

# POINT OF VIEW IN ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY (THE IMPACT OF CULTURE AND MAN POWER IN HOSPITALITY PERCEPTION)

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## **Abstrak**

*ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) impacts to Indonesia. However, the impacts are expected to be factors of the better development and improvement of Indonesian. This implies that Indonesian people should be ready to face at least four big challenges such as a high number of peoples growth, education, culture, and economy. These challenges might be overcome by enhancing the culture tourism program in Indonesia. This paper was aimed to explore ideas of supporting factors for this culture tourism. It was believed that ways to support were inviting tourists e.g. backpackers, having Job Training and Students Exchange Program, having ASEAN Youth Exchange Program, and improving the infrastructure.*

**Kata kunci:** *AEC, Peoples Growth, Education, Culture, Economy, and Culture Tourism*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The regulation of ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) will bring positive and negative impacts to Indonesia. Those impacts are expected to be factors of the better development and improvement of Indonesian in facing the ASEAN free trading. Indonesian people should be ready to face at least four big challenges like a high number of peoples growth, education, culture and economy. They should collaboratively find the way how to overcome these big challenges.

Facing the ASEAN free trading doesn't mean missing our traditional culture. The acceptance on the impact of outsider culture should be wisely filtered by the local ones and religions as the foundation of lives. Therefore, we should principally protect the heritage of our culture towards the globalization era. As it was believed by Gong, Yi [1] that analyzing the change faces and current status of the cultural diversity in the hospitality workplaces, discussing the opportunities, benefits and challenges from the culturally diverse workforce, and providing practical recommendations that might help human resource managers to successfully deal with cultural diversity issues.

Basically, ASEAN countries have similar historical background among them since years ago. Geographically, countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, Vietnam and Thailand have cultural and trading corporations since the era of Sriwijaya and Majapahit kingdoms. Their relationships kept running and developed in the form of tangible and intangible aspects of culture. One of real example comes up when Jakarta has Kampung Melayu in which the first population was the people from West Thailand. Some other examples were provided in arts, traditional clothes, foods and cultural tourism.

Cultural tourism helps preserve the cultural and historical heritage. Tourism makes an important contribution to culture and historical heritage by providing means for keeping the traditions alive and finances the protection of heritage as well as increasing visitor appreciation of that heritage. In short - more public interest and more funds for protection. Tourism interest in the heritage site can be the key in providing political support for the management and protection of the heritage in question. Well-managed cultural tourism can encourage the revival of traditions and the restoration of sites and monuments. Cultural tourism makes it possible to find the balance between protection and the use of heritage. If overused, the site is ruined, and there will be no future income. In such a way there is a natural need for sustainable thinking.

Cultural tourism brings extra income to culture and is thus a very important supporting factor for culture itself. According to Khairiah [2], demands of people for cultural tourism are increasing and these encourage the development of products sales and service. And, as cultural tourism helps differentiate demands and expand the season, it is essential in further developing the tourism industry. Cultural tourism is more in line with modern trends and is thus likely to see a further increase within the tourism sector. Cultural tourism is in line with the demand created by the rising educational levels, the aging population, the increasing economic role of women, the increase in short trips and the general search for meaning among people. The so-called theme parks have created increased interest in cultural tourism and internet is ideal to promote cultural tourism. The cultural tourists spend more money than the average tourist and travel for a longer time. As the increasing pace of life creates need for free time and preservation of past, cultural tourism becomes big business. We are aware that cultural tourism becomes big business but we also have to find a good way to overcome the negative impact of it.

## 2 DISCUSSION

The beauty of panorama and the wonderful sites become the premium assets of local government. The existence of city park called BKB and other tourism and historical sites have already increased the peoples level of economy. The citizens lives increase and the city income grows rapidly. Besides, the native friendly courtesy which has been popular since hundred years ago gives a precious value added. The local people with their sweetest smile and warm greetings in welcoming guests give a great satisfaction to tourists. More over the miscellaneous tasty food and beverage and the variety of arts, traditional songs and dances guaranty the long stay and give them good impression. These Assets enable the tourists to spend their vocation in this city. However, the best and most effective promotion should be set up to invite the global visitors or tourists to visit Palembang.

## 2.1 Back Packers

As a self-organized tourist, backpackers travel to many destinations with no fixed agenda. They usually travel freely with limited budget that they do not have to stay in an expensive hotel. They even choose to make a tent especially when they travel to certain places like beaches, villages or in the mountainous areas. Backpackers usually avoid luxurious things but explore their time with a nature instead. They learn and interact with local people, local tradition and culture and local food and beverage deeply.

The promotion through these backpackers is very effective since they will inform to the other tourists from mouth to mouth. They will describe everything they impress to others. Therefore, we have to be happy and ready to welcome them since they will give a potential booming in the future. Their good experiences will invite more tourists and investors to our country especially local city which, of course, will receive the rapid local economic growth. Do not be afraid of facing and receiving the negative impact of their culture. We must certainly be ready to protect ourselves and maintain our cultures. To be opened to a new culture doesn't mean vanishing ours. On the other hand, our culture and traditional product and service become the strong values to sell and serve to tourists. These are the real essence of culture.

## 2.2 Job Training and Students Exchange

Hospitality industry needs cultural balance. Tourism is not about 3S (Sun, Sand and Sex) but it changes the direction to the environment matter.

The development of hotels, which is followed by the growth of hotel chain, should be more active in developing tourism education. Urgently there should be university chain in ASEAN to collaborate and exchange students and lecturers to develop hospitality and tourism industry, to share culture and knowledge and to counter balance the moral and traditional values among them and to have a balanced standard of graduate of universities and colleges in ASEAN. The university chain is also proposed to give chances to students to have Job Training. The opportunities given to these students provide more professional candidate of manpower with the same level of skills in ASEAN in tourism and hospitality industries that makes it easier for hotels to do recruitment of global employees.

The two collaborations, students and lecturers exchanges and job training, are primarily needed in ASEAN to enhance the rapid growth of tourism and hospitality industries and to maximize the rapid growth of economic affairs which relates to the betterment of local peoples income.

## 2.3 ASEAN Youth Exchange

In spite of all the collaboration in job training and students and lecturers exchange, the local government should also consider an exchange of manpower and youth in any level of education. Those two programs give local youth opportunities to broaden their mind, skills, experiences and knowledge. The power of these exchanges also enrich the value of local cultures and enlarge the awareness of native cultures protection. The youth and manpower exchanges also give great contribution to the local peoples welfare since the tax policies support the local city development.

The youth exchange program, which has running by the government through Asias cruise

ship since years ago, has given great contribution to the modernization of youth of ways of thinking towards the development of mental and working ethics and therefore it should be developed to the collaboration of each ASEAN countries youth exchange to empower the high quality of manpower, hospitality and tourism industries of business among them.

There should be programs of students exchange of any level of education and manpower exchange in any level of tourism and hospitality industries to explore every ASEAN countries potency in the betterment of economic level.

## 2.4 Infrastructure

To facilitate all the services in hospitality and tourism industries, the government should plan to build complete supporting infrastructure like street and bridges, transportation, public facilities and hotels. All these supporting infrastructure are vital to give excellent service to the tourists. Their impressions towards these facilities, especially hotels, will be the trending topic among them that it enhances their interest to come or come back to this city.

Hotels are interpreted as a place to stay for public with commercially managed which consist of several rooms and also provide food and beverage [3]. Based on the data of the local government, there were 16 hotels with 1407 numbers of rooms after the National Olympic Games (PON) or 3 more additional hotels compared to numbers before that event. The numbers increased after the SEA Games and ISG to become 46 hotels with 3892 rooms available. In the future plans or at the end of 2015, there will be 12 new hotels with 1561 room and at the end of 2018, there will be another 12 hotels with another 2020 rooms. Then, at the end of 2018, it is predicted that there will be the total of 70 hotels with 7473 rooms and 1440 athlete villages with 10053 rooms. Those infrastructure developments will hopefully give excellent service of stay to the tourists

## 3 CONCLUSION

As the conclusion of this discussion, the following points are listed:

1. The local tourism and hospitality industries should be explored, give better economic growth of the local city and enhance the better income of the local population.
2. Welcoming the foreign tourists and cultures should prevent the negative effect of their culture and maintain the local cultures values through the filter of moral and religious aspects of local city.
3. The most effective efforts of local government in promoting local tourism and hospitality industries business are through:
  - (a) Welcoming backpackers
  - (b) Developing the numbers of job trainings and students and lecturers exchange
  - (c) Developing the numbers of ASEAN youth exchange program, and
  - (d) Building new infrastructures

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