

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**A WEB-BASED APPLICATION FOR
RECOMMENDING LOCAL
EATERIES IN SARAWAK FOR
TOURISTS USING CONTENT-
BASED FILTERING ALGORITHM**

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ABSTRACT

Sarawak's rich culinary heritage is a significant factor driving tourism in the state. Information about restaurants is widely available in a digital age, but too much information is an issue for visitors. It can be very difficult to find authentic local restaurants, particularly if tourists need to find Halal restaurant foods within a particular area. This project proposes a web-based application, named Sarawak Food Guide, to solve this problem by providing highly personalized local restaurant recommendations with the help of a Content-Based Filtering algorithm. The methodology used in designing the project was Modified Waterfall Model in the System Development Life Cycle (SDLC), which goes through the following phases: Planning, Requirement Analysis, System Design, System Implementation, and System Testing. In conclusion, this project offers a tangible and innovative solution for a food recommendation system that can be adapted by the tourism industry to direct tourists and encourage local cuisine in Sarawak. The prototype is successful, yet it has some minor drawbacks such as the reliance on manual user input through preference forms to generate initial recommendations, the reliance on a static database, and some inaccuracies when the geolocation is done using the browser. Future improvements might include implementing a "passive learning" option that would automatically determine user preference from clickstream data, thereby avoiding the need to have to fill out a preference form, and making the user experience even more streamlined.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter has been structured in such a manner that it offers a holistic structure to the project. It starts with the Background of Study that puts into context the challenges that tourists have currently encountered in Sarawak. This is preceded by the Problem Statement which points out the definite shortcomings of the general-purpose navigation apps. Aims and Objectives are followed with the technical and functional objectives of the system, and then the Project Scope which defines the scope of the development including an area of focus on the Kuching area. Lastly, the chapter comes up with the Significance of Study, which explains the benefits of this application in both the tourists and the local food economy.

1.2 Background of Study

For someone visiting Sarawak for the first time, they have read a million tales about the renowned Sarawak Laksa, Kolo Mee and Manok Pansoh, which are dishes that depict the rich multicultural heritage of the state. Upon arriving in Kuching, they take out their phone as they are prepared to locate a local restaurant that offers such food. However, on the internet, they are inundated with Google Maps, TripAdvisor, and random blogs with all listing generic places, international restaurants or a review without indicating which one is actually a restaurant with local food. They simply want a local halal restaurant that offers the authentic Sarawak Laksa, yet it cannot be found easily without the detail of the restaurant and how far the restaurant is from their location.

This is the reality for most tourists who came to experience Sarawak food culture.