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## Significance of Landmarks in the Local Government Units of Sultan Kudarat: Education Perspective

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the man-made landmarks in the province of Sultan Kudarat and their significance to the towns and cities of the province, as well as to discover how these landmarks represent and promote the places in different aspects. A qualitative research design particularly grounded theory, and semi-structured interviews were administered in gathering the data from the selected Local Government Unit employees in the municipalities of Lambayong Isulan, and Tacurong City. Simple narrative analysis was used in analyzing the data gathered from the interview conducted and served as the basis for creating a theory. The study developed Cadarian: The Theory of Place Identity. This theory explains that landmarks are capable of creating an identity and serve as a representation that can bring a positive image to the passer-by or tourist of the place and entice them to visit. This will be beneficial in promoting the place making it known and elevating the place's economy. Overall, landmarks are important in various ways. They can serve as a marker to guide travelers to their desired destinations, serve as an inspiration for artists and other locales to promote their own identities, serve as cultural symbols to represent the local population, honor a person, manage traffic, and draw tourists to boost the local economy. We conclude that landmarks, whether they are man-made or natural, create a lot of possibilities for the area, particularly in tourism, and are a sign of progress.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The term landmark was derived from the old English landmearc which means “boundary” and landgemirce, which pertains to “boundary, limit, and frontier”. Landmarks are fascinating objects with unique features such as the design and architecture, size, and material used which make them the most patent and attractive among the rest of the surroundings (Morgan, 2019). Landmarks can be anything (Yun, 2019); even an intersection that most people walk is considered a landmark.

Landmarks are facets of a landscape or town that can be seen and recognized from a distance, particularly one that allows someone to determine their location. A community's landmarks play a vital role in it. It is constructed to establish a precise location, serve as a memorial to honor a person, a group, or an occasion, or provide information about a particular culture. Moreover, landmarks are prominent objects in the environment, they form cognitive anchors, markers, and marks for a reference point. In addition to that, landmarks such as traffic lights, churches, and monuments have the potential to help and assist travelers with navigation tasks (Burnett et al., 2001).

Landmarks are important in the local because it reflects the heritages, cultures, and tradition. Thus, Presidential Decree. 1505, is created, this law prohibited the unauthorized modification, alliteration, repair, and destruction of natural features of all national shrines, monuments, landmarks, and other important historic edifices.

Just like any other province in the Philippines, the province of Sultan Kudarat also has landmarks natural and man-made which are significant to the province such as the largest and most opulent provincial capital building in Asia and the entire nation is in Sultan Kudarat province, not only that, the province is also home to several eco-tourism hotspots, including untouched forests, picturesque mountains, undiscovered beaches, massive waterfalls, and mysterious caverns (Mangaoang & Flores, 2019). In the past years many landmarks have been built in the province however, many people are not aware of the significance of these landmarks.

There are few studies discussing the influence of landmarks on a place thus, this study is focused on man-made landmarks and will address the perceived gap as to why landmarks are an important element in developing communities such as the province of Sultan Kudarat and create new learnings about its influence.

The overall focus of this study is to discover the significance of landmarks in the province of Sultan Kudarat. Further, to explore more on the value of these objects on how they feature the towns and the province itself.

## 2. METHODS

This study utilized qualitative research design (Tomaszewski et al., 2020; de Villiers et al., 2022; Wagenaar et al., 2022), particularly the grounded theory approach, where the information is generated from the key informants who shared their insights and perceptions about landmarks. With the face-to-face interview, we came up with a narrative analysis until such a theory was generated.

### 2.1. Participant of the Study

The participants in the study were the people employed in LGU who know landmarks in the province of Sultan Kudarat. There were nine (9) participants in the study who were selected from the municipality of Lambayong, Isulan, and the city of Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat,

Philippines. The participants are prominent residents for more than 30 years and serve as public servants or government employees of the said places.

## 2.2. Data Gathering Instrument

The semi-structured interview questionnaire was the instrument used to gather the information. The questionnaire is composed of two (2) parts, the first part of the interview questionnaire was the demographic profile of the participants for discussion purposes, and the second part was composed of guide questions as well as follow-up questions to deduce information from the participants.

## 2.3. Data Gathering Procedure

To gather the information needed, we chose participants from three municipalities and cities in the province of Sultan Kudarat, namely; Lambayong, Isulan, and Tacurong City, and set a semi-structured interview. The chosen participants were part of their organizations and worked for more or less thirty (30) years.

This allowed us to consolidate information, thoughts, ideas, and feelings regarding the research problem. Moreover, to obtain depth information from the participants, we asked clarifying or follow-up questions and used mobile phones to record the interview to transcript the data thoroughly. The flow of the interview procedure has been supplied by the interview questions

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. Participants' Views on Man-made Landmarks

**Theme 1. Progress.** Landmark in their environment has a commendable influence in building their place. Landmarks are objects in the environment with a unique feature that guides travelers to locate their desired places and create a positive view of the environment they are in. All participants agree with the idea that landmarks are a sign of progress in their place.

**Theme 2. Place representation.** It is undeniable that landmarks play an important role in making the location known to travelers. The same was true in the idea that landmarks can be a beacon in which culture and traditions are preserved and represented through the help of landmarks. Participants suggest that in representing the place, there must be representation such as landmarks.

### 3.2. Landmarks Impact on Tourism and Economic Growth

#### **Theme 1. Landmarks and Tourism.**

Landmarks can become attractions depending on the structural design of that specific landmark. We found out that landmarks open a lot of opportunities in the aspect of business and tourism in which both the people and the place can benefit. Participants from Lambayong stated that business has been booming since the making of the New Municipal Hall of Lambayong because many people from different places are enticed to visit the municipality to witness the beauty of the infrastructure thus, landmarks are door opener for economic growth of the places in general.

### 3.3. The General Significance of Landmarks

#### **Theme 1. Significance of Landmark.**

There are different kinds of usage of landmarks depending on their design or how landmarks are designed. Some landmarks might be useful in negating traffic, geolocation,

tourism, monuments, or simply a representation of a place. According to the participants, this is why landmarks are unique objects in the environment as they can play different roles. Although they differ in design or function in general, they are all the same in creating the identity of a place.

### **3.4. Theory Generated from the Study**

We developed **Cadarian: The Theory of Place Identity**. The identity of a place is important for familiarization, especially if you are new to it. To have an identity, a place must have a unique infrastructure with unique features that separate it from the environment and create its own identity. This theory suggests that landmarks are able to create an identity of a place.

The participant suggested that landmarks are the key promoter in their place that enables them to start a new project that represents their places, it is also a representation of the place which is why it is important. It also serves as directions that aid travelers in locating their desired places, though it might not always be useful for familiarization, with the growth of technologies a place must have representations to be identified by artificial intelligence, thus landmarks are key promoters of creating the identity of a place to be represented and to be used in geophysical navigation.

The identity of a place is not only limited to infrastructure landmarks, other kinds of landmarks such as natural landmarks and attractions are capable of creating the identity of a place, and also, they must possess other characteristics that separate them in the environment and are easy to identify because of its uniqueness and intricate design. With this characteristic, it can create the identity of a place and a representation that people can recognize.

The core insights of the participants enabled us to identify the two kinds of place identities: good and bad. This theory states that a bad identity is what makes the place unknown and often disregarded because people are enticed by an awful environment, which makes them uninterested in knowing the place.

So, to create a good identity, a place must have unique features, a good location, a safe environment, and other differences that separate it from the rest of the environment, thus creating a good identity. Another way to create an identity is that there must be infrastructure or attractions in those places that reveal the place's background or tell a story about it to create connections between the place and travelers because travelers are not only visiting the place to fill their eyes, but they are also interested to know the history of a place. Furthermore, people have also a significant role in the creation of place identities because they are the ones who promote those identities and can connect directly with travelers and introduce the identity of a place. In such a category the identity of a place is secured and can be known.

Place identity is linked to the identity we know, such as people's identity, to connect with someone, you must first identify their name, character, looks, and often how they communicate. A place's identity must also have its name, quality, and story to tell to be able to create a good one and to be used as information about the place.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

Landmarks are the objects or infrastructures that are seen along the road, it has distinct feature and can be recognized from far away, this infrastructure are usually built with huge structures and designed with unique features that separate it from the surroundings and are easily recognized. It has many uses depending on how it is designed and constructed they are

used in navigation, tourism, economy, to negate traffic, and boundary of a place. And also, landmarks are representations of a place that people can recognize.

Landmarks are very useful in navigation, especially to travelers who are new to the environment, they can use landmarks as indicators to navigate their desired location in an unfamiliar place, also landmarks serve as a guide in navigation and a tool in familiarization thus, creating a positive view in the environment. With the growth of technology, inventions such as geophysical navigation use landmarks as their key reference in creating digital navigation, and with this progress landmarks can aid people in navigating much faster.

In tourism, landmarks play an important role because they entice tourist to come to the place thus, creating opportunities for the local people to start their businesses that will also help the local economy to grow. Also, landmarks with distinct characteristics and intricate designs are more likely to be visited because tourists are invested in witnessing the work of art.

Moreover, each place has a history, and the history then is preserved through the use of landmarks. One of the key roles of landmarks is their ability to create the identity of a place and represent the place because landmarks have stories on how a place strives to be what it is today. Moreover, landmarks inspire and give joy to people, especially to the people of the place as they see the progress in their place.

Ultimately, landmarks are advantageous to a community and people in general because they promote positive perceptions of a place and give the area a pleasant outlook. Moreover, landmarks are utilized to represent a location's development.

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## 6. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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