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Malioboro as Soul of Yogyakarta City: Tourist Perception About Malioboro District

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Abstract

Malioboro is a preserved district of tourism in Yogyakarta City, as an artery road that connecting between the Yogyakarta Royal Palace and the Tugu Historical monument. Malioboro is also part of the imaginary axis from Mount Merapi to the Southern Seas. In recent decades, Malioboro district has developed into a center of commerce and tourism. Until now, Malioboro last as the busiest trade district and even became the icons of Yogyakarta. Most of people say, especially the tourists that they have not been visiting Yogyakarta if they have not come to Malioboro Street. Tourists interested in visiting Yogyakarta with Malioboro as one of the main destination. They have perception that they have not come to Yogyakarta if they have not visiting to Malioboro district yet. This perception is interesting to be further examined, to measure the level of tourist interest who come to visit Malioboro district. This study was conducted to examine the phenomena that occur in the community about the perceptions of Malioboro. This study will prove that the soul of Malioboro in Yogyakarta is formed based on the historical and cultural values that exist in the region and its attractiveness as a trading center. The research method using quantitative analysis method to measure public perceptions of Malioboro through interviews with Malioboro visitors, before and after visiting Malioboro. The survey was conducted for 30 days with selected respondents are visitors or tourists aged over 15 years. The analysis is done by looking at the qualitative data obtained to then mapped the extent to which perception of each visitor about the Malioboro district. The final results of this analysis are: Malioboro is the main tourist destination in Yogyakarta, people know and have curiosity about Malioboro from their relatives, Malioboro is the first place to visit. those who have ever visited Malioboro are satisfied with the its condition, and the satisfaction about Malioboro makes people want to visit it again. Those five main reasons make Malioboro is regarded as the soul of Yogyakarta city.

Keywords: tourism; district; perception; soul of city; historical

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1. Introduction

Indonesia is famous as a cultural country and Yogyakarta is regarded as a region that has numerous tourist attractions. One of the famous place in Yogyakarta is Malioboro. Malioboro, a district in Yogyakarta city, is widely known by local and international tourists. Many people, whether they are local residents or even foreigners in Yogyakarta have visited it, at least for a once. This makes Malioboro looks like a soul of Yogyakarta city. And if we talked about the soul of city, we cannot separate it from its history. As Yogyakarta city has a lot of history in it, Malioboro also has it's own unique history. Based on this phenomenon, the study will be focused on Malioboro tourism spot. To gain information about people's perspectives, we use qualitative method and use interview in data collecting.

2. History

Yogyakarta city is one of the city with strong local cultural value in Indonesia, even the national governor give 'Special Province' title for Yogyakarta. The special title is not given because of the empire state in Yogyakarta, but also because of the local residents already bounded with local values that existed for centuries. The folks of the Yogyakarta still practicing the tradition of the culture of the palace in everyday life, that gives special character to the resident. No wonder if Malioboro always have pleasant atmosphere in the main street. Malioboro is one of the largest shopping district in Yogyakarta, it's street roadside are used for main trading place filled with small stalls. Most of the store and stalls sells variety of local's goods like handicraft, batik, leathercraft, etc.

The street is not only used for shopping, one thing that make this street very special is the street also serves as a cultural space for local artist. There are a lot of cultural activities on the street like music, painter, singer and dancer. Supported by the artist, local communities and Dutch colonial architecture to create friendly and pleasant atmosphere. It can be said that Malioboro is one of the important districts in Yogyakarta city, not only support economic growth but it able to show local culture as the identity.

If judged from the historical element, Malioboro street was established to coincide with the establishment of Yogyakarta Royal Palace. The Malioboro region that we know today is actually a north-south imaginary axis that correlates with the Royal Palace to Mount Merapi in the north and southern seas as a supernatural symbol. The existence of Malioboro Street can not be separated from the concept of Yogyakarta city laid out longitudinal with the north - south direction, with streets that lead to the point of compass and intersect perpendicular. The pattern is reinforced by the fact that an "imaginary axis" extending from the north to the south, with the royal palace as its midpoint.

The study about perception aiming the understanding about how people, especially tourist domestic or non domestic see Malioboro as soul of the city in Yogyakarta. The understanding about how people thinking will lead Malioboro for further development as soul of Yogyakarta city.

3. Theory

At 1970 Malioboro, there is a Traditional marketplace Beringharjo in the corner of street. Residents settled and traded on this district, most of them are the chinese ethnic decendants. Also, they are the one who started the shopping center around traditional market Beringharjo, expanding and settled in the Ketandan village. Until now, Malioboro still have vintage feeling of 1970s building because most of the building left as is.

The main activities in Malioboro are commercials, the seller are from neighborhood village around the district. They sell batik clothes, handicraft, leathercraft, etc.
4. Analysis Method

The study using descriptive-qualitative method. The gathering of information are by doing survey and giving questioners to the visitors who visit the site. The data collected on random times between 9a.m. and 11p.m. on weekdays and weekends, there are totals of 347 respondents. There is also 23 of them are visitor who were interviewed. Casual conversation used to gather deep information on how they see and how they feel about Malioboro.

5. Discussion

In various region in Indonesia, a lot of people are talking about Yogyakarta as travelling destinations. Yogyakarta known with it’s nature beauty, there are a lot of beautiful beach spot on southern seas and beautiful landscapes around the corner of Yogyakarta city, mainly active volcanoes Merapi on north. There are a lot of historical site in Yogyakarta, like tourism village in Kotagede and Prambanan temple, however by the destinations that exist, all of them are less favorite than Maliboro as destinations. There is unique fact about Malioboro, there are statements that spread in society almost in every corner region in Indonesia which say “If you have not been to Malioboro, you have not been visit to Yogyakarta yet”. This statement makes the further analysis about the perception of visitors who visit the Yogyakarta city, especially in Malioboro.

The visitor of Malioboro district are mostly from outside of Yogyakarta city, over half of them are already visit Malioboro before and they keep visiting Maliboro again year by year. They seeks atmosphere for that they can not get anywhere else in Yogyakarta. Malioboro most crowded at night when there are a lot of musical performance on the roadside. The artist combine traditional musical instrument called “angklung” with other modern instrument. They usually perform in group on the roadside, there is no special space for the performers, so they used pedestrian instead. Not only in groups, there are lot of artist who performs solo, they usually moved from one corner to another. Due to the lack of space for artist to perform they used space in pedestrian walkway that often they disturb other pedestrian access and creating crowded area and even traffic jam.

There are a lot of artwork and installation along the Malioboro street contributed by the local artist and scholar to show off their ability. This also create perception that Malioboro also used as a living museum for displaying artist works. The artwork usually a statues or installation that express social reality, call to do something or even a satire addressed to some parties. Even some the people says that Malioboro is a public catwalk runway where people can just walk away just like models so that other people can see their charm.

People usually take a picture with famous Malioboro street sign, as an evidence that they have visited Yogyakarta. This little signage is one of the most crowded space in Malioboro, especially when holidays seasons like Eid Al-Fitr when visitor of Malioboro increased by 500%.
Table 2. Visitors perspectives about Malioboro.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column Header Goes Here</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malioboro must be visited or not when visiting Yogyakarta?</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you knew about Malioboro from relatives?</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malioboro is the first thing come in mind when visiting jogja?</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied about Malioboro condition now?</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you come again to Malioboro if had chances?</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tables show us about Malioboro quality in the eye of domestic visitor from outside of Yogyakarta city. Based on the respond of visitor from the outside of Yogyakarta, Malioboro is must be visited destinations when visiting Yogyakarta, for the first time visitor they came to fulfill their curiosity about the district. After they come and mostly are loved the atmosphere of the district especially for the main street of Malioboro. Peoples said that they only get the atmosphere from Malioboro, lot of them who willingly to visit Malioboro again year by year. Some of the visitor of Malioboro are an old timer who had lived in Yogyakarta in their young age for study. They engaged their family to visit and experiencing Malioboro together, their family members eventually share their story to relatives which made Malioboro well known destinations in Yogyakarta. The visitor usually spent their time 3-5 hours walking across the street from end to end. In evening there are open-air streetside restaurant called “lesehan” which serves traditional local foods. Lesehan is a culture in terms of selling food or something stuff while sitting on the mat / floor. It usually filled with visitor who want to experience more relaxing and friendly atmosphere in there.

Malioboro is like already engraved in the head of traveler who come to visit yogyakarta, when they were asked "In Yogyakarta where is the destination you want to visit most?", 8 out of 10 peoples first answer are Malioboro. This illustrates how Malioboro has become the soul of Yogyakarta city tourism. They spend more time in the Malioboro area than other tourist destinations when they visit yogyakarta city. This proves that Malioboro is a special place for those visitors. Visitor on Malioboro have high expectations before visiting Malioboro, 87% of the visitors are satisfied with Malioboro as it is. While the rest said they aren't satisfied enough with the quality of Malioboro now. There are few conditions which made them didn't fully enjoy Malioboro. Few issue like traffic jams along the street, Atmosphere changes, Lack of pedestrian walkway, street furniture and public amenities. Based on interviews with few old timers who were once lived in Yogyakarta for 8 years, he feels like the atmosphere in Malioboro changes a bit. He said Malioboro were more calming and charming in early 2000 than Malioboro now.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, Malioboro has been considered as the most visited tourist attraction in Yogyakarta. There are some perspectives based on local residents and foreigners’ about Malioboro when they were asked about Yogyakarta tourism places. First, Malioboro is the main tourist destination people want to visit when they come to Yogyakarta. Second, they know and have curiosity about Malioboro from their relatives. Third, Malioboro is the first thing that comes in their mind when visiting Yogyakarta. Fourth, those who have ever visited Malioboro are satisfied with the condition of Malioboro. And fifth, the satisfaction about Malioboro makes them want to visit it again. Those five main reasons proves that Malioboro is regarded as a soul for Yogyakarta itself. Without Malioboro, Yogyakarta presumably look like a bland city.
References


