



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN SAFEGUARDING
INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE:
CASE STUDY OF MALACCA

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study intends to assess the influence of universal culture on local culture, which is reflected in community manifestation of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) in a World Heritage Site (WHS). The concerned community of the study is the cultural community of Malacca who are residing within the core zone and buffer zone of WHS location of Malacca. Since the physical setting of the WHS location is a rapidly urbanizing tourism city, it is unsurprising that the locals of the city are experiencing the impact of urbanization which often associates to modernization and globalization. As the community assimilates into the global mainstream of society, the distinctiveness of their local culture slowly disappears as universal culture gradually disseminates into the lives of the community. The unfavorable influence of universal culture results in common yet alarming universal community issues facing community manifestation of ICH. The community issues weaken social coherence of the community members to safeguard their endangered and declining ICH. As a result, cultural identity of the community deteriorates and cultural diversity of the WHS will potentially be at a loss. The study recognizes the community issues through the interaction between universal traits of the community with their manifestation of ICH. Universal traits are the commonly analyzed demographic and socioeconomic factors which represent the concept of diversity of the members in the cultural community. The analysis determines the statistical interactions between universal traits and community manifestation of ICH in relation to the recognized community issues from literature reviews. The survey questionnaires activity with the cultural community obtained 640 samples for further statistical analyses. Additionally, findings from semi-structured interviews evaluate the community issues from relevant authorities' perspectives. The interviews also acknowledge the current approaches to overcome the issues and safeguard ICH. These community issues are lack nurturing and transmitting local culture, acculturation and deculturation, lack sense of place attachment, contemporary over traditional cultures, weak family institution, strong ethnic enclaves, guidance of metaphysical force, conventional over indigenous knowledge input, socioeconomic inequality and lack of interest and convenience. Three objectives of community involvement control the generated guidelines of community involvement to solve the identified community issues. The objectives are to allow community opinions in decision making, to allow community responsibility over changes occurring in the community and finally to allow the community to exercise control over available resources and institution. The significance of the study is realized in emphasizing the community as the most important component to safeguard their ICH in the rapidly urbanizing City of Living Culture, such as Malacca.

ملخص البحث

تقصد هذه الدراسة لتقييم تأثير الثقافة العالمية على الثقافة المحلية الامر الذي ينعكس في مظهر مجتمعات التراث الثقافي غير المادي فيأحد مواقع التراث العالمي. المجتمع المعني بهذه الدراسة هو المجتمع الثقافي ملاكا الذين يقيمون بالمناطق الاساسية و المناطق العازلة في موقع التراث العالمي لمنطقة ملاكا. فمنذ الاعداد المادي لموقع التراث العالمي اخذ في التحضر بسرعة لمنطقة سياحية. فمن غير المستغرب ان السكان المحليين يعانون من التوسع الحضري الذي كثيرا ما يرتبط بالحدثة والعمولة. ويعتقد انه كمجتمع يستوعب في التيار الرئيسي للمجتمع العالمي، تميز ثقافتهم المحلية اخذة بالاختفاء ببطء كثقافة عالمية تنتشر تدريجيا في حياة المجتمع. ان تأثير نتائج الثقافة العالمية الغير مواتية من القواسم المشتركة التي تنذر بخطر قضايا المجتمع الدولي التي تواجهها مظاهر المجتمع في مجتمع التراث الثقافي الغير مادي. قضايا المجتمع تضعف التماسك الاجتماعي في افراد المجتمع للتعاون فيحماية تراثهم الثقافي الغير مادي المهدد بالانقراض والتدهور. ونتيجة لذلك، فان الهوية الثقافية للمجتمع تتدهور و التنوع الثقافي للتراث العالمي من المحتمل ان تكون بخسارة. تفر هذه الدراسة بقضايا المجتمعات من خلال التفاعل بين السمات العالمية للمجتمعات مع مظاهرها من التراث الثقافي الغير مادي. السمات العالمية عموما حللت العوامل الديموغرافية والاجتماعية التي تمثل مفهوم التنوع في اعضاء المجتمع الثقافي. التحليل يحدد التفاعلات الاحصائية بين السمات العالمية ومظاهر المجتمع في التراث الثقافي الغير مادي فيما يتعلق بقضايا المجتمع المعترف بها حسب الدراسات السابقة. البيانات للتحليل الاحصائي تم الحصول عليها من ٦٤٠ عينة تم جمعها من خلال مسح استبياني لدى المجتمع الثقافي. تم اجراء المقابلات الشبه منظمه لتقييم قضايا المجتمعات من وجهات نظر السلطات و لمعرفة الاتجاه الحالي للتغلب على هذه القضايا وحماية التراث الثقافي الغير مادي. هذه القضايا الاجتماعية ترعى وتنقل الثقافة المحلية، الثقيف وعدم الثقيف، الاحساس في التعلق بمكان، الثقافة المعاصرة الى جانب الثقافة التقليدية، ضعف مؤسسة الاسرة، الاطر العرقية القوية، توجيه القوة الميثافيزيقية، اصطلاحيا الى جانب مدخلات معارف السكان الأصليين، عدم المساواة الاجتماعية والاقتصادية وقلة الاهتمام والملائمة. تم حل القضايا من خلال دليل المشاركة المجتمعية، التي تم انشائها على اساس ثلاثة اهداف للمشاركة المجتمعية. تتمثل الأهداف فيالسماح لاءالمجتمع فيصنع القرار، للسماح للمسؤولية الاجتماعية الى جانب التغيرات التي تحدث في المجتمع واخيرا السماح للمجتمع بممارسة السيطرة على الموارد المتاحة والمؤسسات. الحلول والمبادئ التوجيهية يتم انتاجها ايضا للاستجابة لقضايا المجتمع المعترف بها. تنبع اهمية الدراسة من التشديد على المجتمعات باعتبارها العنصر الاكثر أهمية لحماية التراث الثقافي الغير مادي في التحضر المتسارع للثقافة الحية المدنية، مثل ملاكا.

APPROVAL PAGE

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DECLARATION

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance Between-Groups
ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage
ICHC 2003	Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention 2003
MANOVA	Multivariate Analysis of Variance
MBMB	Majlis Bandaraya Melaka Bersejarah
PERZIM	Malacca Museum Cooperation
SPSS	Statistical Package of Social Sciences
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WHS	World Heritage Site

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The intention of the study is to analyze the influence of universal culture on local culture, specifically community manifestation of Intangible Cultural Heritage [ICH] in the attempt to indicate suitable community involvement approaches to safeguard ICH. The study is conducted in one of the World Heritage Sites [WHS], Malacca. Malacca has been declared a WHS by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] on July 7th, 2008. One of the three of Malacca's WHS criterions emphasizes on the ICH expressed by Malacca multicultural community.

ICH is the human skills, practices, expression and instruments which form the transmitted practices of local cultures through generations and provide sense of identity, continuity, respect, diversity and creativity to the involved communities (UNESCO, 2009). Influence of universal culture on local culture refers to community issues discovered as the local community members assimilate in the global mainstream of society which consequently results in weak social cohesion to safeguard ICH (O'Neil, 2006; Pietrobruno, 2009; Smith and Akagawa, 2009). Community involvement is the process of engaging individuals of a particular community to cooperatively accomplish a determine activity (UNESCO, 2003).

This study provides an assessment to understand and indicate the community issues resulting from unfavorable influence of universal culture on local culture in the attempt to generate the solutions through suitable community involvement approaches to safeguard ICH.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Absence of identification on unfavorable influence of universal culture on local culture leads to vague understanding on important community issues and suitable community involvement approaches to safeguard endangered and declining ICH.

ICH is a fragile element yet an essential aspect in sustaining cultural diversity and originality in the globalization era (UNESCO, 2003). For that reason ICH has very abstract presence which means that there are many typical as well as intricate factors which influences the manifestations of ICH (UNESCO, 2003; UNESCO, 2009). It is emphasized that local cultures can only be considered as ICH when they are recognized as elements of heritage by their communities. If the communities do not recognize their local cultures as heritage, no one else would be able to decide if a certain culture is a heritage belonging of any community (White and Dillingham, 1973; Smeets, 2003; UNESCO, 2003; Raj Isar, 2004). Many related studies on the subject of local culture deterioration have frequently and extensively discussed on the typical threat to cultural diversity that is the impact of globalization (Hummon; 1992; Corcoran, 2002; Haris Abdul Wahab, 2007; Abdullah, 2011). However, studies which recognize the unfavorable influence of universal culture on local culture are scarce.

The unfavorable influence of universal culture refers to universally shared community issues raised from cultural assimilation of community members into the global mainstream of society. Literatures and researches on universal culture have discovered that behaviors of community members may change as the members assimilate into a larger cultural mainstream (Schein, 1985; Geertz, 1993; Smith, 2004; O'Neil, 2006; Pietrobruno, 2009; Smith and Akagawa, 2009). As an outcome of the assimilation process, local cultures are gradually eclipsed by the presence of universal cultures which later results in common yet alarming community issues.

Such community issues include (i) young community members particularly the youth lack time, sensitivity and knowledge on traditional local culture (Hummon; 1992; Corcoran, 2002; Haris Abdul Wahab, 2007; Saleh et al., 2007; Abdullah, 2011); (ii) highly educated community members pay more attention on conventional education input yet lack understanding on indigenous knowledge (Squire, et al., 2003; Mathias, 2012; Dei, 2012); (iii) high income community members are too occupied with pursuing materialistic wealth and are unlikely to participate in activities of the local culture (Arnstein, 1969; Ferguson and Dickens, 1999; Choi, 2011; Pyatok, 2012; Szlendak and Karwacki, 2012); (iv) women nowadays have less time for domestic responsibility which involves nurturing local culture at home as they are increasingly employed in the profesional world (Jespersion 1922; Eagly, 1978; Lavitan and Belous, 1981; Carli, 1999; Carli, 2001; Schmid, 2003; Schalkwyk, 2000) and (v) single community members have less sensitivity on communal behavioral norms as they experience less commitment in household responsibility (Dornstein and Matalon, 1998; Waite and Gallagher, 2000; Steven, 2005; Whelan, Tellez and O'Brien, 2008). These issues can be identified through differences of ICH manifestations between different groups in the community. The groups are distinguished by universal traits, such as age, income and education classifications, gender and marital status.

Under UNESCO declaration, one of the criterions emphasize on Malacca ICH, expressed by the living cultures of the city, specifically the cultural community of Malacca residing in the buffer zone and core zone of the inscribed WHS location (UNESCO, 2009). As a community living in a rapidly developing urban area what more a tourism area, the cultural community of Malacca is bound to experience typical community issues resulting from the influence of universal cultures which are affecting their ICH manifestations (Nordin Hussin, 2002, Saleh et al., 2007). Among

commonly discussed issues of Malacca cultural community are (i) socio-economic inequality (Nordin Hussin, 2002), (ii) ethnic enclaves (Tachimoto, 1998; Nordin Hussin, 2002; Chan, 2006), (iii) acculturations and cultural hybrids (Daus, 1989; Muzzi, 2002; Sarkissan, 2005; Lee, 2008; Noriah Mohamed, 2009; Azrul Affandi Sobry, 2010), and (iv) impact of modernization (Endon Mahmood, 2004, Saleh et al., 2007; MStar Online, 2008; Noriah Mohamed, 2009). These issues result in weak community cohesion and eventually deterioration of ICH manifestation. Consequently fragile ICH processes such as transmission of indigenous knowledge and skills are likely to be overlooked (UNESCO, 2009; Smith and Akagawa, 2009). Thus, the involvement of the local community in conservation and tourism development of Malacca has been frequently emphasized not only by a number of scholars, but also concerned agencies in the attempt to protect the living cultures of Malacca (Tachimoto, 1998; Nordin Hussin, 2002; Saleh et al., 2007; Heritage News, 2008; Majlis Bandaraya Melaka Bersejarah, 2012; UNESCO, 2013a).

The resources of ICH are the community's transmitted knowledge, skills and practices of their local and indigenous culture (Deacon, 2004; UNESCO, 2009). Therefore, there should be a strong connection between the community and the ICH resources and this connection should be a social process (Smeets, 2003; UNESCO, 2003; Raj Isar, 2004). Therefore, the cultural community in Malacca is in need of a strong soft-infrastructure to overcome the unfavorable influence of universal cultures and to cooperatively engage them to safeguard their ICH. This soft-infrastructure is best implemented through community involvement approaches (Smeets, 2003; Smith, 2006; UNESCO, 2006; Smith and Akagawa, 2009).

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following key questions are derived from the problem statement:

- i. Why is the ICH significant in the lives of the concerned community?
- ii. How do universal cultures influence community manifestation of ICH?
- iii. How do tourism and conservation units assist the community to safeguard ICH?
- iv. How do community involvement approaches can safeguard ICH?

1.4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

There are interactions between universal traits and community manifestation of ICH.

The deduced statistical hypotheses are summarized in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1
Hypotheses for Statistical Analyses

H_0	There are no significant relationships between Preferences in ICH and Universal Trait(s). That is, Universal Trait(s) are not associated to Preferences in ICH.
H_1	There are significant relationships between Preferences of ICH and Universal Trait(s). That is, Universal Trait(s) are associated to Preferences of ICH.
H_0	There are no significant mean differences of Commitments in ICH between-subjects of Universal Trait(s). That is, Universal Trait(s) have no linear effects on Commitment in ICH.
H_1	There are significant mean differences of Commitments in ICH between-subjects of Universal Trait(s). That is, Universal Trait(s) have linear effects on Commitment in ICH.
H_0	There are no significant mean differences within-subjects of Sensitivity in ICH between-subjects of Universal Trait(s). That is, Universal Trait(s) have no multivariate effects on Sensitivity in ICH.
H_1	There are significant mean differences within-subjects of Sensitivity in ICH between-subjects of Universal Trait(s). That is, Universal Trait(s) have multivariate effects on Sensitivity in ICH.
H_0	There are no significant mean differences within-subjects of Transmission or Embodiment of ICH between-subjects of Universal Trait(s). That is, Universal Trait(s) have no multivariate effects on Transmission or Embodiment of ICH.
H_1	There are no significant mean differences within-subjects of Transmission or Embodiment of ICH between-subjects of Universal Trait(s). That is, Universal Trait(s) have no multivariate effects on Transmission or Embodiment of ICH.
H_0	There are no significant relationships between Willingness to Safeguard ICH with Universal Trait(s). That is, Universal Trait(s) are not associated to Willingness to Safeguard ICH.
H_1	There are significant relationships between Willingness to Safeguard ICH with Universal Trait(s). That is, Universal Trait(s) are associated to Willingness to Safeguard ICH.

1.5 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the study is to analyze the influence of universal culture on community manifestation of ICH in the attempt to indicate suitable community involvement approaches in safeguarding ICH.

The influence of universal culture refers to universally shared community issues indicated by differences of ICH manifestations between different groups in the community. In this study, the differences of ICH manifestations are indicated by the quantitative and qualitative analyses to determine the interaction between 10 universal traits and community manifestation of ICH. The 10 universal traits are gender, ethnicity, origin, age classification, marital status, religion, geographical location, education classification, household income classification and occupation. Community manifestation of ICH refers to communal ICH practices, ICH societal condition and willingness to safeguard ICH. Subsequently after the community issues are indicated, community involvement approaches to safeguard ICH are generated as the solutions to the distinguished community issues.

Therefore, the objectives for the study are:

- i. to identify the significance of ICH in the lives of the concerned community,
- ii. to analyze the influence of universal culture on community manifestation of ICH,
- iii. to identify contributions of tourism and conservation units in Malacca towards safeguarding ICH, and
- iv. to recommend methods and guidelines to instill and enhance community involvement in safeguarding ICH.

1.6 RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE

This study provides an analysis on the influence of universal culture on community manifestation of ICH. The study also investigates the significance of community involvement to safeguard ICH in one of the inscribed WHS.

The application of the WHS listing of Malacca spent over ten years of efforts (Heritage News, 2008). Though the inscription has brought joy to Malaysian governments and citizens, particularly the Malacca people, the review of the heritage experts are not all positive as there is a huge amount of work to be done in order to maintain and enjoy the WHS status. Strict rules and concerns are addressed especially on the legalities of tourism development, inappropriate exploitation of heritage elements, superficial tangible appearances, motor traffic, and lack of local involvement in sustainable development strategy (UNESCO, 2008b).

The inscription invites many tourism opportunities for Malacca, but regardless of the turnover from tourism attractions, particularly the superficial tourism development (MStar Online; 2008; MStar Online, 2009; Bernama, 2012; Bernama, 2013); the government agencies should not misinterpret the motive of tourists visits (Heritage News, 2008). More attention should be placed on consultations with foreign and local heritage expertise as well as involvement of the local communities in the attempt to deepen appreciations, sensitivity and understanding on cultural heritages and the real significance of WHS, on top of tourism opportunities (Heritage News, 2008; UNESCO, 2008b). Without the locals who take pride in civic responsibilities, more importantly the expressions of their cultural heritages, the tourists will not return and it will be impossible to have continuity of efforts to protect and sustain Malacca heritages. Most alarmingly, the living cultures of Malacca would eventually decline and the status of WHS would be in danger.

This study investigates the importance of community involvement to safeguard ICH in one of the inscribed WHS. As well as contributing to tourism and conservation industries, community involvement strengthens social cohesion and enhances the sense of cultural identity and diversity (Hough, 1990; Thompson, 1999; Cohen, 2001; Day, 2002; Smeets, 2003; UNESCO, 2003; Smith, 2006; Saleh et al., 2007; Lewicka, 2008; Abdullah, 2011). The analysis of the study focuses on the influence of universal cultures on community manifestation of CH. As a community residing in a universally known urban historical city, the community experiences the assimilation of universal cultures which have weakened the social cohesion to protect their local culture (Schein, 1985; Geertz, 1993; Smith, 2004; O'Neil, 2006; Pietrobruno, 2009; Smith and Akagawa, 2009).

According to UNESCO (2003), safeguarding of ICH commences from community involvement. This means that community manifestation of ICH is to be comprehensively portrayed in the means of community involvement approaches. As one of the WHS, community involvement in safeguarding ICH, progresses of tourism growth and efforts of conservation activities in Malacca are expected to have a symbiosis relationship (Heritage News, 2008; UNESCO, 2008b). The contribution of the community in tourism and conservation industries and vice versa demonstrates unity between the political, economy and social aspects of the place (White and Dillingham, 1973; Smeets, 2003; UNESCO, 2003; Raj Isar, 2004).

This study identifies suitable community involvement approaches in safeguarding ICH in relevant to community issues which are emphasized by influence of universal cultures on community manifestations of ICH. With anticipation, the suggested methods and guidelines positively contribute to strengthening social cohesion and sense of local cultural identity of Malacca as one of the WHS.