in West Jakarta. The word "evi" in the Wordle refers to Evi Mariani, a journalist who wrote 42 of the 124 articles comprising the sample for 2003. The prominence of "publicorder" and "officers" in the visualization suggest that protest and resistance characterized the evictions process this year, a notion also reflected in the qualitative analysis. In 2003, the phrase "publicorder" is used 133 times, while "public" alone appears 48 times, indicating that the public interest continued to be an important component of the discussion, albeit to a lesser degree than public order. Finally, the appearance of "komnas" and "commission" in the Wordle indicate that the National Commission on Human Rights repeatedly criticized the government, public order officers, and the military, playing an important role in facilitating the discussion of evictions.

Figure 3: Wordle, 2010.



**Table 5:** Qualitative analysis notes, 2010.

| 2010. Category:             | Findings  |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Rationale                   | The river dredging project as a preventative measure for floods and the Adipura Award which is the clean city award granted to a district in Jakarta. 2010 is the first time that the importance of a place's cultural and historic roots emerge since residents are seen resisting the evictions on the rationale that a place has historical value. |
| Compensation and Relocation | 2010 is also the first time that the idea of giving compensation to those without Jakarta ID cards is brought up. While this mention is met with contradiction from Governor Fauzi Bowo, The World Bank makes clear that they have a resettlement policy and agenda and want to offer post-eviction plans for the victims.                            |
| Protest and Resistance      | Protests and resistance regularly accompany the evictions and the means of resistance continue to become more varied and creative, though some use legal methods as well.   |

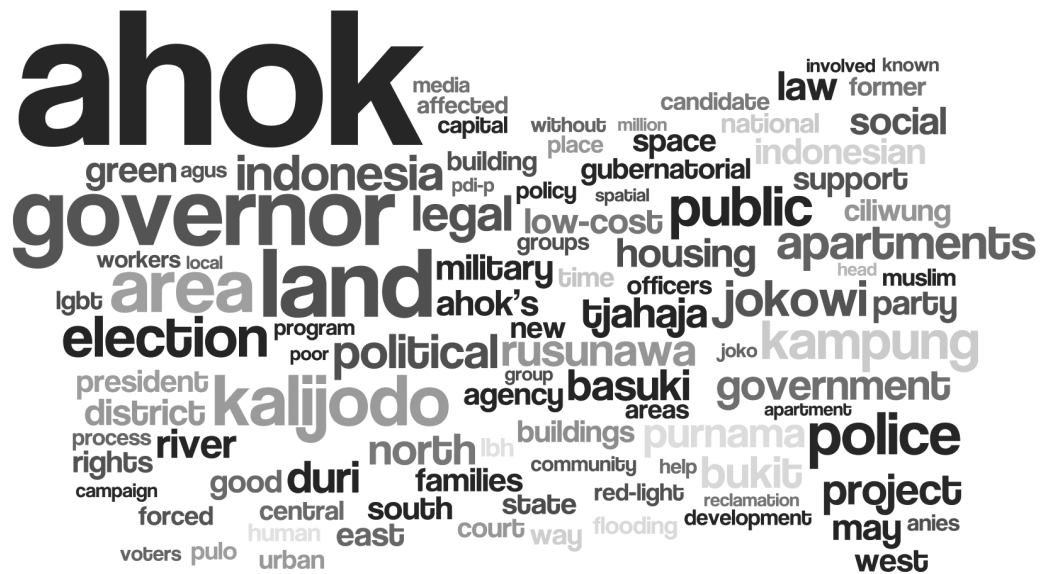
During Fauzi Bowo's gubernatorial term, we see the most discussion of evictions in 2010, with 20 articles relevant to the process. The largest word in the Wordle is "officers," which suggests a continuation of the discussion of the role of public order officers noted in 2003. Interestingly, however, "public" alone appears more frequently than does "publicorder," with 30 and 26 uses, respectively. Also noticeable in the Wordle is "housing," indicative of the continued importance of compensation in the discourse. Discussion of river dredging projects to reduce flooding as a justification of evictions continues, and the Adipura Clean City Award appears as a new rationale. Comparisons to other global cities such as Sydney and New York City appear as well.



In 2014, 32 articles were gathered. This is the final year of Jokowi’s term in office, so there is much discussion surrounding the upcoming gubernatorial election. The prominence of “ahok” and “jokowi” suggests that evictions policy is a source of much contention during the electoral campaign, establishing a strong association between gubernatorial administrations and eviction policy. As noted during the qualitative analysis, *The Jakarta Post’s* perspective shifts towards a more critical view of this association. In line with 2010’s Wordle, there appears to be a resurgence of the public interest rationale over public order, with 49 and 11 mentions, respectively.

The geographic location most visible in this Wordle is Kampung Pluit, a settlement in Northern Jakarta that was to be evicted in 2015. “Apartments” also continues to remain important in the discourse as a form of compensation given to residents. Lastly, the Wordle provides insight into the changing nature of evictions over time. No one single group is targeted and the makeup of victims of high-profile evictions vary from year to year. For example, media focus in 2003 was on fishermen, while street vendors dominated the discussion in 2014.

Figure 5: Wordle, 2016.



Jakarta Post: “Eviction, 2016.” 89 articles.

**Table 7:** Qualitative analysis notes, 2016.

| 2016. Category:             | Findings   |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Rationale                   | The two dominant rationales for evictions this year are to normalize the river and to provide additional green space in the city.  |
| Compensation and Relocation | Discussion on compensation and relocation remains consistent with the previous years, whereby only those with Jakarta ID cards or land certificates will receive compensation and be offered alternative housing. The problem with alternative low-cost housing is also still present since the new location is too far from where the residents used to live, making it extremely difficult to earn a living. |
| Protest and Resistance      | Protest and resistance has taken the form of refusing the leave one's dwellings and physical occupation of streets and public areas and legal action against the administration is still occurring.  |
| Other Notes:                | <i>The Jakarta Post</i> centers around Ahok in the wake of the election, reflecting on his policies and strategies and how this is picked up by the public. It is clear that eviction is one of Ahok's main projects.  |

The Wordle for 2016 demonstrates the geography of evictions in Jakarta. With its clear visualization of “north,” “south,” “east,” and “central” next to each other, the Wordle suggests that evictions are not centralized in a single geographical region but rather distributed throughout the city. In addition to these general location words, specific evictions can still be identified, with 2016's highest-profile evictions, Bukit Duri (in South Jakarta) and Kalijodo (a notorious red-light district in North Jakarta), both prominent in the word cloud. Kampung Pulo, a settlement evicted the year before, is also important in the discussion as a defining example of Ahok's evictions policy. The Wordle and the textual analysis reflect each other for this year: both show the importance of Ahok, the role of LBH (the Jakarta Legal Aid Institute) in the evictions process, and the environmental rationale of green space and flood prevention (both of which are also associated with the public interest). There are only 26 instances of the phrase “public order” across 2016's articles, as opposed to 106 instances of “public” alone. This reflects a theme

alluded to in 2014's Wordle — that Ahok finds justification in (or is at the very least commonly associated with) public interest to a greater extent than public order. The presence of Ahok (and his full name, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama) in the Wordle demonstrates that much of the discourse centered around Ahok and his policies as the gubernatorial election approached, a trend also identified as significant in the qualitative analysis.

## Overall Discussion

Qualitative analysis, along with Wordle, has been used here to facilitate a discussion of the changing themes and justifications found in the discourse surrounding evictions in Jakarta. The data provide a general idea of the changing nature of the discourses over time. This can be used as a starting point for further research on evictions in Jakarta.

Through detailed reading and analysis of the articles for each of the five years of study and analyzing the respective Wordles, three consistent trends can be drawn from the data: (1) the river is the single most common rationale over the years; (2) in more recent years, housing is offered instead of monetary compensation; and (3) legal battles become a common way of resisting and fighting to stay on the land. This section consults wider sources to investigate if the trends identified from *The Jakarta Post* articles have any merit and determines whether the literature can provide support or additional insight to why these trends occur.

### (1) River as a Dominant Justification

In 2002 and 2007, Jakarta faced severe floods. The 2007 floods inundated more than 70 percent of the city and displaced at least 320,000 residents (Padawangi, 2012; Padawangi et al., 2016). After two major floods, the Jakarta administration felt a sense of urgency to protect its citizens and embarked on a project called the Jakarta Urgent Flood Mitigation Project, or JUFMP. This project is a joint project between the Indonesian government and the World Bank. The project was projected to cost \$190 million, of which the World Bank would contribute \$140 million,

the Indonesian government \$15.5 million, and Daerah Kota Istimewa (DKI) Jakarta \$34 million (Nurlembang and Wilhelm, 2015). Approved on 7 January 2012, JUFMP was designed to address flood management by dredging and restoring canals to increase the river's capacity (Nurlembang and Wilhelm, 2015). The plan was to tackle fifteen priority sections of floodways, canals, and water retention ponds located in the city.

The urban poor live in these high-risk areas because the way in which the city of Jakarta expanded meant that concerns about public and environmental health were often overlooked in favor of economic growth (Padawangi, 2012). As the communities along riverbanks expanded, pollution increased. In the context of 2002 and 2007's devastating floods, this pollution — and the floods closely associated with it by the government and media — was blamed on the poor, who were accused of worsening floods by turning rivers into dump sites for waste (Leitner et al., 2017). Under JUFMP, the administration evicted several communities living in close proximity to the river, asserting that the evictions would help alleviate the flooding. Thus, the presence of river dredging as a main justification from 2010 onwards is validated by the Jakarta Urgent Flood Mitigation Project.

## (2) Replacement Housing as Compensation

Another trend that arises from the analysis of *The Jakarta Post* is the use of replacement housing as compensation instead of pecuniary compensation. In earlier articles, such as those analyzed in 1997 and 2003, *The Jakarta Post* quotes dollar amounts that evicted residents were offered as compensation. A shift can be identified beginning in 2010 and is particularly clear in 2014 and 2016 when there is no longer any mention of a quantitative amount of money that will be offered to evicted residents. Rather, compensation is offered in the form of low-cost apartments (rusunawa) and replacement housing. This aligns with the 2010 boom in construction of apartments and other housing projects in Jakarta that was accompanied by increasing property prices (Sheppard, 2017; CNN, 2014). The construction of low-cost apartments as rusunawa is discussed in the 2014 and 2016 articles. The shift towards replacement housing as compensation



results in the increasing displacement of evicted residents far from their communities and livelihoods.

Irawaty (2017) provides insight into this shift, explaining that each gubernatorial administration took a different approach to compensation: “Sutiyoso [did] not offer rusunawa, [but] gave compensation, Fauzi Bowo gave both compensation and provided rusunawa, and Ahok provided rusunawa without compensation” (Irawaty, 2017). The information Irawaty provides supports the trend that compensation methods correlate with administration; more recent administrations use replacement housing instead of money. Interestingly, the Wordles appear to offer another layer of understanding to this trend. In 1997 and 2003, for example, “apartments” and “housing” count among the most visible words in the Wordle, suggesting that replacement housing — and more generally, where the evicted end up — has been an important component of the discourse throughout Jakarta’s recent history, even if rusunawa were offered as compensation by Sutiyoso to a lesser extent than other governors.

Thus, while the literature reveals that replacement housing is being offered instead of pecuniary compensation, the topic merits further investigation. As an extension to this study, the topic of replacement housing and low-cost apartments should be examined.

### (3) Legal Battles to Challenge Eviction Notices

Analysis of *The Jakarta Post* articles shows that in recent years, there has been increased discussion and coverage of residents challenging the administration through legal battles. Residents often receive help from NGOs to file cases against the government. Even though some groups of residents do win their cases, the government often ignores their lawsuits and proceeds with evictions.

Two main organizations that undertake legal battles are the Jakarta Legal Aid Institute (LBH) and the Urban Poor Consortium (UPC). According to its website (<http://en.bantuanhukum.or.id/>), LBH Jakarta is an organization that provides legal aid for poor and marginalized people in Jakarta. LBH Jakarta is actively involved with evictions in Jakarta, helping groups fight for legal

justice. They also work directly with residents and help them take cases against the government to court. The organization publicly criticizes the government's handling of evictions. In an October 2016 *The Jakarta Post* article, for example, LBH Jakarta condemns the city administration for violating legal obligations by “[conducting] forced evictions” without engaging in discussion with residents, alluding to the government's negligence (Wijaya, 2016). The Jakarta Urban Poor Consortium is an Indonesian non-profit organization established in 1997 that engages in numerous issues such as “housing rights and evictions, urban poverty, and the urban environment” (Global Hand). The organization operates mainly in Bahasa, so it was not possible to gather much information about their position on evictions and the action that they take. However, through information published on LBH's website, and the UPC's involvement in the evictions process, it is clear that non-profits and NGOs play an active role in legal opposition to evictions.

Through preliminary investigations of LBH Jakarta and the Urban Poor Consortium, not enough information could be gathered to determine whether the scale of legal battles has increased significantly throughout the years, as the Wordles and qualitative analysis have suggested. As further study, it would be valuable to examine how the work of LBH Jakarta and other legal NGOs in Jakarta has developed in recent history.

## **Conclusion**


Over the past decades, Jakarta's need for land has exploded, leading to countless forced evictions. The eviction problem has been entangled with various social, environmental, and political issues such as frequent flooding of the city's rivers, the public interest, and gubernatorial elections. This study investigates evictions in Jakarta from 1997 to 2016, identifying themes that emerged during each governor's administration.

From analyzing the data with a focus on five key years, the following three trends were identified: the river has remained a dominant rationale; replacement housing as a means of compensation has become more prevalent than pecuniary

measures; and legal challenges to evictions have increased. The first trend has the strongest support in terms of literature and media, while support in academia is less concrete for the latter two trends. A further, more detailed investigation into the latter trends may provide valuable insight into the issue of forced evictions in Jakarta.

This paper provides a unique perspective on evictions in Jakarta: that of a local, English-print news source, which inherently shapes and is shaped by long-term discussions of these evictions and their root causes. The qualitative discourse analysis provides a more specific and targeted narrative of the situation while Wordle provides overall insight and themes not apparent during a detailed read of the data, such as the geography of evictions. Though both are subjective, using these methodologies in conjunction can clarify both broader, long-term themes that have characterized evictions in the public eye and the context in which these appeared.

Overall, this information provides preliminary insight into trends across different administrations of Jakarta governors. It is important to note that these conclusions are derived from *The Jakarta Post's* articles and are thus shadowed by the narrative of the newspaper. Evictions in Jakarta will continue to have implications on countless sectors, including social and political spheres. Further examination of the impacts these evictions have had on education, poverty, and health may provide useful insight into the topic. Additionally, exploring more sources and news media might allow for the discovery of other narratives of evictions not visible in *The Jakarta Post* alone.



## Appendix 1: Screenshot showing sample annotations during qualitative discourses analysis

**a. City insists on treating relocated victims based on ID**

Despite promises that all those evicted as a result of the city's dredging project would receive compensation, Governor Fauzi Bowo said the city would prioritize treatment for those with Jakarta identity cards. These residents would receive low-cost apartments as additional compensation for the eviction. "I will continue to favor the city's [legal] residents. [Squatters] who possess Jakarta ID cards are numerous and we don't have an unlimited number of low-cost apartments," he told The Jakarta Post on Thursday. He said the city planned to hand out money to squatters without Jakarta ID cards so they could go back to their hometowns. The administration, Fauzi said, would use the city budget to finance the relocation plan. "There will be no violent resettlement because there is always compensation. The amount is stipulated in regulations," he said, referring to the Resettlement Policy Framework that the administration jointly designed with the World Bank for the dredging project. Fauzi said the relocation of those affected by the dredging project would be governed by the Resettlement Policy Framework. The Jakarta Urgent Flood Mitigation Project (JUFMP), previously known as the Jakarta Emergency Dredging Initiative (JEDI), will use a US\$150 million loan from the World Bank. The project is expected to restore drainage systems at 15 sites by 2014 to reduce the impact of major floods, such as the 2007 flood that affected 2.6 million Jakarta residents. Fauzi expressed optimism that the project would be able to get started early next year, saying that a 2006 government regulation on the disbursement of the bank's loans and grants was revised in favor of the project. "Another government regulation will be finished in October," he said, referring to a 2005 government regulation on regional loans. The city, Fauzi said, would prepare the relevant infrastructure and programs, including cleaning the drainage system, before carrying out the project to make sure that the flood mitigation project ran well. He said the city would involve the community by raising their sense of ownership because they would have to take care of the environment after the completion of the project. The dredging projects will begin in locations without residential

## Appendix 2: Words manually removed from Wordles, 1997-2016

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Info found in most articles:</b> | <p>eviction</p> <p>residents, people, evictees</p> <p>houses/house</p> <p>home/homes</p> <p>city/city's/City/City's</p> <p>Jakarta's administration</p> <p>Jl</p> <p>Rp</p> <p>officials</p> <p>one/two/three/.../many/several</p> <p>yesterday/soon/now/currently/used/next/later/recently</p> <p>last/first/second</p> <p>year's</p> <p>days/day/years/year/months/month</p> <p>never/always/nothing/every</p> <p>each</p> <p>however/meanwhile/although/therefore/besides</p> <p>just/like/even/well</p> <p>often/still</p> <p>almost</p> <p>percent/per</p> <p>another</p> <p>also</p> <p>since/already/due/because/part</p> <p>least</p> <p>example</p> <p>known/former</p> |
|-------------------------------------|--|

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Jakarta Post:</b>        | <p>JAKARTA<br/>                 Jakarta, post, News, news, JP, page<br/>                 posted<br/>                 day, mon, tue, wed, thurs, fri, sat, sun<br/>                 Jan, feb, apr, may, jun, jul, aug, sep, oct, nov, dec<br/>                 am/pm</p>  |
| <b>Common prepositions:</b> | <p>around/along/near/far/among<br/>                 front/behind/within<br/>                 like<br/>                 away</p>  |
| <b>Common verbs:</b>        | <p>evict/evicted<br/>                 leave/left<br/>                 asked/saying/think/like/want/told/according/must<br/>                 reportedly/reports/report/reported/added/claimed/quoted<br/>                 use/used<br/>                 taking/take/took<br/>                 giving/gave/give/given<br/>                 get/got<br/>                 made/make<br/>                 plan/plans/planned/proposed/decided<br/>                 live/lives/living/lived<br/>                 located/stay/move/go<br/>                 built/build<br/>                 change<br/>                 face<br/>                 know<br/>                 found/find<br/>                 involved<br/>                 become<br/>                 including/include/included</p> |
| <b>Others:</b>              | <p>broken<br/>                 shares<br/>                 data</p>  |

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**Acknowledgements:** We would like to thank the Jakarta Collective Team at UCLA for their support and input: Eric Sheppard, Helga Leitner, Emma Colven, Dian Irawaty, Dimitar Angelov, and Sam Nowak. We also acknowledge the support of the National Science Foundation (grant number BCS-1636437) for making this research, and the environment in which it took place, possible. Lastly, we acknowledge the support of the UCLA Center for Southeast Asian Studies for the Indonesian Travel Grant Fellowship.

