The Landmark Aspect of Distinctiveness Toward The Religious Tourism In Langkat District

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Abstract. Landmark is one aspect of distinctiveness that plays a role in building the image of a place to be easily recognized. Landmark can be religious tourism destinations that have distinctiveness, including the existence of iconic religion buildings. The visually attractive iconic building plays a vital role in promoting the city so that it attracts visitors to come. Landmark aspects include easy to see, easy to identify, contrast with the environment, and accessibility that will always be remembered by tourists. This study aims to examine these four elements of religious tourism in Langkat district. This research uses a mixed-method by conducting field observations and in-depth interviews to collect qualitative data and quantitative data by distributing questionnaires to investigate perceptions of residents. The results showed that easy to identify, contrast and accessibility in religious tourism as a landmark would give memory and impression to local people about the place.

1. Introduction
The tourism sector has a significant impact on improving the economy of the community which can enhance the welfare of local people and enhances the dignity of the city which can increase the value of the city's investment [1]. The experts suggested various types of tourism [2] [3]. The kinds of tourism consist of cultural tourism, maritime tourism, nature tourism, Agritourism or agrotourism, rush tourism, and pilgrimage tourism/religious tourism [4]. Religious tourism is a travel activity that focuses on visiting religion sites, on consolidating certain religions, and developments that refer to spiritual [5]. Tourism attracts visitors not only for religious reasons but also in terms of the value of history and architecture [6]. Religious tourism includes pilgrimage visits, especially visits religious centers such as Mosques, Churches, Temples, Vihara, K lenteng, and others [7].

The variety of tourist destinations causes visitors to get many choices that lead to competition between quite tight tourist destinations. Therefore, a tourism area must have a distinctiveness that shows the identity of the place to attract visitors. Distinctiveness refers to a different object from other sites [8]. Distinctiveness is the desire to maintain diversity or uniqueness associated with positive perceptions of the characteristics of a place that is different from other regions in the city [9]. The Distinctiveness of tourism includes landmarks (icons) [8] [9] [10]. A place can be said to be a landmark when it is easily seen, easily identified, in contrast to the environment and accessibility [10].

Langkat Regency has great religious tourism potential because of the diversity of religions and beliefs held by its inhabitants. Many found landmarks that have history and have been influenced by
local culture, making it unique religious tourism. Therefore, this study aimed to examine the four elements of the landmarks and determines the appropriate religious tourism to be a landmark in Langkat. This finding will show landmark effects on visitor experience and city perceptions so that it raises the feeling of wanting to return / interest to come to the religious tourism in Langkat Regency.

2. Religious Tourism
Religious tourism is part of the tourism industry in which one is traveling individually or in groups for pilgrimage, missionary, or recreation [11]. This excess, for example in terms of history, their myths and legends about the place, or the uniqueness and excellence of its architecture. Moreover, religious tourism is a type of tourism-related to religion, history, customs, and beliefs people or groups in society [12]. Religious tourism refers to visits to relevant places of faith or pilgrimage site where visitors are aiming to meet the needs of spiritual and recreational needs [7].

Visitors regarded as a pilgrim when a trip has a religious character exclusive to the motivation for the fulfillment of spiritual or religious [13]. In this case, religion tourism visitors have a religious motive and desire to tourism [14], such as education, knowledge, spiritual awareness, and recreation [15]. Also, religious tourism includes visits to religious tourism destinations, such as places of worship to mosques, cathedrals, temples, and others [16]. Apart from visiting religious sites, religious tourism can also include attending religious events, cultural events, exhibitions, and sacred music events [17]. Based on the explanation, religious tourism can consist of two main elements: motivation and tourist destinations. The motivation and tourist destinations affect visitor experience and perceptions of tourist attractions, so giving rise to a feeling of wanting to return/be interested in coming to the religious tourism in Langkat Regency.

3. Landmark
Landmark/marker is one of the elements that form the image and identity of the tourism environment [18]. Landmark play an essential role in representing tourist attractions because they symbolize the image and personality of the place [19]. Landmark can be either a physical object such as a building, bookmark, store, and mountain [10]. Landmark has unique characteristics that distinguish them from other places in the region [10]. Marker is a vertical element that direction and visible from a distance [9]. Therefore, it can use as an identity guide for increasing the value of a trip to one place.

Physical objects such as building, bookmark, store, and mountain can be a landmark [10]. In Image of the City, the marker is elements in a vertical form that are seen remotely by observers and serve as a guide in finding a way [10]. By contrast from the background, different shapes and spatial location advantage, the landmark may be more identifiable [10]. Landmark can act as a marker for tourists when they have arrived at a distant place. In this study, a landmark known as the element visible and recognizable from a distance or in any area and different from the environment [5].

The ease of seeing landmarks will show the existence of objects in an environment that will be known by people. The explicit form will make it easier for the observer to identify the marker in a shape that is familiar to the observer or simple to process in his mind. Something can be said to contrast when there are one or several significant differences between the objects and the environment. Variations that occur can be in the form of differences in scale, material, shape, etc. to produce different figures that contrast with the background but also in harmony with the surroundings. Contextuality between landmarks and the environment must also be maintained to maintain the continuity of the image and identity. Accessibility is also a landmark feature that is easily accessible from several routes. Based on theoretical analysis, in determining the landmark elements in religious tourism, there are four elements: easy to see, can be recognized, contrast with the environment, and have easy accessibility (Table 1). The existence of these four elements in a destination religious tourism will provide a pleasant experience for visitors and creates a feeling of wanting to return to the tourist destination.
Table 1. Elements of Landmark

| Landmark                        | Indicator                                           |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Easy to see                    | The location of the building and visible from a     |
|                                | distance                                           |
| Easy To Identify               | Image and identity                                  |
| Contrast With The Environment  | Material, form, and scale of the building          |
| Accessibility                  | Access, pedestrian, public transportation, and     |
|                                | parking                                            |

4. Methodology

4.1. Research Area

Langkat Regency is in a strategic location, so that factored into the national tourism. In this Regency, there are many types of tourism, starting from nature tourism, cultural tourism, historical tourism, religious tourism, and culinary tourism. Researchers chose three religious tourism destinations in Langkat Regency, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia as research areas including Azizi Mosque in Tanjung Pura City, Besilam Village or also known as Babussalam in Padang Tualang District and Shri Murugan Temple in Selesai District (Figure 1). Azizi Mosque and Besilam Village are witnesses and historical evidence of the Langkat Malay Sultanate. Meanwhile, Shri Murugan temple is the second-highest temple in the world, after the statue of Dewa Murugan in Batu Caves, Malaysia.

![Figure 1. Research Area](image-url)
4.2. Method

This research uses mixed methods with qualitative and quantitative approaches to obtain respondents' perceptions of landmarks in religious tourism in Langkat Regency. Qualitative methods are carried out by field observations and in-depth interviews in three religious tourist destinations. In-depth interviews were carried out on three key informants who were tourism stakeholders, local people, governments, academics, and people who were directly or indirectly involved in Langkat tourism. Also, field observations are carried out by collecting physical characteristics of buildings, activities, providing public facilities, access, parking, pedestrians, and all things needed.

The quantitative method by distributing a questionnaire that measured on a five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4) for variable rate landmark of religious tourism. Measurements include landmark elements in religious tourism, which are easily visible, easily identified, in contrast to the environment and accessibility. The questionnaire was distributed equally to 186 local people in three tourism areas. The survey results are processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 20) to analyze the perceptual level of the respondents so that they obtained the average value of the landmark elements. The data collected will be combined and interpreted and then explained with related theories.

5. Results and Discussions

5.1. Respondents

Each area of the study area represents 62 respondents, local people. As a result, of 186 respondents, 47% were women (n = 87), and 53% were men (n = 99), the largest age group was 25-49 years (44%). Other age groups are 18-24 (35%), 50-64 (17%), and aged 65 years and over (4%). When asked how long they lived in North Sumatra, 92.5% of respondents said they had lived more than five years, 7% had lived 2-5 years, and 0.5% had lived one year in Langkat Regency.

5.2. Landmark Principle

The mean scores of 11 items shown in Table 2. The question with the highest mean ratings is: "Landmarks have different scales & form than other buildings" (Table 2). This item indicates that respondents agree that landmarks in Langkat regency must be different from other buildings. On the contrary, the provision of public facilities gets the lowest score, especially on the quality of the pedestrian path (Table 2).

| Statements                                           | Azizi Mosque | Besilam Village | Shri Murugan Temple | Mean |
|------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------------|------|
| Easy to see                                          | 3.4          | 2.4             | 2.4                 | 2.7  |
| Landmark is in a strategic location                  | 3.5          | 2.5             | 2.4                 | 2.8  |
| I can describe this place                           | 3.2          | 3.7             | 2.2                 | 3.1  |
| This landmark is by the identity/character of this region | 3.4          | 3.9             | 2.2                 | 3.2  |
| Easy to identify                                    |              |                 |                     |      |
| Landmark has different materials from other buildings | 3.3          | 3.6             | 3.2                 | 3.4  |
| Landmark has different forms than other buildings    | 3.4          | 3.8             | 3.5                 | 3.6  |
| Landmark has different scales/sizes than other buildings | 3.3          | 3.7             | 3.9                 | 3.6  |
| Contrast                                             |              |                 |                     |      |
| This place is easy to access                         | 3.6          | 3.9             | 3.1                 | 3.5  |
| There is a comfortable pedestrian path               | 3.4          | 2.7             | 2.1                 | 2.7  |
Easy To See
Landmark as a tourist area plays a vital role in shaping the image of a destination and as a visual symbol [19]. With the existence of the marker can make it easier for someone to recognize the location that is associated with religious tourism. Therefore, landmark must be in an easily visible position so that people can easily see objects. In the study area, the local people provides a low assessment of the ease of seeing objects from a distance, especially in Besilam village and Shri Murugan Temple: Azizi Mosque (3.4), Besilam Village (2.4) and Shri Murugan Temple (2.4) (Table 2). The Azizi Mosque is at a crossroads that can be seen and accessed from several routes. Meanwhile, Besilam village and Shri Murugan Temple are in locations that are less visible from a distance. It is because other buildings, such as houses cover the object. This is also supported by the interview:

“Azizi Mosque is indeed on the main road, so it is easy to see, and everyone who goes to Banda Aceh always stops at this mosque.” (KeyRespondent: Local Figure).

Also, a building can be said to be a landmark of religious tourism if it can see from various angles of height variations and the position of more backward (set-back) buildings. The findings showed that respondents gave low assessments of objects located in strategic locations: Azizi Mosque (3.5), Besilam Village (2.5) and Shri Murugan Temple (2.4) (Table 2). The Azizi Mosque received a positive rating because it was on a cross-city road that connects Medan and Banda Aceh City. Whereas Besilam village and Shri Murugan Temple are not on cross-city roads, so the object is visited by tourists only if there are activities or significant events.

Easy To Identify
Visual landmarks play a role in helping people identify the building or object [20]. A unique place will undoubtedly be easy to remember and easy to explain/illustrate [21]. In the study area, the local people provide a high assessment of they could describe objects: Masjid Azizi (3.2), Desa Besilam (3.7) and Shri Murugan Temple (2.2) (Table 2). Local people say that they can describe religious tourism objects well, especially at the Azizi Mosque and Besilam Village. It is because Local people better know the Azizi Mosque and Besilam Village than Shri Murugan Temple. Also, the inability of respondents to describe Shri Murugan Temple roughly shows that Shri Murugan Temple is still not different from other places because one of the characteristics of a landmark is that place which is imageable or easy to imagine [10]. This is also supported by the interview:

“One of the real historical sites seen in Langkat Regency is the Azizi Mosque. This mosque has a unique shape, ornament, and color, so it is easy to explain/illustrate.” (KeyRespondent: Local Figure).

Also, Landmark helps to classify places or cities because they have reference points in the environment [22]. Shri Murugan Temple is considered less appropriate to the character Langkat if used as religious tourist landmarks. It confirmed by respondents giving a high assessment of marker by with the identity/character of the region: Azizi Mosque (3.4), Besilam Village (3.9) and Shri

| Statements                             | Azizi Mosque | Besilam Village | Shri Murugan Temple | Mean |
|----------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------------|------|
| There is a good public transportation system | 3.5          | 2.3             | 3.4                 | 3.1  |
| Parking conditions in this area are quite adequate | 3.6          | 3.8             | 3.2                 | 3.5  |
| Value Format: 1 = strongly disagree, 4 = strongly agree | 3.4          | 3.3             | 2.9                 |      |
Murugan Temple (2.2) (Table 2). It is because the majority religion in Langkat is Islam, so it is difficult to make the Shri Murugan Temple as the character of religious tourism in Langkat Regency.

Contrast With The Environment

Landmark/marker as objects that have a contrast with the surrounding environment will highlight the object [10]. A landmark can be any element in an environment that is outside the observer and which functions to clarify a place. Additionally, marker usually has specific visual characteristics, may have a unique purpose or meaning, or maybe in a central location or stand that makes it useful as a landmark. The landmark aspect of distinctiveness says that landmarks must be distinguishable from nearby objects and other landmarks [23]. Therefore, markers have elements that distinguish them from other destination. In this respect, the contrast with the environment assessed through the material, shape, and size of religious tourism [18].

In the study area, the local people provide a high assessment of landmarks having material that is different from other buildings: Azizi Mosque (3.3), Besilam village (3.6) and Shri Murugan Temple (3.2) (Table 2). The Azizi Mosque material is imported from Malaysia by boat. The mosque's walls made of concrete with a base color of yellow exterior section and ornaments are colored green. Azizi Mosque has sixteen windows imported from Murano, Italy. This window is stained glass with ornamental plants. Besilam village has walls with black wood material. While, Shri Murugan Temple has the same sculpture material used to make the Murugan Statue in Batu Caves, Malaysia: steel, concrete, and gold liquid.

![Azizi Mosque](image1)
![Besilam Village](image2)
![Shri Murugan Temple](image3)

**Figure 2. Visual of Religious Tourism**

Landmark also can mean as a symbol that identifies a city based on a specific visual form because it has something unique and not owned by other regions. The following three objects of religious tourism have a shape that contrasts with their environment. It confirmed that respondents gave a high rating of landmark having different forms from other buildings: Azizi Mosque (3.4), Besilam village (3.8) and Shri Murugan Temple (3.5) (Table 2). The Azizi Mosque looks like an Islamic mosque in India with an octagonal dome and tower. The roof of the mosque is a large dome surrounded by small domes. Meanwhile, Besilam village has a rectangular shape by adopting a stage house style. Moreover, Shri Murugan Temple has a rectangular shape that getting to the top is getting smaller (Figure 2).

Also, different sizes are an element of contrast with the environment. Strengthened that respondents gave high ratings of landmarks having different scales/sizes from other buildings: Azizi Mosque (3.3), Besilam village (3.7) and Shri Murugan Temple (3.9) (Table 2). The tower at the Azizi Mosque is octagonal with a height of 35 meters. Meanwhile, Besilam Mosque has a height of 15 meters. As well as, at Shri Murugan temple there is a 55-foot tall God Statue or about 17 meters and is claimed to be the second-highest in the world. This is also supported by the interview:

“Shri Murugan Temple is a 17-meter tall statue of the god Murugan known as the god of war and protector of the Tamil state. This temple has been named the second highest temple in the world” (KeyRespondent: Local Figure).
The results show that the three religious tourism objects that get a positive assessment of the element of contrast with the environment. Although there are differences in materials, shapes, and sizes in the tourist area, the difference is still dependent on other elements such as colors, ornaments, and details that will strengthen the characteristics of the object of religious tourism so that it contrasts with its environment.

Accessibility

Accessibility is also a characteristic of physical landmarks. For example, a building or object at a crossroads, or even intersection itself can be a landmark because it is easily accessible from several paths. Accessibility is the ease of moving from place of origin to destination [24]. Access of tourist destinations influences the attractiveness and potential for tourism in the region [25]. In this case, accessibility assessed through the ease of access, pedestrian paths, public transportation, and parking facilities.

In the study area, the local people provided an appropriate with a high assessment of the accessibility of entrance to religious tourism: Azizi Mosque (3.6), Besilam Village (3.9) and Shri Murugan Temple (3.1) (Table 2). Easy access will affect an individual's interest in coming to a place [21]. So, easy access will further increase someone's attention in visiting. However, the quality of the pedestrian lane in these tourist destinations is still lacking, especially at Besilam village and Shri Murugan Temple. Respondents gave a low assessment of the pedestrian path: Azizi Mosque (3.4), Besilam Village (2.7) and Shri Murugan Temple (2.1) (Table 2). Bad sidewalks and broken paths make visitors feel uncomfortable and safe walking there. Pedestrian paths are also illegally used by traders (Figure 3).

Tourist areas have good accessibility when public transportation is easy to find [21]. However, public transportation in these tourist destinations still lacking, especially in Besilam village. Strengthened that respondents gave a high assessment of public transportation: Azizi Mosque (3.5), Besilam Village (2.3) and Shri Murugan Temple (3.4) (Table 2). There is no public transportation to Besilam village so that tourist destinations are difficult to achieve. Whereas, the availability of public transport and good accessibility have a significant effect on influencing one's perception of tourist destinations [26].

The existence of parking lots must facilitate vehicle users to access places and work effectively. Parking helps people manage and complete their activities somewhere. The research findings show that parking facilities are adequate and local communities have positive perceptions: Azizi Mosque (3.6), Besilam Village (3.8) and Shri Murugan Temple (3.2) (Table 2) (Figure 4). Parking spaces for the three religious tourism are available, but for the Azizi mosque, there is still less space to accommodate pilgrims. This is also supported by the interview:
"A less spacious parking lot at the Azizi Mosque is an important problem. Azizi mosques visited during the Friday prayer, so the road is also used as a parking lot to accommodate cars.” (KeyRespondent: Local Figure).

![Azizi Mosque](image1)
![Besilam Village](image2)
![Shri Murugan Temple](image3)

**Figure 4 Parking Facilities**

The results show that the Azizi Mosque has a high assessment of the element of accessibility to religious tourism. Although in the religious tourist destination, there have entrance and adequate parking facilities, availability still depends on other items. For example, road mobility and integration between parking facilities and roads need to be increased to improve accessibility. Public transportation and efficient mobility play a role in advancing tourist destinations.

6. Conclusions
This study examines four landmark principles of distinctiveness, including easy to see, easily identified, contrast with the environment and accessibility of religious tourism based on the perception of local people. Landmarks play a role in building an image of a city or place that is easily recognized [19] and helps someone to find locations that have charm and uniqueness in the form of culture, activity, history, and buildings. Among the four elements landmark variables, only one variable "easy to see" who get a negative response, because the tourist area is in a less strategic location and cannot visible from a distance. While the aspect of easily identified, contrasts with the environment and accessibility receives a positive response in the study area. Because it has a uniqueness that distinguishes it from other places in the area [10]. Although religious tourism has reflected the image of Langkat Regency by having different materials, shapes, and scales from other religious destinations. However, many pedestrian paths in the religion areas have been damaged and used illegally by traders. Whereas access to tourist destinations affects the attractiveness and potential of tourism in the region [25]. Therefore, it is essential to improve accessibility in religion spiritual territory to create the impression and feeling of wanting to return. For further research, it is suggested to be more comprehensive by including other distinctiveness variables, including uniqueness, characters, and different perceptions.

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