

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In recent years, international concerts have increasingly become influential global events that extend far beyond the realm of entertainment. These large-scale performances now serve as major drivers of economic growth, tourism development, and cultural exchange for host cities. As the global music industry continues to evolve, cities compete to become preferred destinations for renowned international artists. Concerts featuring global icons like Taylor Swift draw massive audiences and generate significant economic activity—not only through direct ticket sales but also across multiple sectors including accommodation use, food and beverage spending, transportation services, and overall consumer behavior.

Singapore's selection as the only Southeast Asian city to host Taylor Swift's *Eras Tour* in 2024 underscores its positioning as a premier destination for international events. The concert drove a surge in tourism, with fans traveling from neighboring countries to attend the six exclusive shows. Hotels experienced spikes in occupancy, local eateries saw increased foot traffic, and public and private transportation systems were pushed to their limits. These outcomes reflect the economic stimulation triggered by such events. Beyond the financial metrics, concerts also offer unique opportunities for socio-cultural enrichment. Events of this scale promote cultural exchange, foster fan and creative communities, and contribute to the host city's cultural image on a global scale. They also provide a shared space for interaction among diverse audiences, strengthening social cohesion and cultural branding.

On the political front, hosting international mega-events requires strategic governance, intergovernmental cooperation, and targeted investment. Singapore's exclusive hosting of the concert brought regional diplomatic attention, strengthened its global reputation, and highlighted its soft power capabilities in entertainment diplomacy. Environmentally, however, mega-events present sustainability challenges. The influx of tourists contributes to carbon emissions, energy usage spikes due to large venue operations, and potential strain on urban infrastructure. Balancing these factors with economic benefits is a growing priority for cities pursuing long-term, sustainable development goals. Taken together, the Taylor Swift concert in Singapore offers a compelling case study of how political strategy, socio-cultural dynamics,

tourism growth, and environmental management converge to influence a city's economic performance.

1.2 Research Significance

This research addresses the growing need to understand the broader and interconnected economic impacts of hosting international entertainment events. While concerts are often evaluated through direct financial returns, this study takes a more integrated view—examining how political involvement, tourism dynamics, socio-cultural influence, and environmental considerations all play critical roles in shaping economic outcomes. From an academic perspective, this study contributes to the fields of event economics, tourism management, and cultural policy by taking an approach that goes beyond the financial aspect and combines multiple perspectives to see the full impact.

On a practical level, the study offers insights for policymakers, tourism boards, event organizers, environmental planners, and local businesses. By unpacking how each dimension—such as tourist activity (accommodation, F&B, transport), cultural image and community formation, political reputation, and environmental strain—affects economic performance, stakeholders can design more effective and sustainable event strategies. Furthermore, this research may guide future event-hosting decisions across Southeast Asia and similar urban settings worldwide. It emphasizes the value of sustainability, inclusive planning, and long-term vision in leveraging cultural events for economic advancement.

1.3 Research Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the economic impact of Taylor Swift's 2024 *Eras Tour* concert in Singapore by exploring how various factors—such as tourism activity, socio-cultural engagement, political involvement, and environmental considerations—collectively influenced the host city's economy. This research aims to understand how large-scale international events contribute to economic performance not only through direct financial gains, but also through broader social, political, and ecological dynamics. By analyzing survey results supported with relevant articles and journals, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the concert's economic significance and offer practical insights for cities planning to host similar global entertainment events in the future.