

**Article Type:** Research Paper

# Analysis of Community Readiness for the Mandalika Special Economic Zone: Using the Sapta Pesona Standard

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**THIS ARTICLE IS AVAILABLE IN:**

<http://journal.umy.ac.id/index.php/jerss>

**DOI:** [10.18196/jerss.v7i2.16414](https://doi.org/10.18196/jerss.v7i2.16414)

**CITATION:**

Azizurrohman, M., Ilyas, G. B., Ginting, Y. M., Sudyanti, S., & Hasanah, Y. N. (2023). Analysis of Community Readiness for the Mandalika Special Economic Zone: Using the Sapta Pesona Standard. *Journal of Economics Research and Social Sciences*, 7(2), 166-174.



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**Abstract:** The Mandalika Special Economic Zone is one of the locations selected as a priority destination by the Government of Indonesia. Therefore, this opportunity must be utilized by the surrounding community in order to get the maximum benefit. This study aims to assess the readiness of the community in carrying out tourism-based development. Identify readiness both as a host and as a tourism business actor based on the Sapta Pesona standard. Based on the results of the analysis, it is known that the people around the Mandalika Special Economic Zone are quite ready to take advantage of tourism activities. However, the standard of safety and serenity is still not as expected. Thus, there is still a need for improvement in terms of security and additional green open space to add to the coolness of the Mandalika area.

**Keywords:** SEZ; Mandalika; Sapta Pesona

**JEL Classification:** O15; Z32; R11

## Introduction

Indonesia is a country that has abundant natural resources. Evidently, in recent years, Indonesian tourism has become one of the largest contributors to national income. The contribution of tourism to the country's foreign exchange has continued to increase in recent years, even exceeding the government's target. In 2015, the foreign exchange target from tourism was IDR. 144 trillion and reached IDR. 175.71 trillion. Foreign exchange receipts from tourism also exceeded the government's target in 2016 and 2017. The tourism sector is expected to generate foreign exchange of IDR 140 trillion - IDR 150 trillion in 2019. As a result, in 2019 Indonesia's total foreign exchange for tourism reached IDR 280 trillion.

To aid in the growth of the tourism industry's profits, the Indonesian government issued Government Regulation Number 52 of 2014 concerning Special Economic Zones (SEZ). One of the selected areas is the Mandalika SEZ, West Nusa Tenggara. SEZ Mandalika is concentrated on economic development in the tourism sector which is expected to accelerate economic development in Central Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province.

The development of the Mandalika SEZ will use the concept of environmentally friendly and event-based destinations. Tourist facilities to be built must meet environmentally friendly criteria in order to boost the resale value of the area. While the concept of event-based destinations emphasizes the provision of international standard non-accommodation tourism facilities which can later become an attraction for tourists to enjoy the beauty of the Mandalika Lombok tourism area<sup>1</sup>.

The Mandalika SEZ's efforts to manage tourism destination objects have had favorable results, as evidenced by the growing number of tourists who visit. 614,906 travelers visited in 2016. There were 480,154 foreign tourists and 134,752 local tourists among them<sup>2</sup>. Mandalika SEZ, on the other hand, need further development, particularly in terms of human resources.

Tourism is a reasonably environmentally friendly and sustainable industry that can have a significant trickle-down effect. The perceptions and expectations of the local community must be carefully considered in order for tourist development to be sustainable and effective (Ahsani et al., 2018). This strategy of involving local communities aims to increase public awareness and understanding of tourism activities.

According to Moosner, A, K (2020), people's views are very important in determining, measuring, and analyzing the consequences of tourism. Building a good perception is needed to harmonize the development process because perception is very vital in making a person's decision on something. Perception, according to Mestre et al. (2002) is the process by which we perceive and regulate patterns of environmental stimuli. According to Dar et al. (2014), public perception can be an obstacle to the inhibiting and driving factors of development. According to Matdoan (2014), a basic development policy must pay attention to the condition of the community in terms of the suitability of the socio-economic growth rate of the community. The calculated impacts include crime and vandalism, recruitment and rejection of labor, as well as an assessment of the economic feasibility and carrying capacity of infrastructure (Mason, 2020). Thus, preparing local residents is very important in tourism development.

According to Syahza and Suarman (2013), the development of an area, especially rural areas, must be carried out in accordance with the nature and characteristics of the place. Rural development should be guided by four main initiatives. First, economic empowerment of rural communities. In this effort, capital input and guidance on the use of technology and marketing are needed to help the community become independent in taking advantage of existing opportunities; second, improving the quality of rural human resources so that they have an adequate basis for increasing and strengthening productivity and competitiveness; third, infrastructure development in rural areas. For rural areas, transportation infrastructure is an absolute necessity, thus spurring the backwardness of rural communities; and fourth, building rural institutions, both formal and non-formal. The institutions needed by the village are the creation of good services, especially in spurring the village economy such as financial institutions, village business

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<sup>1</sup> Bappenas Website, Prioritas Nasional Percepatan Pertumbuhan Kawasan Ekonomi Khusus

<sup>2</sup> Badan Pusat Statistik Lombok Tengah, 2017

entity (*Bumdes*), tourism awareness group (*Pokdarwis*), and other institutions in accordance with the development plan.

The novelty of this research lies in the focus on the development of the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Indonesia, particularly in the tourism sector. The SEZ is designed to promote economic growth in the Central Lombok Regency of West Nusa Tenggara Province by leveraging the potential of tourism. What sets this research apart is its emphasis on environmentally friendly and event-based destination concepts in the development of tourist facilities.

By incorporating environmentally friendly criteria, the research aims to enhance the resale value of the area while minimizing negative environmental impacts. Additionally, the concept of event-based destinations highlights the importance of providing international standard non-accommodation tourism facilities, which can attract tourists and enhance their experience in the Mandalika Lombok tourism area.

Another aspect of novelty is the consideration of local community perceptions and expectations in the sustainable development of tourism. By involving the local community and increasing public awareness and understanding of tourism activities, the research recognizes the importance of addressing local concerns and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the industry.

Furthermore, the research emphasizes the significance of human resources readiness in the Mandalika SEZ, as it plays a crucial role in supporting the special economic area's function. The use of the 'Sapta Pesona' standards, which focus on the seven essential attributes of tourism destinations, adds a unique perspective to assessing the readiness of human resources in the context of tourism development.

Overall, this research contributes to the understanding of sustainable tourism development, the role of local communities, and the importance of human resources in the context of a specific SEZ in Indonesia.

#### Seven Enchantment (*Sapta Pesona*)

Based on the Decree of the Minister of Tourism Number 5/UM.209/MPPT-89 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of *Sapta Pesona*, *Sapta Pesona* is defined as a condition that must be realized in order to attract tourists to visit an area, especially in Indonesia. *Sapta Pesona* consists of seven elements, namely safety, orderly, cleanliness, serenity, beauty, hospitality, and memorable. In connection with the increasing performance of tourism development, the *Sapta Pesona* Program was later refined and became part of the concept of the Tourism Awareness Group<sup>3</sup>.

According to the Guidelines for Tourism Awareness Groups (2012), each charm component is described in this guidebook as follows:

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<sup>3</sup> Kemenparekraf.go.id

**Security:** An atmosphere in a tourism area that gives visitors a sense of serenity and freedom from fear and anxiety.

**Order:** A constant, ordered, and efficient environment and service at a tourist site that displays a highly disciplined mentality and physical quality.

**Clean:** A tourist destination's surroundings, as well as the standard of its goods and services, should represent a state of good health and sanitation.

**Coolness:** An aesthetic quality in a tourist site that reflects the cool and shaded surroundings that will make visitors feel at ease and at home.

**Gorgeous.** An environmental circumstance in a tourism destination that displays a lovely and appealing setting that will inspire travelers with a strong sense of admiration and impression.

**Hospitality:** A characteristic of an environment that results from visitors' positive attitudes and creates a warm, friendly, and welcome vibe.

**Memories:** A type of enjoyable experience in a tourist destination that leaves visitors with happy memories.

## **Research Method**

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of community readiness in Mandalika SEZ using *Sapta Pesona* standards. The aim of this study is to make a systematic, factual and accurate description of the facts, characteristics and relationships between the phenomena studied. Things that will be looked at in depth include factors that support the readiness of the community to be guests of tourism activities in Mandalika SEZ, specifically in 2022. These factors include the safety, orderly, cleanliness, serenity, beauty, hospitality, and memorable.

The research method applied is qualitative with community in Mandalika SEZ In-depth interviews was applied in this study with a non-probability sampling design to identify key informants. Snowball Sampling was chosen as the data collection method for the first phase. Since the authors use the information saturation method, there is no single key informant as the exact number of sample sizes in the qualitative method. When the researcher reaches a particular level of information, the researcher will end the in-depth interview (Hartarto et al., 2021).

The authors have a total of 25 respondents who are willing to be interviewed based on the findings of online interviews. In order to conduct this interview, respondents were given information about the process and the outcomes. Respondents have the option of terminating the interview if they do not desire to answer any of the questions. The interview data obtained were then transcribed, reduced and categorized and then

presented in a descriptive form by including interview quotes to strengthen the analysis (Williamson et al., 2018).

## Result and Discussion

From the results of interviews conducted by the author, we found the results as shown in the Table 1.

**Table 1** The Perception of Community and Tourist about *Sapta Pesona* in the Mandalika Special Economic Zone

Standards	Definitions	Community	Tourist
Safety	A tourist destination that provides a sense of calm, free from fear and anxiety	Excellent	Good
Orderly	A tourist destination that reflects discipline, physical quality and organized and efficient service	Good	Good
Cleanliness	A tourist destination that reflects a healthy and hygienic condition	Good	Good
Serenity	A tourist destination that reflects a cool and shady state that makes tourist feels relax	Good	Good
Beauty	Tourist destinations that reflect beautiful and attractive conditions give a sense of awe and deep impressions	Excellent	Excellent
Hospitality	A tourist destination that reflects an intimate, open atmosphere and high acceptance	Excellent	Excellent
Memorable	A tourist destination that gives a sense of fun and beautiful memories	Excellent	Excellent

Note

Poor

Good

Excellent



The authors received 25 responses, with 9 locals and 16 tourists among them. From the results of interviews conducted with the communities and tourists, the authors found that the standard of orderly is good. In other words, The Mandalika special economic area is quite good in reflecting discipline, physical quality and regular and efficient service. Appears with the same result, the standard of cleanliness is in good level. This means that the Mandalika SEZ reflects a healthy and hygienic condition.

In addition, the standard of beauty, hospitality and memory is at an excellent level. Therefore, it can be said that the Mandalika SEZ reflects a beautiful, attractive condition, gives a sense of awe, beautiful memories, open-mindedness, friendly, and fun. However, there are differences of opinion between the public and tourists in terms of safety and serenity. In terms of safety, the people of Mandalika SEZ feel very safe (excellent). However, according to tourists' perceptions, the safety standard in the Mandalika SEZ still

need to be improved (poor). In other words, until now, the security condition of the Mandalika SEZ cannot be said to be safe for tourist.

According to UNWTO (2011), safety and security are crucial for sustaining the caliber of tourism in a destination, hence it is a necessary condition of the tourism business. When it comes to a long period, it will not be possible to travel to the patentine as a destination. The study by Khalik (2014) showing locals' hospitable attitudes toward tourists might be a major driving force behind travel is later supported by this.

The manager's next course of action is to assist and safeguard visitors by posting guards throughout their visits and conducting patrols when visitors are present. Additionally, there are types of assistance and protection that are carried out prior to the arrival of visitors, particularly by disseminating clear information regarding area sterilisation.

Hanafiah et al. (2014) contend that offering accommodations, information, transportation, and other facilities is a natural function of locals or those who often work as service providers. This is so because the success of a tourism endeavor greatly depends on the community.

Additionally, there is a course of action that reduces the possibility of an accident when using public facilities, or an outgoing package in this scenario. In accordance with Bentley (2001: 334–336), there are three possible actions. Targeting tourists who will love the package is the first step. The second is information mastery and communication skills, and the third is equipment upkeep. First, the manager has put the three things under control by categorizing outbound according to age, after which young cadets have been trained as outbound officers and put through outbound testing.

According to Stanford (2016), both travelers and management exhibit ethical and responsible tourism behavior when they have a well-organized mentality. The duty at issue is the duty to follow all applicable laws, refrain from inadvertently offending local religious convictions or cultural norms of behavior, and refrain from causing physical harm to the environment on purpose.

For a tourist attraction, the issue of environmental hygiene has become particularly critical. Cooper (Jovanovic et al., 2015) asserts that health and hygiene are crucial for the travel and tourism industry's ability to compete. Khalik (2014) argues that trash must be avoided, and public spaces must be kept clean, in order to preserve the ecology around tourist destinations. Irresponsible rubbish disposal can lead to sickness, harm the ecosystem in the area, and compromise the comfort of my visitors.

The serenity of a destination is an important factor in increasing tourist attraction. A good tourist attraction must pay attention to public spaces by multiplying trees (Khalik, 2014). The Creator gave KEK Mandalika its beauty as a gift, and humans have since helped to maintain it. The Mandalika SEZ's main draw is its hills and stretches of beaches with blue sand. Humans essentially always require beauty from the balance of biological diversity for mental tranquility, pleasure, and inner calm (Hakim L, 2014). Unfortunately, the

beauty of the hills and beaches in the Mandalika SEZ has not been matched by the planting of trees and plants that can add to the beauty of the destination.

A noteworthy characteristic of the neighborhood is the welcoming attitude of the locals. The existence of training programs and the distribution of tour coordinators according to specialization lend credence to this approach. As a result, the application to become a host willing to assist tourists is better. This backs with Thyne's claim that a host's behavior toward guests can affect those guests' intentions to return (Skipper, 2009).

It may be argued that the memory element was applied in the Mandalika SEZ in the best possible way. The variety of tour options and locations available to tourists demonstrates this. Tourists can also easily access the local community's cultural offerings and souvenirs because they are close to the Mandalika SEZ. A tourist site must meet at least three requirements, namely something to see, something to do, and something to buy, according to Yoeti (Suwen, 2010).

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this research aimed to analyze the community readiness for the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Indonesia, using the Sapta Pesona standard as a framework. The results of the analysis revealed that the community around the Mandalika SEZ is quite ready to engage in tourism-based development. The standards of orderliness, cleanliness, beauty, hospitality, and memorability were found to be at a good or excellent level. However, there were areas that require improvement.

One key area of concern is safety. While the local community perceives the Mandalika SEZ as safe, tourists expressed a need for improved safety measures. Safety and security are crucial for sustainable tourism, and it is essential to address this aspect to maintain the quality of tourism in the area. Measures such as posting guards, conducting patrols, and providing clear information about safety precautions can help enhance the perception of safety for tourists.

Another area that requires attention is serenity. While the Mandalika SEZ offers natural beauty, including hills and beaches, the planting of additional trees and plants to enhance the serenity and aesthetics of the destination is recommended. Creating a cool and shaded environment can contribute to a more relaxing and enjoyable experience for tourists.

Overall, the findings highlight the importance of community readiness in tourism development. Involving and addressing the perceptions and expectations of the local community is essential for sustainable and effective tourism. The results of this research provide insights for the managers and stakeholders of the Mandalika SEZ to prioritize improvements in safety and serenity to further enhance the tourism experience and attract more visitors to the area. By adhering to the Sapta Pesona standards and

continuously evaluating and addressing community readiness, the Mandalika SEZ has the potential to become a thriving and attractive tourism destination in Indonesia.

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