EXPLORING LEARNING COMMUNITIES:
CASE STUDIES FROM INDONESIA TO IBASHO IN JAPAN

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ABSTRACT
Individuals are knowledgeable beings who are well aware of their actions. The desire for knowledge acquisition and sharing is distributed through communities. A community forms due to shared goals, perspectives, and knowledge, establishing rules and deep-seated beliefs among its members. Learning communities in Indonesia are typically formed by individuals or groups with similar interests in a specific field or topic, including formal education, skills, arts, technology, or other relevant subjects. These communities are driven by the desire to share knowledge, enhance skills, or even build social networks. In Japan, "Ibasho" shares a similar concept with learning communities, focusing more on personal development in mental and emotional aspects by raising awareness of an individual's value within society. This research aims to explore and further understand learning communities in Indonesia and "Ibasho" in Japan. The study employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach, using literature review as the data collection method. The data utilized are secondary data from experimental research findings in various literature sources obtained through the internet, including books, theses, and national or international journals. The results indicate that the nature of learning communities is highly dependent on the uniqueness of the local communities in which they exist. Therefore, the similarities and differences highlight the adaptation of learning communities to the needs and local contexts of each country. The existence of learning communities within society brings significant benefits, serving not only as a place to enhance individual skills and knowledge but also playing a key role in building social networks, addressing mental health issues, social problems, educational inequalities, and creating an inclusive environment.

Keywords: Learning Communities, Ibasho, Indonesia, Japan

INTRODUCTION
Humans as Social Beings
Living in social groups has significantly increased the prospects for survival and reproduction by facilitating protection against natural elements, searching for resources (such as food, shelter, and mates), and caring for offspring. The key characteristics of social species include cooperation, social bonding, and neurobiological processes. Humans exhibit social behavior in distinctive ways, particularly in their cooperative interactions, giving rise to observable social motivations, specific emotions, preferences, and attitudes (Tomasello, 2023). The human persona emerges as individuals develop a nonconceptual capacity for intentional behavior, requiring awareness and intentionality. Throughout the developmental process, individuals learn a language, and in doing so, typically attain the conceptual capacity to understand themselves (Baker, 2015). Once individuals comprehend themselves, humans fundamentally become social beings, experiencing a sense of connection with friends, family, and their country. This connection is crucial for individual survival in the development of the human species. Consequently, the experience of social connection is a potent and ubiquitous need. In their pursuit of belonging to a group, humans often adapt their behavior to assimilate (Schumpe & Erb, 2015). Furthermore, humans constitute a group (society) that coexists and interacts with others (community). Humans have the freedom to manifest themselves (self-realization) both as individuals and as social beings; however, they cannot escape various attachments that limit them (Chaer & Sukatin, 2020).

Togetherness (sociality) can only be realized when, in a relationship, individuals are capable of placing each other as subjects, thus fostering effective interpersonal relationships (Chaer & Sukatin, 2020). In fact, the position of an individual is generally based on the combined perceptions of group members regarding their personal characteristics. The diversity of assets (such as material possessions) and individual qualities (such as skills and knowledge, prosocial behavior) play a crucial role. Perceptions of an individual's attributes and behavior are then obtained from social information gathered by people about each other through direct or

indirect interactions and gossip (Redhead & Power, 2022). Anthony Giddens, in various works, argues that human individuals are knowledgeable beings who are well aware of their actions. These actions, in turn, should be understood as "reflexive monitoring of behavioral processes in the course of everyday social life" (Kilpinen, 2012). The individual's willingness to acquire knowledge and share it is distributed through communities. A community forms due to shared goals, perspectives, and knowledge, establishing rules and deep-seated beliefs among its members. As social beings, humans engage in daily activities to sustain their lives (Siti Chodijah & Mochamad Ridho Fergiwan, 2022).

A community refers to a group of people who pay more attention to each other than is typically expected, with close personal relationships among its members due to shared interests or values (Pribadi et al., 2020). Within a community, changes or dynamics can occur, influencing the attitudes or behaviors of individuals within a group (Kelbulan, E., Tambas, J. S., & Parajouw, O., 2018: 57). The construction of communities has been adopted by educational researchers to refer to the directed, negotiated, or informally/spontaneously formed social formations, structures, arrangements, or systems in which individuals act, interact, depend on each other, share, and collectively build knowledge, skills, and learning experiences. These communities are commonly referred to as learning communities because they focus on various aspects of learning, both formal and informal, and have been characterized by their pioneers (Dingyloudi & Strijbos, 2020). In a community, members can support each other to be independent and empowered to meet their professional needs. Therefore, it is crucial for all community members to contribute and benefit from all activities within the community (Kasiman et al., 2020).

Communities that empower each other typically involve a learning process, whether conscious or unconscious, intentional, or unintentional. Learning communities can have various meanings, certainly not limited to face-to-face interactions alone. Learning communities can be as vast as an entire school or as small as a classroom (Busher, 2005) or even subgroups of students from a larger group collaborating with the same goal to provide support and collaboration (Davies et al., 2005). The concept of community emerges as an ambiguous term in many social science fields. The boundaries of learning communities are often defined in terms of shared access, relationships, visions, or functions. Each of these boundaries contributes in various ways to different theoretical understandings of learning communities (West & Williams, 2017). Optimal and effective results are achieved through collaboration. Based on conducted research, professional learning communities can enhance knowledge and expertise (Bachtiar, 2021). Not only that, it also fosters a sense of ownership for every decision made to improve work (Vijayadevar et al., 2019) and enhances collaboration (Napitupulu & Wibawanta, 2022).

Building on various findings from the references above, learning communities emerge due to several factors, including the influence of modern education, which encourages the notion that learning is not just about information delivery but also about knowledge construction through interaction and collaboration. It provides opportunities for mutual support, sharing knowledge, developing social skills including communication, cooperation, and problem-solving abilities collectively. It also involves working together to face challenges, solve problems, combine expertise and knowledge, and learning to appreciate differences and broaden perspectives. Learning communities in Indonesia are typically formed by individuals or groups with similar interests in a specific field or topic, including formal education, skills, arts, technology, or specific topics relevant to community members, driven by the desire to share knowledge, enhance skills, or even build social networks. "Ibasho" in Japan shares a similar concept with learning communities; there may be similarities in goals such as sharing knowledge, improving skills, or building social connections. Organizational structure and formality levels may also be points of similarity or difference depending on local approaches and culture. Therefore, this research aims to explore and further understand learning communities in Indonesia and "Ibasho" in Japan.

METHOD
This research employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. The qualitative research method used for data collection in this study is through literature review. The data utilized are secondary data obtained from experimental research results found in various literature sources through the internet. These literature sources may include books, theses, national or international journals. According to Sugiyono (2012), literature review is utilized in studies related to culture, values, morals, as well as social situations or conditions. Zed (2014) emphasizes the steps in using the literature review method, including preparing

the necessary equipment, compiling a working bibliography, allocating sufficient time, reading various relevant references, and making research notes (Utoyo et al., 2020).

The purpose of this literature review is to provide an overview of learning communities in Indonesia and Japan as learning platforms for the community. Literature review serves as a way to establish theoretical foundations for obtaining its hypothesis sources. The literature forming the basis of the research is the knowledge derived from the studies conducted by other researchers and previous research. This knowledge is not only used to link the results of one study with those of others but also as material to understand the phenomenon. The relationship between research findings is then carefully summarized, providing an overall description and conclusion. Therefore, this research is continued through the examination of books, journals, and supporting documents (Satrianingrum et al., 2021).

DISCUSSION
Formation of Learning Communities in Indonesia
Learning communities in Indonesia emerge due to shared interests, vision, mission, and goals in a particular field. These communities typically implement various programs for their members based on the community's field of interest. The forms of learning communities in Indonesia vary, ranging from structured formal, non-formal, to informal setups. Structured communities usually have clear organizational structures and responsibilities for each committee member, along with a formal bureaucratic flow between members and committee officials. Non-formal communities also possess clear organizational structures but tend to be more familial. Informal communities, on the other hand, often have very simple organizational structures, such as having only a chairperson or a chairperson, secretary, and treasurer, with a more familial pattern.

Below are examples of learning community cases in Indonesia.
Bike Community
UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bike Community (USBC) was initiated by Apurizar Kurniawan in late 2017 and is the first cycling community operating on campus. The community was initially established based on concerns that excessive use of electric vehicles would increase the risk of pollution and congestion on campus. However, raising environmental awareness is not easy. Therefore, a community stimulating students' interest, including cycling, needs to be formed. Bicycles, as one of the alternative transportation modes, are considered effective and relevant, especially for daily activities on campus. This is particularly true if the distance from home to campus is relatively short and can be covered by walking or cycling. The community is open to everyone, whether they are new to cycling or have been cycling for years. Once a collective base is formed, socialization tools, such as the USBC Facebook account, will be created and connected to the UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung Facebook account and other cycling community accounts. In their online forum, members discuss the benefits of cycling for the environment and health, advertise individual cycling experiences on campus, and exchange bicycles, with the hope of increasing awareness and attraction that cycling is better than wasting money and getting stuck in traffic (Pohan & Sugandi, 2019).

Online Motorcycle Taxi Community
The increasing number of online motorcycle taxi drivers, commonly referred to as "drivers," in the Bandung area has led these drivers to form communities. These communities consist of motorcycle taxi drivers who gather and have a base camp or home base. The D'BOS community (Sauyunan Online Bandung Driver) is one of the many online communities of motorcycle taxi drivers in the Bandung region, particularly in the Rancaekek district. This online community of motorcycle taxi drivers was born out of collaboration and a sense of belonging among its members. The solidarity shown is reflected in daily meetings where members exchange stories and experiences at the base camp, creating a close-knit community. Established in 2019, this community has approximately 20 members. It serves as a platform for members to share their joys and experiences with other community members. The community also functions as a place for exchanging ideas and mutual assistance among its members. In this community, they not only compete to gain customers but also treat both young and old riders as family, supporting each other. They also sometimes share customer earnings. If one member doesn't have a customer, they will share passengers with others. This is because, fundamentally, a community has a sense of "who we are" experienced by its members, emotions motivated emotionally or traditionally (Siti Chodijah & Mochamad Ridho Fergiwan, 2022).

Teacher Learning Community

The Teacher Learning Community (KGB), a hybrid education community in Indonesia. KGB first started its practice in 2015 as a learning community for teachers in Indonesia (Prawitasari & Suharto, 2020). Founded by Cikal Teacher Campus (KGC) to facilitate the needs of teachers to discuss and share knowledge (Cikal Teacher Campus, 2018). The method used is hybrid learning that combines offline and online learning activities (Lestari, 2019). In its e-learning practice, KGB has three ongoing virtual programs: Weekly Educator Meeting (TPM, weekly teacher meeting), Virtual Regional Educator Meeting (TPD Daring, online regional teacher meeting), and Special Educator Meeting (TPS, special teacher meeting). As a community, KGB also maintains their online presence through social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Blog, and Instagram. Besides promotional purposes, these social media platforms also serve as a space for knowledge sharing. Therefore, in this virtual learning community, e-learning can take various forms: either synchronously through discussion sessions or asynchronously by accessing learning materials posted on their social media channels. Since October 2019, this informal community has transformed from a community into a professional association.

Case Study on Ibasho in Japan

"Ibasho" is a Japanese term that originally means "existence" and signifies a place where one feels accepted, safe, valued, and/or comfortable. In Japanese culture, the original concept of Ibasho is crucial in understanding well-being. Literally translated, Ibasho (i=be, stay; basho=place) means "existence," but the term implies a place where an individual experiences peace, security, satisfaction, acceptance, ownership, and comfort (Hujitake, 2000; Sumida, 2003). According to Japanese "folk psychology," finding or creating Ibasho at home, school, work, and in the community is necessary for it to function well throughout life. Ibasho enables freedom of self-expression and affirms one's identity and participation in society (Hujitake, 2000; Kawasaki shi Kodomo no Jinken Iinkai, 2005) (Bamba & Haight, 2007). The ancient Japanese word ibasho has been used in daily situations, in expressions like "please tell me his ibasho (whereabouts)." The use of the term ibasho in education began with the truancy problem in the 1980s when the number of students skipping school in public education increased, becoming a social issue (Tanaka, 2021). Ibasho is a Japanese term that means "a place where one feels at home, being oneself." It is also a place where one senses ownership and purpose resulting from social relationships related to that place (World Bank, 2019). The Ibasho model was pioneered in Japan after the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011. In its first six years of operation, Ibasho House in Japan served more than 40,000 people and organized over 1,250 events where elders shared their knowledge with the younger generation by cooking traditional food, hosting traditional festivals, teaching young people how to use old tools without electricity, and much more (Lee et al., 2022). To create ibasho in the works of Japanese youth, the conditions were examined in the 1990s.

In academic discourse, ibasho is widely discussed as a concept influencing the dynamics and social behavior in communal environments. Creating ibasho as a place for the younger generation to live where they can engage socially with others (Tanaka, 2021). Tanaka describes ibasho as "a place or community where one feels comfortable," and as "a place where one feels 'safe, calm, accepted, and approved.'" Thus, researching the various ways in which ibasho is used and defined, Tanaka then identifies three elements in ibasho: the spatial element "place," the positive human relationship element, and the time element (Tanaka, 2021). This spatial element of ibasho refers to a place or community, but ibasho does not have to be a literal place; Tanaka includes examples of the virtual world as ibasho for many people. The human relationship element refers to ibasho as a space of safe and non-threatening social relationships. The time element in ibasho relates to efforts to encourage personal growth or a sense of hope for their future. Through these three elements, ibasho serves as a space that fulfills various hierarchies of Maslow's needs, including the need for safety, ownership, and recognition. Ultimately, Tanaka argues that ibasho can function as a protective space for those socially oppressed and a foundation for their empowerment, aligning with some Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Brien, 2023). Other research mentions that ibasho in the form of active communities, such as music groups, can serve as a space encouraging social participation. Ibasho is discussed as a safe space for social inclusion and even empowerment (Nomura, 2021).

Ibasho for Immigrant Students in Japan

Although the concept of ibasho is widely used among various populations, this concept holds specific meaning and significance for immigrant students. Often, immigrant students, especially newcomers, experience displacement from their hometowns and feel disconnected from their daily lives and close individuals such as siblings, friends, and neighbors. In a foreign and unfamiliar environment, they establish

sites of ownership due to the loss of ibasho during migration (Tokunaga, 2018a), which typically occurs when the familiar environment changes into an unfamiliar one. Additionally, immigrant students often face racial, ethnic, and gender stereotypes in their everyday interactions with teachers, students, neighbors, and media representatives. Ibasho can serve as a protective or sheltered space where they can free themselves from societal views and expectations, even if only temporarily. Through interactions and conversations with others with similar backgrounds, immigrant students can heal from the pain of discrimination and prejudice and collectively gain strength to resist oppression. Similarly, ibasho can function as a place where students can recover from pain and cultivate resilience, self-esteem, and self-acceptance individually and/or collectively (Tokunaga, 2021).

b. Ibasho for International Students

Ibasho in Japan is a place where someone can ensure privacy, but it cannot be compared to the values of family and home as ibasho. Unless they find an alternative ibasho besides their family in Japan, feelings of loneliness will persist, and they will not be able to attain feelings of happiness and satisfaction. International students who have a base in their home country and plan to return there after their studies leave their most important ibasho in their home country. Therefore, to accommodate this new culture, they need a temporary ibasho, particularly a place to interact with others. Ibasho reveals the degree of someone's psychological relationship with the cultural identity of their home country. If they find a positive connection with ibasho (in their home country), it can help them build their cultural identity. In other words, ibasho can assist in the formation of cultural identity, and the search for ibasho in the cultural identity formation process appears to be a motivating factor. This is a common example of the adaptation process to a new environment (culture), indicating that ibasho is crucial for mental health. When someone moves from one culture to another, they may experience loss due to isolation and a lack of community to interact with, which can be a psychological stress factor during the adjustment period. It is essential for individuals to receive social support to prevent psychological pressure due to acculturation (Berry, 1997). Providing ibasho to international students during their stay in Japan, even if only temporary, can be useful in supporting their psychological well-being and the formation of their cultural identity (Suzuki et al., 2022).

c. Ibasho for Children Victims of Violence

In this study, both institution staff and educators emphasize the importance of children victims of abuse acquiring ibasho—a place where they are fully accepted by adults and peers, feel safe, valued, and peaceful, and can express themselves freely. Adults believe that part of their role is to create an atmosphere of acceptance to support abused children in finding their ibasho. Some abused children describe the absence of ibasho in institutions and/or schools. These children do not trust peers and adults, and they do not feel safe or confident enough to express themselves. Adults describe a lack of social skills, withdrawal or fearful behavior, aggressive behavior, and shallow interpersonal relationships as obstacles in creating ibasho for some children with a history of abuse. Adults strive to support the creation of ibasho for abused children in various ways, such as developing positive interpersonal relationships with children, supporting positive peer relationships, promoting academic achievement, supporting the integration of children into the larger community, and fostering school-institution collaboration. They intervene with abused children and their peers, collaborate with community members, and develop good school-institution relationships (Bamba & Haight, 2007).

Analysis

Similarities and Differences between Learning Communities in Indonesia and Ibasho in Japan

Learning communities in Indonesia and Japan may share some similarities and differences; the characteristics and dynamics of communities can vary significantly depending on the local context, culture, and groups involved. Some similarities include 1) Both in Indonesia and Japan, learning communities are typically established with the aim of enhancing the skills and knowledge of members in specific fields. Members joining the community generally have the motivation to continue learning and progressing in understanding a topic or skill. 2) Learning communities generally emphasize a collaborative approach, where members share knowledge, experiences, and resources to enrich collective understanding. This has positive goals, such as enriching collective understanding and providing a more holistic learning experience. 3) Both in Indonesia and Japan, there is a desire to build social networks and sustainable relationships within learning communities. Social interactions extend beyond educational aspects, encompassing other social aspects that enable members to form stronger bonds. 4) Openness to various backgrounds, educational levels, and skills is usually a characteristic of learning communities everywhere.

Inclusivity can promote diverse perspectives and experiences, creating an environment that encourages diversity to thrive and enriching members' understanding to produce more creative and holistic solutions to various learning topics and issues.

As for the differences, 1) Both countries have different cultural contexts that can influence how learning communities operate and how cultural values are reflected in their activities. Indonesia and Japan have different cultural contexts, and cultural values can influence learning communities and reflect cultural values in their activities. For example, in Japan, cooperation, politeness, and respect for authority are emphasized. Cultivating ibasho elements in Japanese communities is also highly emphasized. In contrast, in Indonesia, learning communities are more about providing a platform for sharing and channeling shared interests. 2) Differences in the education systems between Indonesia and Japan can influence the approach and expectations of learning communities. For example, the formal education tradition in Japan may impact the academic-level learning community's tendency to emphasize discipline and hierarchy. 3) The organizational structure of learning communities can vary, and differences may arise depending on broader organizational culture and local norms. For instance, learning communities in Indonesia tend to be more flexible and informal, while in Japan, they are more structured. 4) The level of participation in learning communities is influenced by factors such as education policies, societal trust levels, and different social dynamics in both countries. For instance, societal trust in the benefits of learning communities can affect the extent to which people are willing to join and engage. 5) Geographic factors, such as the size of the country and population distribution, can affect the management of learning communities. Indonesia, with its vast and diverse geography, will face challenges in managing communities in terms of accessibility, logistics, member participation, and more. The nature of learning communities depends heavily on the uniqueness of the local communities. Therefore, these similarities and differences can indicate the adaptation of learning communities to the needs and local contexts of each country.

Implications
Relevance and Potential Development of Learning Communities in the Context of Society
Learning communities can serve as a crucial channel for enhancing public education. Through collaboration and knowledge-sharing, members can acquire new skills and information, subsequently elevating the overall education levels of society. With a focus on exchanging experiences and knowledge, learning communities provide a platform for individuals to develop skills, acquire new expertise, and even maintain mental health, as humans, being social creatures, naturally require interaction with others. This can help improve the quality of human resources, enhance members' competitiveness in the job market, and contribute to the economic development of the community. Learning communities create opportunities to build strong social networks. Interactions among members not only enrich their understanding but also foster social relationships that can support personal and professional growth.

In a society where there is unequal access to formal education, learning communities can be an inclusive solution. Learning communities can open doors for individuals who may not have access to formal education to continue learning and growing. The use of technology, such as online platforms and social media, can enhance the accessibility of learning communities. This allows participation from various geographical locations, expanding their reach and impact. Learning communities can develop partnerships with formal educational institutions to strengthen the integration between formal and informal learning, creating continuity in education and skill development. Support from the government and other stakeholders through education policies that support and encourage the formation of learning communities can help increase participation and sustainability. Learning communities can develop strategies to promote inclusivity, raise awareness, and appreciate the diversity of backgrounds, skills, and educational levels of their members. This can create an open and friendly environment for everyone. Building sustainable programs and activities can enhance the appeal of learning communities. The development of relevant curricula, regular discussion activities, and collaborative initiatives can help maintain interest and member participation.

CONCLUSION
Recommendations for the Development and Implementation of the Learning Community Concept
Recommendations for the development and implementation of the learning community concept include the following: 1) There is a need for a comprehensive analysis of educational needs and learning in society. Identify areas where learning communities can contribute maximally, addressing deficiencies or gaps in the

formal education system; 2) Involve key stakeholders such as teachers, educational institutions, government, and community organizations in the development of learning communities. This collaboration can enhance support, resources, and community sustainability; 3) Develop innovative and relevant learning programs tailored to the needs of community members. Consider the use of engaging and practice-based learning methods, supporting the development of skills relevant to job market demands; 4) Leverage technology, such as online platforms and mobile applications, to enhance accessibility and engagement of community members. This can enable distance learning and collaboration among members without geographical limitations; 5) Establish effective communication and collaboration systems within the community. Provide discussion forums, regular meeting sessions, and other communication tools to facilitate the exchange of ideas, knowledge, and experiences; 6) In addition to focusing on academic skills, pay special attention to the development of social skills. This includes communication, collaboration, and leadership skills that can add value to the personal development of members; 7) Continuously evaluate the effectiveness of learning community programs. Use member feedback and performance data for ongoing changes and improvements in design and implementation; 8) Ensure an inclusive approach by considering the diversity of backgrounds, skills, and needs of members. Support an open, friendly atmosphere that encourages the exchange of various perspectives; 9) Establish partnerships with formal educational institutions to enhance the sustainability and credibility of the learning community. Support from educational institutions can provide access to additional resources and encourage integration between formal and informal learning; 10) Actively promote learning communities through social media, local events, and collaboration with relevant organizations. Building networks with other communities can expand the impact and attractiveness of the learning community.

Conclusion on the Importance and Potential of Learning Communities in the Social Context of Society
The importance and potential of learning communities in society are highly significant. Learning communities serve not only as a platform to enhance individual skills and knowledge but also play a key role in building social networks, addressing mental health, social issues, educational inequality, and creating an inclusive environment. By understanding this potential and continuously developing the concept of learning communities, society can reap greater benefits in individual development and the overall quality of education.

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