



A City Image Study by Kevin Lynch's Theoretical Approach: A Case Study of Pontianak City, West Kalimantan Province of Indonesia

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ABSTRACT: Pontianak City is the capital city of West Kalimantan Province reaches area coverage of 118.31 km². This city has multiple functions as the government and economic centers of the West Kalimantan Province of Indonesia. It is also known as the Equatorial city because it is located on the equator line and by the end of 2023, its population will reach 679,818 people and will become the 26th most populous city in Indonesia. The City of Pontianak located on the equator line with altitude height ranging from 0.1 to 1.5 meters above sea level, and from administrative divisions, Pontianak City consists of several district areas: (a) North Pontianak District, (b) East Pontianak District, (c) South Pontianak District, (d) Southeast Pontianak District, (e) the Pontianak City District, and (f) West Pontianak District, whether from geographical perspective, City of Pontianak is traversed by the longest river in Indonesia, the *Kapuas* River which has become a life support for the surrounding community. The analytical method applied in this research to study the city image of Pontianak is the triangulation method where it is used to compare information obtained through field observations with theoretical perspectives that have been studied previously. The result found in this article is the City of Pontianak has fulfilled the requirement of 5 elements of city image according to Kevin Lynch's theory and it has *Tugu Khatulistiwa* or Equator Monument as a symbol or the icon of Pontianak City.

KEYWORDS: City identity, Element of city image, Kevin Lynch theory, Pontianak City, Qualitative data

INTRODUCTION

Pontianak City is the capital of West Kalimantan Province with area stretches to 118.31 km² consists of 6 districts (*kecamatan*) and 29 urban villages (*kelurahan*). Pontianak City is located on the equator with the height of Pontianak City ranging from 0.10 – 1.50 meters above sea level. From administrative aspect, the largest district in Pontianak City is the District of North Pontianak whereas the administrative boundaries of all south, east, west and north directions are directly adjacent to Kubu Raya Regency.

Pontianak City founded by Syarif Abdurrahman Alkadrie as the prominent figure who opened Pontianak City for the first time. He and his entourage built a hall and a house as their place to live named as Pontianak. Later, Syarif Abdurrahman Alkadrie was crowned to be the Sultan of Pontianak Kingdom. Location of central government was marked by establishment of the Sultan Abdurrahman Alkadrie Grand Mosque and the Kadariah Palace as now located in the East Pontianak District. By the steadfast leadership of Syarif Abdurrahman Al-Qodri, City of Pontianak developed into a successful trade and port city.

Pontianak has a rich historical background since it is one of the oldest cities in Kalimantan. The name of Pontianak derives from Malay language which refers to ghosts or spirits known in local mythology. This city also famous as the Equatorial city because it traversed by equator line. Pontianak City also has rich cultural life influenced by various ethnicities and tribes such as Malay, Chinese, Dayak and several others. The culture and customs of Pontianak people are reflected in many traditional celebrations such as *Gawai Dayak* Festival, Chinese New Year, also Id Fitr and Christmas Celebrations.

The signature characteristic of Pontianak City is its location that lies right on the Equator line which makes Pontianak City to be one of cities located closest to zero latitude. This reason gives the signature name of Pontianak as the Equatorial city and has become a special tourist attraction for visitors. In addition, Kapuas River as the longest river in Indonesia also crossing Pontianak City. The Kapuas River embodies very important role in daily lives of Pontianak people, as a transportation route and source of life.

Other special traits from Pontianak City are the Equator Bridge crosses the Kapuas River, in addition to the Kapuas River and the equator. The equator bridge is a geographical symbol of Pontianak since the city is located on the equator line and becomes a popular place for tourists to take photos and experiencing standing in two hemispheres at once. Apart from that, another characteristic of Pontianak City is the multiethnic society comprised of several tribes such as Malays, Chinese, Dayak and other ethnic groups. Malay



culture rooted deeply and holds very strong influence to the local people as reflected in this city's language, customs and culinary delights.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Adapted from Kevin Lynch's theory about the elements that form a city image, there are five elements that create a city as explained below.

A. Landmark

According to Kawulusan and Warauw (2017), landmark is an important element of a city acted to help people orient themselves in the city and help to recognize an area within the city. Meanwhile, according to Supriyadi (2004), a landmark is a visual form that becomes a prominent external element of a city where usually takes form of mountain, hill, tower, gate, place of worship, etc. By the presence of a landmark, it will help people to recognize an area both in the mezzo area or in the macro area. Landmark is said to have a good identity when a landmark has a clear and distinctive shape in the environment, has sequence of several markers of the city with a difference in scale for each marker.

B. Path

According to Lynch (1982) a path is a line of road in an area usually be used by observers to mobile or going to a place, which becomes the main element used by observer in his/her mobility during his/her observation throughout a city. Path examples are road, train track, main alley, water channel, and so on. A path is said to have a good identity when it has a clear destination like towards the train station, city square, monument or other destination in the city, and the path must have a clear visual appearance for example in the shape of building façade, trees, or have a clear lane turn, and so on.

C. District

District is an area that has a unique characteristic in its shape, pattern and form. According to BAPPENAS (2004) in Murtiningrum and Oktoyoki (2019) districts are areas based on the physical and economic diversity but in a close relationship to support each other functionally in order to accelerate regional economic growth and improve the people welfare. District also be seen from two-dimensional scale as an interior reference and an exterior reference. A district categorized to have a good identity if it has boundaries with clear appearance, the form that can be seen homogenously with its function and position are clear whether it stands alone or linked with other elements.

D. Nodes

Nodes are the surrounding of strategic areas where the activities and direction meets and can be changed or interchangeable such as station, bridge and traffic intersection. Therefore, in the size on macro scale or as a whole it includes market, park, mall, and others. Aside from that, a node is a place that has entry and exit access at the same place. According to Abdi (2020) node is a certain point and a strategic place in the city where observers can enter and be the focus from where the observers from and going to certain points. A node is said to have a good identity when the place's shape is easy and clear to remember and the appearance, function and shape are distinct or unlike from the surrounding environment.

E. Edge

Edge is a boundary between two areas functions as a barrier or breaker between one area to another area. Edge also the end tip of a district which functions as a divider where the boundaries must be clear (such as beach, mountain, or others) and according to Cahyanti et.al (2022) edge is linear element which is not used as path. Furthermore, Cahyanti et.al (2022) say that an edge is at the tip between two certain areas and functions as a linear boundary. An edge is said to have a good identity when it has clear and visible continuity in its boundaries, where its function must also have clear boundaries whether for dividing or uniting areas.

RESEARCH METHOD

Adapted from Kevin Lynch's theory about the elements that form a city image, there are five elements that create a city as explained below.

A. A Qualitative Data Collection

The type of data which will be obtained for this research is a qualitative data. According to Arikunto (2009) data are all facts and figures which can be used as material for compiling information. Furthermore, Jogiyan to in Wijaya and Hendri (2017) said that data

is reality that describes real events and unity. Qualitative according to Mellinia (2022) is research that places greater emphasis on aspects of in-depth understanding of a problem. In addition, Sugiyono in Luthfiyah *et al.* (2023) added with qualitative is an approach for conducting research which oriented towards natural phenomena or natural symptoms. Since it has a nature orientation, then the characteristics must be very basic and naturalistic in nature, and cannot be done in the laboratory but must be conducted in the field. Whereas the qualitative data in this research is referring to empirical data in forms of detailed descriptions and direct quotations. These data were collected as open narratives without attempting to classify phenomena into predetermined standard categorization. This qualitative data collection method uses field observations, in-depth interviews and literature reviews.

B. A Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis is the process of searching and compiling data obtained from field observation, in-depth interview, and literature review in a systematical way so these data can be easily understood and the findings can be informed to others. The qualitative data analysis used in this research was qualitative descriptive data analysis on the primary data (in forms of photos) and the results of in-depth interviews then compared with secondary data (in the form of literature reviews obtained from various articles). According to Mahdiyah (2023) qualitative data analysis is the process of exploring, understanding and interpreting non-numerical data, such as text, images and/or sound. Meanwhile, Anwar and Karamoy in Mukriyanto *et al.* (2024) said that a qualitative descriptive analysis is the realization of an analysis by explaining the condition of an object in sentence description format based on the information from parties directly involved in the field and matching it with the result of the literature review. The final result of this study emphasizes discussions related to the Pontianak City image associated with Kevin Lynch's theory about the five elements that form a city image. Stages in qualitative descriptive analysis are made by summarizing, categorizing and interpreting through the triangulation analysis method. Triangulation analysis according to Rahardjo in Mukriyanto (2024) is a method carried out by comparing information obtained through field observations and in-depth interview with theoretical perspectives that have been studied in previous time as seen in figure 1 below, the triangulation model:

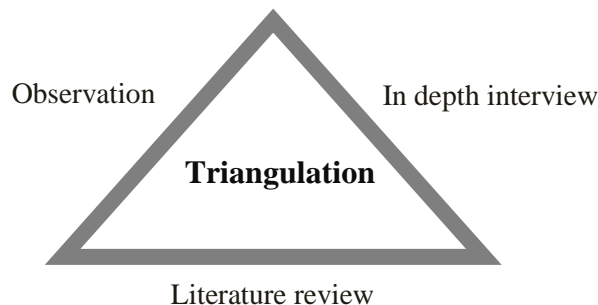


Figure 1. A Triangulation model

Source: Mukriyanto, *et al.* (2024)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The following section explains five forms of city image; the path, edge, district, node and landmark whereas the 5 city elements as the creator of Pontianak City image are paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmark that will be put into explanation as follow:

A. Path

According to Lynch (1982) a path is an area usually used by observers to move towards a place and is the main element used by observers for mobile when observing a city.



Figure 2. Two ways road of Kubu Raya Regency

Figure 2 depicts two ways road from Kubu Raya Regency in adjacent direction to Pontianak City that will be passed by every individual who want to go to Pontianak City from outside the city as marked by the road sign of welcoming gate and farewell gate to signalize whether the person has entered Pontianak City or not. The aim of these mobilities or movement on this road is the direction from Pontianak City to other cities outside this area with material used on the road is asphalt.



Figure 3. Ahmad Yani Street at Pontianak City

Figure 3 depicts Ahmad Yani Street at Pontianak City. This road is the main road to one of modern shopping center in there which also called by identical name of the street “The Ahmad Yani Mall”, so that finding this road is easy for passerby. The road also served as one of the routes to the State University of Pontianak City called the Tanjungpura University and also served as the road to Digulis Park of Pontianak City.

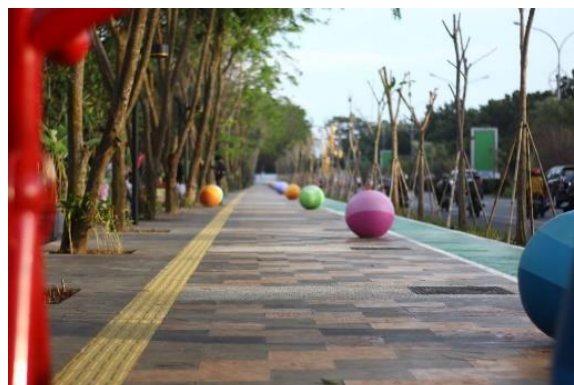


Figure 4. Lane of pedestrian way at central of Pontianak City

Figure 4 depicts the sidewalks or pedestrian paths in central of Pontianak City. The sidewalk itself located on Ahmad Yani Street of Pontianak City. As seen on the picture, the sidewalk has fulfilled the efficiency of pedestrian path, which, as observed from its size is able to accommodate two or three people in one time, with a bicycle path also available in the lane. There are several trees apparent from the picture and the sidewalk is passable and safe to be walked for disability individuals or disable pedestrians.

B. Edge

Cahyanti *et al.* (2022) stated that an edge is located at the tip between two certain areas and functions as a linear boundary.



Figure 5. Picture of edge boundary in one area of Pontianak City

Figure 5 exhibits image of an example of edge. The picture above showed a river and its boundary or edge that uses a fence as the river boundary. From the picture above, it shows the bank of Kapuas River where the black fence acted as the barrier between river and the land (the land in this picture is the city square or City Park of Pontianak City).

C. District

According to BAPPENAS (2004) in Murtiningrum and Oktoyoki (2019) districts are areas based on the physical and economic diversity but in a close relationship to support each other functionally in order to accelerate regional economic growth and improve the people welfare, where districts can also be seen from two dimensional scales as an interior reference and an exterior reference.



Figure 6. The section of Pontianak Old City

The activity image concept from Pontianak City that will be presented in this study is the service trade center at the old city area of Pontianak with its typical shophouse buildings (old districts). Pontianak City has a local market that has been active since 20th century

where its initiation already began in the 19th century. This market located on the river bank (all traditional markets in Pontianak are close by the river), where at that time, export-import activities were already taking place in the *Fabriek Weg* area or today is known as Pak Kasih Street. Landscape of combination or mixtures between new shophouse buildings with traces of some old buildings that have been underwent restoration are the main attraction of this area. In here, many shops are selling clothes and accessories. The local people called it as *Pasar Tengah* or Central Market. Moving a little forward, there is a Sudirman Market area where at night time when the shophouses close and left only their headlights on, at some upper points in front of shophouses, a crowd started to enjoy the night view facilitated by several coffee shops and food stalls that open in this area. Through days and nights, this area always alive and attractive. Moreover, from the Kapuas Waterfront, visitors can enjoy the night life of Kapuas Waterfront side by side with the old market area.

D. Nodes

According to Abdi (2020) nodes are certain points and strategic places within the city where the observer can enter, which also becomes the focus for where they walk to and walk from.



Figure 7. Intersection of transportation lanes at Pontianak City

Figure 7 showing one of the main transportation routes in Pontianak City. An intersection route with four road lanes that always be passed by everyone who wants to go in or leave the Pontianak City. Every person who wants to come to Pontianak City will definitely pass this road and vice versa. This road intersection is different from others because it gives the special characteristic of Pontianak City as presented by The Digulis Bamboo Monument which must be passed by everyone that take the route lane.

E. Landmark

According to Kawulusan and Warauw (2017) landmark is an important element of a city because it can help people orient themselves in the city and aid the people to recognize an area.



Figure 8. Tugu Khatulistiwa at Pontianak City

One primary landmark in Pontianak City is the *Tugu Khatulistiwa* or equator monument as seen on the figure 8 above. The equator monument is one of the identities of Pontianak City itself since this monument becomes the landmark of Pontianak City and can be found only in Pontianak. So, this shows the identity of Pontianak City as an equatorial city.

Besides the *Tugu Khatulistiwa*, Pontianak City has another landmark in a form of Cathedral Church which is one of the largest churches in Asia. By its grandeur size, the church is a powerful landmark to show the city image and the identity of Pontianak City.



Figure 8. Cathedral Church at Pontianak City

CONCLUSION

Result of research analysis revealed that City of Pontianak fulfills the criteria of five elements of city image according to Kevin Lynch's theory. The descriptions of this article showed explanations of each city image element of Pontianak City along with the pictures where each element of Pontianak City image able to show the city identity in direct. At the path element, the City of Pontianak has an efficient transportation route served for its local people also other people who visit Pontianak City. For the edge element, it shown by the existence of river boundary between the Kapuas River which flows through Pontianak City and the central land of Pontianak and marked by its city square. In the node element, it is marked by an intersection with noticeable Digulis Bamboo Monument placed in the central spot of Pontianak City, this intersection is one of many roads that is often used when entering or leaving Pontianak City. The *landmark* element is represented by the *Tugu Khatulistiwa* or Equator Monument as a symbol that immediately can be recognized belongs to Pontianak City. Apart from the monument, Pontianak City also has a Cathedral Church which is one of the largest churches in Asia that also serves as a landmark for Pontianak City.

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