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Industrial Development, Urban Heritage, and Place Identity: A Comparative Conceptual Framework for Shanghai Pudong and Faisalabad's Allama Iqbal Industrial City

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Abstract

Development of industrial parks under Special Economic Zones (SEZ) proved as a steppingstone in the economic growth of China. The rapid modernization and international influence within these zones raise concerns about preserving the unique cultural and historical identity of China. This article develops a comparative conceptual framework linking industrial-zone development to spatial transformation, tangible and intangible heritage, community attachment, and heritage-sensitive planning. The research is based on Shanghai Pudong New Area and the urban-industrial interface associated with Allama Iqbal Industrial City near Faisalabad, Pakistan, as deliberately contrasting cases yet connecting through CPEC. Five interrelated dimensions are proposed for subsequent assessment: land-use and urban-form change, historic fabric and industrial heritage, cultural practices, governance and participation, and heritage-led visitor connectivity. The paper argues that SEZ planning should assess cultural continuity alongside economic performance and proposes a phased assessment and policy framework adaptable to different institutional contexts. Its contribution is an explicit analytical bridge between SEZ-led urbanization and heritage/place-identity scholarship, together with testable propositions for future empirical comparison.

Keywords: special economic zones, urban heritage, place identity, industrial urbanization, Pudong, Faisalabad, and heritage-sensitive planning.

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Introduction

Each region possesses its own distinctive culture, contributing to the vibrant mosaic of diversity that forms global heritage. The task of preserving a nation's cultural identity and heritage becomes paramount, especially against the backdrop of significant economic advancements. China, as one of the world's oldest civilizations, has seen tremendous economic growth in recent decades. Development of industrial parks under Special Economic Zones (SEZ) proved as a steppingstone in the economic growth of China. The rapid modernization and international influence within these zones raise concerns about preserving the unique cultural and historical identity of China. This situation presents a complex challenge, balancing the economic advantages of globalization and infrastructure development with the imperative to maintain and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the region. The major SEZs in China are at Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Shantou, Xiamen, Hainan, Shanghai Pudong New Area, and Tianjin Binhai New Area (Zeng, 2012). Since 1980's there has been massive growth and progress in the regions of SEZs in terms of economics, job opportunities, per capita income and overall country growth (Levien, 2013; Mahmood, 2018; Mwansa et al., 2020; Naeem et al., 2020; Rawat et al., 2010; Sigler, 2014). In pursuance of that trend China's President Xi Jinping has announced the Belt and Road initiative in 2013 and is considered as one of his most ambitious projects. This infrastructure development strategy has been accepted by nearly 70 countries and international organizations (Zia et al., 2018).

The historical development of SEZs creates an important planning question: how can industrial expansion be accommodated without reducing the distinctive physical and social attributes through which communities recognize their cities? Economic performance cannot establish if that region can sustain cultural continuity. This article therefore treats heritage and identity as planning outcomes rather than decorative additions.

The proposed study seeks to investigate importance of urban heritage and identity of SEZs and integrated cities in China and Pakistan. To highlight its significance Shanghai Pudong New Area and Allama Iqbal Industrial City near Faisalabad will be studied. The research will propose strategies that can be incorporated in city planning to safeguard the urban heritage and revive the identity along with enhancing tourism in the region.

The article makes three contributions. First, it identifies pathways through which industrial growth may alter urban identity. Second, it defines a common comparison framework without assuming that Pudong and Allama Iqbal Industrial City are equivalent in age, scale, governance, or development stage. Third, it proposes practical criteria for integrating heritage into planning decisions. The research questions are: (1) through which spatial, social, and institutional mechanisms can SEZ development affect urban heritage and place identity? (2) Which dimensions are suitable for a structured comparison of the two settings? (3) What heritage-sensitive planning responses follow from the conceptual analysis?

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Literature Review

The process of urbanization is inherently complex, requiring the delicate coordination of industry, people, culture, environment, land, infrastructure, and socio-political factors (Spence et al., 2008). This multifaceted coordination becomes even more challenging in the context of China's rapid economic growth and its expanding trade relationships with other nations (Falahatdoost & Wang, 2022). The immense economic progress, marked by the development of SEZs and ambitious initiatives like BRI, has propelled China onto the global stage, fostering unparalleled industrial growth and urban development (Chen & Wang, 2022). However, this swift expansion has also sparked concerns about the erosion of China's rich cultural heritage, as traditional values and historical landmarks are increasingly overshadowed by the push for modern infrastructure and economic efficiency. The intricate balance between preserving cultural identity and pursuing economic advancement is crucial, as the essence of a nation's identity is deeply rooted in its history, traditions, and cultural practices. Therefore, as China navigates the path of urbanization and global trade, it must implement strategies that protect and celebrate its unique cultural heritage, ensuring that the soul of one of the world's oldest civilizations remains vibrant and intact in the face of relentless modernization and globalization pressures. As commented by the president of German Architectural Association, Mr. Andreas Gottlieb Hempel, during his visit to Beijing in 2015, 'nowadays, if I drive my car toward the central part of Beijing city from outskirt, I will never know where I am. I can be in Miami, or in Singapore, also can be in Franklin because all the high-rise buildings are same and have a few of their own special individuality. Only from the Chinese characters around me can I tell that I am in China. This is not a good thing for Chinese future' (Huang, 2019).

The fast paced urbanization leads to standardized planning in different cities. There are many cities that face identity crisis and historic character of the city is disappearing gradually (Akkar Ercan, 2017). Since the opening up policy of China, the level of Urbanization has increased from less than 20% to more than 50% (Huang, 2019). It is predicted that China will achieve a relatively stable rate of urbanization at 70% ~ 80% until 2030~2040.

Figure 1 Graph showing level of Urbanization in China from 1969-2013 (Huang, 2019)

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This rapid urbanization has caused disappearance of urban features, and the fact has been firmly established as an undeniable reality within academic discourse. Many scholars and experts stated that urban economic advancement must not come at the expense of sacrificing urban characteristics and eroding city identity(Devine-Wright, 2009; Howard, 2003).

Urban heritage and place identity

Heritage, in its multifaceted dimensions of tangible and intangible, plays a pivotal role in shaping the place's identity. The intrinsic value of heritage components in creating a unique sense of place is undeniable, as they collectively contribute to the identity of a space (Akkar Ercan, 2017). The relationship between heritage, sense of place, and human behavior highlights the importance of integrating both tangible and intangible heritage considerations in urban and rural planning. By acknowledging and valuing the impact of environmental conditions on human psychology and community dynamics, policymakers and planners can create spaces that resonate with the identity and values of their inhabitants. This approach not only enhances the well-being and satisfaction of residents but also ensures that the evolution of public spaces contributes positively to the preservation of cultural identity and the promotion of social cohesion.

The process of management of urban heritage focuses on both the practice and theory with the focus on heritage monuments, urban landscape and settings in the context (Ristic & Frank, 2019). Recently, there has been several reflections on urban heritage by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Centre and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). Their influence on integrating heritage into urban planning and development is limited, as they originate from a specific cultural heritage framework with mostly self-contained parameters and interests.

There is extensive literature that explores the multifaceted nature of urban heritage and its critical role in shaping the identity, memory, and value of cities, as well as its impact on human behaviour, social practices, and urban development. The discussion incorporates various authors who have contributed significantly to the understanding of urban heritage, its preservation, and the challenges it faces in the contemporary world. Relph (1976) made a comprehensive study to the characteristics of the place's identity. To him, identity is a fundamental concern in our everyday life referring to the persistent sameness and unity of the objects. Logan (2005) defines urban heritage as encompassing not only the physical artefacts from the past but also the intangible elements such as arts, crafts, rituals, ceremonies, and festivals that make a town or city distinctive. This broad definition highlights the importance of both tangible and intangible aspects of heritage in contributing to a city's unique identity and communal memory (Logan, 2005). Howard (2003) emphasizes the importance of urban heritage in informing the identity of a place, underlining its role in shaping the collective memory and value attributed to a location by its inhabitants and visitors. This perspective suggests that heritage is not just about preservation for its own sake but also about maintaining the continuity of identity and value for communities. Orbasli (2000) discusses urban heritage

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as an essential element of cityscapes, serving as a tangible manifestation of the memory of the past. This view underscores the importance of preserving urban heritage as a link to history and a means of maintaining a sense of continuity with previous generations.

The Urban Heritage (2016) report expands on the understanding of urban heritage by situating it within a broader context of disciplines, including art history, leisure studies, archaeology, geography, history, and the built environment. This interdisciplinary approach highlights the role of urban heritage in reflecting social, religious ideals, community dynamics, and inter-generational interactions, demonstrating its significance beyond mere physical presence. Devine-Wright (2009) explores the connection between urban heritage and human behaviour, particularly focusing on how heritage stimulates a sense of place and place attachment. This relationship indicates that urban heritage not only has historical and aesthetic value but also plays a crucial role in influencing how individuals relate to their environment. Martínez (2017) addresses the challenge of balancing the authenticity of urban heritage with the pressures of urban development and growth. The author points out the need for reconciling the interests of heritage conservation with the demands for urban densification, highlighting the complex negotiations required to maintain authenticity while accommodating economic imperatives (Martínez, 2017). Bird (2002) highlights the importance of a place's distinctive characteristics in differentiating it from other localities (Bird, 2002). This differentiation is not solely based on aesthetic qualities, as cities traditionally labelled 'ugly' can still offer desirable living environments due to strong social solidarity and social capital. This perspective broadens the understanding of what contributes to a city's appeal and liveability beyond surface-level beauty.

Preserving and maintaining heritage not only strengthens a city's identity but also fosters social solidarity among its inhabitants, enriching the urban living experience. Altman & Low (2012) explore the concept of sense of place, framing it as a cognitive and emotional relationship individuals have with their environment (Manzo & Devine-Wright, 2013). This sense of belonging and social attachment underscores the deep connections people form with their surroundings, which in turn, contribute to the identity of a place. Relph (1976) delve deeper into the essence of sense of place, with Steele associating it with personal experiences and emotional responses to specific locations. Relph represents sense of place as a subjective and varied notion, indicating that it differs among social groups, thus adding layers to the complexity of urban identity.

The exploration of cities with tangible commonalities and shared strategies in refining their identity, alongside cities with multiple identities, presents a comprehensive approach to understanding urban identity. This dual perspective acknowledges the diversity of urban environments and the myriad ways in which cities navigate and craft their identities.

Heritage led tourism and cultural continuity

Tourism and cultural heritage protection are interrelated. The cultural heritage will be promoted through tourism, and tourism will increase to appreciate your well protected heritage. Some scholars have discussed the integration of cultural heritage and tourism development in old

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cities of China like Hunan and the study was based on spatial aggregation of the city and tourist attractions. Chuanchuan Yuan argues that while integration cultural resources for regional tourism it is essential to fully study the methods of regional tourism (Yuan et al., 2022). Intangible cultural heritage has contributed a lot in the promotion of tourism in China (Yang et al., 2010). However, scholars have discussed both the positive and negative aspects of integration of cultural heritage and tourism through different perspectives. Nasser explored how the effective correlation of preservation of cultural heritage and development of sustainable tourism can have a symbiotic relationship (Lan et al., 2021). The same optimistic approach can be seen in scholarly article of Loulanski et al. that reinforce the viability of orderly integration between intangible cultural heritage and tourism industry (Liu, 2021). Nega also endorsed that the correlation of intangible cultural heritage and tourism can enhance the value of both and to prove this they have studied and evaluated Lalibela Ashenda Festival in Ethiopia. Among many others Rosby explores the way of sustainable development and established a golden rule for the interrelated development and relationship building in tourism ad heritage (Zhou, 2020). Chinese Scholars also explored the positive impact of natural relationship between intangible cultural heritage and tourism and the benefit it can gain in terms of culture preservation and the increase in tourist activity in the area making it a sustainable approach for retaining the culture (Afzal & Naseem, 2018; Butt & Butt, 2015). Tourism is always considered as an approach to keep the cultural identity alive. Heritage-led tourism can create incentives for conservation and local livelihoods, but simultaneously tourist-oriented redevelopment can also affect cultural continuity. Therefore, tourism should consequently be assessed as one possible instrument of conservation, not its primary purpose. Heritage routes are most defensible when they support public accessibility, community narratives, and maintenance of historically meaningful places (Orbaşli, 2000; Zandieh & Seifpour, 2020; Yuan et al., 2022).

Industrialization, urban transformation, and conservation

This rapid urbanization has caused disappearance of urban features, and the fact has been firmly established as an undeniable reality within academic discourse. Many scholars and experts stated that urban economic advancement must not come at the expense of sacrificing urban characteristics and eroding city identity (Devine-Wright, 2009; Howard, 2003).

Industrial parks may produce employment and infrastructure benefits while simultaneously changing land values, movement patterns, settlement morphology, and the relationships between established neighborhoods and newly developed areas. Such effects are contingent rather than universal: regulatory institutions, planning instruments, project phasing, and community participation shape the outcome. Research on planning in industrial parks and the industrial history in Shanghai offer helpful starting points but information from one setting cannot just be applied to any other setting. (Chen & Wang, 2022; Sun & Chen, 2023).

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Research gap

The literature underscores the significance of urban heritage in shaping the identity and memory of cities, influencing human behaviour and social practices, and facing challenges from economic and developmental pressures. The preservation of urban heritage, therefore, emerges as a crucial concern that involves balancing historical authenticity with contemporary urban dynamics, requiring thoughtful consideration of both tangible and intangible elements of heritage. However, there remains a notable gap between Special Economic Zones, cultural heritage and identity of the city. The existing literature highlights the importance of urban heritage and identity, and some has proposed the tourism as a strategy to protect the heritage but there is dearth of research on SEZs and the identity of city changes before and after the development of industrial zones.

The proposed research aims to address the current identity crisis and cultural heritage protection issues at SEZs and integrated cities. Shanghai and Faisalabad both are historical cities of their respective countries. Several researchers have discussed the industrial heritage of Shanghai and its protection (Martínez, 2017; Shi et al., 2022; Sun & Chen, 2023). Currently there is no research that addresses the Pudong New Area and its impact on identity and urban heritage of the city. Similarly, there is extensive work done by scholars on CPEC and SEZ in Pakistan (Khan, 2019) but Faisalabad with adjacent Allama Iqbal Industrial City needs to be explored.

To address this issue, it is essential to devise strategies that integrate urban heritage and regional identity with economic development. The implementation of scientific and technological methodologies in preserving urban heritage within industrial zones is essential for achieving sustainable outcomes and nurturing cultural identity. By harnessing the power of data-driven analysis, advanced imaging techniques, and digital storytelling platforms, cities can preserve heritage while creating immersive experiences that resonate with visitors and residents alike. Embracing innovative approaches to heritage preservation not only safeguards the past but also shapes a more vibrant and sustainable future for communities

Conceptual Framework

The research proposed five assessment dimensions to operationalize the model: (1) spatial change land conversion, road structure, edge conditions, and connectivity, (2) tangible heritage and historic buildings, industrial structures, streetscapes, and landscapes, (3) intangible heritage occupations, festivals, collective memory, and everyday practices; (4) social and institutional conditions, displacement risks, stakeholder participation, planning controls, and management responsibility, and (5) interpretation and access heritage networks, visitor mobility, public-space quality, and narrative representation.

Three propositions guide future testing. P1: Greater integration of heritage inventories into industrial and municipal planning is associated with fewer avoidable losses of valued historic fabric. P2: Participation by established communities improves the legitimacy and contextual relevance of heritage interventions. P3: Heritage-linked spatial networks support identity

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recognition when they retain everyday community use and are not designed exclusively for visitors. These are hypotheses for investigation, not reported findings.

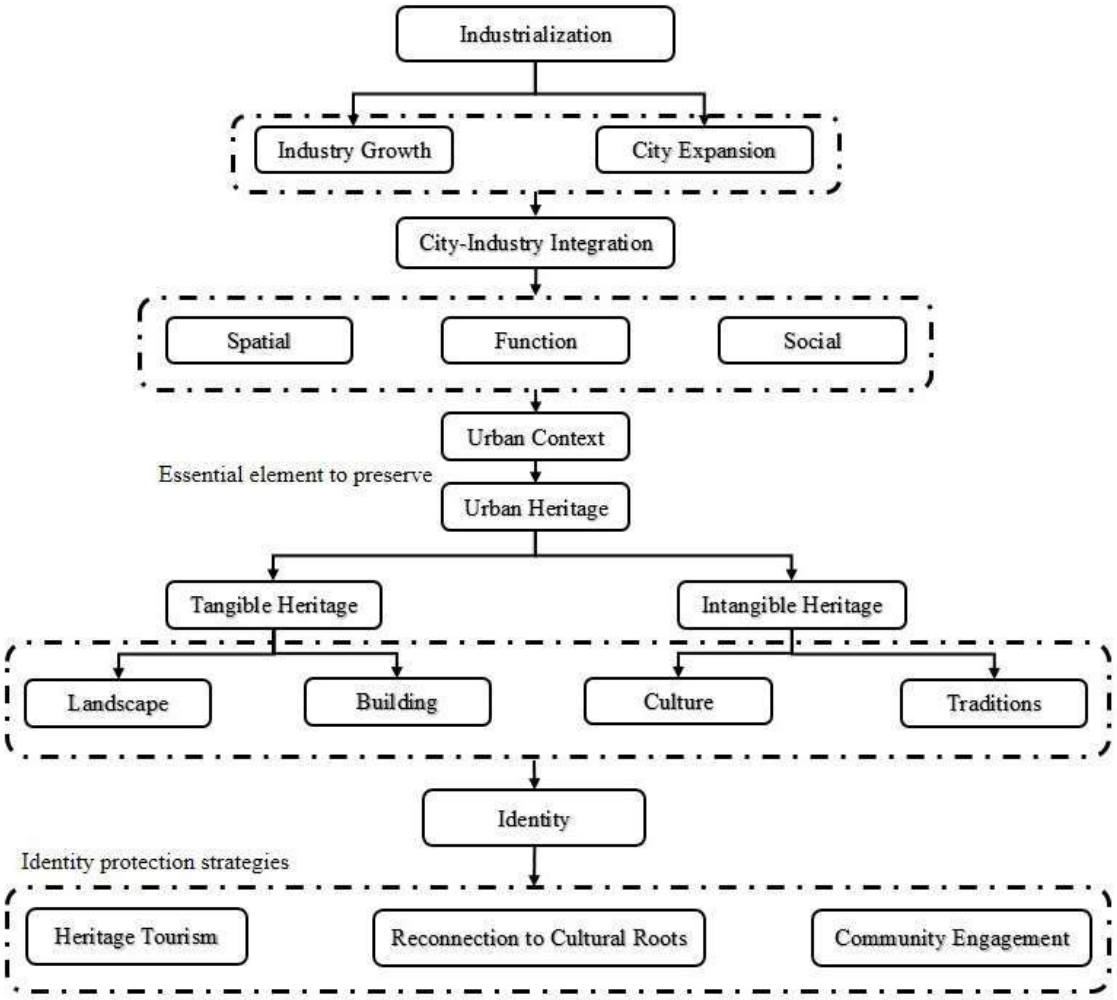

Figure 2 The chart represents the link of industrialization to Identity with essential elements to preserve (prepared by authors)

Research Design and Methodology

Research approach and case selection

This research aims to develop a comprehensive framework for safeguarding the urban heritage and identity of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and integrated cities, with a specific focus on Shanghai Pudong New Area and Allama Iqbal Industrial City. As models of rapid economic growth and urban development, these areas face unique challenges in balancing modernization with the preservation of cultural and historical legacies. The project seeks to identify sustainable practices and strategies that can protect and enhance the unique urban zones while promoting their continued development and integration into the global economy.

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The selection of China and Pakistan as focal countries for research is underpinned by two significant factors, their centuries old heritage and the contemporary China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative. This deep-rooted heritage reflects a rich tapestry of cultural, historical, and socio-political ties that have shaped the relationship between these two nations over the ages. Moreover, the CPEC, as a flagship project of China's BRI, represents a substantial economic and strategic partnership, highlighting the evolving dynamics of their bilateral relations in the 21st century. Together, these elements not only underscore the profound interconnectedness between China and Pakistan but also offer a unique lens through which to explore broader themes of regional cooperation, development, and geopolitical strategy. Thus, these facets establish a compelling rationale for selecting China and Pakistan as subjects of research, providing a multifaceted perspective on their partnership's historical depth and its contemporary significance.

Shanghai Pudong New Area in China and Allama Iqbal Industrial City in Pakistan are the SEZs established near to the historic cities. The current problems faced by both the cities are:

1. **Displacement of Traditional Communities**: The rapid construction and urbanization have led to the displacement of local communities. The demolition of old neighbourhoods to make way for skyscrapers and commercial complexes has not only changed the physical landscape but also disrupted the social fabric and community life that contributed to the area's identity.
2. **Loss of Historical Buildings and Sites**: With the focus on modernization and development, many historical buildings and sites have been demolished or neglected. This has resulted in a loss of architectural diversity and historical layers that are essential for understanding the city's past and its cultural evolution.
3. **Erosion of Local Culture and Identity**: The emphasis on creating a global cityscape has led to the erosion of local culture and identity. The influx of multinational corporations and expatriates, combined with the adoption of international architectural styles, has diluted the local cultural expressions and traditional practices.
4. **Challenges in Integrating Old and New**: Balancing the old with the new represents a significant challenge. Finding ways to integrate historical preservation with contemporary urban development without compromising the area's heritage or its role as a symbol of modern China is complex.
5. **Limited Public Awareness and Engagement**: There may be limited public awareness and engagement regarding the importance of preserving cultural heritage and identity in the face of rapid development. Without strong public support, conservation efforts may not receive the attention or resources needed to be effective.
6. **Homogenization of Urban Space**: The global trend towards homogenization of urban spaces is evident in Pudong, where the proliferation of similar-looking skyscrapers and

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commercial complexes can contribute to a lack of distinct urban identity, making it harder to distinguish from other global cities

Data sources and collection

The empirical extension should assemble dated master plans, statutory development controls, land-use records, heritage inventories, archival maps, official SEZ documents, historical imagery, and census or municipal statistics for comparable time windows. Field observations should document building conditions, public-space character, industrial heritage, signage, accessibility, and land-use interfaces. Semi-structured interviews should include residents, heritage practitioners, planning officials, business representatives, and community organizations; sampling, recruitment, consent, and saturation criteria must be specified before collection.

Analysis and comparability

Document and interview materials should be coded using a transparent codebook based on the five framework dimensions, while permitting inductive themes. Historical maps and images may be compared using a reproducible classification scheme and clearly reported source dates and boundaries. Descriptive indicators can include the number and condition of inventoried assets, documented land-use transitions, public access to heritage sites, and recorded participation mechanisms. Triangulation should distinguish confirmed observations, interview perceptions, official claims, and researcher interpretations. A cross-case matrix should record evidence, counterevidence, and missing data for each dimension.

Research ethics, validity, and limitations

Ethical review and informed consent are necessary before interviews or ethnographic work. Reliability can be strengthened through a codebook, double coding of a sample, source provenance logs, and transparent treatment of conflicting accounts.

Shanghai Pudong New Area

Pudong offers a context for examining the relationship between globally oriented development and local historical continuity. The key analytical issue is not whether contemporary architecture is intrinsically incompatible with heritage, but whether planning and redevelopment practices recognize existing places, memories, industrial histories, and communities. The research identifies concerns about urban homogenization and loss of historic character, these are treated here as issues to investigate, not verified case findings. Relevant Shanghai scholarship suggests the importance of considering conservation alongside redevelopment and the changing meanings assigned to industrial heritage (Martínez, 2017; Sun & Chen, 2023).

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Figure 3 An aerial photo taken on May 22 shows the construction site of an office building project at the Binjiang Avenue in Pudong, Shanghai. The project represents the largest commercial building complex along Binjiang Avenue. Source:(People's Daily Online)

Allama Iqbal Industrial City and Faisalabad

For Faisalabad, the focus of research is the relationship between a developing industrial zone and the wider city-region. The relevant questions concern land-use transition, connections to established settlements, continuity of local productive and cultural practices, and whether heritage considerations are reflected in industrial and municipal planning. The research does not supply an independently validated inventory of threatened sites, displacement records, or completed stakeholder interviews. Such claims must await empirical documentation. Studies of CPEC-related SEZ opportunities and barriers provide development context but do not themselves establish local heritage impacts (Naeem et al., 2020).

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Figure 4 Allama Iqbal Industrial City, Faisalabad source: Faisalabad Industrial Estate Development and Management Company.

Heritage-Sensitive Planning and Policy Framework

A practical planning sequence comprises six linked actions. First, establish a publicly documented baseline inventory covering buildings, landscapes, practices, and community-valued places. Second, screen major industrial and infrastructure proposals for heritage and social impacts at the earliest planning stage. Third, map significant heritage assets and connections to everyday destinations before designing any visitor route. Fourth, incorporate conservation priorities into zoning, urban design guidance, adaptive-reuse policies, and development approvals. Fifth, create participatory governance arrangements with clear institutional responsibilities and accessible grievance channels. Sixth, monitor change using periodic heritage-condition surveys, community-perception measures, and transparent reporting.

Heritage-tourism proposals should prioritize local use, universal accessibility, interpretive accuracy, maintenance capacity, and equitable distribution of benefits. Digital mapping and storytelling may support these objectives but should not substitute for physical conservation or community participation.

Five-Dimensional Heritage–Industrial Urbanization Framework

The framework is an analytical proposal synthesized from the cited scholarship. Each dimension is specified through an object of assessment, mechanism, evidence, possible indicator, and planning response. The dimensions interact and should not be collapsed into a single score without explicit weighting and community validation.

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Table 1 Operational specification of the proposed five-dimensional framework. Source: Author-developed conceptual synthesis, indicators are proposed and have not been empirically measured.

Dimension	Analytical focus	Evidence to seek	Indicative measures	Planning response
Spatial transformation	Land conversion, connectivity, settlement edges	Road and land-use plans, dated imagery, planning documents	Change in land-use classes, severed routes, access to historic areas	Buffer areas, connectivity safeguards and development review
Tangible heritage	Built fabric, industrial artefacts, streetscapes, setting	Inventories, dated photographs, conservation records	Documented assets retained; condition and contextual integrity	Protection overlays, adaptive reuse and heritage impact assessment
Intangible heritage and identity	Rituals, skills, industrial memory, belonging	Oral histories, ethnography, community archives	Continuity of practices; perceived belonging across groups	Co-produced interpretation and safeguarding plans
Community inclusion	Displacement, access, distribution of costs and benefits	Consultation records, housing and livelihood data	Meaningful participation; affordability; access to services	Representation rules, mitigation and benefit-sharing
Governance and heritage-led economy	Coordination, implementation, tourism and maintenance	Policy texts, budgets, project approvals, visitor management	Budgeted safeguards; review procedures; local benefit	Cross-agency protocols, monitoring and responsible tourism

Comparative Evidence Matrix: Pudong and Faisalabad–AIIC

The comparative evidence matrix provides a structured basis for examining the relationship between industrial development, urban heritage, and place identity in Shanghai Pudong New Area and Faisalabad–Allama Iqbal Industrial City (AIIC). Drawing on the five-dimensional conceptual framework, the matrix identifies key characteristics of both cases and highlights the similarities and differences in their urban development contexts.

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Table 2 Comparative evidence and verification matrix. Source: literature-informed contextual observations, analytical interpretation by the author.

Comparison	Pudong / Shanghai evidence	Faisalabad–AIIC AIIC evidence	Evidence needed	Inference boundary
Development stage	Pudong: mature metropolitan redevelopment context	AIIC: planned/developing industrial-city context	Official timelines, plans and boundary definitions	Contextual contrast only
Spatial change	Shanghai industrial land restructuring is documented at city scale	Research anticipates conversion and connectivity effects near Faisalabad	Historical maps, comparable dated land-use records, corridor plans	No paired land-conversion estimate
Tangible heritage	Shanghai industrial heritage inventory/reuse scholarship exists	Research identifies heritage inventory as a priority, not completed result	Geocoded assets, condition audits, historic building lists	No site-specific loss estimate
Intangible identity	Research hypothesizes pressure from metropolitan homogenization	Research hypothesizes changes to local traditions and industrial memory	Resident narratives, worker accounts, archival oral histories	No measured perception difference
Community inclusion	Literature warns of regeneration and gentrification effects	Potential displacement and benefit distribution require verification	Displacement records, access audits, interviews	No demonstrated displacement attribution
Governance	Shanghai has documented heritage and land-use policy evolution	CPEC/SEZ institutional coordination needs direct policy audit	Approvals, budgets, protection instruments, agency interviews	Institutional effectiveness unassessed
Tourism potential	Adaptive reuse and heritage interpretation are plausible pathways	Proposed heritage-linked spatial routes are hypothetical	Visitor demand, community consent, accessibility and carrying capacity	No demonstrated tourism benefit

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Discussion and Propositions

The comparison suggests that planning maturity should be treated as a conditioning variable rather than a measure of success. In a mature district, heritage-sensitive policy may focus on adaptive reuse, density, displacement and industrial memory. At an emerging industrial edge, the priority may be anticipatory inventories, protection of settlement networks and negotiated safeguards before irreversible land conversion. These are planning hypotheses, not observed case findings.

Proposition 1: Early and publicly accessible inventories reduce the likelihood that culturally valued sites are omitted from industrial planning decisions. Proposition 2: Heritage-compatible reuse is more likely to support place identity when community access and industrial memory are protected. Proposition 3: Cross-agency review and budgeted monitoring mediate the relationship between industrial development intensity and heritage outcomes. Proposition 4: Heritage tourism contributes to identity only when local cultural practice and resident benefits remain central.

Conclusion

Industrial development has played an important role in transforming cities by creating economic opportunities, improving infrastructure, and encouraging urban expansion. However, these changes also raise important questions about the future of urban heritage and the identity of cities. As cities continue to grow and modernize, maintaining a connection with their historical and cultural roots becomes increasingly important. This study explores these concerns in the context of Special Economic Zones (SEZs), focusing on Shanghai Pudong New Area in China and Allama Iqbal Industrial City in Faisalabad, Pakistan. Although the two areas differ in their scale, development patterns, and institutional settings, they provide useful contexts for understanding how industrial growth can be considered alongside the preservation of urban heritage and local identity.

The main contribution of this study is the development of a five-dimensional conceptual framework that brings together spatial transformation, tangible heritage conservation, intangible heritage and place identity, socioeconomic and tourism integration, and governance and community participation. These dimensions highlight the need to consider cities beyond their physical development and economic performance. Historic buildings, traditional urban spaces, cultural practices, and the everyday experiences of communities all contribute to the identity of a place. Their significance should therefore be recognized when planning new industrial areas and managing the growth of existing cities.

The comparison between Shanghai Pudong and Faisalabad also highlights the importance of understanding local conditions before proposing planning strategies. Approaches that may be appropriate for a highly developed urban area such as Pudong cannot necessarily be applied in the same way to an emerging industrial area such as Allama Iqbal Industrial City. Each location has its own history, urban characteristics, cultural values, and development priorities. Planning

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strategies should therefore respond to these differences while identifying opportunities to integrate heritage conservation with industrial and urban development.

The study further emphasizes the potential of industrial heritage and heritage-led tourism in strengthening the relationship between cities and their past. Historic industrial structures, traditional neighbourhoods, and culturally significant urban spaces can contribute to local identity while creating opportunities for adaptive reuse, tourism, and community activities. However, these opportunities need to be approached carefully so that heritage conservation benefits local communities and does not become limited to the physical restoration or commercial promotion of historic places. Greater coordination among planning authorities, heritage institutions, industrial development agencies, and local communities is particularly important in this regard.

Overall, the study provides a conceptual basis for considering urban heritage and place identity as part of SEZ planning and city–industry integration. The proposed framework offers a way to examine the relationship between industrial development and cultural heritage across different urban contexts, although further empirical research is needed to evaluate its practical application. The central argument is that industrial growth and heritage conservation should not be treated as separate planning concerns. The challenge for urban planners and policymakers is not simply to accommodate new development, but to ensure that cities can continue to grow without losing the historical character, cultural connections, and local identity that make them distinctive.

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