

## **A Case Study on Emotion Types of Graffiti Writers in Jogging Paths, Sri Lanka**

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**Abstract:** “The use of graffiti as a source of data has spread beyond studies of human sexuality and urban youth” and this study focused on emotion types of graffiti writers in Mahara Jogging Path (MJP). The main sources of data collected through pictorial analysis and observations from the graffiti along the MJP. The study was carried out in October, 2014 and 93 graffiti were recorded. There were three major categories found among the Graffiti in MJP viz. (1). drawn by jogging path authorities, (2). drawn by jogging path visitors and (3). drawn by jogging path sellers. 41.94%, 55.91% and 2.15% of graffiti were drawn by jogging path authorities, jogging path visitors and jogging path sellers respectively. Majority of emotions were expressed by the drawing of visitors (55.91%). Study demonstrated that 92% of the graffiti writers had happy emotions. 4% of graffiti accentuated an emotion of anger and 2% of graffiti revealed moody and confused emotions. However, the amenity and the maintenance of the park were disturbed due to graffiti drawings.

**Keywords-** Emotion Types, Graffiti, Graffiti Writers, Jogging Paths.

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Graffiti; which are “any wall writing or pictures or symbols or markings of any kind on any surface anywhere no matter what the motivation of the writer” (Gadsby, 1995) have been surrounded most of the environment (ibid.) regardless the surrounding is private or public. And many scholars have been interpreted their aspects on graffiti as "a form of communication that is both personal and free of everyday social restraints that normally prevent people from giving uninhibited reign to their thoughts" (Abel & Buckley, 1977; Gadsby, 1995). Hence, graffiti either in public or private places must be a mode of communication which reveal the emotions of the graffiti writers as cited by Schwartz & Dovidio in 1984. As public graffiti [which constitute anonymous inscriptions found on public spaces, including the sides of buildings, transit facilities, and fences (Rodriguez & Clair, 2009)] graffiti in jogging paths should be a source of identifying the emotions of graffiti writers. Now days, not only in Europe but also in most of the continents jogging have been popularized as an outdoor recreational activity in means of improving health and wellbeing. Under the present government policy, several projects are launched to improve health and wellbeing of Sri Lankan citizens. Jogging paths in Sri Lanka is also one of the projects that emerged to enhance the health and wellbeing. In earlier period, the trendiest jogging track in Sri Lanka was the Galle Face Green. Soon after, jogging was spread to Kiribathkumbura in Kandy, Diyawanna Oya close to the Parliament and to Independence Square in Colombo 07, Oruthota, Gampaha and Mahara. Still policies are in progress to build jogging tracks in several other selected cities and towns in Sri Lanka. However, these all jogging tracks are widely important venues which emphasize the emotions of the jogging path visitors as these parks are being used not only by the visitors who are employing as sedentary workers but also being used by many other types of visitors such as graffiti writers.

Previous research on graffiti and graffiti writers could be found out under nine approaches viz., cultural, gendered, linguistic, folkloric, quantitative, aesthetic, motivational, preventative and popularization (Gadsby, 1995). Considering graffiti as a representation of a specific community or ethnic group cultural approach of graffiti studies were driven (ibid.). According to Gadsby (1995) the gendered approach rarely seemed to look for similarities between genders but rather focused on the differences while linguistic approach was based on the language used in each graffiti and the way the writer employed that language. Folklore approach used to collect graffiti as accurately as possible. And the quantitative approach was provided little or no contextual information and usually the researchers were studying differences in graffiti based on content or gender or some other measurable quality. Aesthetic analysis looked at the artistic qualities of graffiti. Motivational approach was examining the mind of the individual writing the graffiti, rather than an entire culture or community, then look for patterns between all writers to find a common denominator. The preventative approach entailed research into which surfaces discouraged people from writing graffiti and popularization approach was a collection of graffiti provided to entertain the reader.

Using the motivational approach on graffiti, this exploratory case study were conducted to identify the types of emotions of jogging path graffiti writers who are one of the jogging path visitors in Sri Lanka. The

study will contribute the literature on graffiti under motivational approach while providing an understanding of the emotion types of jogging path sketch writers in Sri Lanka.

## II. METHODS AND MATERIALS

Mahara jogging path (See Figure 1) were purposively selected as the study area as it was a recently implemented project in a near urban area (Explore Gampaha, n.d.). Thus, the emotions types revealed by data could be considered as more contemporary as this study was further social oriented. This case study was conducted using the exploratory approach during a long week end in October, 2014 using photographs and participant observation. Snapshots on 232 bench marks, thirty five wooden notices, six monuments, two sales notices along the jogging path and the wooden bridge close to the jogging path (which will be addressed as *objects* henceforth) were analyzed to find out the emotions types of the graffiti writing jogging path visitors. Bench marks from Balummahara end of the jogging path was labeled as BM1, BM2 ... and BM 232 in a 'Z' style. The 232 bench marks were divided into 12 intervals with a class range of 19 (such as BM1- BM20, BM21- BM40, BM41- BM60... and BM221<) with the aim of analyzing the frequency of dispersal of sketch drawings. Time for the duration of 7.00a.m to 6.00p.m were considered for observations to further justify this study. 34 young couples and 42 joggers and walkers were observed during the study in order to confirm the validity of data. Pictorial analysis and content analysis were led to findings in the study.

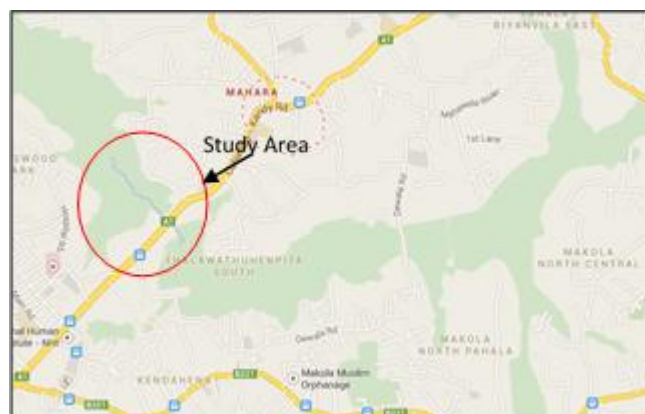


Figure 1: Study Area

Source: google maps, 2014.

Identified pictorials on graffiti of jogging path visitors were analyzed to categorize their different types of emotions. There are clearly many different types of emotions; they all have some common characteristics (Hall, 1998). Based on those common characteristics, different types of emotions were categorized as happy, sad, angry and other feelings. Psychological scientists stated that distinct emotion like joy, sadness, anger, and fear influence thought, decision making, and actions (Bechara, Damasio, & Damasio, 2000; Bower, 1991; Clore, Schwarz, & Conway, 1994; Fredrickson, 2000; Lerner & Keltner, 2000). Graffiti which emphasized a sense of calm, cheerful, confident, delighted, excited, glad, loved, proud, relaxed, satisfied and silly etc. were categorized into happy. Graffiti which emphasized a sense of ashamed, awful, disappointed, discouraged, gloomy, hurt, lonely, miserable and sorry etc. were categorized into sad while the feelings such as annoyed, bugged, destructive, frustrated and violent etc. were categorized into angry. And the feelings such as afraid, anxious, ashamed, bored, curious and jealous etc. were considered as other feelings.

## III. FINDINGS

After analyzing the snapshots on 232 bench marks, 35 wooden notices, 06 monuments, 02 sales notices along the jogging path and the snapshots of the wooden bridge close to the jogging path, 93 graffiti were recorded. Among 93 graffiti, three major categories of graffiti were found viz., 1. graffiti drawn by jogging path authorities, 2. graffiti drawn by jogging path visitors and 3. graffiti drawn by jogging path sellers.

Thirty nine graffiti drawn on objects by jogging path authorities were able to found under 05 extents such as; 1. graffiti on rules and regulations, 2. graffiti on ensuring the security of the venue, 3. graffiti on providing health education, 4. graffiti on ensuring environment protection and 5. graffiti on providing information about the venue distances. Among 39, most of the graffiti were on providing information about the venue distances while the least number were on graffiti which drawn to ensure the security of the venue. There were 52 graffiti which drawn by jogging path visitors in expressing their relationships and conveying their

personal attitudes. Yet, it was found that graffiti of visitors had made a huge impact in Mahara Jogging Path more than the drawings of jogging track authorities.

And the highest number of graffiti by visitors revealed their relationship status. There were only two graffiti drawn by sellers of the jogging path with the intention of informing the prices of their selling items (See Figure 2).

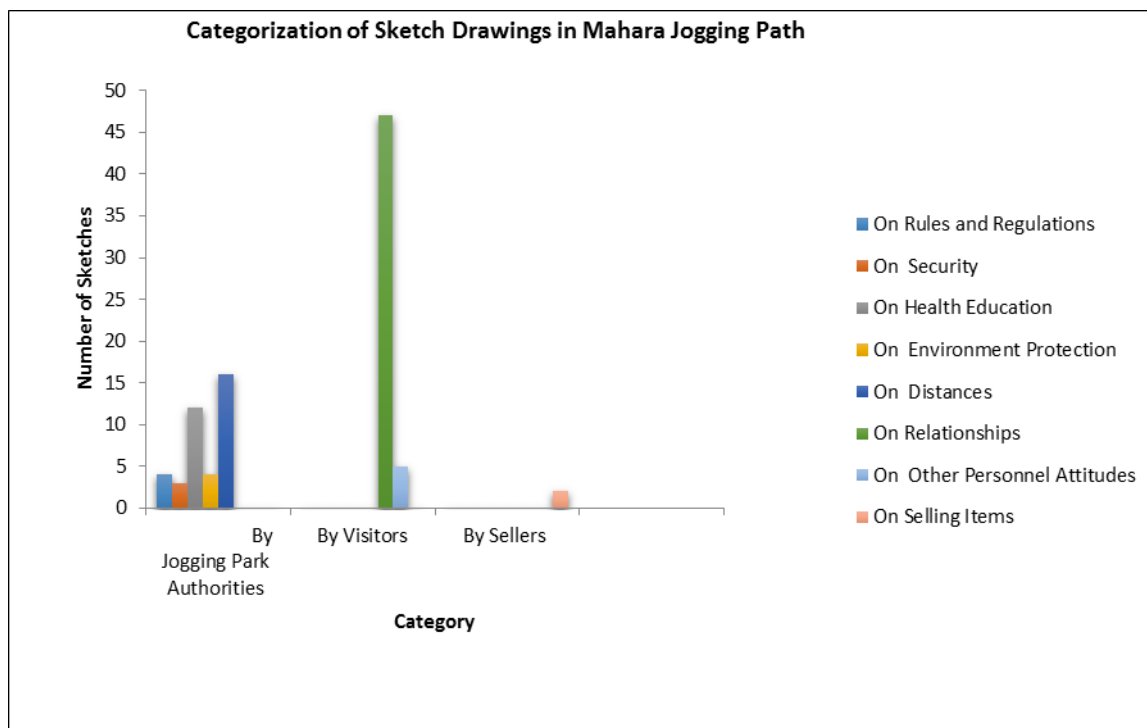


Figure 02: Categorization of Graffiti in Mahara Jogging Path  
Source: Survey Data, 2014

Graffiti of jogging path visitors were spotted on three monuments, on the wooden bridge and on 81 bench marks from BM19 to BM100. Three monuments with sketches and the wooden bridge also were in between the BM19 and BM100 which confirmed that the most popular and the most motivated area for graffiti drawing was the zone between BM19 and BM100. Dispersal of the sketch drawings between BM19 to BM100 were found as per in the table 01.

Class Range of Bench Marks	Number of Sketches
BM1- BM20	01 (Sketch was on BM19)
BM21- BM40	08
BM41- BM60	29
BM61- BM80	12
BM81- BM100	02
BM101- BM120	NIL
BM121- BM140	NIL
BM141- BM160	NIL
BM161- BM180	NIL
BM181- BM200	NIL
BM201- BM220	NIL
BM221<	NIL

Source: Survey Data, 2014

The most motivated area of graffiti drawers was in between BM41 and BM60 and the lion's portion of those graffiti/sketches (48) revealed happy emotions (See Table 02).

Happy		Sad		Angry		Other Feelings	
Loved	47	Lonely	01	Bugged	02	Moody or Confused	01
Cheerful	01						

Source: Survey Data, 2014.

There were 47 sketches on relationships that revealed loved emotions while there was another sketch on a cheerful feeling within BM61- BM80. Out of 48 happy emotions 29 feelings on love was found in between BM41 and BM60. A sketch on a lonely feeling within BM61- BM80 could be identified under the sad emotions category while 02 (BM81- BM100) emotions on angry and other one emotion were identified as another feeling in between BM1- BM20 (See Figure 03).

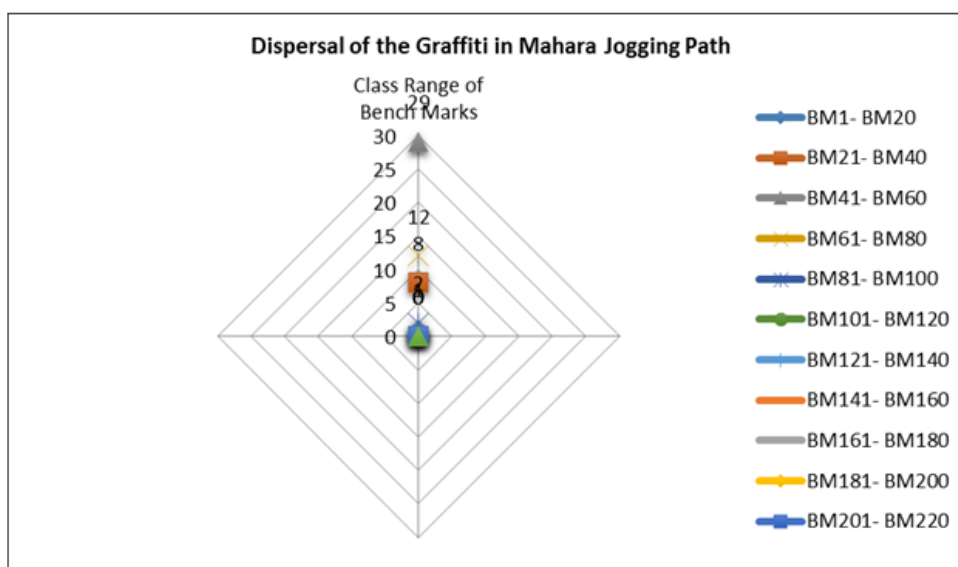


Figure 03: Dispersal of the Sketch Drawings in Mahara Jogging Path  
Source: Survey Data, 2014

As per the results of pictorial analysis on graffiti by visitors, most of the sketch writers were having happy emotions. It was 92% out of the identified 52 drawings by the visitors (See Figure 03). 4% of sketch drawings accentuated an emotion of anger while the rest highlighted emotions such as sadness and moody or confused.

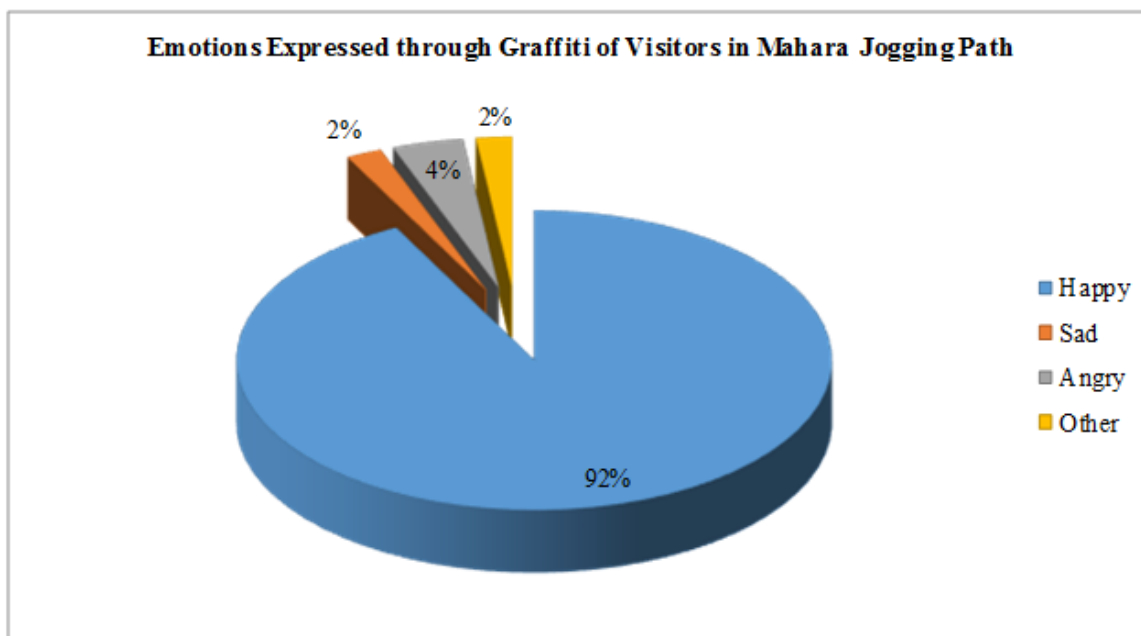


Figure 04: Percentage of Emotions Expressed through Sketch Drawings in Mahara Jogging Path  
Source: Survey Data, 2014

Both the pictorial analysis and the content analysis of observations revealed that majority of the visitors who drew sketches were youth. Through observations, it could be found out that the venues which young couples flocked around were the same places where sketches were spotted. There were 232 bench marks and majority of the young couples gathered in between BM41- BM60 where the highest number of sketches could be found. Observations, confirmed that neither the joggers nor the families on walking tried to draw on objects. So, it was recognized that other visitors such as lovers and social groups other than joggers were motivated to draw sketches on the objects of the parks within the area between BM19 – BM100.

Even though the results highlight that majority of the sketch drawing visitors were happy according to the analysis on graffiti, proactive responders of the study that graffiti of visitors destroy the facilities and amenity of the jogging path.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Majority of the graffiti writers were having happy emotions while the least number of sketch drawing visitors had sad and other emotions within the BM19 – BM100 area of the Mahara jogging path. Yet, there is a huge disturbance arising towards the amenity and maintenance of the jogging path. Due to the sketches written on objects such as jogging path monuments, wooden bridge, bench marks and wooden notice boards etc., the facilities and the amenity of the jogging path were being destroyed. It highlights that the response of the visitors towards respecting and protecting public assets are very low. A policy or educating programmes should be introduced to increase the friendly and respective use of jogging paths by relevant authorities while strategically providing opportunities for graffiti drawers to reveal their emotions.

#### **Acknowledgements**

An acknowledgement section may be presented after the conclusion, if desired.

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