

## The Relevance of First-Time Visit Experience towards Judgment of Malioboro

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**ABSTRACT:** *There is a massive lot of information that could be gathered in a place. However, processing a massive amount of information at once could be overwhelming for a person could handle. Therefore, there is the tendency of human minds to filter this information based on one's existing beliefs. This is what is called confirmation bias. To understand more about this in its relation to place attachments, this study tried to observe the relevance of first-time visit experience towards their judgment of the present-day Malioboro. It is done by interviewing several people that had previously been to Malioboro. The results show that 66,6% of the participant are having correlations between their first-time visit and their judgments toward Malioboro. Also, people that were visiting Malioboro for the first time as a child with family members are more likely to have positive judgments toward Malioboro.*

**Keywords:** *Confirmation Bias; Place Attachment; Malioboro; First Experience.*

### INTRODUCTION

One of the unique characteristics of human beings is their ability to be emotionally attached to certain things or certain places. This characteristic would give additional consideration when it comes to judging or giving value to something or somewhere with a concept as abstract as good or bad. People will create a perception of a certain thing which most likely to be different from one another. The perception would come from humans' response of stimulus to their senses and affected by their background, their emotion at the time, and their past experiences.

Then, how about their judgment of a place that has been changed over time? Would it still be the same even though their experience becomes irrelevant? These questions are related to confirmation bias which is a tendency to filter and interpret information that only favors one existing belief. This means that the first time experience of a person visiting a place and their first impression of it are the most important experience regarding their judgment of the place. Here, those 2 terms are separated. The experience here is defined as the person have contact or interaction with the place by doing certain activities such as walking, shopping, hanging out, etc. As for the first impression, they can do it by only using their sensory sense when they are nearby the place or browsing it through online means. At their first time experience visiting a place, there will be several factors that will contribute to their judgment. It is influenced by their background such as their social background, economical background, origin, etc. It can also be influenced by that temporary factor in the from their mood at the time, who they were with, what was the purpose of their visit, etc. And since their background is more likely to stay the same, this research focuses more on the temporary factors to help recollect the memory of the subject experience.

This research would try to learn about how a person's first experiences of a place affecting their judgment of that place. To do so, this research takes place where it has changed or being developed over time. It is chosen so that there are clear differences between the time the subject's first-time visit and the most recent one. The place mentioned is Malioboro. It is one of the most visited and well-known places in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. Throughout the years, Malioboro has been changed over time from how vehicle oriented it was several years ago to more pedestrian-oriented for the last few years. Another thing that can support the research taking place there is how considerably a lot of universities in Yogyakarta. This means that there also a lot of new temporary residents from all over Indonesia who may just visit Malioboro for the first time in different years. With that said, how do people first-time visit experience affecting their judgment of present-day Malioboro? To answer that, this qualitative research was to conduct an online and offline interview with random sampling subject that has been visited Malioboro before.

### **Research Objective**

Finding out the relevance of first-time visit experience to their judgment of the present-day Malioboro.

### **Research Question**

How do people's first-time visit experiences affecting their judgment of the present-day Malioboro?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Yogyakarta**

Yogyakarta is located in the middle south of Java Island. At first, in the early 18th Century, there was a kingdom called the Mataram Kingdom that was ruled by Sri Sunan Paku Buwono the second. At the time he died, there was a struggle for power that involves a family dispute between one of his sons with his younger siblings which was the result of provocation by the Dutch colonialists. The dispute was then resolved in 1755 through the Ginyanti Agreement that separated the Kingdom into two, namely the Kingdom of Surakarta Hadiningrat that ruled by the son of Sunan Paku Buwono III, and the Kingdom of Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat under government. the second sibling of Sri Sunan Paku Buwono who later had the title Sultan Hamengkubuwono I. The Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat Kingdom was later commonly referred to as Yogyakarta and often shortened to Jogja.

Later in 1813, Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono I surrendered part of his Kingdom that located west of the Progo River to one of his sons, Prince Notokusumo to rule the area freely with full sovereignty. He then held the title of Sri Paku Alam I and called his territory Adikarto. After the time proclamation of Independence by the Republic of Indonesia, he declares Adikarto to be under the government of Indonesia Republic, as part of the unified state of the Republic of Indonesia, which subsequently became the Special Region of Yogyakarta which at the same level as a Province (Aditya, 2018).

### Historic Background of Malioboro



**Figure 1.** Malioboro between 1900 and 1940 Source: Creative Commons

As part of the initial city concept in Yogyakarta, a street called Malioboro is laid out as an imaginary north to the south axis that connects Keraton, Mount Merapi, and the South Sea as a supernatural symbol. In the colonial era of Indonesia, the urban pattern was disturbed by the Vredeborg fort that was built by the Dutch at the southern end of Malioboro street in 1790. Other than the fort, there also built Dutch Club in 1822, Dutch Governor's Residence in 1830, Java Bank, and a Post Office there. There, at Malioboro, rapid development was occurred caused by the trade between the Dutch and the Chinese community which has land that distributed for them in the sub-segment of Malioboro Street. This sub-segment is later known as the Chinese District. And to increase the strength and economy of the Dutch there, they built the main train station that divides Malioboro Street into two parts (Aditya, 2018)

### Malioboro Transformation



**Figures 2 and 3.** Malioboro during 1970 and 2010.  
Source: Creative Commons

Today, Malioboro Street is used as the name of the sub-section between the railway station and KM 0 instead of the whole road. Since 1758, Malioboro has become the center of the urban economy of Yogyakarta. It had various physical characteristics such as street furniture, open spaces, and buildings. The building architecture had a variety of styles from Chinese, Dutch, Javanese, or the combinations between mentioned styles. Over the year, Malioboro Street has undergone various changes over the years. With it, many of the mentioned urban elements have been gone one by one (Wibisono 2001).

According to Wibisono (2001), there have been several plans and programs done to develop Malioboro Street that intended to preserve and improve its meaning as an axis symbol. The plan and program mention are:

1. Development Plan for Malioboro Area (1982-1984)  
The program was intended to develop Malioboro as a whole rather than only focusing on the main street. However, the program was only done partially and not followed up by proper regulation and urban design.
2. Traffic Management of Jalur H (1993)  
The plan was focused to manage the traffic of Malioboro City using H shape road traffic management.
3. The reduction of the functional status of Jalan Malioboro within the City Master Plan (1993-2003)  
To reduce the traffic volume, the city structure of Yogyakarta City is revised and Malioboro Street status changed from collector road into the local road.
4. Formulation Development Plan for Infrastructure and Services of Malioboro District (1996)  
The development plan was intended to prepare a spatial planning framework and medium-term development programs for infrastructure and strategic areas. However, it is not implemented effectively.
5. Agenda Malioboro 2000+  
The proposal from Yogyakarta Urban Infrastructure Management Support here is intended to solve the traffic on Malioboro Street.



**Figure 4.** Malioboro in 2020 during a covid pandemic Source: Author

However, several developments were done after. Between 2016 and 2018, Malioboro had undergone several revitalizations to be a semi-pedestrian. The program was consist of tidying up the pedestrian way, adding street furniture, rearrange the street vendors, and making it more friendly to people with disabilities. Also, in 2020, there are several changes done in Malioboro as a response to the global pandemic. It was done by policies such as social distancing in the street furniture and applying one-way pedestrian among others.

### **Place Attachments**

According to Scanell and Gifford (2014), Place attachment is the cognitive-emotional bond that is developed between individuals and a place. There are 3 dimensions of place attachments; person dimension, process dimension, and place dimension. The personal dimension is describing the reasoning of where the place attachments come from. It can be based on the individual, a collective, or both. The individual-based can come from their personal meaning such as personal experience at the place, and the example of collective-based can come from how their cultural or religious background determines how meaningful a place is. The process dimension refers to the attachments being express and experienced by the individual's affection, cognition, and behavior. It is about how most of the place attachments tend to appear toward positive feelings such as happiness and joy to the place they are bond with. However, a negative feeling can also appear in case of place attachments in which the individual has a painful memory of a place. The place dimension is related to the type of place which can have a different scale or size, but it is usually more focused on the social and physical aspects of the place.

Place attachment is important to various cultures, locations, and times. However, the value and time of place attachments are depending on various individual factors that they relate with. One of the influential factors is time. The amount of time a person spent on a place could well defining their place attachments to that place. Place attachments usually build up over time and strengthen by positive interaction and experience. The level of individual history with the place forming the character of the place attachments. Those who have little small place attachments or none at all, such as tourists, have a shallow feeling towards a place, where the positive feelings that come from the place are a result of the aesthetic features of the place. As for those who have stronger attachments, such as long-term residents, they develop a more stable relationship with the place (Scanell and Gifford, 2014).

### **Confirmation Bias**

According to Margit E. Oswald and Stefan Grosjean (2012), Confirmation bias is the tendency of searching, interpreting, and remember pieces of information that systematically give immunity to an existing hypothesis. It is an example that shows how sometimes when processing information, humans can unconsciously have an illogical and biased manner caused by many factors. One of the explanations that can explain how confirmation bias appears is that it is a way to process information more effectively. When one entering a social world, the human mind can not possibly comprehend each and every piece of information in the context. Therefore, to reduce the overwhelming available information, the human mind is only interpreted information that in line with their

perspective (Casad, 2018).

## METHODOLOGY

This is correlational qualitative research located in Malioboro, Yogyakarta, Special Region of Yogyakarta. The data are collected by conducting an online or offline interview with 8 random sampling subjects that have previously visited Malioboro. The interviewees are consist of both gender that come from various age, occupation, origin, domicile, and was visiting Malioboro for the first time at various years. The interview will be conducted between 5 to 10 minutes as a semi-structured interview.

## Data Analysis

The result of each of the interviews was transcribed and reviewed for any findings regarding the relevant information of the research. The review is including the direct statements of the interviewees, the word they are using, and the way they said certain words. The results of the interview that being quoted here were translated from Bahasa into English with the intention of preserving the meaning of it, rather than translating it word for word. The quotations are shortened by excluding the unnecessary word in previous or after the exact quotation indicated with an / . . . /. Also, in showing the relationship between one's first experience to their judgment toward Malioboro, numbering Indicated with /(number)/ are given for each person for each category.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Interviews were done with 8 people that have previously visit Malioboro to answer the research question of how people's first-time visit experiences affecting their judgment of the present-day Malioboro. The interview is done using sub-structure questions intended to gather information regarding a) their first experience in Malioboro, which includes time pinpoint of when did their first-time visit was, their intention of visit, their destination, with whom they are with at the time. b) their judgment of present-day Malioboro in general.

Table 1. Participants Profile

Participant 1
Age 20, Occupation: Student, Origin: Palembang, Domicile: Yogyakarta, Gender: Male, First-time Visit: 2008
Participant 2
Age 24, Occupation: Entrepreneur, Origin: Cilegon, Domicile: Yogyakarta, Gender: Female, First-time Visit: Early 2000
Participant 3
Age 24, Occupation: Unemployed, Origin: Jepara, Domicile: Jepara, Gender: Male, First-time Visit: 2012
Participant 4
Age 24, Occupation: Employee, Origin: Palembang, Domicile: Palembang, Gender: Female, First-time Visit: 2016
Participant 5

Age: 25, Occupation: Entrepreneur, Origin: Yogyakarta, Domicile: Yogyakarta, Gender: Male, First-time Visit: 2012
Participant 6
Age: 30, Occupation: Employee, Origin: Yogyakarta, Domicile: Jakarta, Gender: Male, First-time Visit: 1997
Participant 7
Age: 32, Occupation: Employee, Origin: Yogyakarta, Domicile: Yogyakarta, Gender: Male, First-time Visit: 1993
Participant 8
Age 57, Occupation: Employee, Origin: Yogyakarta, Domicile: Yogyakarta, Gender: Female, First-time Visit: The 1970s

Source: Author

Table 2. Demographic

<b>Demographic</b>	<b>Number(%)</b>
<b>Age</b>	
20-25	5 (62,5%)
30-35	2 (25%)
>35	1 (12,5%)
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	5 (62,5%)
Female	3 (37,5%)
<b>Occupation</b>	
Student	1 (12,5%)
Unemployed	1 (12,5%)
Employee	4 (50%)
Entrepreneur	2 (25%)
<b>Origin</b>	
Yogyakarta	4 (50%)
Palembang	2 (25%)
Cilegon	1 (12,5%)
Jepara	1 (12,5%)
<b>Domicile</b>	
Yogyakarta	5 (62,5%)
Palembang	1 (12,5%)
Jakarta	1 (12,5%)
Jepara	1 (12,5%)
<b>First Time Fisit</b>	
1970s	1 (12,5%)
1990s	2 (25%)

2000s	2 (25%)
2010s	3 (50%)

Source: Author

### **The relation between their first-time visit experience to People's Judgment of Present-day Malioboro**

From 8 interviewees we found there are 3 people (Participants 2, 4, and 6) that show they are having a good time in their first experience also having a positive judgment about Malioboro. Their satisfaction with their first experience in Malioboro shown by the word that they are chosen as well as their direct statements toward it. They said about their first experience to be:

- (1) *"...I was just instantly happy going there. I really felt Yogyakarta's atmospheres, chill, comfortable..."*
- (2) *"...Even though it was crowded, but overall spending the day there is fun..."*
- (3) *"...I just liked to go there, take walks, relieve fatigue, shopping..."*

They later explain their judgment about current Malioboro as:

- (1) *"...its definitely even more comfortable, even more peaceful."*
- (2) *"... the conditions are comfortable, the roads are neat, the wagon really gives Yogyakarta's vibe."*
- (3) *"... it is already comfortable for a walk, for the pedestrian especially..."*

Then, there is a person (participant 5) that has a neutral first-experience in Malioboro with their judgment of Malioboro neither good nor bad. However, they also explain that they are not a person who likes to walk, and a place like Malioboro is not the first option they would choose to be their destination to hang out of some sort. According to them, their experience was:

*"...its so-so, nothing really fun. It is just like, Malioboro, wow, that's it..."*

They then describe present-day Malioboro as:

*"...It may have been more managed, but it still just so-so... It is fun to take a walk there, but there isn't anything to be impressed about."*

Also, 2 people (participants 1 and 3) are having either a good experience that results in a negative judgment toward Malioboro or a bad experience that results in a positive judgment of Malioboro. They stated that about their first experience in Malioboro as:

- (1) *"... going to Malioboro was fun because I go there with my friend."*
- (2) *"...unpleasant and crowded."*

They explain their judgment about Malioboro to be:



- (1) "...its not nice to see, still not enough trees, not comfortable for walking. And it is hot."
- (2) "Now it is good. It has a certain vibe. It is visually good.."

Lastly, there are 2 people who were the oldest 2 (age 32 and age 57) of the interviewees which they do not remember their first experience there. In explaining their judgment toward Malioboro, they explain how it has already become a decent public place. However, both of them argue that it can still be improved for the better. They stated:

- (1) "...not bad, there are lots of chairs for pedestrians, but still far behind with developed countries..."
- (2) "... it looks cleaner and tidier. It's good enough, maybe just need to add shade plants..."

From there we could see that from 6 interviewees that still remember their first experience in Malioboro, 4 (66,6%) of them has their positive or neutral experience resulting in positive or neutral judgment toward Malioboro correspondingly. As for the other 2 (33,3%), they have their judgment toward Malioboro seems to be not affected by their first-time experience there. Of 4 the people of having their experience and judgments in correspondence, 3 of them are having a positive experience. This may be the result of how positive experiences impact more on personal attachments to a place rather than negative experiences.

Another thing worth mentioning is how people that were visiting Malioboro for the first time with their family and as a child (5 people) are all have positive judgments toward it, and the people that first-time visiting it with non-family members and as a teenager or onwards (3 people) are having various judgments between positive, neutral, or negative judgments toward it. However, regarding their current domicile, the stage of Malioboro in time they were first-time visiting it, the interview does not show any particular pattern that may be the result of having a small number of interviewees.

## CONCLUSION

Human being has the ability to be emotionally attached to a place. In giving value to a place, the first experience they have in that place plays an important role. The research shows that a positive first-time experience in a place could impact personal judgments toward the place. The state of age they are in and people that they are within their first-time visit seems to also have an implication on how they judge the place.

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### **IMAGE SOURCE**

Figure 1. 'COLLECTIE TROPENMUSEUM Hoofdstraat Malioboro Djogja TMnr 10014977' by unknown author available at

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Figure 2. 'Straatgezicht met betjakrijders en geparkeerde auto's in de hoofdstraat Jalan Malioboro' by Boy Lawson available at

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Figure 3. 'Malioboro Street, Yogyakarta' by Gunawan Kartapranata available at

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