

Balancing cultural shock and economic development: A study of impacts on local culture in the Mandalika Special Economic Zone

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ABSTRACT

Purpose — *This study aims to investigate the dual impacts of cultural shock and economic development in the Mandalika Special Economic Zone on the preservation of local culture.*

Method — *Employing a qualitative approach, this research utilizes in-depth interviews and observations to collect data from residents, tourists, and stakeholders within the Mandalika. The gathered insights provide a comprehensive understanding of the cultural impacts, economic developments, and changes in behavior, lifestyle, and cultural norms.*

Result — *The study reveals a range of positive and negative impacts stemming from the collision of local culture with global influences. Positive effects include the introduction of local culture to the world, economic empowerment through tourism, preservation through education, and increased cultural awareness. Conversely, negative outcomes encompass cultural dilution, excessive commercialization, clashes of values, social imbalances, and shifts in lifestyle. These changes manifest in increased social interactions, adoption of global business ethics, modern lifestyle adoption, shifts in consumption patterns, adjustments to tourist expectations, clothing influences, and more.*

Contribution — *This research contributes to the understanding of the intricate interplay between cultural shock, economic growth, and the preservation of local culture in SEZs. By delineating the positive and negative outcomes, this study informs stakeholders and policymakers about the challenges and opportunities presented by cultural shock. It underscores the necessity for balanced strategies that uphold cultural heritage while harnessing economic benefits in the context of SEZ development.*

Keywords: *cultural shock, economic development, local culture, mandalika*

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INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary era of globalization, Special Economic Zones (SEZs) have emerged as pivotal hubs for economic growth and cross-cultural interactions, as demonstrated by recent research studies (Estriani, 2019; Lidona Aprilani & Fathurrahman, 2021; Murianto et al., 2021; Permadi et al., 2019; Ramdani, 2020; Satrio, 2021; Yuli et al., 2023). One such remarkable example is the Mandalika SEZ, situated in a region known for its cultural richness and tremendous potential for tourism development. SEZs, like Mandalika, serve as unique crucibles where global and local cultures intertwine, creating an environment ripe for cultural shock—a phenomenon resulting from the collision of traditional values with foreign influences. Simultaneously, SEZs are celebrated as catalysts for economic expansion, propelling tourism, creative industries, and investment opportunities. However, this convergence of economic growth and cultural interaction raises intriguing questions regarding the preservation of local culture in the face of rapid change.

In the contemporary era of globalization, Special Economic Zones (SEZs) have become pivotal spaces where the dynamics of cultural preservation and economic advancement intersect. This review explores existing literature to elucidate the intricate interplay between cultural shock and economic development within SEZs, with a specific focus on the Mandalika Special Economic Zone.

Cultural shock in SEZs is the result of the convergence of traditional values and foreign influences. As SEZs like Mandalika attract international tourists, they serve as platforms for cross-cultural interactions, potentially leading to cultural shock. Lidona Aprilani and Fathurrahman (2021) note that these interactions can raise questions about the preservation of local culture, resonating with the broader discourse on the impact of globalization on local cultures (Suciati & Erzad, 2018; Ullah & Ming Yit Ho, 2021; Upali Pannilage, 2016).

SEZs are renowned for their transformative economic impact. Ramdani (2020) underscore the economic benefits, including job creation and investment opportunities, which are fundamental to SEZ development. However, the literature often tends to focus on these economic aspects in isolation, creating a research gap regarding the cultural consequences of such development.

Preserving local culture is an essential aspect of SEZ development. While economic growth is paramount, Estriani (2019) and Yuli et al. (2023) suggest that tourism, a significant driver of SEZ development, can promote cultural awareness and cross-cultural understanding. However, maintaining cultural

authenticity in the face of increasing tourist numbers poses a considerable challenge.

One positive aspect of the interaction between cultural shock and economic development is economic diversification. Dwyer et al. (2010) highlight how tourism-related activities diversify income streams for local communities, potentially contributing to cultural preservation by reducing dependency on traditional economic sectors and enhancing local resilience.

Cultural preservation within SEZs can also be facilitated by intergenerational knowledge transfer. Chen and Rahman (2018) emphasize the importance of older generations passing down traditional knowledge and skills to younger community members, ensuring the continuity of cultural practices and preventing their erosion over time.

External appreciation, as observed through interactions with tourists, can motivate locals to safeguard their traditions (UNESCO, 2009). This highlights the role of external influences in boosting internal motivation for cultural preservation when locals witness tourists' interest in their cultural heritage.

However, cultural shock in SEZs also presents challenges. Yeoman and McMahon-Beattie (2006) express concerns about the homogenization of cultural spaces in response to tourism demands, potentially diluting local cultural distinctiveness. Additionally, Mckercher and Du Cros (2002) raise questions about the balance between preserving cultural heritage and responding to the demands of the tourism market, highlighting the commodification of cultural practices.

The rapid growth of the tourism sector can lead to social and economic disparities within the local community. Adhikari & Goldey (2010) discuss tourism-induced inequalities, where some individuals benefit economically from tourism-related activities while others feel excluded from the economic benefits.

In conclusion, the literature review underscores the intricate interplay between cultural shock and economic development within SEZs, highlighting the necessity of balancing economic growth with cultural preservation. While SEZs offer opportunities for economic diversification, intergenerational knowledge transfer, and external appreciation, they also pose challenges related to cultural authenticity, social disparities, and responsible development. To navigate these complexities successfully, a nuanced approach and comprehensive analysis are imperative, offering valuable insights for policymakers, stakeholders, and scholars seeking to harmonize cultural preservation and economic advancement within the context of SEZs.

While extensive research has documented the transformative impact of SEZs on economies (Estriani, 2019; Haris & Ningsih, 2020; Murianto et al., 2021; Yunarni & Haris, 2020), a significant research gap persists in comprehensively understanding the interplay between cultural shock, economic development, and the preservation of local culture within SEZs. Existing studies often focus on either economic aspects or cultural impacts in isolation, neglecting the intricate dynamics that emerge when these forces collide. Moreover, limited research delves into the ways in which behavioral shifts, lifestyle changes, and cultural norms adapt to this collision. Consequently, there is a pressing need for a nuanced analysis to bridge this research gap and provide holistic insights into the coexistence of cultural preservation and economic advancement within SEZs.

This research endeavor seeks to address the aforementioned gap by delving into the multifaceted impacts of cultural shock within the Mandalika SEZ, with a particular focus on the preservation of local culture. Additionally, this study adopts an innovative approach by investigating changes not only in cultural norms but also in behavior patterns and lifestyle choices—an aspect often underexplored in existing literature. Employing a qualitative methodology that includes in-depth interviews and observations, this research strives to offer a comprehensive understanding of the intricate interactions between cultural shock, economic growth, and the dynamics of local culture.

The study's findings are expected to provide valuable insights to policymakers, stakeholders, and scholars, aiding in the development of strategies that strike a balance between economic development and the imperative to safeguard cultural heritage within the unique context of SEZs. By doing so, this research aims to contribute to a more holistic comprehension of the complex forces at play within SEZs and their profound implications for local cultures and economies alike. In essence, it seeks to shed light on how SEZs like Mandalika can evolve as laboratories of cultural integration and economic prosperity while ensuring the preservation of their distinctive cultural identities.

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative research design to provide a comprehensive exploration of the intricate relationship between cultural shock, economic development, and the preservation of local culture within the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ). A qualitative approach allows for an in-depth understanding of participants' perspectives, experiences, and behaviors in the given context.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a diverse range of participants, including local residents, tourists, SEZ stakeholders, and cultural experts. Purposive sampling ensured a variety of viewpoints. The interviews aimed to delve into participants' lived experiences, opinions, and observations regarding the impacts of cultural shock and economic growth on local culture. Participant observations were carried out within the Mandalika SEZ to gather real-time data on behavioral patterns, cultural interactions, and lifestyle changes. The observations took place during cultural events, interactions between locals and tourists, and economic activities within the SEZ. Recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim, preserving the participants' words and expressions. Thematic analysis was employed to identify patterns, themes, and insights within the data. Initial codes were generated from the transcribed interviews, and these codes were grouped into broader themes that represented significant findings. The identified themes were refined and developed based on the relationships and connections among codes. The themes provided a comprehensive understanding of the research phenomena. The themes were interpreted in the context of the research objectives, using direct quotations from the interviewees to support the interpretations. To enhance the validity and reliability of the findings, triangulation was employed by comparing data from different sources (interviews and observations) and different participants.

Ethical guidelines were strictly followed throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring their voluntary participation. Participants' privacy and confidentiality were rigorously maintained, and all data were anonymized during the analysis and reporting stages.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Cultural impact

The research findings provide a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted impact of cultural shock within the Mandalika SEZ, where the influx of international tourists has played a pivotal role in introducing the local culture to a global audience. This interaction has not only fostered a sense of pride among the local community but also aligned with previous research emphasizing the role of tourism in promoting cultural awareness and cross-cultural understanding (Ferraz & Serpa, 2021; Hafasnuddin et al., 2022)

Moreover, the study reveals that this cultural exchange has significant economic implications. Local participants reported engaging in various economic activities

geared towards tourists, resulting in increased income opportunities and enhanced livelihoods. This echoes findings in the literature that highlight the positive economic impact of tourism-related activities on local communities (Dwyer et al., 2010).

Furthermore, the research underscores the vital role of cultural activities in preserving local traditions. Through workshops, demonstrations, and cultural performances, the older generation imparts traditional knowledge and skills to younger community members, ensuring the continuity of cultural practices. This aligns with the importance of intergenerational knowledge transfer in cultural preservation, as documented in previous studies (Chen & Rahman, 2018; McLaren et al., 2013; Richards, 2018).

Additionally, the study suggests that the interaction with tourists has led to increased awareness within the local community regarding the value of their cultural heritage. This external appreciation has motivated locals to safeguard and maintain their traditions, emphasizing the potential of external influence in boosting internal motivation for cultural preservation (UNESCO, 2009, 2015).

However, the research also uncovers challenges associated with cultural shock, particularly in terms of dilution of local cultural distinctiveness. Foreign influences, especially in architectural changes, have altered the traditional appearance of certain areas within the SEZ, raising concerns about the homogenization of cultural spaces in response to tourism demands (Adams et al., 1976).

Furthermore, the commodification of cultural practices for tourism purposes has been observed, potentially diluting their authentic cultural significance. This dilemma highlights the need to strike a balance between preserving cultural heritage and responding to the demands of the tourism market (Bitušíková, 2021; UNESCO, 2015; X. Zhang et al., 2022).

Cultural shock has also led to clashes between local norms and values and those introduced by tourists, highlighting the complexities of managing interactions between global tourism and local cultural traditions (Mihayo, 2019; Syamsul Bahri, S.S., M. Hum & Wilda Wardani Sitorus, 2022; Winkelman, 1994; WU Hui-nan & LIU Ying-liang, 2022).

Additionally, the rapid growth of the tourism sector has resulted in social imbalances within the local community, with economic benefits not evenly distributed. This phenomenon aligns with the concept of tourism-induced inequalities documented in the literature (Akarsu, 2022; Tchouamou Njoya, 2023; J. Zhang & Zhang, 2022).

Finally, the research indicates that cultural shock has influenced the adoption of new lifestyles among the local population, with changes in consumption patterns, clothing choices, and technological adoption influenced by exposure to tourists and global trends. This aligns with existing literature emphasizing the (Cahigas et al., 2022; Coskun & Norman, 2021; Gu et al., 2022; López-Sanz et al., 2021) and lifestyle changes (Hannam & Diekmann, 2010).

In summary, the research provides a comprehensive view of the intricate dynamics at play within SEZs like Mandalika, where cultural shock can simultaneously drive economic empowerment and preservation of local culture while posing challenges that require careful management. These findings offer valuable insights for policymakers, stakeholders, and scholars in devising strategies that balance economic development with the imperative to safeguard cultural heritage within the context of SEZs.

Economic development

The study's findings shed light on the profound impact of cultural shock within the Mandalika SEZ, notably contributing to a significant increase in tourist arrivals. This surge in tourism has translated into substantial economic benefits, as visitors spend on accommodations, dining, tours, and local products. The expansion of the tourism sector has created a ripple effect, generating employment opportunities and boosting various economic activities. This aligns with the recognized role of SEZs in stimulating economic growth, particularly through tourism (Sharpley & Naidoo, 2010).

Furthermore, the research has unveiled the emergence of a vibrant creative industry as a direct consequence of cultural shock. Participants reported innovations in products and services that skillfully combined local cultural elements with modern influences. This diversification has given rise to unique offerings that not only cater to the interests of tourists but also serve as showcases for local artistic expressions.

In addition to economic diversification within the SEZ, the study identified numerous investment opportunities stemming from cultural shock. The burgeoning tourism sector has triggered increased demand for infrastructure development, including accommodations, transportation, and recreational facilities. Additionally, the surging demand for property and real estate within the SEZ has opened up avenues for investments in housing, resorts, and related amenities.

The overall impact of this economic development within the SEZ has been twofold. Firstly, it has led to increased incomes for local residents, with tourism-related activities and the creative industry generating additional income streams, significantly improving the overall quality of life for the community. Secondly, it has stimulated local development initiatives, with investments in infrastructure, employment opportunities, and business growth contributing to an overall enhancement of local living conditions and well-being.

However, the rapid growth of the tourism sector has also led to disparities in economic benefits among the local population. Those directly involved in tourism-related activities tend to reap the advantages, while others, particularly those not directly engaged in the sector, experience limited economic growth and face challenges related to inclusion.

Moreover, the study has uncovered concerns about the potential exploitation of natural and cultural resources due to the rapid economic development driven by tourism. This underscores the need for responsible and sustainable development practices to prevent resource depletion and cultural commodification, ensuring that the benefits of cultural shock are balanced with long-term environmental and cultural preservation.

Finally, the economic growth and cultural interactions resulting from cultural shock have triggered rapid social changes. These changes encompass shifts in social structures, urbanization trends, and alterations in social norms. Managing these changes effectively becomes essential to prevent unintended consequences on the local community's social fabric and ensure that the overall well-being of the community remains a central focus amidst the economic development brought about by cultural shock.

CONCLUSION

In the ever-evolving landscape of Special Economic Zones (SEZs), the collision of cultural shock and economic development within the Mandalika SEZ has presented a compelling panorama of challenges and opportunities. This study embarked on a qualitative journey to unravel the intricate interplay between these phenomena and their effects on the preservation of local culture. The exploration into the positive and negative impacts reveals a tapestry of insights that resonate with global discourse on cultural heritage, economic growth, and sustainability.

The positive impacts emanate from the welcoming of tourists as cultural ambassadors, fostering a global appreciation of local traditions, arts, and culinary treasures. This interaction bolsters local pride and encourages cultural

preservation efforts, as residents witness the intrinsic value of their heritage through the eyes of visitors. The economic empowerment borne from tourism activities underscores the potential of SEZs to not only drive economic diversification but also to empower local communities by providing sustainable livelihoods.

Nevertheless, the study's findings also bring to light the shadows cast by the cultural shock. The dilution of local cultural uniqueness due to architectural shifts, the risks of excessive commercialization, and clashes of cultural values underscore the intricate challenges posed by the intermingling of local culture and global influences. Social disparities arising from the uneven distribution of economic benefits remind us of the complexities of balancing economic development with social equity.

The study also unveils the transformation of behavior, lifestyle, and cultural norms that can be attributed to the cultural shock. The adoption of global business ethics, modern lifestyles, and new consumption patterns underscores the deep impact of cultural interactions on local behaviors. These changes, while presenting opportunities for growth and adaptation, also raise questions about the preservation of indigenous ways of life.

The impact on economic development, notably in the tourism sector and creative industries, is evident, painting a portrait of growth, investment, and diversification. Yet, the concomitant risks of economic imbalances and environmental exploitation challenge stakeholders to adopt sustainable strategies that safeguard the ecological and cultural foundations of the region.

In conclusion, the Mandalika SEZ embodies the juxtaposition of cultural enchantment and economic dynamism, highlighting both the promises and perils that accompany such intersections. As the global landscape continues to evolve, the findings of this study contribute to the broader discourse on the interplay between cultural heritage, economic growth, and sustainable development in SEZs. The preservation of local culture within the tumult of change requires a judicious blend of policy formulation, stakeholder engagement, and community participation. It is only through the recognition and embrace of the delicate equilibrium between culture and economy that SEZs can truly evolve into dynamic zones of progress that honor their past, engage with their present, and shape their sustainable future.

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