

VISITOR PERCEPTION ON THE ASPECTS THAT CREATES THE KYA-KYA SENSE OF PLACE: THE PHYSICAL EVIDENCES

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ABSTRACT

Kya-Kya is a Chinatown area, which is part of the old city of Surabaya. This place has become a culinary tourism destination and feasts visitors' eyes on architecture that is viscous with oriental elements in its buildings. Various foods and beverages are available to welcome visitors, with seating areas decorated with round tables and chairs. Interestingly, this area provides opportunities for researchers who aim to define physical evidence of the tourism area, which is a tactic of the marketing mix. Physical evidence is one of the seven marketing mixes, which are product, price, place, promotion, people, and process. Good physical evidence is expected to increase the intention of repeat visits and word of mouth. This study used a quantitative method. Data collection was based on numerical data and 65 respondents' data, and a direct visit to the Kya-Kya area was performed to observe the surrounding atmosphere. The results of the study revealed that physical evidence that has been proven to make a contribution was Chinatown architecture, buying and selling activities, and interiority in the Kya-Kya area.

Keywords: Architecture, Interior, Physical Evidence, Sense of Place, Site

ABSTRAK

Kya-Kya merupakan area pecinan yang termasuk dalam kota lama di kota Surabaya. Tempat ini menjadi destinasi wisata kuliner sekaligus memanjakan mata pengunjungnya dengan arsitektur yang kental akan elemen-elemen oriental pada bangunannya. Berbagai makanan hingga minuman tersedia untuk menyambut pengunjungnya, lengkap dengan area duduk yang dihiasi meja bundar dan beberapa kursi. Menariknya kawasan ini, memberikan peluang bagi peneliti yang bertujuan untuk mendefinisikan physical evidence kawasan yang berada di area turisme yang merupakan taktik bauran pemasaran. Physical evidence merupakan salah satu dari ketujuh bauran pemasaran antara lain adalah product, price, place, promotion, people, dan process. Harapannya dengan physical evidence yang baik akan dapat meningkatkan intensi kunjungan ulang dan word of mouth. Penelitian ini mempergunakan metode kuantitatif dengan pengumpulan data berdasarkan data numerik dan responden yang dilakukan oleh 65 orang, serta telah dilakukannya kunjungan ke kawasan Kya-Kya secara langsung untuk mengobservasi suasana sekitar. Hasil dari penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa physical evidence yang telah terbukti memberikan kontribusi adalah arsitektur pecinan, kegiatan jual-beli, dan interioritas pada kawasan Kya Kya.

Kata kunci: Arsitektur, Bukti Fisik, Interior, Kesan Tempat, Situs.

BACKGROUND

The Kya-Kya area has received a lot of attention. This area is initiated by the Surabaya government, Apkrindo, and the local community in Kembang Jepun. This area is a step toward reviving Chinatown as a tourism area at night. Currently, this area is designated as a Surabaya tourist area. As a tourist area, attention to the physical factors of the area to increase visitors, which can result in economic improvement in this area, is certainly required.

Marketing the tourism area as a servicescape environment is required to pay attention. Some marketing mixes for areas like these are the combination of several elements used by the company to promote and sell their products or services. There are 7 elements in marketing mixes, which are known as "7Ps", product, price, place, promotion, people, process, physical evidence (McCarthy, J. 1960).

The collaborative interaction of these seven essential elements forms the basis for developing an effective marketing strategy. Within this strategic framework, the concept of physical evidence is one of the key components, particularly important in the dynamic landscape of tourism-driven regions such as the Chiakiya region.

This multifaceted term summarizes the tangible characteristics and experiential aspects of a destination, from the architectural wonders and

interior aesthetics to the diverse products and services offered, to the captivating attractions that attract visitors (Erkilic et al., 2021).

Expanding more on this all-encompassing view, Kusumowidagdo et al. (2023) provide a detailed list of physical components that form the overall atmosphere and charm of a place, an element identified by Montgomery in 1998 as the iconic landmarks that define a locality.

These elements include factors from different ends of a spectrum such as those contributing to sensory experiences' intensity, or sizes and majesty levels architectural features; permeability spatial boundaries; other than landmark based navigation system plus interactions, like topological layout discussed by Schulz in 1980.

In the realm of physical evidence shaping marketing strategies and architectural place essence, there is a gap. The absence of this information indicates the pioneering work that projects such as this study aim at, probing into the seamless relationship between what physical evidence conveys and what architectural elements constitute place identity.

By uncovering such subtle dynamics, we are also hopeful to shed light on yet unseen perspectives or unexplored aspects that may be able to trigger more original innovations within the marketing sphere; particularly towards those destination

settings rife with cultural dynamism amid fierce competition like Kya-Kya.

METHODS

A case study by collecting data and respondents was used in the Kya-Kya area with a very in-depth focus. The unit of analysis was physical elements in the Kya-Kya area, which were found in architecture, interior, and focal points, to provide positive experiences to visitors in order to increase the number of visitors.

Data collection was conducted through interviews such as respondent characteristics, physical and architectural aspects, the interiority of the kya-kya area, observations, documentation, and literature study. The survey questions include visitor biodata and visitor rating; such as territory placement, space, cleanliness, interior, facilities, focal point, food variety, interaction, and event in Kya-Kya.

The interview was conducted with 30 local visitors in the Kya-Kya area, including Mr. Herlambang and Ms. Farah Andita Ramdhani from the Surabaya Government as the Vice Chairman of the Department of Culture, Tourism, Sports and Creative Economy. Source of triangulation was used, which was from different sources, including informant sources, observations, and literature study.

Direct observations were conducted from September 15, 2023, to September 24, 2023, to

examine physical elements in the area that can be physical evidence in this study.

Documentation was conducted in the Kya-Kya area from September 15, 2023, to September 24, 2023. The documentation was taken from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m., from Friday to Sunday, because many people were having activities following the operational hours of the Kya-Kya area, which was peak hour. Documentation technically has resulted in information about the Kya-Kya area and visual evidence in the form of photos supporting the analysis process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the marketing mix, physical evidence refers to the physical elements or physical evidence that can influence the customers' perceptions of a product or service offered by the company. Physical evidence is one of the 7Ps in the marketing mix, which are Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, and Process.

Physical evidence has an important role in influencing the image of the tourist area and visitor satisfaction. Physical evidence in this discussion was focused on the physical environment. The physical environment can include many things, including area arrangements, architecture, interior, trade area, and focal point.

Physical evidence is important because it can give customers a strong first impression, help establish customer trust, and influence purchasing

decisions. Therefore, the regional stakeholders, architecture, traders, and site management must pay attention to these elements to create a positive experience for visitors and strengthen the image of the area.

Area

Area arrangement becomes a good marketing element. A good area arrangement includes several supporting factors, including landscape arrangement, parking arrangement, accessibility, tourist pedicab, and booth.

First, landscape arrangement with buildings in the form of shophouses had the characteristics of Chinese settlements that had lived for a long time. As this area used oriental-themed architecture, the environment felt by the visitors was also different from other places in Surabaya, as stated by informants. “The atmosphere in Chinatown is far different compared to the city which gives an interesting impression to the visitors. As a result, visitors are interested to visit and feel the atmosphere there in person.” (F, 34)

The tourist area Kya-Kya had wide well-paved roads that played a major role as an attraction and increased the beauty of the place, making it easy for tourists to access. Those broad pathways did not only help people move easily from one point to another but also helped in retaining the aesthetic value of the place thus creating an ambient atmosphere for visitors.



Figure 1. Kya-Kya Culinary Area
Source : Author, 2023

One of the notable features that made Kya-Kya stand out was its reputation for cleanliness which tourists consistently lauded. A clean environment always has a way of making people feel comfortable and also organized, hence a good setting for different activities like shopping or even just taking a walk around places; this is able to provide some relaxation or fun aspect. This neatness was an expression of their desire to ensure that every visitor felt welcome and had a good time at the place; consequently they succeeded in positioning themselves as leaders in attracting visitors both for tourism as well as trade purposes.



Figure 2. Kya-Kya Car Park and Surrounding Roads
Source : Author, 2023

Second, the parking arrangement in Kya-Kya was on the side of the road so that visitors could easily access it. Moreover, this area was also easy to known by Kya-Kya visitors so that they could find this parking area easily.



Figure 3. Kya-Kya Parking Area
Source : Author, 2023

Third, accessibility or other roads related to the access and entrance to the Kya-Kya area were in the form of dragon gates located at the ends of both sides of the Kya-Kya area, which limited and also became the marker of the Kya-Kya area. Thus, it was easier for the visitors to find access to the area. Access for parking from Banyu Urip has to pass through the area behind the Kya-Kya to access the parking area.



Figure 4. Kya-Kya Area Limit in Form of Main Gate and Plastic Barrier
Source : Author, 2023

Fourth, there were tourist pedicabs to facilitate Kya-Kya visitors to get around the tourist area easily. Besides that, the route taken also passed through many historical places with low prices. Pedicabs also became a characteristic of the Kya-Kya area, which was always remembered by visitors.



Figure 5. A Pedicab Waiting for Customers and A Signage of Kya-Kya Complex
Source : Author, 2023

Fifth, there were booth arrangements, a place to eat, and other elements such as toilet/service, music venue, and luggage storage area. Carts used as booths for sellers could be moved easily. The visitor area was in the form of seating and tables spread around this street, equipped with sufficient trash bins. There were quite a lot of toilets in the form of portable toilets located in the back and front areas of Kya-Kya. There was also a disabled toilet.

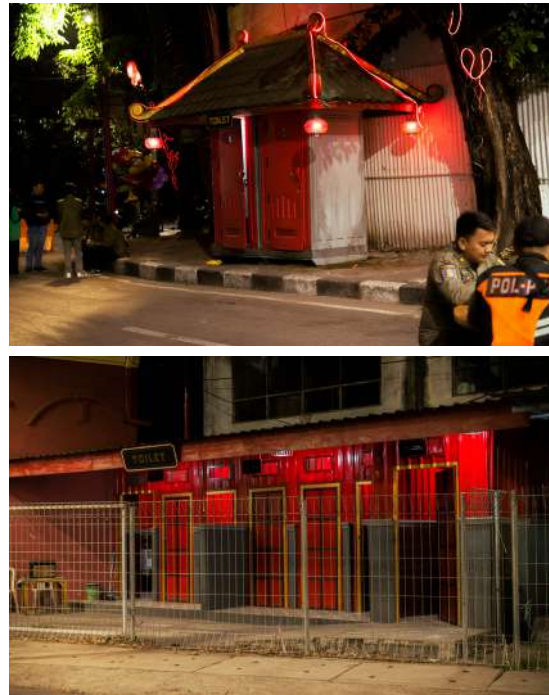


Figure 6. Toilet Facilities Around Kya-Kya Area
Source : Author, 2023

There was a music stage as the main entertainment area in the middle of the Kya-Kya area, equipped with speakers and a mic used for singing as an entertainment facility. Thus, customers and visitors could enjoy the atmosphere in the Kya-Kya area.



Figure 7. A Picture of Local People Setting Up the Music Stage and an Eating Contest Event Held on Kya-Kya
Source : Author, 2023

Architecture

The commercial buildings in the Kya-Kya area were used as places for selling and residences, making the shophouse buildings in the Kya-Kya area became the people's choice. On several points, there were historical buildings typical of Chinatown with Baba-Nyonyas style, such as Rumah Abu, belonging to the Tjoa, The, and Han families.

The shophouses had many different colors and form types, making the atmosphere in the Kya-Kya colorful, attractive, and lively. The building columns in front of the rolling doors of each shophouse created the passageway used by visitors to pass from one shophouse to another, creating an exclusive atmosphere.

Several buildings still preserved the Chinese architecture, which had many openings in the form of rows of wood and windows and did not have a balcony on the 2nd floor. The roof used typical Chinese clay tiles. The use of railing on the 2nd floor was for security and differentiated between the bank facade and other commercial shophouses.



Figure 8. Facade Arrangement Collage of the Building on Kya-Kya Street
Source : Author, 2023

Interior

The area consisted of many stand booths, seats, and tables for visitors. Trash bins were provided in the middle of the street to facilitate visitors in throwing trash and prevent them from throwing trash carelessly. The seats and tables adjacent to the sellers' booth made it easier for visitors to buy food and beverages and sit and relax more comfortably.

The Kya-Kya area had quite a clear interiority. However, the scale of the area compared to the

semi-space was still spacious, giving a quiet impression of the area. If interiority was compared to the number of visitors and stands, the comparison was quite significant, so the option was to provide new arrangements of seating and stands. The addition of chairs and tables can be an option, but this needs to be reconsidered according to the number of visitors whether it is needed or not because the Kya-Kya area itself is crowded at certain times or when events are held, on weekdays the crowd is not too significant.



Figure 9. Kya-Kya Interior Arrangement (Chairs, Tables, Bins, Booths, etc)
Source : Author, 2023

Trade Area

The products sold were varied because they had done a selection process, so there was no similarity in the products sold. Many typical Chinese foods can be found in the booths in the Kya-Kya area. There were 3 types of booth

designs from APKRINDO, Government, and Private. Booth/stall designs can be considered to describe the Chinatown concept but there are also some booths that do not use the concept of Chinatown. Many booths were also spread along the trade area of Kya-Kya. Not only Chinese food products, there are also many types of food choices such as Middle-Eastern food, traditional food and Western food so that visitors can comfortably choose food according to their preferences.



Figure 10. Booth Types Spread Across Kya-Kya Trade Area
Source : Author, 2023

Physical Factors for Creating a Sense of Place

Physical factors became the supporting component of physical evidence to be able to attract visitors and provide a sense of place in the area (Erkilic et al., 2021). (Canter 1977, Punter 1991, Schulz 1980, Montgomery 1998) A

good arrangement of the Kya-Kya area becomes good physical evidence. Furthermore, booth arrangement, restaurant arrangement, or other elements have also physically been proven to increase a good relationship between humans and the environment. Several findings support the theory (Kusumowidagdo et al., 2023; Xu et al., 2023), especially for the architecture, interior, trade area, and focal point of the area.

The success of this physical evidence was proven by several facts, including the presence of crowds, interaction between sellers and visitors, and a friendly atmosphere. Place arrangement gives the impression that the dining and trade areas have their areas that complement each other in this one site.

Crowds can be seen from the trade area and visitors who were buying. The stand area was busier than the sitting area because there were still few visitors, so that stand area seemed busier.

Interaction between sellers and visitors can be considered quite good. There were several well-known stands that attracted visitors in the Kya-Kya area. Visitors had many options in choosing foods and beverages because there were various stands available and at a price that is quite affordable for Surabaya residents, especially the North Surabaya area. It can be concluded that the interaction between visitors and sellers is quite good.

A friendly atmosphere could be seen from this

area, which had good privacy for a food court area. Even though Kya-Kya was outdoor, the Kya-Kya area was quite far from the highway passed by vehicles so that the visitors were not disturbed by noise from the highway. This supports a comfortable and friendly atmosphere because Kya-Kya has very good potential, both audio and visual. The air quality there can be considered quite good for related activities because it is not too exposed to pollution and cigarette smoke.

Suggestions for further improvement in this area related to physical evidence are the improvement of typical Chinese ornaments to attract visitors to Kya-Kya. Another suggestion is to add iconic areas or accent aspects that make Kya-Kya different from other food courts. The improvement of marketing from social media also helps, but adding weekly or monthly events can increase visitors' interest in visiting. Live music also can be an attraction for visitors, but it must be related to the Chinatown theme to give visitors unique and different experiences from other places. For the maintenance aspect, special attention is needed on some visitor chairs because there are damaged chairs with nails sticking out which can cause visitors to get injured.

CONCLUSION

Kya - Kya is an area with harmonious Chinese architectural buildings with traditional Chinese residential areas around it. This area has easy access and a comfortable parking area along the

street. A dragon gate becomes the main marker for easy access, and tourist pedicabs are available to go around the area at affordable prices.

The booth, eating place, and other facilities are arranged well, including many toilets. Kya-Kya has various buildings with different colors, which can create a lively atmosphere. This area has buildings with typical Chinese architecture, including rows of woodwork, windows, and clay tile roofs.

Seller booths, seats, tables, and trash bins are available for the comfort of visitors. This area has clear interiority, but sometimes it feels spacious and quiet. There are opportunities to increase interaction by rearranging seats or booths. Products sold are varied, with booth designs reflecting the Chinatown concept.

Kya-Kya offers various experiences to the visitors, including entertainment and culinary. Since the launch of the Government program of Kya-Kya Reborn in 2022, its attractiveness has increased, and it has become one of the highly recommended tourist destinations. Promotion is actively performed via social media, print media, and visitor recommendations. All of this has increased the popularity of Kya-Kya as an attractive tourist destination in Surabaya.

Development suggestions for locations include: Several recommendations have been proposed to increase visitor experiences in the Kya-Kya area.

This included the provision of additional seats and tables that can be used when visitors start to get busy, better lighting, clear parking signs, information about operational hours, explanation about the route and local history education, and security measures such as monitoring and security officers. Moreover, the use of suitable furniture for outdoor areas, more strategic placement of toilets, highlighting historical buildings with attractive lighting, preserving Chinese architectural style as the characteristic of the area, re-arrangement of the central area by adding seats, and arrangement of trash bins on the side of the road are suggested.

Other recommendations include the addition of stands selling non-halal products or making a special area for non-halal products, uniforming booth design, more strategic and interesting information boards, promotion via social media, and development of the Kya-Kya official account to join the trends of young generations. Furthermore, It appeals to sellers and administrators to make marketing and invite their relatives to visit Kya-Kya. This is expected to increase the attractiveness of Kya-Kya and can accommodate various groups of visitors.

This study is the basis for further research, in which further research can be developed with different methods, such as using a qualitative method, different elements of physical evidence, social and asset factors, and another marketing mix.

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