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CULTURALLY SENSITIVE DESIGN: TRANSFORMING MEDIKLINIK AL WALEED INTO A COMMUNITY- CENTRIC HEALTHCARE HEAVEN IN SUNGAI LIMAU, YAN, KEDAH

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

The importance of clinic design in fostering patient comfort is undeniable. Nevertheless, many existing designs fail to provide a truly comforting experience due to impracticality, lack of ergonomics, and outdated aesthetics. Evidence-based design, as advocated by Lawson (2010), underscores the significance of improving healthcare architecture. Meanwhile, Uldrich (1984) emphasized the role of buildings in promoting healing through evidence-based design decisions. Against this backdrop, this paper proposes a new private clinic identity and image in rural Sungai Limau, Yan, Kedah. Collaborating with design experts, a refreshed design concept was crafted, integrating interior and exterior elements to establish a unique identity that resonates with the local community. Materials and design elements were meticulously selected, focusing on ergonomics, lighting, and workspace functionality. Consequently, the proposed Islamic-inspired design caters to physical comfort and addresses psychological elements to welcome patients

from diverse backgrounds. The transformation of Mediklinik Al Waleed aims to provide a welcoming and comfortable environment for rural communities seeking healthcare services. By infusing tranquility into the clinic's ambiance, the design endeavors to elevate the overall patient experience and establish a recognizable brand within the community. Notably, the proposed design covers all clinic areas comprehensively, ensuring a cohesive and inviting space for patients. Contextual relevance, cultural significance, and community engagement are paramount in the design process and aligning the clinic with the specific needs and values of Sungai Limau. Balancing tradition with modernity, the design integrates Islamic architectural elements with contemporary medical facilities, creating a holistic healthcare space that serves as a community hub. In conclusion, by embracing culturally sensitive design principles and prioritizing community needs, Mediklinik Al Waleed seeks to become a cornerstone of healthcare in Sungai Limau. This collaborative effort between healthcare providers and design experts aims to enhance the well-being and prosperity of the rural community, setting a new standard for healthcare premises in the region.

1.   Introduction

The design of a clinic is crucial and should be emphasized to provide comfort for patients. However, due to the impracticality, unergonomic, and unevolved designs, the existing clinic design does not provide full comfort to the users and patients. Lawson. B (2010) highlighted that evidence-based design seeks to improve healthcare architecture. Uldrich. RS (1984) argued that buildings can promote healing when design decisions are based on evidence from scientific research. He concluded his 1984 study with advice, stating that "hospital design and siting decisions should consider the quality of patient window views." Aware of the needs and the importance of an attractive clinic design, a new identity and image of a new private clinic in a rural area is proposed. The collaboration among several experts in design and decoration has successfully projected a renewed design concept. In addition, the combination of interior and exterior decoration holds its own identity and uniqueness in attracting the attention of the local community. Among the elements researched are manufacturing, materials, and design. The design of this private clinic is an Islamic concept emphasizing essential elements such as ergonomics, lighting, and workspace. Moreover, physical and psychological elements are scrutinized to welcome patients or rural communities from various backgrounds and career landscapes. Notably, the latest materials, such as steel, Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) board, glass, concrete, and wood, are used in the interior design as well as the exterior of premises.

The clinic's new transformation aims to welcome and provide comfort to the rural community with the aim that they can experience the best health services while at the clinic. The calmness of the new ambience will impact the clinic services and become a well-known brand. The proposed

design covers all areas in the clinic. This includes a waiting room, treatment rooms or consultation rooms, toilets, and other spaces available. In addition, the design of this clinic will provide a new chapter in the production of interior and exterior design for health premises. It will also provide a first-class atmosphere in welcoming rural communities to enjoy their comfort while getting treatment at Mediklinik Al Waleed, Sungai Limau, Yan, Kedah.

Figure 1. Clinic location and site area

2.   Literature Review

Mediklinik Al Waleed is situated at Sungai Limau, Yan, Kedah. The property is situated along the western side of a metaled service road known as Persiaran Mahsuri, within Taman Mahsuri, off the western side of Jalan Kuala Kedah – Yan, also known as Jalan Batas Piap, Yan, Kedah. The clinic property is in the same row as Bank Islam Taman Mahsuri. Geographic, the subject property is situated about 1.3 kilometers to the south of Sekolah Kebangsaan Sungai Limau and about 10.0 kilometers to the north-east of the Ibu Pejabat Polis Daerah (IPD) Yan town Center. The immediate neighborhood locality is commercial in nature. Situated within the same row of the subject property is a similar type of double-story shophouses that accommodate the premises of Sound Garden Auto Accessories, Udang Pak Det Fresh Frozen Food, Restorant Nasi Kandar Mahsuri, Farmasi ZNZ Health Care, Atikah Tomyam, and Kedai RM2.00 Fresh & Frozen Mart Sdn Bhd, to name a few.
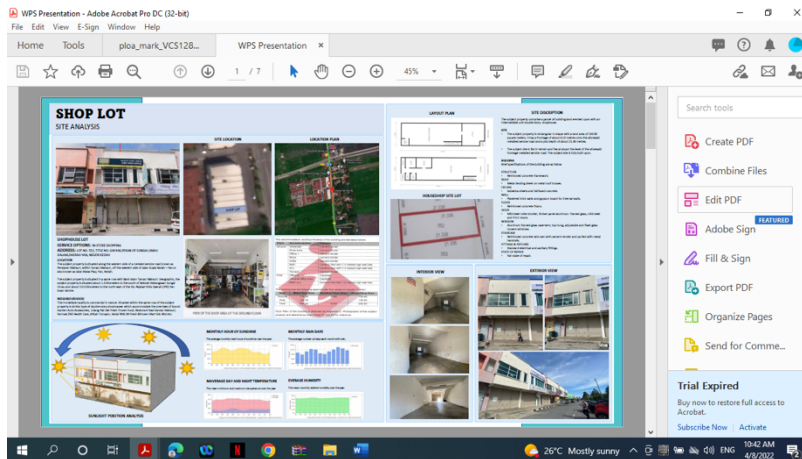
Figure 2. Moodboard for Site Location Information

The site details are as follows:

Figure 3. Front building and google site view map

The premise is a shophouse lot and the address is Lot No. 552, Title No. GM 946, Pekan Of Sungai Limau Dalam, Daerah Yan, Negeri Kedah. The subject property comprises a parcel of building land erected upon an intermediate unit double-story shophouse. The subject property is rectangular, with a land area of 130.00 square meters. Additionally, it has a frontage of about 6.10 meters onto the aforesaid metalled service road and a plot depth of about 21.34 meters. The subject site is flat in terrain and lies about the level of the frontage metaled service road.

In this academic endeavor, we propose a comprehensive corporate identity framework for Mediklinik Al Waleed, situated in Sungai Limau, Yan, Kedah. Drawing upon a thorough literature review encompassing healthcare branding, visual identity, patient experience, and community engagement, we aim to provide a strategic blueprint that aligns the clinic's corporate image with its values, cultural context, and target audience. By synthesizing scholarly insights with practical considerations, we advocate for a holistic approach that emphasizes authenticity, patient-centricity, and community integration. Furthermore, our proposed corporate identity

framework offers actionable recommendations for enhancing Mediklinik Al Waleed's brand perception. This fosters patient trust and loyalty and strengthens its position within the local healthcare landscape.

In the contemporary healthcare milieu, the significance of corporate identity and branding strategies cannot be overstated. As healthcare facilities seek to differentiate themselves in a competitive market, cultivating a solid corporate image becomes imperative for building trust, fostering patient loyalty, and enhancing community engagement (Ogden et al., 2019). In this paper, we propose a tailored corporate identity framework for Mediklinik Al Waleed, a private clinic situated in the rural setting of Sungai Limau, Yan, Kedah. Our approach is informed by a comprehensive review of academic literature spanning healthcare branding, visual identity design, patient experience, and community outreach. Therefore, by synthesizing theoretical insights with practical considerations, we aim to provide actionable recommendations to enable Mediklinik Al Waleed to cultivate a distinctive brand identity that resonates with its target audience and cultural context.

The literature review reveals that effective healthcare branding goes beyond mere visual aesthetics. It includes a multifaceted approach that encompasses messaging, patient experience, and community engagement (Kotler et al., 2016). Meanwhile, visual identity elements such as logos, colors, and typography serve as powerful tools for conveying a clinic's values and personality (Berry et al., 2020). Moreover, patient experience emerges as a key determinant of brand perception, with personalized care, empathetic communication, and a welcoming environment contributing to patient satisfaction and loyalty (Ogden et al., 2019). Community engagement initiatives, including participation in local events and collaboration with community organizations, are crucial in building trust and rapport with the target audience (Kotler et al., 2016). Thus, by integrating these insights into developing its corporate identity, Mediklinik Al Waleed can establish a compelling brand narrative that resonates with its patients and community.

Proposed Corporate Identity Framework:

Building upon the insights gleaned from our comprehensive literature review, we delineate a structured framework for formulating the corporate identity of Mediklinik Al Waleed. Drawing upon established theories and empirical evidence within the realm of corporate identity and branding in healthcare, we present the following components as integral facets for crafting a robust corporate identity framework:

1. **Visual Identity**:

   Embracing the principles of visual communication, the clinic's corporate identity should encompass distinctive visual elements. This includes logos, color schemes, typography, and design aesthetics. Inspired by Islamic motifs and cultural symbolism, the visual identity of Mediklinik Al Waleed should evoke a sense of authenticity, spirituality, and cultural resonance. This aligns with research suggesting that visual elements significantly influence brand perception and recognition (Kotler et al., 2016).

2. **Messaging and Communication**:

   Central to shaping stakeholder perceptions and fostering engagement, strategic messaging, and communication strategies are imperative for Mediklinik Al Waleed. Our literature review underscores the importance of clear, consistent, and culturally sensitive

communication in healthcare branding (Ogden et al., 2019). As such, the clinic's messaging should emphasize core values, patient-centricity, and its commitment to delivering quality care rooted in Islamic principles.

3. **Patient Experience and Service Quality**:

Synthesizing insights from patient experience literature, we emphasize the pivotal role of service quality and patient satisfaction in shaping corporate identity (Berry et al., 2020). Mediklinik Al Waleed must prioritize patient-centered care, personalized interactions, and an empathetic approach to service delivery. By fostering positive patient experiences, the clinic can fortify its reputation as a trusted healthcare provider within the community.

4. **Community Engagement and Reputation Management**:

Acknowledging the significance of community relationships and reputation management, Mediklinik Al Waleed should actively engage with local stakeholders and proactively manage its reputation. The research underscores the impact of community engagement on brand perception and loyalty (Kotler et al., 2016). Furthermore, by participating in community events, fostering partnerships, and soliciting feedback, the clinic can cultivate a positive reputation and strengthen its ties with the local populace.

Incorporating these components into its corporate identity framework, Mediklinik Al Waleed can effectively position itself as a culturally sensitive, community-oriented healthcare provider, resonating with the ethos and aspirations of its target audience. Moreover, by aligning its visual identity, messaging strategies, patient experience initiatives, and community engagement efforts with the findings of our literature review, the clinic can forge a compelling corporate identity that engenders trust, loyalty, and positive brand perception among stakeholders.

3. **Methodology**

The research design for investigating Mediklinik Al Waleed's corporate identity encompasses a mixed-methods approach integrating qualitative and quantitative research techniques. By leveraging primary and secondary data sources, this methodological strategy aims to ensure comprehensive insights into the clinic's corporate identity needs. Qualitative data collection involves conducting semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders to delve into corporate identity perceptions, expectations, and values. This includes clinic management, staff members, and patients.

Additionally, focus group discussions will facilitate in-depth conversations, uncovering nuanced perspectives on visual identity, messaging, patient experience, and community engagement. Conversely, quantitative data will be gathered through surveys and questionnaires administered to a representative sample of patients and community members. This quantitative approach allows for the quantitative assessment of preferences, perceptions, and satisfaction levels pertaining to the clinic's corporate identity elements. Subsequently, data analysis will entail a thematic analysis of qualitative data to identify recurring themes and patterns. This is complemented by statistical analysis techniques such as descriptive and inferential statistics applied to quantitative survey data to uncover statistically significant relationships and trends.

Triangulating qualitative and quantitative findings will be pivotal in corroborating results and deriving a holistic understanding of the clinic's corporate identity requirements. Moving forward, the framework development phase will synthesize findings to formulate a comprehensive corporate identity framework for Mediklinik Al Waleed, defining key components. This comprises

visual identity elements, messaging strategies, patient experience initiatives, and community engagement approaches based on identified themes and stakeholder preferences. In addition, the framework will be further enriched by incorporating theoretical insights and best practices from the literature review.

The proposed framework will be validated through stakeholder consultation sessions to solicit feedback, validate assumptions, and ensure alignment with clinic objectives and values. Subsequent refinement iterations will be guided by stakeholder input, ensuring effective addressing of the clinic's corporate identity needs and resonance with the target audience. Finally, an implementation plan will be developed to outline the steps, timelines, responsibilities, and resources required to operationalize the corporate identity framework within Mediklinik Al Waleed. Additionally, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be identified to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented corporate identity initiatives over time, ultimately enhancing the clinic's brand perception, stakeholder engagement, and community impact.

Results, findings and discussion

This section presents the results, findings, and subsequent discussion derived from the initial phase of designing a private clinic's identity and image to support rural communities in Sungai Limau, Yan, Kedah. The findings are categorized based on key components of the initial phase, including research and analysis, community engagement, cultural and design inspiration, moodboard proposals, layout plans, and the final phase. These findings provide valuable insights into the contextual relevance, cultural significance, community engagement strategies, functional versatility, inclusivity, sustainability, and other aspects pertinent to the design process.

Figure 4. Interior (before)

4.1 Research and Analysis

The research and analysis phase yielded crucial insights into the local culture, traditions, values, and healthcare needs of the rural community in Sungai Limau, Yan, Kedah. Understanding the demographic composition and existing healthcare facilities enabled a

comprehensive assessment of the community's healthcare landscape. This phase laid the groundwork for designing a culturally sensitive and community-centered clinic environment aligned with the needs and aspirations of the local population.

4.2 Community Engagement

Community engagement emerged as a pivotal aspect of the design process, facilitating the active involvement of community members in shaping the clinic's identity and image. Meetings, focus groups, and surveys provided platforms for gathering invaluable feedback, preferences, and ideas from the rural community. Moreover, by soliciting input from diverse stakeholders, including patients, residents, and community leaders, the design process became more inclusive, transparent, and reflective of community values and priorities.

4.3 Cultural and Design Inspiration

Exploring Islamic design principles, motifs, and architectural elements offered rich inspiration for integrating cultural authenticity into the clinic's design. Hence, researching local art, crafts, and architecture further enriched the design process, imbuing the clinic's interior and exterior with elements that resonate with the community's cultural heritage. In addition, incorporating Islamic concepts and aesthetic appeal enhances the clinic's visual identity and fosters a sense of familiarity and belonging among patients and visitors.
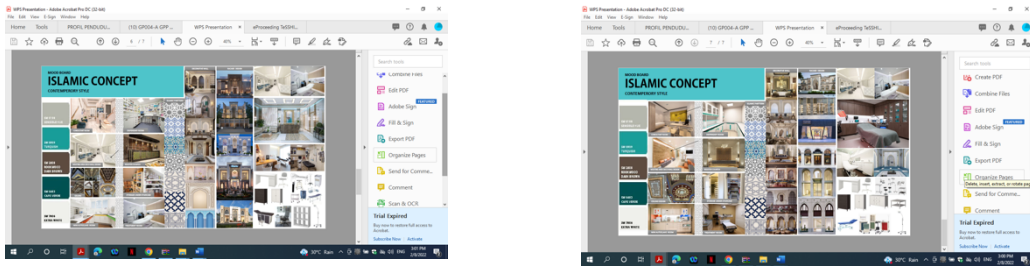
Figure 5. Islamic Concept for moodboard presentation of ideas

4.4 Moodboard Proposals and Layout Plan

The presentation of moodboard proposals and layout plans provided visual representations of the clinic's proposed interior and exterior design concepts. By juxtaposing existing conditions with proposed renovations, stakeholders better understood the design direction and aesthetic enhancements envisioned for the clinic. Furthermore, the layout plan delineated functional areas such as medicine storage, consultant rooms, treatment rooms, waiting areas, reception, and dispensary, optimizing space utilization and workflow efficiency.

Figure 6. Layout plan of the clinic

Medicine Storage Area

Design Proposal 1 – Medicine storage area

Design Proposal 2 – Medicine storage area

Consultant Room
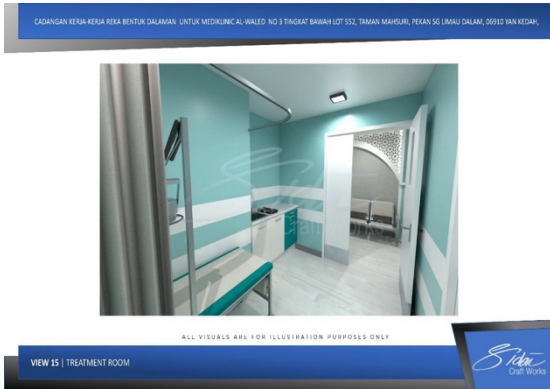
Treatment room

Design Proposal 1 – Treatment room
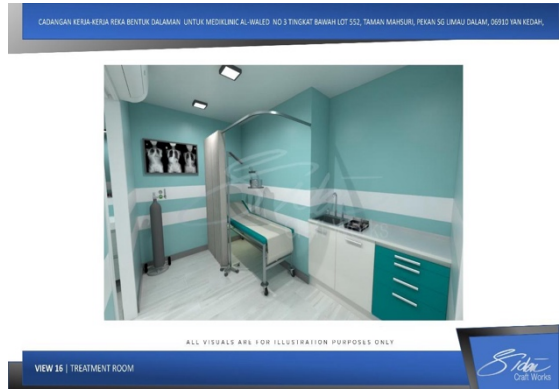
Design Proposal 2 – Treatment room

Waiting Area

Design Proposal 1 – Waiting area

Design Proposal 2 – Waiting area

Reception And Dispensary Area

Design Proposal 1 – Reception and dispensary area

Design Proposal 2 – Reception and dispensary area

4.5 Final Phase

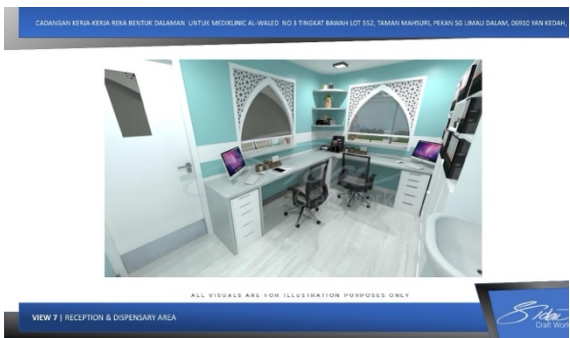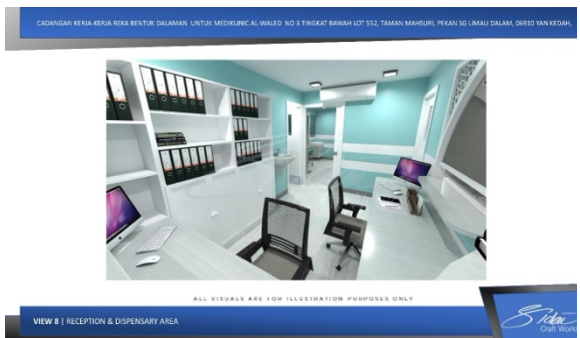The final phase encapsulated the culmination of preliminary research, design conceptualization, and execution into a cohesive vision for the clinic's identity and image. Through integrating Islamic design elements, cultural sensitivity, and stakeholder input, the clinic's interior and exterior underwent transformational changes to create a welcoming, modern, and culturally resonant healthcare environment. Moreover, the meticulous attention to detail and adherence to community-driven design principles resulted in a clinic that not only meets functional requirements but also embodies the values and aspirations of the rural community.

Figure 7. The image of the clinic entrance during construction

Certainly, here are the key findings based on the information provided about designing a private clinic's identity and image to support rural communities in Sungai Limau, Yan, Kedah:

Contextual Relevance: The design of the private clinic should consider the specific cultural, social, and environmental context of Sungai Limau, Yan, Kedah, to ensure that it resonates with the rural community.

Figure 8. The image of the clinic's new walkway

Cultural Significance: Incorporating elements of Islamic design and local cultural motifs can establish a sense of cultural identity and familiarity for the community, enhancing their comfort and connection with the clinic.

Community Engagement: Involving the rural community in the design process helps gather insights, preferences, and needs, leading to a more community-centered and inclusive clinic design.
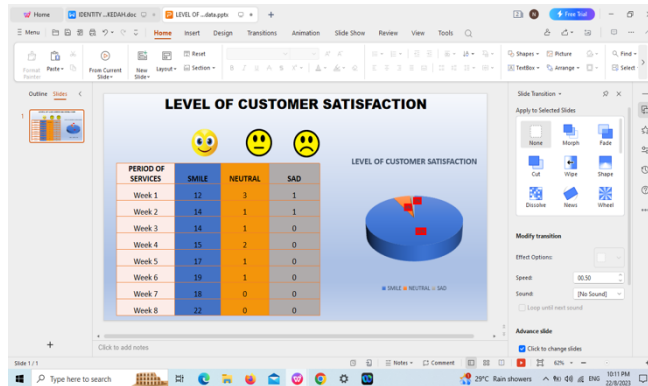

Figure 9. Survey of customer service satisfaction after the clinic's new operating
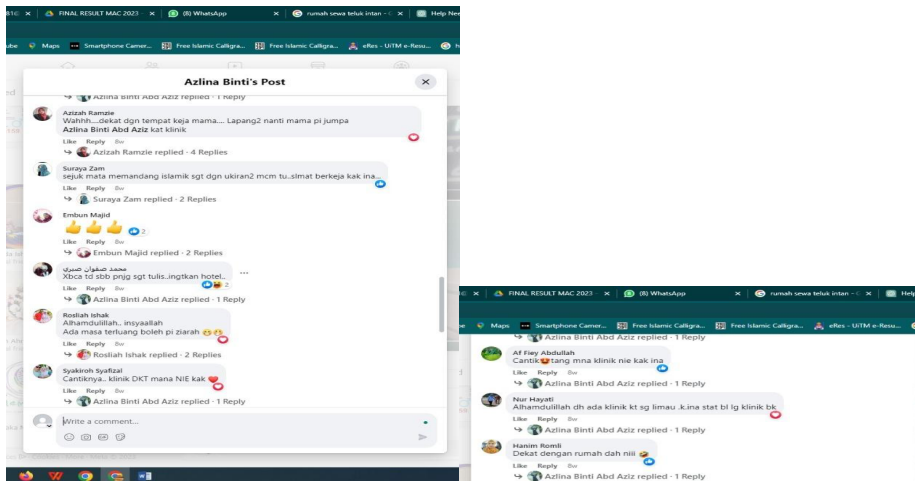
Figure 10. Customer review on Facebook

Functional Versatility: Designing multifunctional spaces within the clinic can serve dual purposes. This includes accommodating medical services and community events and strengthening the clinic's role as a community hub.
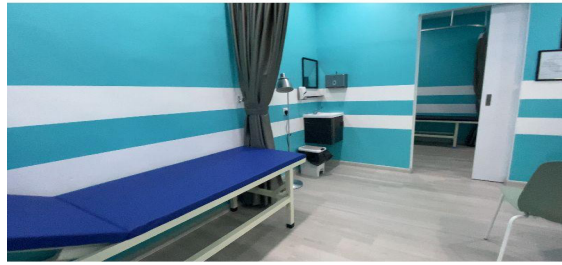
Figure 11. New treatment room

Figure 12. A staff at the consultation room

Figure 13. Dispensary counter

Inclusivity and Accessibility: Designing the clinic with features that cater to all community members, including those with disabilities or special needs, promotes inclusivity and ensures that healthcare is accessible to everyone.

Local Artisan Collaboration: Incorporating local art and crafts supports the local economy, fosters a sense of pride, and adds an authentic touch to the clinic's design.

Sustainable Design: Incorporating sustainable design practices aligns with the community's values and contributes to the long-term well-being of the environment and the people.

Language Consideration: Providing communication materials in multiple languages, including local dialects, ensures effective communication with the diverse community and promotes better healthcare understanding.

Health Education and Promotion: Integrating health education and community programs into the clinic's services can empower residents to take proactive steps toward their health and well-being.

Collaboration and Partnerships: Collaborating with local institutions and organizations fosters a holistic healthcare and community development approach, creating a support network.

Symbolism and Identity: Design elements that hold spiritual and cultural significance can enhance the clinic's identity and provide a deeper connection with the community.

Harmonizing Tradition and Modernity: Combining traditional design elements with modern medical facilities ensures that the clinic meets contemporary healthcare standards while respecting local culture and values.

By incorporating these findings into the clinic's design approach, it is possible to create a space that offers healthcare services and becomes an integral part of the community's life, promoting health, well-being, cultural identity, and community engagement.

4.6   Discussion

The discussion contextualizes the findings within the broader framework of designing healthcare spaces for rural communities, emphasizing the importance of cultural sensitivity, community engagement, and sustainable design practices. The integration of Islamic design principles, local cultural motifs, and community feedback underscores the significance of creating healthcare environments that reflect the identities and values of the communities they serve. Moreover, the findings highlight the transformative potential of inclusive design processes in fostering health equity, social cohesion, and community empowerment.

In conclusion, the results and findings from the initial phase of designing a private clinic's identity and image for rural communities in Sungai Limau, Yan, Kedah, underscore the importance of contextual relevance, cultural authenticity, and community engagement. Sustainable design practices in creating healthcare environments promote health, well-being, and community resilience. Therefore, by incorporating these insights into the design process, healthcare practitioners, designers, and policymakers can contribute to creating inclusive, culturally responsive, and socially impactful healthcare spaces tailored to the needs of rural populations.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, designing a private clinic's identity and image to support rural communities in Sungai Limau, Yan, Kedah, involves a thoughtful integration of functional and cultural elements. By considering the specific needs and values of the rural community, a successful design can create a healthcare space that not only provides medical services but also fosters a sense of belonging and well-being.

Key conclusions from the overall project include:

Cultural Sensitivity: Designing with cultural sensitivity is paramount. Incorporating local colors, patterns, and symbols can help establish a strong connection between the clinic and the community.

Inclusivity and Accessibility: Ensuring that the clinic is accessible to everyone, including those with disabilities, demonstrates a commitment to serving the entire community.

Community Engagement: Involving the community in the design process not only gathers valuable insights but also empowers residents and builds a sense of ownership.

Balancing Tradition and Modernity: Combining traditional design elements with modern medical facilities ensures that the clinic meets contemporary healthcare standards while respecting local culture.

Functional Spaces with Multiple Uses: Designing multifunctional spaces can turn the clinic into a hub for community activities and education, promoting holistic well-being.

Local Art and Sustainability: Incorporating local art and crafts enhances the aesthetic and supports local artisans. Embracing sustainable design practices aligns with the community's values and environmental awareness.

Bilingual and Inclusive Communication: Providing communication materials in local languages and dialects caters to diverse linguistic needs, promoting effective healthcare communication.

Health Promotion and Education: The clinic's design can facilitate community health programs, emphasizing prevention, awareness, and overall health improvement.

Collaboration for Community Building: Partnerships with local institutions amplify the clinic's impact by creating a network of support for community health and development.

 Symbolism and Identity: Thoughtful integration of cultural symbols, design motifs, and spiritual elements can infuse the clinic's identity with deeper meaning.

By embracing these conclusions and tailoring the clinic's design to the unique context of Sungai Limau, Yan, Kedah, the private clinic can truly become a focal point that addresses the medical, cultural, and social needs of the rural community, contributing to their overall well-being and prosperity.

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Authors Contributions

All authors have contributed to this publication through information and data findings, design proposals for the interior and exterior of the clinic, writing and editing contributions, and brainstorming ideas and concepts for the clinic.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest associated with this publication.

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