

Visitors' Preferences on Seasonal Accommodation for the Rainforest World Music Festival

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ABSTRACT

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Sarawak Cultural Village (SCV) is an award-winning open-air living museum of Sarawak has been the host to the three days annual Rainforest World Music Festival (RWMF) since 2005. Every year, thousands of visitor flock to SCV grounds to experience the rich Sarawak culture, live performances and celebrations that it offers. Due to its popularity, each year the number of visitors increases with regulars and newcomers. This has created a spike in accommodation demands for the area of Santubong. Unfortunately, the growth of visitors is not supported by adequate desired accommodations within the area. Thus, the objectives of this paper are to identify an ideal seasonal accommodation type and desired basic facilities required during RWMF. Quantitative analysis is incorporated in this research through collection of data gathered from online survey. Set of questionnaires was distributed to the former visitors seeking their views on the seasonal accommodations and facilities preferred. Based on the results of the data collected, it provided some understanding on the seasonal accommodations and facilities that are suitable for RWMF. This finding consequently could help provide a feasible and practical solution towards the spike demand for accommodation facilities during the RWMF.

Keywords: Seasonal Tourism, Festival, Accommodation, Facilities

INTRODUCTION

This paper leads us to the discussion on a specific tourist attraction in Malaysia and host destination to the popular Rainforest World Music Festival (RWMF) at Santubong, Sarawak. Santubong is located approximately 33.7 kilometres (40-minute drive) from Kuching, the state capital. The location is highly praised by Everett and Hewitt, (1909) stating it is an imposing forest clad mass that creates an illusion of a mountain standing erect almost straight out of the sea and its steep slopes reaching a height of 2700 feet. Santubong offers a myriad of attractions such as Damai Central, Santubong National Park, Buntal Esplanade, Pantai Puteri, Santubong Embang Waterfall, fishing villages such as Kampung Santubong and Kampung Buntal with its quintessential traditional Malay houses to admire (Sarawak Forestry Corporation, 2019), Sarawak Cultural Village (SCV) and the most attractive landmark is the Mount Santubong.

SCV is located just across from Damai Beach Resort and Hotels and the extent of the area covers 17 acres of land with Mount Santubong as its majestic backdrop. Here visitors can experience of an award-winning living museum of local culture and witness the daily routines of the diverse ethnic groups in Sarawak (Sarawak Cultural Village, 2019).

SCV hosts numerous national events throughout the year such as Malaysia Day Celebration, Christmas Day Celebration, New Year Celebration, Chinese New Year Celebration, Hari Raya Celebration and Gawai Celebration. However, it is undeniable that the main event would be the annual RWMF. Over the three days event, musicians, artists and music enthusiasts globally would unite to share their mutual passionate interests in this event which is considered the most reputable cultural events in Malaysia. The festival offers a variety of programs and activities involving cultural

workshops during the day and the music performances take place at night. RWMF maintained its 8th position in the Global Top 10 of Trans global World Music Charts (TWMC) Festivals awards for two consecutive years in 2018 and 2019 (RWMF 2021).

During the RWMF season, sudden influx of visitors to Santubong and Kuching will occur making the existing capacity of accommodation severely insufficient. Currently, there are a few options of accommodations within proximity of the SCV to choose from ranging from local 5 stars rating to campground category such as Damai Beach Resort, Damai Puri Resort and Spa, Permai Rainforest Resort and the newly developed resort, The Village, The Culvert and Airbnb's rentals, homestays and camp site are made available. These accommodations are fully booked during the event every year, with visitors having to resort to stay in Kuching as the city offers more accommodations with a variety of room quantities and rates. Nonetheless, both locations are not able to support the increasing number of visitors to RWMF. This paper, looks at the possibility of creating preferred and feasible accommodations to boost the seasonal tourism market in the future by considering and providing alternative temporary / seasonal accommodations in Santubong. A thorough study was conducted to obtain the views of former visitors to RWMF of their preferences on accommodation types and facilities.

Research Problem & Objectives

The steadily growing numbers of visitors over the years to the RWMF seasons have led to major greater demands on accommodations and tourism facilities around SCV. In 2017, the RWMF achieved the ticket sales up by 8 percent and have exceeded their initial target of 20,000 visitors both in 2018 and 2019 and expecting more each coming year (Borneo Post, 2019). This is the prediction of the possible forthcoming occurrence hence the ability to provide enough accommodation would play an important role in the system.

While the rooms and facilities in Santubong are adequate in other parts of the year, there is little attention and efforts being given to supply more accommodation and shelters for the visitors of RWMF. For the past five years only a mere 3% - 7% of the total room demands are being fulfilled with accommodations available in Santubong against the number of visitors to RWMF (Sivadsasan, 2015). Nonetheless, RWMF's seasonal nature makes it extremely difficult to predict and assess its market size as a whole, resulting in no substantial data to determine the necessity of building more accommodations. According to Cannas (2012) there are studies that try to explore the effects of policies, for instance in the accommodation sector, but it seems that there is a lack of longitudinal studies. To neglect the need to build or prepare more accommodations in Santubong would not only create a problem in the tourism industry for Sarawak and dissatisfactions amongst the visitors but will impede on the growth of the festival itself. Then how do we evaluate the need to propose more accommodation with the lack of precise statistical information? Given the popularity of the festival and its impact on the tourism industry, the issue becomes not only a recurrent conundrum, but turns out to be a significant gap in the literature that requires immediate attention.

Thus, this paper aims to identify the alternative and suitable type of seasonal accommodation and preferred facilities by visitors during RWMF season. The results would then give a glimpse of how the accommodation facility may be set up to meet the requirements suitable for the festival. The proposal will need to take on board on variety of issues and interest of stakeholders such as cost, the benefits that could be offered community and imposing minimal impacts to the pristine environment of Santubong, the event itself, the RWMF visitors and tourism operators. The predictive study of the future tourist patterns and their needs is the contingency that we must be equipped for lest the decline in the RWMF should be affected by the lack of accommodations and facilities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Seasonal Tourism & Festival Tourism

‘Seasonal tourism’ is a temporary difference in terms of tourism experience and phenomena where the imbalance can be associated with number of visitors, expenditures, traffic condition, rate of employment or the differences in the number of attractions (Butler, 2001). Seasonality can be caused by natural or institutional factors. The majority of tourism destinations are characterised with fluctuations in tourism activities throughout the year (Higham and Hinch, 2002; Jang 2004). In term of tourism industry and its economy it is essential to predict reliable movement of seasonality in order to form an efficient economic tourism development. Seasonal tourism has become one of the most distinctive and determinative features of global tourism industry. Despite that fact, seasonality is one of the most prominent features of tourism; paradoxically it is also one tourism trend that is least understood (Corluka, 2018). Seasonal tourism has been branded as a critical feature in tourism for a very long time (Muhamad Mustafa and Majeed 2020). This pattern in tourism industry is identified to pose both positive and negative effects on the travel and tourism sectors claims Cisneroz Martinez and Morales (2015), Koenig and Bischoff (2005). The more specialised the destination, the more seasonal it is, and less seasonality is due to diversified demand such as in the big urban areas where the factors are not constant and always changing (WTO, 1984). Seasonality factors can be constant or unpredictable (Hylleberg, 1992).

The more specialised the destination, the more seasonal it is, and less seasonality is due to diversified demand such as in the big urban areas where the factors are not constant and always changing (WTO, 1984). There are four types of seasonality patterns (Butler and Mao, 1997):

- Single Peak: Single clear and fixed reason of time and demand.
- Two Peak: Two clear and fixed reasons of peak time and demand.
- Non-Peak: No reason of peak time and demand can be identified.
- Dynamic: Can be single or multiple reasons of peak time and demand. Thus, not clear and fixed.

In other words, tourism is naturally seasonal (Hartmann, 1986). However, it can be argued that the seasonality can be clearly differentiated base on location or destination characteristics. Seasonality can be measured in numerical values for better tourism economic development planning and to preserve it ecologically as a recovery phase both for environment and local communities. For examples, number of visitors, night stays, duration of stays or expenditures are normally some basic methods to measure seasonality followed by time span in daily, weekly or monthly basis (Weidner, 2006).

RWMF would fall under the category of Institutional seasonality resulted from cultural, social, ethnic and organizational factors (BarOn, 1972; Hinch & Hickey, 1996). Variations in tourist’s activities are caused by holidays and other events at specific times of the year. Festivals are a fast-growing multidimensional phenomenon that plays an important role in tourism industry. Visiting a festival can be treated as a distinct type of tourism called festival tourism (Cundy, 2013). Festival tourism can also be referred to the willingness and motivation to travel and attend festivals. It can become a particularly valuable form of cultural exhibition and exchange that creates interest and favourable impressions towards the destination (Richards & Wilson, 2004). According to Włodarczyk (2009 cited in Cundy, 2013), there are four elements that constitute a tourist space: i). natural heritage (including elements created by nature and constituting the tourist assets of a given area), ii). cultural heritage (including the tourist resources of a given area created by people within a given space), iii). infrastructure, or the area’s tourism related resources, which supplement the natural elements and make the tourist offer more attractive, and iv). people as the subjects of tourist space, undertaking certain tourist activities. Each of these elements imposes both positive and negative impacts due the activities caused by the seasonal festival tourism as described by Cundy (2013).

Visitors Arrivals to RWMF

The RWMF covers approximately a span of two weeks consisting of mini programmes with the main event being the three nights performances at SCV. Other sub programmes are scattered around Santubong and Kuching city creating a trail of activities during RWMF season. Normally, those who attended the RWMF do not only stay in Santubong or Kuching for the three days event, but will also extend their stay to attend other tourist attraction in Sarawak before and after the RWMF. Ever since its existence, the RWMF has received an average of 22,000 visitors or audiences to the festival each year (Ting et al 2017). The large majority of approximately 70% of them are local visitors from different states of Malaysia. Data have shown a climb from 4,517,179 visitors in 2015 to 4,662,419 visitors in 2019 (MTAC Sarawak 2021). The highest number of visitors was in the 2017 with a number of 4,856,888 foreign visitors. However, in 2018 there was a slight drop to 4,430,921 due to the bad haze which had affected Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore and a steep decline in 2020 due to the Worldwide Covid19 Pandemic. Table 1 below indicates that there has been a steady increase of visitors participating in the festival yearly. RWMF will be expected to attract and gather more participants in the coming years hence; any necessary preparation should be taken into account (The Star, 2019).

Table 1: Domestic and Foreign visitor Arrivals into Sarawak and Visitors to RWMF

Visitors	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Sarawak	4,517,179	4,661,100	4,856,888	4,430,921	4,662,419	1,199,872
Domestic	2,020,163	2,402,444	2,217,366	2,317,946	2,579,975	836,568
Foreigner	2,497,016	2,258,656	2,639,522	2,112,975	2,082,444	363,304
RWMF	18,000	18,340	19,807	21,688	23,650	0

(Source: MTAC Sarawak 2021, The Borneo Post, 2017, 2018, 2019)

Orchid Rating Hotel

Orchid Rating Hotel was introduced to local accommodations that do not fit in the five-star rating systems. The Orchid Rating system has a set of the benchmarking tool that can be used to gain hotel license, certificates and ratings in Malaysia. There are three categories of orchid class (one orchid, two orchid, three orchid) to be determined depending on the established accommodation facilities provided. There are five areas that it focuses on (motour.gov, 2019):

- A. Cleanliness and Hygiene Standard; dustbins, sanitary installations, health awareness message, kitchen, refuse and insect & vermin protection.
- B. Safety and Guest Security; corridors, fire security and safety, emergency power supply.
- C. Facilities and Services; Reception area, public toilet, thermal conditions for common areas, public telephone, lifts/elevators, front desk services.
- D. Bedroom Requirements; minimum room size, non-smoking room, bedroom furniture, bed linens, towels, bedroom windows, bedroom doors, sound proofing bedrooms, thermal conditioning in bedrooms, ventilations, bedroom communication, drinking water in bedrooms, information materials in bedrooms, kiblat signs.
- E. Staff; mode of greeting, language, number of staff, citizenship, quality of staff

Budget Hotel, Short-Term Residential Accommodation (STRA)

The accommodation sector is a major component in the travel and tourism industry. In Kuching and Santubong there are accommodations that ranges from luxurious expensive five-star hotels to low-cost budget hotels, homestays, Airbnb and campsites. The room rates surveyed within the vicinity of the RWMF in 2019 ranged from RM60.00 to RM1500.00. A study done by Sivadasan (2015), found that majority of the tourists visiting Sarawak, prefers mostly budget hotels and homestays because of their high levels of hospitality services and the convenience of their location to the attractions. There are no recent records on visitor's expenditure however; the average total expenditure of per participant is about RM334 per day during RWMF 2009 (Shuib, Edman and

Yaacob 2013). Previous records indicates that the RWMF average stay ranges from 3 days to a week's span, therefore the study of the accommodation sector is vital for the development of the tourism industry in Santubong. This paper focuses on area specific as to what the contribution of budget seasonal accommodations can offer to the booming festival tourism, customer satisfaction, economic developments and employment generation due to the growth of visitations. In searching and establishing the appropriate requirements for accommodations suited during the RWMF season, several key documents were referred to.

Budget Hotel Guidelines introduced and prepared by the Kuala Lumpur City Hall in 2015 was used as reference to further understand the minimum requirements of budget hotel. The guideline is essential to set up a safe and functional temporary accommodation environment. A comprehensive checklist can be drawn from the guideline studied in order to come up with an ideal set up of a temporary accommodation suitable during RWMF season. Simplified, there are three areas that the guideline focusses on which are; Layout, Facilities (has to match number of rooms) and Activity for mixed development (DBKL 2015).

Short-Term Residential Accommodation or STRA is a newly introduced draft guideline set up by Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MOTAC, 2019). The criteria of STRA licence stated that only residential and commercial dwelling property that is allowed under STRA. Four Types of licences are available: Hosted rental, Un-hosted rental, Hybrid hosted and un-hosted rental Commercial. It may not suit fully to Santubong SVC situation. Nevertheless, The STRA Guideline is the nearest guideline to be referred to in the case of this study in order to ensure positive growth of temporary accommodation for RWMF.

The STRA industry without a doubt has shown a significant growth in the economic aspects of the country. The Guidelines is important as it function also to provide a safe environment for tourists and customers alike. In other words, the guideline aims to better enhance the STRA industry without compromising regulatory aspects such as safety, security, environment, public good and welfare

Camp Site Guidelines

Guidelines established by the Kuala Muda, Kedah local authority (mpspk.gov.my., 2018) was referred to for camp sites. It is stipulated in the document that the camp sites must fulfil these general criteria; 1). Flat land / plinth and accessible to freshwater, 2). Nearby basic facilities such as toilet, 3). Avoid environmental pollution, 4). Avoid areas with unique flora and fauna, 5). Provision of land reserved for expansion when necessary. The document also states more specific requirement such as if there are building structures to be built, it shall not exceed 1 storey height except for lookout towers which then should not exceed three storey height. Provision of access to site and inside the site must be available yet must be done with care to the environment and must respect the site context and terrains. Facilities on site should include parking spaces, eateries, toilets, refuse bins (suitable to avoid scavenging by wild animals), picnic tables and chairs and shelters). It is also mentioned that the guidelines must be read together with the National Eco Tourism Plan (1996) and Malaysia Planning Standards (2017).

Currently, there is no specific guideline for the seasonal temporary accommodation. However, the three guidelines mentioned above can possibly create somewhat a minimum requirement that should be considered during the preparation of the proposal.

Seasonal Accommodation

As seasonal tourism exist so does the seasonal accommodation that follows with it. Seasonal accommodation is a type of accommodation that depends on the seasonality factors or which the revenue of the accommodation depends greatly on the time where the accommodation is operating (Alanpedia.com, 1998). Some examples are ski hotel resorts, island resorts, theme parks and sporting

accommodation. Seasonal accommodations can be in a form of fixed or a temporary facility. A temporary seasonal accommodation is a type of accommodation that can be mobilised, assembled and dissembled whenever necessary. Temporary accommodation is also known by other names such as pop-up hotels, portable container hotels, collapsible cabin, and glamping.

For the past few years, camping ground site located in the proximity of RWMF ground event made it one of the most demanded options for the visitors. This camp site can cater up to 300 tents are constantly fully booked during the RWMF season. The camping rental rate stated by the management is from RM60 to RM117 per night stay. The visitors are also allowed to bring their own camping tent to the site by paying RM60 per night for the space rent and RM80 for renting a lightweight non-waterproof dome style camping tent per night. The rentable camping tent unit can accommodate one to four people. Both Damai Central Complex and the camping ground are managed by SCV. At present, the camping site does not have any attached facilities to it except for rentable camping space and few barbeque pits. Where else other basic facilities such as shared toilet, food court and transportation are provided at Damai Central is located across the campsite about 100meters away. Other facilities at Damai Central are:

- Open-air arena: banquet, carnivals, corporate or theme functions and weddings.
- Amphitheatre: discussion, training and performances.
- Conference room: meetings and functions.
- Public toilet: wash closets and showers.
- Locker and Towel rental
- Bicycle rental
- Food court: 10 units of stalls serving local dishes
- Commercial Lots: 15 units of lots servicing souvenir shops and café, wellness centre, laundry services, Bay ridge Fine seafood restaurant, Escobar pub and convenience shop.
- Camping rent: camping tent and space rental

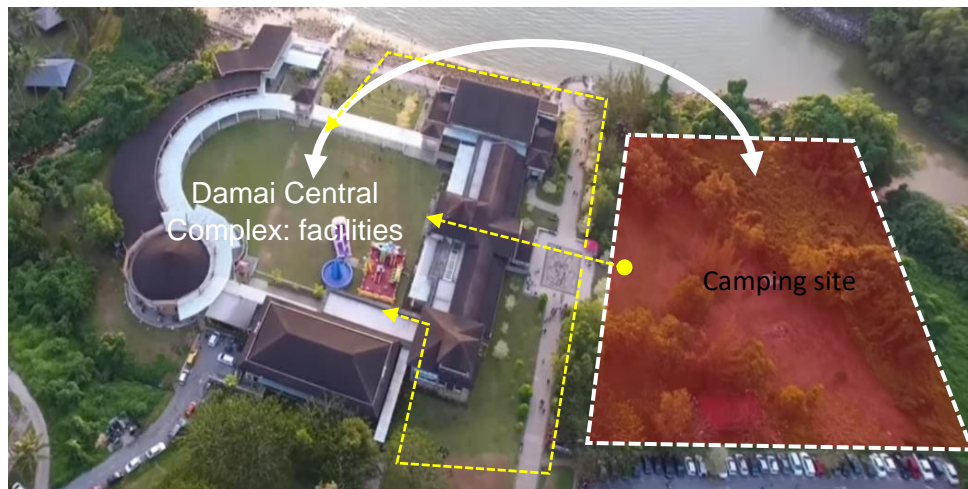


Figure 1: Aerial view of Damai Central Complex and Camping site (Adapted from image in Youtube, SCV 4K Drone, 2019)

Millennial's Travel Behaviour

Youth travel has become one of the fastest growing segments of international tourism, make up more than 23% of the over one billion tourists travelling internationally annually. This growth represents tremendous socioeconomic opportunities for local communities as youth travellers stimulate local tourism businesses, foster closer social interaction with host populations and champion environmental protection and UNWTO believes they have the potential to drive sustainable development in the tourism sector (wysetc.org, 2021). The young travellers nowadays have different needs apart from travelling for the local attractions and culture. They have high expectations on design aspects, internet connectivity and the quality of services provided. Accommodation or hotel

service provider have to adapt to the millennial's travel lifestyle in order to remain relevant in the current tourism industry (Chee, Bernard and Teoh, 2017).

Study by Shuib, Edman and Sabran (2013) profiled visitors to RWMF found that 48% being 21–30 years old, and 21.7% were aged between 31–40 years old. Another study by Ting et al (2017) found that 84.6% of the visitors to RWMF were single and 78.8% are students. Whilst their age range is not mentioned, it can be perceived that the majority of visitors in the study consist of younger adults. Hence, this information help indicates their affordability in spending during the festival. According to Muhamed, Omar and May (2010), the choice of accommodation is often determined by the needs, expectations and perceptions of tourists (Refer to Figure 2). For instance, hostels and backpacker hotels are the preferred accommodation for youth tourists (Keeley 1995; Seeking 1998; Nash, Thyne and Davies 2006) mainly due to the low cost.

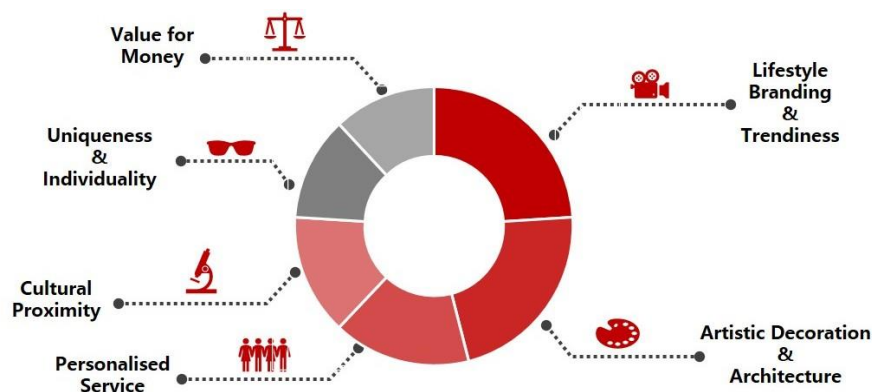


Figure 2: Young travellers' priorities when choosing accommodation (Adopted from Muhamed, Omar and May 2010)

METHODOLOGY

Quantitative method

The research was carried out using quantitative method as primary data collection approach. Quantitative method was used to obtain statistics generated from numerical data. The data are defined variables such as opinions, behaviour and quantify attitudes. The research which is corresponding to the RWMF requires a certain scale of data to be collected due to the large audience also categorized as the sample population. Some of the approach of quantitative method would be through surveys, interviews, longitudinal studies and systematic observations (Ariolla, M.M, 2006).

When studying social studies or a group of audience, quantitative method has the specific strength because of accuracy in results. The target is to study the phenomenon under where the group of audience are presented, and quantitative methods can summarise and generalised the data gained from the group. In order to guarantee the validity and reliability, the quantitative research would normally involve few variables, case studies, and prescribed procedures (Babbie, Earl R, 2018). Quantitative method is also an efficient way of asking few key questions and getting quick feedbacks for the study in a large population size within a limited time span (Askattest, 2019). Therefore, quantitative method is suitable to be employed for this research.

Structured fixed response questionnaire

A set of questionnaires was formulated to capture the essence of visitor's preferences on seasonal accommodation during RWMF. Five structured short objective questions presented in the questionnaire represents the most pertinent aspects to determine the preferred seasonal accommodations and tourist facilities during RWMF season. The two most important aspects and responses would be the visitor's preferences on basic facilities of seasonal accommodation whilst

other data are supportive information. The respondents were allowed to choose more than one answer from the choices of answers provided. The questionnaire five aspects are:

- Question 1: Duration of night stays
- Question 2: Price range per night stay
- Question 3: Accommodation size
- Question 4: Accommodation type
- Question 5: Accommodation Facilities

Questionnaire survey was administered to former visitors of RWMF through online survey specifically by using Google forms application. As the visitors to RWMF originated from locations nationwide and worldwide, the best mode to reach out to them is via online. This questionnaire was distributed to the respondents using electronic communication tool and social media; emails, Facebook and WhatsApp. The use of social media as indicator to tourists' preferences has been supported by Hausman et al (2018). According to study by Dolnicar, Laesser and Matus (2009), online respondents have a lower dropout rate and produces lower incomplete data, though it is seen that responses to tourism-related questions differ significantly, indicating that survey format can dramatically influence results of empirical studies in tourism.

A few limitations of this study are the physical distance of the location to the researchers and due to the given timeline of the research, the data was collected post event and not during the 2019 RWMF. Another setback was that second cycle of data collection proposed in 2020 had to be eliminated because of the cancellation of the event due to the Covid19 pandemic.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

Based on the survey administered concise results are shown in Table 5.0, the top preferences of accommodation by visitors are hotel or resort with 245 responses followed by 234 responses preferred staying in cabin or eco lodge. The third highest choice is capsule or container accommodations with 224 responses and followed by glamping / camping tent with 208 responses. Other selection of accommodation types (hostel/ dorm, Airbnb, homestay / bungalow, condominium / apartment) all received below 200 responses each (refer to Table 5.0). The survey result shown that majority of 246 visitors stayed no more than three days in Santubong area followed by a big difference of 72 responses that stayed for four to six nights. 24 responses showed that the visitors stayed for one week. 8 responses indicating two weeks stay during RWMF season.

For room preferences, a close count for double rooms (221) and twin rooms (209) were selected. The questionnaire listed out 21 choices of facilities for seasonal accommodation desired by visitors. There are six different range of prices presented in the questionnaire for acceptable price visitors are willing to pay for their accommodations ranging from RM50 to RM2999. The responses revealed that the acceptable price rate per night stay preferred by the visitors mainly fall under the lowest bracket of MYR50 to MYR199 (291) per night stay. Second, with 181 responses of affordable accommodation is from MYR200 to MYR399. Followed by 80 of the visitors selected the price range from MYR400 to MYR599 per night stay and lastly, the less than 50 responses showed that they can afford to pay from MYR600 to MYR2999 for a night stay.

The survey results revealed that the top nine facilities prioritised by visitors which scored above 300 responses are; electricity supplies, Wi-Fi, fan / air conditioning, safe / locker storage, E-Hailing & public transportation, convenient store, security, credit cards/ online banking, first aid kits. Subsequently, responses reaching 200 but below 300 are guest lounge or communal area (235), restaurant (231), natural ventilated (229) and shared toilet (205). The remaining facilities have responses of below 200.

Discussion

Duration of Night Stay

Previous data and this study confirm that participants preferred to spend the duration of 1 to 3 nights. For longer or extended stay in Sarawak, the visitors either leave in Santubong after the event has ended and move to other areas such as in the Kuching city centre and other destinations where they can explore other attractions available.

Affordable price range rate per night stay

Most of the participants preferred to spend no more than MYR50 – MYR199 for a night stay during the RWMF season. This result is comparable to the past study where 88% percent of the respondents paid less than MYR600 on lodging expenditure on the accommodation (Ahmad Shuib, Edman, Yaacob, 2013). At the present time, that there are very few choices of accommodation that would offer the rate of MYR50 – MYR199 per night stay during RWMF season in Santubong. Furthermore, Santubong in general can only accommodate 3-7% of the total number of visitors.

Table 2: Majority visitors' preferences on seasonal accommodation (by authors)

Seasonal accommodation preferences	Category	Majority total response
Duration of night stay	1 – 3 nights	246
Affordable price range per night stay	MYR50 - 199	291
Preferred accommodation size	Double room	221
	Twin room	209
Favourable accommodation type	Hotel Resort	245
	Cabin, Eco lodge	234
	Capsule, Container	224
	Glamping	208
Acceptable accommodation facilities	Electrical supply	356
	W-fi	342
	Fan, Air condition	322
	Safe, Locker storage	320
	E-hailing, Public transportation	317
	Convenience store	307
	Security	306
	Credit cards, Online banking	303
	First aid kit	301

Preferred accommodation (room) size

The result shows that participants of RWMF preferred to stay in a double room and suite accommodation room size. Based on past study done by Ahmad Shuib, Edman and Sabran (2013) the participation characteristics stated that most of the participants was accompanied or attended the event in a group of friends (47.3%). Therefore, room sizing for accommodation plays an important aspect in accommodating a group of people in one room or more beds (twin room). Comfort and personal space is also important attributes to be considered when lodging a large group of people.

Favourable accommodation type

The participants mostly preferred to stay in a hotel / resort type of accommodation mainly due to the fact that the facilities that come with a standard hotel would offer basic facilities and other extra

facilities for the guests. Standard hotel is attached with required requirements for hotel licensing that ensure comfort and safety. Secondly, the cabin or eco-lodge accommodation type was also being preferred. This is because of the theme of event which is related to cultural and natural environmental festival concept. The younger travellers may also prefer a more environmental approach of lodging rather than commercialised hotel resorts.

The capsule or container and glamping or traditional camping tents are also the top five favourable accommodation type chosen. Both types of accommodation can be categorised as temporary pop-up hotels or seasonal accommodations. The popularity and demand of pop-up hotels has risen becoming a trend and an alternative or option especially among young travellers whom are the driving forces of this innovative accommodation concept. The pop-up hotels offer a different and unique experience compared to the conventional hotel. Pop-up hotels are normally available during festivals or events and music festivals in particular are the most suitable environment for pop-up hotels to thrive (SiteMinder, 2019).

Acceptable accommodation facilities

Two categories of facilities that have been grouped based on the responses gathered. The primary facilities preferred by the visitors are the electrical supply, wi-fi/ internet connection, mechanical ventilation, safe/ locker, e-hailing/ public transportation, convenience store, security/ surveillance, credit cards/ online banking and first aid kit. Secondary facilities preferred are guest lounge/ communal area, restaurant, naturally ventilated and shared toilet.

Referring to the key documents in the literature review, minimum requirements for Orchid Hotel Rating, STRA Guidelines, Budget Hotel Guidelines and Campsite Guidelines most of the above desired facilities overlapped with the requirements stated in the guidelines. For that reason, by following the minimum criteria stated in these documents, the accommodation facility should be sufficient and suitable to accommodate the needs of visitors to RWMF.

STRA guideline however, is still in draft stage and can only be use as a basic reference. The Budget Hotel Guidelines provided more basic facilities requirement that is suitable for an affordable accommodation services specifically, affordable pop-up hotels.

Based on the results of the survey and also knowledge gathered from literature reviews, criteria for seasonal accommodation suitable for RWMF season may be proposed. Firstly, the most used and suitable accommodation for festival-oriented events are those that may cater for large group of participants. Secondly, a large space either designated or multipurpose use area that is spacious, secured and safe to cater to the seasonal crowd. Thirdly, the location should be of easy access and within walking distance from the festival ground. Fourthly, temporary structure seasonal accommodation type: better glamping / camping form of accommodation in addition to the existing ones could be the best solution for temporary and seasonal accommodation. Fifth criteria, is to create a designated communal spaces and facilities meeting international standard.

Even though camping and glamping is the fourth choice of preferred accommodation type. This study sees the great potential of offering them on the SVC site. Camping / glamping are less preferred because the visitors had experienced the relatively basic and poor facilities provided at the existing camp site. The existing camp site does not offer attached facilities within the camping site perimeter and facilities are provided at the Damai Central Complex 100meters away from the camping site.

The proposed RWMF camping and glamping with upgraded facilities and services can be offered inexpensively compared to other accommodation facilities types and it converge with the affordability price range rate of MYR50 – MYR199 per night stay. Proposing glamping accommodations with upgraded facilities have great potentials to attract and cater for more visitors without pumping in enormous amount of investment for new infrastructure and hotel orientated buildings just for the festival period. It is economically not practical to build hotel rooms just for a short spike of demand in

a year. Seasonality and innovation have become key challenges for tourism in general. Overcoming seasonality is key to achieving both a more even spread of the economic benefits of tourism and reduced environmental pressure on destinations (UNWTO, 2014) most definitely it is not sustainable to impose more built forms on such a beautiful natural site. Furthermore, glamping is an up-and-coming contemporary tourism accommodation trend all over the world with the term *glamping* is linked to the urban generation of modern and younger tourists seeking higher quality for their money based on study done by Petrusa (2019). Glamping accommodations such as luxurious tents and similar facilities, equipped as top hotel suites are also called five-star camping (Latza, 2011). Glamping is said to be able to solve seasonality issues and also attract non-traditional campers to enjoy nature without total missing out on comfort and facilities (Cvelić-Bonifačić, Milohnić and Cerović 2017).

The combination of findings in this study and a cross reference of data have helped to support achieve the research objectives. Figure 3 indicates a conceptual layout of temporary accommodation (glamping type) attached with facilities that are required to create a safe and comfortable environment.

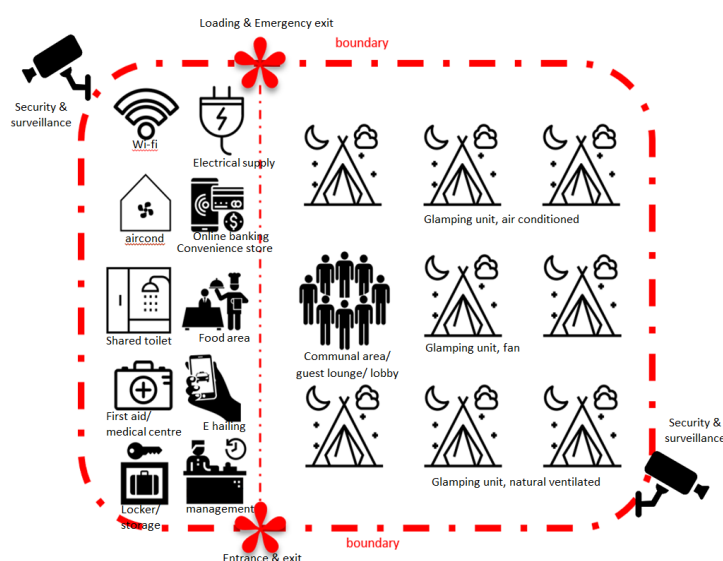


Figure 3: Festival's seasonal accommodation and facilities concept layout (source: authors)

CONCLUSION

This paper has provided key insights into, preferences of visitors to RWMF accommodation and facilities and opportunities for glamping to contribute significantly as an option for implementing new and innovative seasonal accommodation in SCV. The idea of glamping that can be offered at an affordable rate compared to other accommodation facilities. The survey also shows that the glamping type is one of the top choices for preferred accommodation type during RWMF season.

This fact discerns that it could be a solution to consider when proposing more tourist accommodations with maximum comfort and convenience to match the increment in the number of tourists attending RWMF each year. A simple adjustment to the site by providing sufficient amounts of well-designed shelters encompassing social, cultural, environmental as well economic concerns could solve many of the dissatisfaction on accommodation supplies.

Temporary accommodation for other popular festivals in Asia was also being referred to support the research such as RREC in Indonesia, FUJI Rock in Japan and Wonderfruit in Thailand are music festivals that have utilised tents, glamping accommodations and supplied provision of boutique RVs to support the demand of seasonal accommodations. With proper planning and required facilities provided, glamping is a creative and innovative solution to accommodate the growing number of visitors during RWMF season.

The finding on acceptable accommodation facilities was compared to the Minimum Orchid Rating, Short Term Residential Accommodation and Budget hotel guidelines and requirements resulting to almost similar required facilities to be provided. Therefore, it can be concluded that the facilities preferred during RWMF season matched the Orchid Rating, STRA Guidelines, Campsite Guidelines and it is necessary to provide the required facilities for an accommodation development based on them and other relevant guidelines. There are major improvements to the services and facilities to be made within the RWMF grounds.

Additionally, the study on millennial's travel behaviour also provides guidance on how the accommodation facility should adapt to the young traveller's lifestyles in order to remain relevant in the tourism industry. Overall, it is recommended that future researches to be done to obtain more data on the seasonal patterns in Santubong and development strategies to sustain the popularity of the event.

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