

PRESERVING MALAY CULTURE AMIDST MODERNIZING CHALLENGES

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Keywords	Abstract
Cultural Preservation Malay Culture Modernization Multicultural Education	<i>This research explores the challenges in preserving Malay culture in Batam amidst the ongoing wave of modernization. Using a systematic literature review method, the study evaluates 16 relevant Google Scholar articles published from 2015 to 2025. The analysis underscores the necessity for comprehensive multicultural education and supportive policies to enhance cultural awareness and mitigate potential societal conflicts. The development of tourism, aligned with cultural preservation efforts, is identified as a viable approach to increase economic value, ensuring that cultural integrity remains intact. The study emphasizes the crucial role of youth and local community involvement in sustaining cultural continuity. Results indicate that a collaborative approach involving all stakeholders is essential to maintain the relevance of Malay culture in today's modern context. The study provides strategic recommendations for policy development and fostering cross-sector collaboration, aiming to balance modern growth with cultural needs successfully. These findings highlight the importance of integrating cultural heritage within developmental strategies to preserve the distinctive identity of Malay culture in Batam.</i>
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INTRODUCTION

Urbanization and modernization have profoundly impacted local cultures, a phenomenon prominently observed in Batam. As an industrial hub in Indonesia, Batam has undergone significant shifts that have reshaped its physical landscape, social structures, and traditional cultural practices. This transformation is particularly evident in the declining presence of traditional Malay houses, such as the Limas Potong, which are now confined to specific areas like Kampung Melayu and Nongsa District. This trend indicates a broader shift where modern architecture and lifestyles replace traditional cultural elements (Monikasari & Fitriyanti, 2023).

The urgency of this research arises from the visible impacts of urbanization on traditional architecture, not only in Batam but in urban settings worldwide. The dwindling number of Malay Limas Potong houses signifies the rising efficiency in construction practices, limited land availability, and growing interest in modern architectural styles (Monikasari & Fitriyanti, 2023). Similar patterns in various urban areas point to a cultural shift toward modern priorities.

The social and cultural changes from urbanization are significant, transitioning communities from agrarian societies to urban lifestyles that promote individualism and competitiveness, complicating previously simplistic social stratification (Surya, 2016; Syah, 2013). Communities like the Sea Tribe in Batam adapt by integrating their spatial and social practices to accommodate modern life while preserving cultural identity (Chanet et al., 2022). The adaptation creates new social formations, creating cultural enrichment and tension (Surya, 2016). The challenge lies in balancing development with cultural heritage preservation, ensuring that traditional cultural identities are not entirely lost to modernization.

Previous studies highlight the critical role of ethnic diversity in preserving local culture, especially in areas with significant demographic changes. The rich ethnic tapestry can enhance cultural richness and foster community identity and cohesion. For instance, in Tana Toraja, cultural empowerment and education have effectively preserved multicultural values (Mubarok et al., 2024). However, globalization threatens local traditions, often leading to cultural homogenization, which risks eroding unique cultural identities and practices (Aditia, 2024).

A gap exists in effectively integrating digital media and community education to preserve cultural traditions amid inevitable globalization. Additionally, governmental policies are vital in balancing cultural preservation with economic development in rapidly growing cities (Steelyana, 2024). As cultural tradition bearers, the younger generation is strategically positioned in preservation efforts. They can bridge traditional practices within a modern context through education and digital media.

While urbanization and modernization present significant challenges, cultural preservation opportunities through integrative strategies exist. Digital technology, education, and inclusive policies are pivotal in sustaining cultural heritage amidst change. A holistic approach involving all stakeholders can ensure the continuity and development of Malay cultural identity in Batam amidst modernization challenges. This study seeks to fill the identified gaps by providing strategic recommendations and highlighting the need for cross-sector collaboration to effectively sustain cultural preservation in Batam.

METHOD

This study utilized a systematic literature review to analyze the challenges of preserving Malay culture in Batam amidst modernization. This method was chosen due to its efficacy in integrating and synthesizing existing knowledge and identifying gaps in current literature (Schwartz et al., 2022; Snyder, 2024). Data collection involved a comprehensive literature search using the Google Scholar database. The search focused on the period between 2015 and 2025, using keywords such as "Challenges of Malay Cultural Preservation Amidst Modernization in Batam." Initially, 153 articles were identified, but 16 articles were deemed most pertinent through a rigorous selection process based on relevance.

The inclusion and exclusion criteria ensured the quality and relevance of the data. The inclusion criteria involved articles explicitly discussing aspects of Malay cultural preservation in Batam, published in English or Indonesian. The exclusion criteria eliminated articles irrelevant to the topic, lacking empirical data, or in-depth analysis. Data analysis followed a thematic approach (Rewhorn, 2018). This involved categorizing data based on education, policy, youth participation, tourism, and cultural identity. Results were synthesized to identify consistent relationships and patterns, and knowledge gaps were analyzed to highlight areas needing further research.

Based on the analysis, strategic and contextual recommendations for supporting Malay cultural preservation in Batam were developed. These recommendations included enhancing community participation, strengthening cultural preservation policies, and utilizing technology in cultural promotion. However, it is acknowledged that this approach depends on available literature, which could introduce biases or not fully

represent the complexity of the issue. Thus, it is advised that these findings be complemented with future field research and empirical studies to acquire a more comprehensive perspective.

RESULT

This study examines the complex landscape of preserving Malay culture in Batam amidst ongoing modernization. Utilizing a comprehensive approach, the research synthesizes insights from 16 relevant studies, highlighting key challenges and opportunities across various domains: education, policy, tourism, youth participation, and cultural diversity.

Table 1 is an essential component of the research to provide a structured overview of the diverse challenges and strategies associated with preserving Malay culture in Batam. It succinctly encapsulates the findings from 16 studies, outlining their objectives, main conclusions, implications, and recommendations for future directions. This organized presentation allows readers to quickly grasp the key insights from each study, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted issues at hand. By highlighting the roles of multicultural education, policy implementation, youth engagement, and tourism development, the table serves as a foundational reference point that supports the broader narrative of the research. It helps identify both the gaps and opportunities in current cultural preservation efforts, thereby guiding strategic interventions required to maintain and promote Malay cultural heritage amidst the pressures of modernization.

Table 1. Summary of Studies on Malay Cultural Preservation in Batam Amidst Modernization

No	Penulis & Judul	Tujuan	Hasil Utama	Implikasi	Arah Lanjut
1	Hafid (2020) - Multicultural Education in Batam	To examine the role of multicultural education in attitudes toward diversity	Enhances understanding and reduces social conflicts	Strengthens social cohesion	Integrate Malay values in education
2	Marpaung (2023) - Policy Advancement of Malay Culture in Batam	To understand the implementation of Malay cultural policies in Batam	Implementation is suboptimal, with low participation	Needs government support funding	Increase local cultural awareness
3	Hafid & Mujrimin (2023) - Transformation of Islamic Education in Batam	To analyze challenges in Islamic education in Batam	Strengthens Malay cultural identity	Integrates culture into education	Further studies on the integration of cultural education
4	Dailami et al. (2024) - Readiness of Malay Culture for Tourism	To assess the readiness of Malay culture for tourism	High conservation awareness needs government support	Tourism must align with the culture	Longitudinal studies & quantitative analysis
5	Bastian et al. (2024) - Integration of Malay Culture in Education	To develop education based on Malay culture	Cultural integration in the curriculum enhances cultural understanding	Essential for cultural preservation	Explore program sustainability
6	Hendra & Shulha (2024) - Malay Dance in Malay Society	To understand the role of Malay dance in cultural identity	Dance is crucial for identity unity	Needs collaboration for preservation	Focus on innovation in cultural preservation
7	Putra et al. (2024). - Preservation of Traditional Malay Costume for Riau Youth	To preserve traditional costumes for Riau youth	Vital for cultural identity	Needs educational policy collaboration	Analyze the economic and social impact

8	Nursalim et al. (2024) - Maintenance of Malay Language in Batam	To understand the maintenance of the Malay language	Language is vital for identity and social cohesion	Language strengthens culture	Language Preservation Strategy in Batam
9	Hutabri et al. (2024). - Digital Screen Printing Training with Malay Motifs for Batam Youth	Empower youth through Malay motif screen printing	Enhances the local economic culture	Culture strengthens the community economy	Focus on distribution marketing
10	Hidayuwati et al. (2024) - Role of Batam's Disperindag in Empowering the Malay Weaving Industry	Role of Batam's Disperindag in the Weaving Industry	The weaving industry strengthens the economic culture	Government support is crucial	Model for Sustainable Cultural & Economic Development
11	Saputri & Tarwiyani (2023). - Jogi Dance in Batam: Youth Participation in Cultural Preservation	Youth participation in Jogi dance	Significant youth involvement	Increase role of the young generation	Youth awareness involvement
12	Shaesa (2020) - Plan for Establishing a Malay Cultural Museum in Batam	Plan for establishing a Malay museum	Museums are crucial for historical preservation	Strengthens cultural heritage	Museum design promotion planning
13	Mulda et al. (2021) - Malay Culture in Batam's Bureaucratic System	Malay culture in the bureaucratic system	Malay cultural values are important in bureaucracy	Preserving cultural values	Challenges of culture in modern bureaucracy
14	Permata & Syafrini (2022). - Amalgamation Marriage: Family Resilience in Malay-Javanese Marriages	Family resilience in Malay-Javanese marriages	High cultural adaptation tolerance	Maintains family stability	Cultural preservation in diversity
15	Lawita et al. (2024). - Analisis Potensi Pengembangan Kawasan Desa Wisata Di Pulau Galang	Potential development of tourism in Pulau Galang	Importance of planning coordination	Cultural preservation in tourism	Evaluate tourism development factors
16	Sutrisno & Sidabutar (2022) - Desain pengembangan kampung Melayu Nongsa sebagai identitas wisata pesisir kota Batam	Evaluate the potential of Kampung Melayu as a tourism identity	Infrastructure funding challenges	Harmonize the cultural environment	Potential & strategy for culture-based tourism

Education and Policy

Multicultural education has emerged as a powerful tool in strengthening cultural awareness and social harmony, particularly in diverse regions such as Batam. Studies by Hafid (2020) reveal that incorporating multicultural perspectives into educational curricula nurtures tolerance, minimizes social conflicts, and enhances mutual understanding among students from different backgrounds. Furthermore, the research of Hafid & Mujrimin (2023) underscores the importance of integrating Malay values within Islamic educational frameworks, emphasizing that when cultural heritage is woven into religious and secular lessons, it significantly reinforces individual and communal Malay identities. These efforts have direct implications for knowledge transfer and shaping students' attitudes toward cultural diversity.

Despite these advancements, policy implementation remains a notable challenge. Marpaung (2023) critically observes that while government policies aimed at promoting and preserving Malay culture do exist, their execution is often lacking in both scope and depth. Insufficient funding, fragmented coordination between stakeholders, and limited community engagement have all contributed to suboptimal results. As a result, the intended goals of nurturing a cohesive, culturally conscious society are often unmet. Addressing these shortcomings requires enhanced governmental commitment and the

active involvement of local communities, ensuring that cultural preservation policies are not just theoretical but practiced at all levels of society.

The collaboration between educational institutions and policy makers must be strengthened to close the policy-practice gap. Schools, religious organizations, and cultural associations must work hand-in-hand with local governments to create programs encouraging participation and fostering pride in Malay cultural heritage. This involves updating curricula and providing professional development for educators, organizing community workshops, and developing public campaigns that raise awareness about the importance of cultural preservation. By prioritizing a holistic, inclusive approach that values both formal education and informal community learning, the sustainability of Malay culture in Batam can be more effectively secured amidst ongoing modernization.

Tourism Development and Infrastructure

Research by Dailami et al. (2024) emphasizes the preparedness of the Malay Tourism presents significant opportunities and challenges for cultural preservation in Batam, particularly within the Malay community. The authors point out that, when managed thoughtfully, tourism can create new economic opportunities and incentivize communities to maintain and celebrate their cultural identity. Attractions such as traditional houses, culinary experiences, and cultural festivals have the potential to draw visitors while simultaneously safeguarding centuries-old practices.

However, heritage-based tourism's success relies heavily on effective planning and coordination among stakeholders. Lawita et al. (2024) and Sutrisno & Sidabutar (2022) stress the particular need to balance tourism growth in areas like Pulau Galang and Kampung Melayu Nongsa with the imperative to preserve cultural authenticity. Unchecked tourism can threaten local traditions, commodifying or even eroding what makes the culture distinctive. Moreover, the researchers identified key infrastructural challenges, such as limited funding, inadequate facilities, and a lack of comprehensive strategies integrating cultural preservation with tourism development.

To maximize the benefits and minimize the risks, adopting a sustainable, community-based approach to tourism is essential. This should involve participatory planning that includes voices from residents, cultural experts, businesses, and government authorities. By ensuring that tourism initiatives genuinely reflect and respect local values, Batam can position itself as a model for how cultural heritage can be sustained and promoted through tourism. In the long run, investing in infrastructure, capacity-building, and awareness-raising among the community and tourists will be fundamental in achieving a harmonious blend between cultural preservation goals and economic advancement.

Youth and Local Community Participation

The active involvement of youth has proven to be a pivotal factor in preserving and revitalizing Malay culture in Batam. According to Saputri & Tarwiyani (2024), participation in traditional artistic expressions like the Tari Jogi allows young people to connect with their heritage. It fosters a sense of pride and ownership over local customs. Similarly, Hutabri et al. (2024) demonstrate how young entrepreneurs contribute to cultural preservation through innovative economic activities like digital screen printing, incorporating traditional Malay motifs. These creative endeavors help sustain local culture and open up new avenues for economic empowerment among the younger generation.

Community-based cultural activities play an equally substantial role in strengthening cultural identity. Local festivals, language workshops, and art exhibitions provide collective learning and engagement opportunities. These initiatives enhance intergenerational dialogue, allowing younger and older community members to share perspectives and wisdom about their cultural heritage. Such grassroots efforts are essential for ensuring that the transmission of traditions is dynamic and adaptive to modern contexts, rather than static or purely ceremonial.

Additionally, preserving the Malay language is a strategic priority for maintaining social cohesion. Nursalim et al. (2024) highlight that language is a vital carrier of cultural values, beliefs, and expressions, making it indispensable for sustaining communal identity. Through formal education, community programs, or digital platforms, efforts to maintain and revitalize the Malay language strengthen communal bonds and cultural resilience. By prioritizing youth engagement and fostering a strong sense of community, Batam can better ensure the continuity and vibrancy of Malay cultural heritage amid ongoing modernization.

Heritage Preservation and Cultural Identity

Preserving tangible heritage, such as historical sites and traditional artifacts, remains a cornerstone in maintaining Malay cultural identity in Batam. Shaesa (2020) advocates for establishing a dedicated museum that would not only conserve Malay history but also provide a dynamic space for education and cultural engagement. A museum can be a central hub where the community and visitors can access authentic narratives, view historical artifacts, and participate in heritage-themed programs. Such initiatives ensure that valuable cultural memories are not lost to modernization, and instead, are actively transmitted to future generations in a meaningful way.

In tandem with this, integrating cultural values into education systems has shown significant promise in deepening students' understanding and appreciation of their heritage. Bastian et al. (2024) demonstrate how curriculum innovation—by embedding local wisdom, customs, and values into everyday learning—helps cultivate students' stronger sense of identity. Schools serve as platforms for both formal knowledge transfer and informal exposure to cultural practices, fostering pride and respect for Malay traditions. This educational approach not only benefits native Malay students but also encourages cross-cultural understanding in increasingly diverse classrooms.

Furthermore, as highlighted by Putra et al. (2024), inheritance and display of traditional attire extend beyond symbolic meaning to become everyday practices that reinforce regional identity. Wearing and producing traditional clothing supports local industries and upholds the continuity of craft skills. Additionally, Mulda et al. (2021) emphasize the influence of core cultural values within governmental bureaucracies. By embedding core Malay principles into administrative practices, regional governance becomes more rooted in local wisdom, aligning public service with integrity, mutual respect, and communal harmony. These multifaceted strategies demonstrate how tangible heritage, education, and value systems play interconnected roles in safeguarding and promoting Malay cultural identity in Batam.

Cultural Diversity and Bureaucracy

Cultural diversity is a dynamic and defining feature of Batam's social fabric, particularly as urbanization and migration unite individuals from various backgrounds. Permata & Syafrini (2022) highlight the unique challenges and opportunities of mixed Malay-Javanese marriages, emphasizing that adaptability and mutual understanding are essential for family resilience. These interethnic unions serve as microcosms of broader community integration efforts, where cultural negotiation and openness can foster harmony while maintaining each group's distinct traditions. Through such everyday acts of adaptation, preserving core Malay values becomes a collaborative and evolving process.

Bureaucracy and government institutions also play a vital role in shaping how society preserves and promotes cultural heritage. Hidayuwati et al. (2024) highlight the Disperindag (Department of Industry and Trade) and its proactive involvement in supporting the traditional weaving industry. By empowering artisans and encouraging the continuation of traditional crafts, the government is protecting cultural heritage and strengthening local economies. These efforts ensure that cultural preservation is not

isolated from economic development but is instead seen as a mutually reinforcing process that benefits the broader community.

The synergy between cultural diversity, effective governance, and economic empowerment illustrates the importance of cross-sector collaboration. Bringing together families, community leaders, industry, and government agencies allows for the development of culturally sensitive and economically viable strategies. Community-driven approaches that involve all stakeholders can create sustainable models for development, where cultural heritage and economic growth go hand in hand. Such collaborative frameworks are crucial to address modernization's complexities without sacrificing the local culture's richness and resilience.

Preserving Malay culture in Batam requires an integrated approach involving education, policy, youth participation, and collaboration across sectors. The results establish a foundation for practical recommendations to enhance future cultural preservation efforts, balancing the traditional with the modern in an ever-evolving cultural landscape.

The results should be presented clearly and briefly in the same section. The research results could be supplemented with tables, figures, or graphs (separate writing terms). Avoid presenting similar data in a separate table. The analysis should answer the stated gap. The qualitative data, e.g., interview results, is discussed in paragraphs. The references contained in the introduction should not be rewritten in the discussion. A comparison to the previous studies should be presented.

DISCUSSION

This research discusses the intricate challenges and opportunities in preserving Malay culture in Batam amidst modernization, examining aspects such as education, policy, tourism, youth participation, and cultural diversity—all of which play crucial and interconnected roles. Education emerges as a powerful medium for nurturing tolerance and cultural appreciation. The studies by Hafid (2020) and Hafid & Mujrimin (2023) demonstrate that multicultural education and integrating Malay values into Islamic teaching can effectively reduce social conflict and deepen communal identity. On the other hand, as Marpaung (2023) points out, the execution of cultural policies in Batam is often incomplete, hampered by insufficient government support and a lack of robust participation from local communities. This gap signals the need for more substantial commitment, better funding, and more inclusive engagement of various stakeholders to optimize the preservation of cultural values during rapid development.

Tourism development, meanwhile, presents both significant opportunities and complex challenges. The works of Dailami et al. (2024) highlight the readiness of the Malay community to welcome cultural tourism, which can generate economic benefits while reinforcing traditional values and practices. However, Lawita et al. (2024) and Sutrisno & Sidabutar (2022) caution against unplanned or poorly coordinated tourism initiatives, noting that infrastructure and funding limitations could undermine economic and heritage goals. Effective planning, participatory approaches, and community-based tourism models are essential to ensure that tourism initiatives do not commodify or lose cultural authenticity but instead create synergies between economic advancement and the safeguarding of cultural heritage.

Youth engagement and community participation stand at the heart of cultural sustainability. As depicted in the studies by Saputri & Tarwiyani (2024) and Hutabri et al. (2024), youth involvement in activities such as traditional dance and creative economic ventures, like digital screen printing with Malay motifs, strengthens cultural understanding and community resilience. These activities help foster pride, creativity, and financial independence among young people, ensuring that cultural practices remain dynamic and adaptive. Furthermore, Nursalim et al. (2024) draw attention to preserving the Malay language as an essential element for maintaining social cohesion and cultural

identity; such efforts are vital, given that language carries the values and expressions fundamental to communal life.

Preserving tangible and intangible heritage further reinforces community identity and intergenerational linkage. Initiatives such as establishing a Malay cultural museum (Shaesa, 2020) and integrating cultural themes into educational curricula (Bastian et al., 2024) exemplify practical strategies that enable cultural continuity while fostering a greater public appreciation of Malay traditions. The wearing and promotion of traditional attire (Putra et al., 2024), together with the embedding of core cultural values into the bureaucratic system (Mulda et al., 2021), amplify the everyday relevance and visibility of Malay identity, both in the public and private spheres.

Cultural diversity and adaptability also play a key role in the resilience of local identity. The experiences of Malay-Javanese interethnic families, as described by Permata & Syafrini (2022), illustrate how adaptation and tolerance are necessary for cohesive multicultural societies. In parallel, government efforts underline the need to intertwine cultural preservation with economic empowerment, particularly through the Disperindag's support of the weaving industry (Hidayuwati et al., 2024). It is evident from these findings that successful cultural resilience strategies are built through active collaboration across the community, government, and industry sectors. Cross-sector synergy facilitates sustainable models for development where cultural, economic, and social goals mutually reinforce each other.

These findings highlight that a holistic approach—one that concurrently values education, robust policy, empowered youth, inclusive community involvement, and collaborative partnerships—is crucial for preserving and evolving Malay culture in Batam amid the ongoing waves of modernization. In contributing to and expanding upon prior research, this study reinforces the necessity of integrating heritage preservation into broader developmental strategies, ensuring that the uniqueness of Malay culture continues to thrive even as the city transforms.

CONCLUSION

This research has comprehensively addressed the challenges and opportunities in preserving Malay culture in Batam amidst rapid modernization, emphasizing the importance of multicultural education, supportive policy frameworks, responsible tourism development, and the pivotal roles of youth and community involvement. The findings highlight that cross-sector collaboration among government, educational institutions, cultural organizations, and the broader community is essential to counter cultural erosion and ensure the continuity of Malay identity in a modern context. However, the study is limited by its reliance on a systematic literature review, which may introduce biases from secondary data and may not fully capture the nuanced, on-the-ground realities of cultural dynamics in Batam. Future research involving empirical fieldwork is recommended to provide greater depth and a more comprehensive perspective on strategies for sustaining Malay cultural heritage.

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