

# Accessibility Study For Persons With Disabilities In Tourism Destinations: A Case Study In The Malioboro Area, Yogyakarta

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## Abstract

The Malioboro area is an icon of Yogyakarta tourism as well as a cultural heritage and an economic center which makes it always crowded with visitors. The large number of uncontrolled space users makes Malioboro often reported as an inaccessible area for tourists, especially people with disabilities. Even though according to Tourism Act of Indonesia No. 10 2009 states that tourists with special needs have the right to receive services according to their needs. Therefore, research related to accessibility for persons with disabilities in the Malioboro area is needed to find out the fulfilment of the rights of tourists with special needs in the area. The research method used is descriptive qualitative. Data collection techniques were carried out by means of literature studies, observation and documentation. While data analysis was carried out by comparing the facts found in the field with the theory of accessibility of the urban environment and cultural heritage. The results of the study show that accessibility indicators in the form of parking areas, vertical movement, public hygiene facilities and prices are available. While the indicators for communication, signage and horizontal movement facilities have not met the indicators. Based on these findings, the Malioboro area is accessible for general tourists but not yet fully accessible for persons with disabilities.

**Keywords:** Malioboro area, accessibility, persons with disabilities.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Malioboro area is one of the cultural heritage areas in the center of Yogyakarta City which has now become a center for tourism activities. As an icon of Yogyakarta tourism, Malioboro is often reported as an inaccessible area for persons with disabilities. The Malioboro area which is also the center of economic activity makes this area always packed with visitors every day. Meanwhile, uncontrolled spatial planning makes this area increasingly congested and irregular. Many tourists and other space users complain about this. The pedestrian path is filled with motorbike parking lots and street vendor stalls that cover the guiding block. Meanwhile at night, the remaining space is getting smaller due to the presence of several art communities performing angklung music. The remaining space for pedestrians is very narrow, especially for persons with disabilities.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2006 in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 19 of 2011 concerning Ratification of the Convention on The Rights of Persons with Disabilities) defines persons with disabilities as those who have physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments in the long term which can create obstacles in various interactions and can prevent them from participating fully and effectively in society on an equal basis with others. Kim and Lehto (2012) in Elmoghazy (2019) argue that differences in the physical, intellectual and

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emotional states of persons with disabilities can bring up different requirements and problems in their travel experiences. Meanwhile, according to UNWTO (2003), the understanding of disability is a disability/disfunction that is considered a medical/biological condition related to an individual that needs to be corrected through treatment or rehabilitation is a traditional understanding. Currently, disability is more considered as a social aspect. Still in UNWTO (2013), persons with disabilities are defined as people who are hampered either by environmental barriers or by attitudinal barriers that prevent these people from participating fully and effectively in society on an equal basis with other people in travel, accommodation and tourism services. So, persons with disabilities can consist of those who have physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments in the long term or due to temporary disabilities such as people who use crutches only temporarily, the elderly, people with luggage, small children, or people who have a large or small body in size and stature, including pregnant women. According to Wang & Cole (2014) in Nyman (2016), travel is more difficult for people with disabilities to experience/experience than non-disabled people, while existing regulations and guidelines are not always followed. This makes it difficult for tourists with disabilities to be able to travel.

According to Oxford (2019), accessibility is the quality of being able to be reached or entered. Meanwhile, according to PUPR Ministerial Regulation No. 14/PRT/M/2017 concerning Requirements for the Convenience of Buildings, accessibility is defined as the convenience provided to everyone in order to realize equal opportunity in all aspects of life and livelihood. More specifically, Law Number 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities defines accessibility as facilities provided for persons with disabilities in order to realize equal opportunity. Meanwhile, according to Meriam Webster (2019), conditions that can be reached are called accessible. In tourism activities, accessibility is provided for all tourists, including tourists with special needs. UNWTO (2016) adds that efforts are needed to improve universal accessibility of tourist destinations so that everyone has equal opportunities to participate in tourism activities in order to achieve accessible tourism. UNWTO (2016) further explains that accessible tourism refers to the adaptation of the environment, tourism products and services so that they are accessible, used and enjoyed by all users, under universal design principles. In another publication, UNWTO (2003) provides an overview of universal design to support accessible tourism in urban and cultural heritage environments. The publication states that a tourist destination that is accessible to all, including persons with disabilities, can be reviewed through 7 indicators, namely parking areas, communication, signage, horizontal movement, vertical movement, public hygiene facilities, and prices.

Following up on these problems, in 2014 the Yogyakarta Government held a Malioboro Area Arrangement Contest. The design that was chosen as the winner was themed "Teras Budaya" which designed the revitalization of the Malioboro area as a Yogyakarta cultural heritage area and carried the value of humanism for all space users, including by accommodating the needs of persons with disabilities. The master plan includes development plans up to 2050 (A+A Studio, 2014). The implementation of the master plan which began in 2016 began with the relocation of parking lots and arrangement of pedestrians. Currently, the need for parking has been focused on several parking pockets that no longer take pedestrian paths. While the pedestrian paths were

totally revitalized by procuring new guiding blocks, benches made of wood, planting philosophical trees, adding pots and plants, procuring iron railings at each end of the pedestrian paths and crossings, procuring round benches, and constructing an underground toilet at “0 Km”.

However, after the first stage of revitalization was completed, the Malioboro area was still widely reported as inaccessible for persons with disabilities. Even in 2018, the Yogyakarta disabled community rallied demanding the fulfillment of equal rights in accessing public spaces, one of which is the Malioboro area (Net Yogya, 2015). Even though according to Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 10 of 2009 concerning Tourism it is stated that tourists with special needs have the right to receive services according to their needs [Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 10 of 2009 concerning Tourism]. Therefore, research related to accessibility for persons with disabilities in the Malioboro area is needed. The purpose of this research is to find out the fulfillment of the rights of tourists with special needs in the Malioboro area.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### Research sites

As a tourist destination, the Malioboro area which is along the Malioboro Street is a part of the Mangkubumi Street where the Yogyakarta Monument and “Angkringan Kopi Joss” are located. However, writing this paper will focus on Malioboro Street and Ahmad Yani Street, because the center of activity is along these streets. This area is bordered by Diponegoro Street – Jenderal Sudirman (north side); Code River (east); Panembahan Senapati Street – KH. Ahmad Dahlan (south side); and Bhayangkara – Street TRM (west side).



Figure 1. Research Locations

Source: Yogyakarta City Tourism Map (<https://alindstransport.com>)

## Data Collection and Analysis Methods

The research method used is descriptive qualitative because the researcher wants to present the findings in the field. Methods of data collection is done through literature studies, observation, and documentation.

A literature study is carried out by reading laws, books and similar research to find the theory that best fits the research topic and object of study, namely the theory of accessibility for tourists with disabilities in urban environments and cultural heritage in open spaces. Literature studies were also carried out using several websites as a source of definitions and supporting information. The observation method was carried out to determine the physical condition of the Malioboro area directly related to accessibility conditions which were then enshrined with documentation techniques in the form of taking pictures.

The data that has been collected is then analyzed by comparing the facts found in the field with the theory of accessibility for persons with disabilities in urban environments and cultural heritage which consists of parking areas, communication, signages, horizontal movement, vertical movement, public hygiene facilities, and prices.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research, the data shows that the Malioboro area is not yet fully accessible for tourists with disabilities. This can be seen from the fulfillment of some of the accessibility indicators.

The indicators that have been fulfilled are the existence of a parking area and also a drop off area that is close to the area and equipped with special parking spaces for persons with disabilities. Another indicator that is fulfilled is the vertical movement facility because there are several ramps at the changing floor levels. Accessible toilet and sink facilities are also found in Malioboro. Meanwhile, the prices applied for special facilities for disabilities are no different from facilities for general tourists. While the indicators for communication, signage and horizontal movement facilities have not met the indicators.

### 1. Parking Areas

The parking area is one of the mandatory facilities that must be available in tourist areas. Parking areas are usually located adjacent to or within tourist areas for easy access. In addition to distance, the parking area must also be wide to facilitate the mobilization of vehicles entering or leaving the parking area.

The availability of parking areas for motorbikes, cars and buses already exists and is quite a lot. However, since the arrangement of the pedestrian paths was carried out in 2017, the parking area in the Malioboro area has been relocated and focused on designated parking area. If you look at the distance from the parking area (Abu Bakar Ali, Fort Vredeburg, Ngabean, and Senopati) to the main pedestrian route, it is quite far for persons with disabilities because it is located near the end of the road. This certainly makes it difficult for people with disabilities.



**Figure 2. The Location of The Malioboro Parking Areas**  
Source: Google Maps with adjustments ([www.google.com](http://www.google.com))



**Figure 3. Abu Bakar Ali Parking Lot**  
Source: Detik.com [21].

Meanwhile, the parking area for Malioboro, Beskalan and Beringharjo Malls are still more affordable based on distance. However, these three parking areas have a more limited capacity and 2 of them are not equipped with parking standards for persons with disabilities who require more space to get off/up to the car. Meanwhile, the Beskalan parking lot has been equipped with special parking space facilities for persons with disabilities in one corner of the car park entrance. This special room is also under the supervision of officers so that it is not used by general users.



**Gambar 4. Beskalan Parking Lot – Parking Area for Persons with Disabilities**  
Source: Author, 2019

The Beskalan parking lot is the newest parking area that was completed in mid-2019. However, this parking lot is only big enough to accommodate around 20 cars. If it is full, tourists must go to the Vredeburg/ Senopati/ Ngabean parking lot in the south. Only the Beskalan parking lot met accessibility standards for persons with disabilities.

While the availability of drop off facilities in the Malioboro area can be found at several points along Malioboro Street. Drop off locations with easy access for the disabled are usually in front of important buildings such as the front door of the Grand Hotel Indonesia, at the entrance of the Yogyakarta Provincial Government office, in front of banks and other public facilities.

## 2. Communications

In meeting the communication needs of tourists with disabilities, a tourist area should be equipped with communication facilities using alternative means other than verbal communication, both human resources who understand sign language or supporting equipment (UNWTO, 2003). Unfortunately, these facilities have not been found in the Malioboro area. This has resulted in persons with disabilities still having to be independent in pursuing their communication needs with other parties. Communication facilities such as public telephones that are low-cost and located in accessible places are also not available.

## 3. Signages

Signages which is the plural form of sign which means signs (in identification, warning, or direction) or a system of such signs [www.merriam-webster.com]. Whereas in Suryantini (2001), sign has several meanings such as a public appearance or a message, a perception indicating a clue and behavior or movement as a signal (Rini, 2001). From these various definitions it can be concluded that signage is a good form of communication using symbols, words, pictures, movements, sounds and various other ways so that information reaches the public.

In UNWTO (2003), the need for signage in tourist areas includes several things, namely information counters, check-in and ticket sales equipped with clearly legible signs and located close to the entrance; announcements must be visual (running text or big

screen) and audio preceded by a tone; accessible services and facilities must have a clear sign with an easy-to-understand symbol, with a large size and a contrasting color; general information is provided in a timely manner in various formats and technologies that can be accessed by various types of disabilities; fire alarms emit visual and acoustic signals; Evacuation routes are clearly visible and equipped with visuals (UNWTO, 2003).

Based on the research results, the last 2 indicators related to fire alarms and evacuation routes were not found in the field because Malioboro is a non-building open space. Meanwhile, with regard to the first indicator, the Malioboro area can be accessed without purchasing a ticket, so there are no check-in counters and ticket purchases. However, in this area there is an information counter in the form of a TIC (Tourism Information Centre) which is equipped with guiding blocks and ramps so that it can be accessed by persons with disabilities. While other indicators are also not fulfilled because there is not many signage found in the Malioboro area.

Some of the signage found contained information on the whereabouts of a toilet but it was difficult to read because it was only written on a wooden board with medium size and was not easily visible. Other signage is in the form of information on the use of crossing signs where the writing is very small with non-contrasting colours and the location is high enough that it is difficult to read if you are not close. Apart from that, signage is only in the form of street/alley nameplates.

#### **4. Horizontal Movement**

Horizontal Movement in this study refers to the convenience provided to tourists with disabilities in carrying out horizontal mobility. According to UNWTO (2003), a horizontal movement is said to be accessible for persons with disabilities if it is free from physical barriers, visual barriers, and has a sufficient minimum width to allow 2 wheelchairs to walk side by side/ special waypoints are available.

Based on the research that has been done, the condition of the pedestrian paths in the Malioboro area after the revitalization is much more feasible because there is a wider space. The pedestrian path is also equipped with a guiding block made of iron and in some parts it is yellow. However, when physically checked, many of the colors were missing and some parts of the guiding blocks were also incomplete. The existence of the guiding block, even though it is complete along the pedestrian path, is complained that it is not high enough so that it is difficult for a blind person to feel it. Along the pedestrian paths, special waypoints are also provided equipped with iron railings, especially for the movement between pedestrian lanes which are separated by asphalt roads and crossing lanes. However, at several points, especially on the east side of the pedestrian path, there are many street vendor stalls that close the guiding block, narrow the pedestrian path to the stalls which interfere with the view, making it difficult for people with disabilities.

#### **5. Vertical Movement**

Vertical movement in this study is defined as the facilities provided to persons with disabilities to support vertical movement in the Malioboro area. Based on observations, ramps are only found at Trans Jogja and TIC stops. Meanwhile, for the purposes of moving from the pedestrian path to the shopping yard or entering the shops, it is still not gently sloping so it is difficult to access. Meanwhile, the movement from the road to the

pedestrian path at several drop off points and crossing points has been equipped with a sloping entry point so that it can be accessed by wheelchair users. Because the Malioboro area is a non-building open space, there is no need for special elevators. While public toilet facilities at the "0 Km" point are equipped with escalators because the location of the toilet is underground. The escalator is accessible to disabled wheelchair users.

## **6. Public Hygiene Facilities**

Public Hygiene Facilities in this study consist of washbasin and toilet facilities that are easily accessible for persons with disabilities. In the Malioboro area, public cleaning facilities such as toilets are very limited in the Malioboro area. There are 4 public toilet points provided. The first toilet is located close to the DIY Provincial Government office, but the toilet is so narrow that wheelchairs cannot enter. The second point is in the Beskalan parking enclave which has provided special toilets for persons with disabilities. Meanwhile, the third point is between Beringharjo Market and Fort Vredeburg in the form of a portable toilet that cannot be accessed by physical disabilities because it is very narrow, uses stairs, and access to the toilet is blocked by street vendors. While the fourth toilet is at the southern end of Malioboro, namely at "0 Km", to be precise, in front of the BI building. The toilet was just completed in 2018 with an underground concept. The toilet is disabled friendly because it is equipped with an escalator that can be accessed by wheelchair users and several special toilets for persons with disabilities are provided. This special toilet meets the standards of using a seated toilet, has a wide space, is equipped with an iron handle, and a low sink. However, because the location is at the end of the Malioboro area, of course the distance will make it difficult for visitors who are in the Malioboro area.

## **7. Prices**

Regarding prices, there is no increase in tariffs for special facilities provided for persons with disabilities.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Malioboro area, which often complains of traffic jams and inaccessibility for visitors, especially for persons with disabilities, has made revitalization efforts referring to the 2016 Malioboro competition master plan. In phase 1 of the revitalization, traffic engineering, parking relocation, arrangement of pedestrian paths and controlling street vendor stalls have been carried out. Efforts to accommodate the interests of tourists with disabilities can be seen from the provision of guiding blocks, handrails, ramps, disability-friendly parking areas and accessible toilets for disabilities. However, based on research conducted, the Malioboro area is not yet fully accessible for persons with disabilities. This can be seen from the results of the check list of indicators for accessibility of tourist destinations for persons with disabilities in urban areas and cultural heritage in the Recommendation on Accessible Tourism issued by the UNWTO in 2003. Of the 7 components presented in 20 indicators, the Malioboro area only meets 10 indicators. Accessibility components that have been provided are parking areas, vertical movement, public hygiene facilities, and prices. However, the availability of parking areas, vertical



movement, public hygiene facilities still have several records. Meanwhile, the components of communication, signage, and horizontal movement do not meet accessibility indicators.

### Research Limitations

1. The short duration of the research resulted in researchers only being able to retrieve data in the form of the physical condition of the facility by means of observation but no detailed measurements were made.
2. The theory used is still limited in responding to accessibility conditions for persons with disabilities based on the presence or absence of physical facilities, and the adequacy of the physical conditions of the facilities based on observations.
3. The indicators used in this study are complete in terms of the number of elements, but each of these elements can still use additional theory that has more detailed indicators.

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