

IDENTIFICATION OF COLLECTIVE MEMORY AND SPATIAL IDENTITY IN THE GLODOK CHINATOWN AREA USING KEVIN LYNCH'S URBAN IMAGERY APPROACH

Astria Melanira¹, Yonas Prima Arga Rumbyarso², Sutaryo³

¹Architecture Program, Krisnadwipayana University, Jakarta, Indonesia

²Civil Engineering Program, Krisnadwipayana University, Jakarta, Indonesia

³Department of Regional and Urban Planning, Krisnadwipayana University, Jakarta, Indonesia

Email : astriamelanira@unkris.ac.id

ABSTRACT

As one of Jakarta's historic districts, Glodok Chinatown is a hub of social and commercial activity with a strong Chinese cultural identity. However, the spatial image of this area may be affected by changes in its visual character caused by urban expansion, land-use changes, and the pressures of modernization. By defining the components of paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks, and assessing the area's levels of visibility and legibility, this study aims to evaluate the urban spatial image of the Glodok Chinatown District using Kevin Lynch's theoretical framework. This study uses quantitative data to support its qualitative descriptive methodology. Field observations, documentation, literature reviews, area mapping, and the distribution of questionnaires to tourists were all utilized in the data collection process. The study's findings indicate that the Glodok Chinatown area still possesses a positive urban image. The most prominent and important visual indicators for visitor orientation in this area are landmarks, particularly the Dharma Bhakti Temple. In addition to well-preserved economic, culinary, and cultural activities, this neighborhood aspect also conveys a strong sense of identity through its Chinese architectural features. Meanwhile, further development is still needed for the pathways and edges components, particularly regarding internal connectivity, wayfinding systems, the quality of pedestrian paths, and the clarity of boundary lines. Meanwhile, the pathways and edges components still require improvement, particularly regarding internal connectivity, wayfinding systems, the quality of pedestrian paths, and the clarity of boundary lines.

Keywords: city image, imageability, legibility, Kevin Lynch, Glodok Chinatown

INTRODUCTION

One of Jakarta's historic districts that has played a significant role in the city's growth is Glodok Chinatown. Glodok has retained its unique physical, social, and cultural characteristics as a long-standing commercial district and hub of Chinese community activities since the 17th century. However, the visual character of this area has begun to change due to rapid urban development, shifts in land use, and the pressures of modernization, making Glodok's urban landscape an intriguing topic for systematic research.

From Kevin Lynch's (1960) perspective, the image of a city is shaped by five elements—paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks—that influence how people perceive, understand, and remember the urban environment. Spatial legibility is particularly important in historic districts like Glodok because a strong urban image can enhance users' spatial experience, aid orientation, and promote the district's identity. The significance of this research lies in Glodok's status as a cultural heritage area facing challenges of physical degradation and

declining vitality; if not properly addressed, these issues could damage the area's image and diminish its appeal as a vital part of the city's past.

Based on the discussion above, the following research topics have been formulated: (1) According to Kevin Lynch's theoretical approach, what aspects determine the urban image of the Glodok Chinatown area? (2) To what extent does the area possess a strong image as a historic district with a distinct visual identity? (3) What elements—both positive and negative—influence the quality of the area's urban image? Based on these research questions, this study aims to map and identify the five components of the urban image in the Glodok Chinatown area, evaluate the area's image based on user perceptions, and examine the variables that influence the quality of the urban image.

With the following study area boundaries: Pancoran Street to the north, Hayam Wuruk Street/Gajah Mada Street to the east, Keadilan Street to the south, and the Krukut River to the west, this study focuses on the central Glodok Chinatown area, which is administratively located in the Taman Sari neighborhood, West Jakarta. Essentially, this study examines five factors that, according to Kevin Lynch, shape a city's image and are present in this area.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach supported by quantitative data. The qualitative approach was used to identify and analyze the physical-spatial conditions of the area based on Kevin Lynch's five elements of urban image (paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks), while quantitative data served as supporting data to determine users' perceptions of the area's legibility and image through a Likert-scale questionnaire (1–5).

Time and Location

This study was conducted in June 2026 in the Glodok Chinatown area, Taman Sari Subdistrict, West Jakarta Administrative City, DKI Jakarta. The study area encompasses the core of Glodok Chinatown, bounded by Pancoran Street to the north, Hayam Wuruk Street and Gajah Mada Street to the east, Keadilan Street to the south, and the Krukut River to the west. This location was chosen because it is a historic district that still preserves its Chinese cultural character and possesses elements that shape the cityscape, making it suitable for analysis using Kevin Lynch's theoretical approach.

Data Collection Techniques

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach supported by quantitative data. Primary data were collected through field observations to identify the physical conditions of the area based on Kevin Lynch's five elements of urban image: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. Additionally, documentation was conducted using a camera to record the visual conditions of the area as supporting data for the analysis. Data collection was also conducted by distributing questionnaires to visitors in the area using a Likert scale to determine their perceptions of legibility and imageability.

Secondary data were obtained through a literature review encompassing books, scientific journals, articles, supporting documents, and other information sources related to Kevin Lynch's urban image theory and the characteristics of the Glodok Chinatown area. Secondary data served as both a theoretical foundation and a point of comparison in the analysis of the research findings.

Sampling Technique

This study employed purposive sampling, a technique for selecting a sample based on specific considerations aligned with the research objectives. The observational sample—

comprising elements of the Glodok Chinatown area—was selected based on their ability to represent the five elements of urban image according to Kevin Lynch (paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks) and their possession of relevant visual and historical value for analysis.

Meanwhile, questionnaire respondents were selected purposively based on the criterion of being visitors or users of the Glodok Chinatown area who had previously engaged in activities within the area, thereby possessing experience in recognizing the character of the space and providing assessments of the area's image. The data obtained were then analyzed descriptively to describe the condition of the city image elements as well as users' perceptions regarding the levels of imageability and legibility of the Glodok Chinatown area.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this analysis indicate that the Glodok Chinatown area continues to maintain a strong urban reputation as a historic district with distinctive Chinese cultural characteristics. The five components that shape the urban image (paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks) can still be easily identified using Kevin Lynch's theoretical framework, although the legibility of each component varies.

Analysis of Path Elements

Arterial roads, side streets, pedestrian paths, canals, and small, interconnected alleys form the street network in the Glodok Chinatown area. The main roads leading to this area are Hayam Wuruk Street, Gajah Mada Street, and Pancoran Street. Meanwhile, Kemenangan Street, Petak Sembilan Street, and Pancoran VI Street provide access to the commercial district, the culinary district, residential areas, and historic buildings in this area. These routes facilitate user orientation and form a recognizable circulation pattern.

However, observations indicate that the quality of pedestrian paths still needs improvement. Some sidewalks are used for parking or business purposes, making them less comfortable for pedestrians. Additionally, first-time visitors still have difficulty navigating the alleys and secondary paths in the area due to the lack of an integrated navigation system. These conditions indicate that while these paths have contributed to the area's identity, their comfort and spatial legibility still need to be improved.



Figure 1. Pathways in the Glodok Chinatown Area

Edge Element Analysis

The Glodok Chinatown area is defined by both man-made and natural boundaries. The Chinatown area and the modern business district are visually separated by Hayam Wuruk Street and Gajah Mada Street, while the Krukut River on the western side serves as a clear physical boundary. Compared to the eastern side, the transition into Chinatown is less distinct on the northern and southern sides because the area's boundaries are more gradual there.

This situation indicates that although the area's boundaries are fairly clear on some sides, a stronger sense of identity is still needed—especially in the transitional areas—so that tourists can more easily recognize when they are entering this historic district.



Figure 2. Boundaries of the Glodok Chinatown Area

Analysis of District Elements

The Glodok Chinatown area consists of three distinct sub-areas: (1) The Residential/Mixed-Use Area on the western side along the Krukut River, which is dominated by residential areas intermixed with small businesses and features a dense building pattern and naturally formed alleys; (2) The Chinatown Culinary District, a hub of traditional Chinese culinary activities with multilingual signage and bustling crowds during mealtimes; and (3) The E-Commerce District surrounding the Harco/ITC Glodok area. Although there is a risk of fragmentation due to incompatible modern development initiatives, the overall character of this area remains strong and unique thanks to the preservation of historic architecture and cultural activities.

Node Element Analysis

Three main nodes have been identified in this area: the convergence point of pedestrian traffic heading toward temples and markets; the forecourt of Vihara Dharma Bhakti, which serves as a spiritual and social hub and reaches its peak bustle during the Chinese New Year and Cap Go Meh celebrations; and the Glodok Plaza area, which connects this district to the TransJakarta stop on Jalan Gajah Mada as a gateway to public transportation—these are the three main nodes identified in this district. The northern, western, southern, eastern, and inner parts of this area are also filled with various local-scale intersections. Due to the high volume of traffic, the nodes in this area are generally easily recognizable, while some of the intersections within it still lack distinctive physical features.



Figure 3. Glodok Chinatown Area Nodes

Landmark Analysis

The image of the Glodok Chinatown area is primarily shaped by various landmarks. The main landmark is the Dharma Bhakti Temple due to its architectural style, historical significance, and high visibility. This building serves as a primary orientation point for both local residents and visitors, in addition to its function as a place of worship.

The presence of these historic landmarks demonstrates how well the visual character of Glodok Chinatown has been preserved. These landmarks not only serve as waypoints but also support the community's collective memory of the history and development of this area as the center of Jakarta's Chinese community.



Figure 4. Landmarks of the Glodok Chinatown Area

Respondent Characteristics

Perception data was collected from 30 respondents who visited the area. By age, the majority of respondents were in the 20–30 age group (69%), followed by the 31–40 age group (17.2%) and those under 20 (13.8%), indicating a predominance of young adults such as college students or young professionals. Based on visit status, the majority of respondents were tourists or general visitors (72.4%), followed by local residents (17.2%), while workers/merchants and researchers/students made up a small proportion. Based on visit frequency, the distribution was relatively even among first-time visitors, those who had visited 2–5 times, and those who had visited more than 7 times (each accounting for approximately 32.1%), indicating that the area appeals to both new and regular visitors.

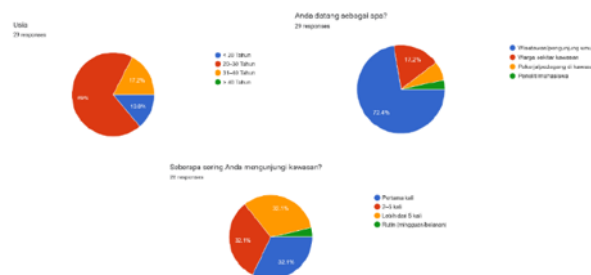


Figure 5. Age and Visit Frequency Diagram for Glodok Chinatown

User Perceptions of Urban Image Elements

The “path” aspect is considered very easy to recognize due to the network of main roads connecting various activity centers in the area. However, other respondents highlighted that the condition of pedestrian paths and the lack of directional signs remain obstacles to orientation, especially for first-time visitors. Regarding the “Edge” component, respondents stated that it is fairly easy to recognize the area’s boundaries along the sides bordering the river and the main highway. However, because changes in visual character are not yet clearly visible, the boundaries along some transitional paths feel less distinct.

The “District” element received positive evaluations thanks to the presence of places of worship, commercial establishments, culinary areas, and buildings that distinctly reflect Chinese culture. Meanwhile, the “Node” element is viewed as a hub of activity that facilitates orientation, particularly around the Dharma Bhakti Temple and Petak Sembilan. Because the presence of historic buildings creates a strong visual character that is immediately recognizable to tourists, the “landmark” element received the highest rating.

Analysis of the Area’s Legibility and Imageability

The Glodok Chinatown area has a high level of visual memorability, based on the findings of observations and respondents’ opinions. This is evidenced by the area’s ability to create a strong visual impression through its historic buildings, temples, rows of traditional warehouses, culinary scene, and various ongoing cultural events. Both the general public and

visitors can quickly recognize and recall Glodok Chinatown thanks to its distinctive visual characteristics.

Meanwhile, the area's legibility is rated as good because most users can recognize its spatial layout thanks to the network of main roads, activity centers, and monuments scattered throughout the area. The study's results indicate that there are still several aspects that need improvement, including the wayfinding system, information boards, the layout of pedestrian paths, and the design of public spaces to facilitate visitor orientation.

Analysis of Sense of Place

The relationship between the physical characteristics of the Glodok Chinatown area and its ongoing social and cultural activities forms the concept of "sense of place." Visitors can directly experience the character of this area through the unique spatial experience created by the presence of temples, Chinese-style buildings, traditional markets, and culinary districts.

According to research, the community's emotional bond to a place is strengthened through commercial activities, cultural events, and community interactions. As a result, Glodok Chinatown is recognized not only as a physical location but also as a cultural district that holds social and historical significance for its surrounding neighborhood. This demonstrates that even though the area has undergone physical changes due to modernization, its sense of place remains intact.



Figure 6. The Glodok Chinatown Gate and Pancoran Chinatown Point

Analysis of Collective Memory

Historic buildings, places of worship, traditional trade practices, and cultural events in the Glodok Chinatown area—which have been taking place for generations—all reflect the community's collective memory. These characteristics reinforce Jakarta's reputation as one of the oldest Chinatowns in Indonesia while also serving as markers of the historical development of the Chinese community.



Figure 7. Dharma Bhakti Temple

The historic buildings, places of worship, traditional trade practices, and cultural events in the Glodok Chinatown area—which have been taking place for generations—all reflect the community’s collective memory. These characteristics reinforce Jakarta’s reputation as one of the oldest Chinatowns in Indonesia and serve as markers of the Chinese community’s historical development.



Figure 8. Glodok Petak Enam Market

CONCLUSIONS

Glodok Chinatown in Jakarta still possesses a strong urban image as a historic district with a distinctive Chinese cultural identity, according to the findings of a study that used Kevin Lynch’s theoretical approach to analyze the area’s urban image. Paths, boundaries, districts, nodes, and landmarks—the five components that shape the urban image—remain easily recognizable and contribute to the spatial organization of the area, helping its users navigate the surrounding environment.

Although the wayfinding system and pedestrian paths still require improvement, the “paths” feature indicates a circulation network capable of connecting several key activities within the area. While the boundaries on the north and south sides remain relatively vague, the “edge” aspect has created fairly clear boundaries for the area, particularly on the east and west sides. The presence of residential, commercial, and culinary districts that preserve Chinatown’s uniqueness lends a distinctive visual character to the “area” element. In addition, “landmarks,” particularly the Dharma Bhakti Temple, serve as the most prominent visual markers that reinforce the area’s image, while “nodes” function as centers of activity and orientation.

The presence of historic buildings, cultural events, and well-preserved visual characteristics all contribute to the high overall image of the Glodok Chinatown area. Meanwhile, the area’s legibility is rated as good, but there is still room for improvement in terms of spatial legibility through the construction of pedestrian paths, the provision of an area information system, and the enhancement of visitor orientation. The findings of this study indicate that Kevin Lynch’s theory is a useful method for determining spatial character and assessing the quality of a historic area’s image.

REFERENCES

- Aulia, A. C. R., Arief, R. B., & Fitriyana, L. (2026). ANALISIS STABILITAS LERENG TUBUH TANGGUL SUNGAI WULAN DI RUAS MIJEN-DEMAK. *Presisi: Jurnal Teknologi Rekayasa dan Inovasi Teknik*, 1(3), 168-190.
- Farhandian, D. E., Fikri, A. R., Poedjiastoeti, H., & Fitriyana, L. (2026). Evaluation of The Performance of The Terboyo Retention Pond in Flood Control Using The Hec-Ras 2d Simulation Approach. *Technema: Journal of Intelligent Engineering and Computing*, 1(3), 406-416.
- Fitriyana, L., Zamroni, E., Sholikhah, N., & Rochim, A. (2026). Menguji Faktor dalam Negative Social Comparison: Studi Confirmatory Factor Analysis pada Indikator Penilaian Peringkat, Keraguan Diri, Iri Hati Malisus, Perasaan Inferioritas, Konsumsi

- Media Sosial Komparatif, Dinamika Sabotase Interpersonal. *EDUCARE: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Kesehatan*, 4(1), 674-687.
- Saputra, A. P., Ahyar, M. R., & Fitriyana, L. (2026). The Effect of Rice Field Snail Shell Powder Addition as a Fine Aggregate Substitution Material in Concrete Production. *Technema: Journal of Intelligent Engineering and Computing*, 1(3), 330-344.
- Hendriyansyah, I. A., Mustafiq, M. M., Soedarsono, S., & Fitriyana, L. (2026). The Effect of Stabilizing the California Bearing Ratio (CBR) and Unconfined Compression Strength (UCS) of Clay Soil Using Fly Ash and Slacked Lime. *Technema: Journal of Intelligent Engineering and Computing*, 1(3), 244-257.
- Muchyyidin, M. F., Hanan, N. R., Sulistyo, J. A., & Fitriyana, L. (2026). An Experimental Study on the Use of Teak Wood Ash and Bengawan Solo Sand as Filler Additives in Asphalt Concrete–Wearing Course (AC-WC). *Technema: Journal of Intelligent Engineering and Computing*, 1(3), 96-114.
- Farrel, M. E., Zuda, D. S., Sulistyo, J. A., & Fitriyana, L. (2026). Analysis of Asphalt Concrete Wearing Course (AC-WC) with the Addition of Bodri River Sand and Styrene-Butadiene Rubber (SBR) for Road Pavements. *Technema: Journal of Intelligent Engineering and Computing*, 1(3), 01-13.
- Pratama, I. N., Ramli, M. R., Antonius, A., & Fitriyana, L. (2026). Structural Feasibility Analysis of PT Phapros Building Subjected to Additional Machinery Loads. *International Journal of Applied Research and Innovation*, 1(3), 137-147.
- Justitia, M. S. P., Fadil, T. E., Pratikso, P., & Fitriyana, L. (2026). Pengaruh Siklus Beban Gempa Berulang terhadap Perilaku Tanah yang Diperkuat Geosintetik. *Journal of Engineering and Applied Technology*, 2(1), 239-248.
- Trisnadyani, N., Afiatillah, N. M., & Fitriyana, L. (2026). Evaluasi Kinerja Penanggulangan Kelongsoran Lereng pada Timbunan Tinggi Menggunakan Bronjong Berbasis Analisis Plaxis V24. 3.0: Studi Kasus Candisari, Kota Semarang. *Journal of Engineering and Applied Technology*, 2(1), 206-218.
- Danendra, D. I. S., Pratikso, H., & Fitriyana, L. (2026). Analisis Korelasi Nilai CBR Tanah Laboratorium Dengan Pengukuran DCP Lapangan Pada Tanah Dasar (Subgrade)(Studi Kasus Kawasan BSB Kota Semarang). *TEKNOSIAR*, 20(1), 75-84.
- Triyono, A., Nafi, A. S., & Fitriyana, L. (2026). The Effect of Adding Lime And Rice Husk Ash on The Cbr Value of Expansive Soil in The Purwodadi Area, Grobogan Regency, Central Java. *Technema: Journal of Intelligent Engineering and Computing*, 1(1), 75-87.
- PSP, A. W., Pambudi, A. P., Soedarsono, S., & Fitriyana, L. (2026). Perencanaan Ulang Struktur Bawah Gedung dengan Fondasi Tiang Pancang: Studi Kasus Proyek Pembangunan Rumah Susun Pekerja Industri Batang III JTGRSN21-03. *Journal of Engineering and Applied Technology*, 2(1), 135-144.