

USING INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP COMMUNITY-BASED METHODS TO DOCUMENT CULTURAL LANDSCAPES ELEMENTS

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1 ABSTRACT

Community-based studies encourage people to speak out, lending their voices and memories to studies that seek to document community awareness and perceptions of local landscapes. Sanoff (2000) states that “residents are more aware of the realities of their own environments than outside professionals”. This is a reflective critique of a community-based approach used to document the cultural landscape elements of Findikli in Rize province located near the Black Sea in the northeast of Turkey. The critique reveals advantages and limitations to research methodologies that researchers should consider as they design their community-based studies. This paper reviews six methods used in the study to document people’s awareness and perceptions of their current and past physical and social landscapes. The methods include: discussion, survey, oral history interview, photo survey, photo-voice recording and spatial mapping. Group sizes ranged from individual to small groups with 2 or 3 participants, and large groups of 4 to 8 participants. The critique presents and reviews the opportunities such as ability to recall, flexibility to work with participants and challenges such as language barriers, time limitations to collect quality and quantity of data encountered with the different methods based on group size. This paper offers researchers a practical perspective on factors to consider when implementing community-based methods.

1.1 Keywords

Cultural Landscape, Cultural Heritage Documentation, Community Participation Research Methods