

# Tourism Strategies for Maintaining Tourist Visits During Emergencies in Rural Accommodations

## Case Study Juwana Central District

I Gusti Ketut Indra Pranata Darma<sup>1\*</sup>, Ni Made Rai Kristina<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>UHN I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa Denpasar

\*Corresponding author. Email: [indrapranata@uhnsugriwa.ac.id](mailto:indrapranata@uhnsugriwa.ac.id)

### ABSTRACT

The hospitality industry has undergone significant changes with the implementation of strict health protocols in order to maintain its operations towards a new life. The hotel industry in Juwana, which was initially engaged in accommodating fishery entrepreneurs, was affected by the Covid virus which caused many restrictions on activities. The fisheries sector, which cooperates with the hotel industry in rural accommodation, is starting in the adaptation phase of a new life form. March 2020 as the start of the pandemic, the decline in hotel industry visits decreased drastically to 90% of tourists in the fisheries sector. Nationally, there was a + 67% decrease in the number of catches and exports of the fishery sector during the pandemic due to restrictions on activities (KKP, 2021). In the research that will be using an in-depth literature review based on quantitative data from the primary sources of the tourism office and the marine and fisheries service to determine the number of tourists and fish catches. The partners will be assisted at the location of the activity to make it easier to obtain data and be equipped with in-depth interviews with entrepreneurs in the fisheries sector and entrepreneurs in the rural accommodation sector affected. It is hoped that after doing this research, it will be able to provide future strategies in dealing with issues during the pandemic and it is expected to be able to become a model in making alternative strategies for relevant stakeholders in dealing with emergency conditions in Juwana.

**Keywords:** Fishery; Rural Accommodation; strategy

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The development of rural accommodation is currently an interesting discussion for areas that do not have tourist attractions. One area that has the development of rural accommodation is in the Juwana sub-district, Pati Regency. Juwana does not have a natural tourist attraction or a cultural tourist attraction that can be recognized nationally. However, the area is known for its fishing industry which is well known in Indonesia. The existence of the fishing industry makes the characteristics of guests who come to accommodation around Juwana more specific. Tourists in the area are business travellers which have business in fishery.

Rural accommodation has a similar concept with homestay, where the daily activities of residents are carried out naturally accompanied by other supporting activities supporting activities in rural accommodation,

like traditional activities, are carried out without coercion or fabrication(Suhartono, 2011)[1].

In general, the main idea of rural tourism from the ability to alleviate problems in almost all areas. Rural tourism has the main aim of developing rural areas so that they are more advanced (Suhartono, 2011) [1]. The concept of accommodation that adapts rural tourism is one of the implementations in rural tourism.

It was recorded that during 2019, hotel room occupancy rates in Central Java ranged from 35.23%-45.86% during January to May. At the start of the 2020 pandemic, there was a drastic decrease in room occupancy rates ranging from 10.83%-31%. A significant decline will occur in 2021 starting from 16%-19% in room occupancy [source BPS JATENG]. In terms of visits, there was a decrease from 57 million people in 2019 to 22 million people during the covid pandemic(Dinas Kepemudaan dan olahraga, 2020) [2]. The decrease in visits by more than 50% has become a

special concern for policy makers in making regulations to maintain economic movement, especially in Central Java.

In 2020-2021, several regulations emerged in regulating the movement of people from one place to another, such as in the Circular Letter of MENPANRB no. 41 of 2020 concerning Restrictions on Traveling Activities outside the region for ASN is one of them. This regulation is one of the reasons for preventing the spread of the Covid-19 virus, which is indirectly one of the reasons for the decrease in room occupancy rates. The real impact seen from the existence of activity restrictions was felt in the decline in domestic tourist visits in Central Java by more than 50%.

Pati Regency as one part of Central Java Province has also experienced a decline in domestic tourists. It was recorded that in 2019, there were 1,682,194 people who visited and it decreased in 2020 to 510,361 people or around 69% of the decline for 1 year due to activity restrictions (Dinas Kepemudaan dan Olahraga, 2019)[3] Juwana Sub-district as one of the affected areas that has a type of rural accommodation, experienced a significant decrease in guests, especially in the fisheries sector. The average decrease in the number of visits per day at one of the accommodations in Juwana is shown in the table below:

**Table 1.** Average visitor 2019 and 2020

Month	Visitor	Average
Juli	381	12
Agustus	388	12,5
September	379	12,5
Oktober	362	12
November	351	11,3
Desember	389	12
Average Visitor 2019		12,05
Month	Visitor	Average
Juli	271	9
Agustus	304	10
September	336	11
Oktober	323	10
November	302	10
Desember	328	11
Average Visitor 2020		6

**Table 2.** Average visitor for a day

No	Year	Average (day)	Keterangan
1	2019	12.05	Before the pandemic
2	2020	6	After the pandemic

Soure: Central Java Statistic

Based on the decrease in room occupancy rates in rural accommodation in Juwana which was affected by the pandemic and the decline in the fishing industry, the authors are interested in raising the title Strategic Tourism for Maintaining Tourist Visits during emergencies in Rural Accommodation. It is hoped that they will be able to get a model in maintaining guest visits, especially guests in the fisheries sector in Juwana. In addition, it can be a development for Juwana District for Rural Accommodation. So that getting a strategy can not only be applied during a pandemic, but can be applied to other emergencies.

### 1.1. Rural Accomodation

Rural accommodation is closely related to rural-based tourism. In the 19th century, some saw rural areas as having a valuable element for tourists (Suhartono, 2011)[1]. Valuable elements such as beauty, originality from the village become an attraction for tourists so that they make the houses of local residents into rural accommodations such as homestays.

Accommodation facilities that are attractive to tourists are accommodations that offer beauty and authenticity. This accommodation facility actually offers a new experience for tourists (Antara dan Arida, 2015) [4]. Rural accommodation which is currently developing, integrated with custom and has been equipped with several forms of modernization such as the provision of supporting facilities (Ningrum, 2019)[5]. The development of rural accommodation is one form of adaptation in order to remain competitive and adapt to the needs of guests.

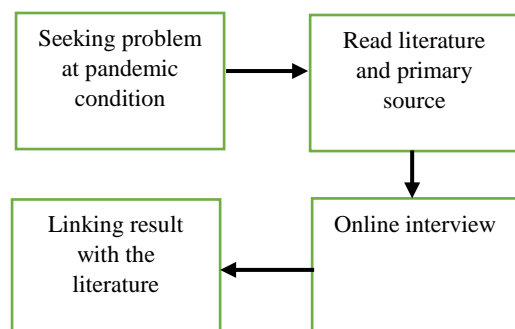
### 1.2. Fishery

The fisheries sector is a sector that is able to maintain the sustainability of marine production in the long term (Hilborn, 2005)[6]. Fisheries have economic value for communities around marine ecosystems. Fisheries become a unified system consisting of populations, marine animals, biota and human life (Lackye, 1978)[7]. The fisheries sector is another goal for humans to achieve their desires. Economic issues in the world of fisheries have an impact on increasing or decreasing economic value and even have the potential to disrupt a country's foreign exchange (Bappenas, 2014)[8].

The existence of the fishery sector in rural accommodation is a special attraction for humans. The potential of the presence of marine and land ecosystems increases with the long-term sustainability of marine production.

## 2. METHOD

The research uses qualitative methods by looking at quantitative data. The qualitative method uses online interviews with one of the accommodation managers in Juwana District. Furthermore, the results of the interviews were synchronized with qualitative data from primary sources from the Central Java BPS and the Department of Marine and Fisheries. From the results of these data are associated with research journals and other literature to strengthen the research. After doing this research, it is possible to get opportunities and strategies for the Juwana sub-district in developing rural accommodation



**Figure 1.** Design activities(Darma, Dewi dan Kristina, 2020) [9]

## 3. DISCUSSIONS

Rural accommodation is an accommodation that shows the characteristics of a particular area. In the condition of the Juwana sub-district, the geographical proximity to the sea causes the existence of the area to be in the fishery sector. The geographical location near the sea and adequate marine products of course make the Juwana area a destination for local and foreign tourists. It is not enough just to use natural resources but also from human resources. Accommodation is needed to complete and fulfill the satisfaction of tourists visiting Juwana. According to Tjiptono and Candra (2016) satisfaction comes from the Latin: *satis*: which means good enough, adequate) and *facion* means doing or making. So satisfaction can be interpreted as an effort to fulfill something or make something adequate (Kemenparekraf, 2020)[10].

Based on the results of interviews with one of rural accommodation managers, Juwana sub-district until March 2021 has 2 inns registered with associations related to PHRI with hotel concepts. At the

accommodation where the researcher got the data, there was a decrease in visits as shown in table 1. It ranged from 50-100 visits per month. The average number of visits per day in 2020 has decreased to 6 people per day.

Few steps that have been taken by the manager at the research site in maintaining income include:

1. Participate in the CHSE (Cleanliness, Health, Safety and Environment) certificate program for their accommodation.
2. Follow the health protocol from government.
3. Inovate to create new product that connected with rural accommodation.

The guests who visit rural accommodation in the Juwana sub-district are quite interesting. It can be seen that although there has been a decline during the pandemic condition, tourist visits have not been completely empty. Tourist who visit accommodation in the Juwana sub-district are recorded as coming from outside the city and carrying out business activities surrounding. The fishery business is one sector that still contributes even though it was not significant before

The guest characteristics visiting rural accommodation can be seen in the following table

**Table 3.** Guest characteristic (Top Three)

No	Job	Total
1	Swasta	653
2	Nelayan	48
3	Wiraswasta	490

Source: One of Rural Accommodation from August to December 2020

In table 3 it can be seen that guests who are related to the distribution of goods contribute to maintaining guest visits which have job called Swasta. During the pandemic period accompanied by the level of PPKM, guest visits are maintained properly and regularly make visits. According to the accommodation manager, the previous travel regulations that restricted travel activities were one of the reasons why business guests became constrained in visiting. After the PPKM level decreased, travel activities went well even though they couldn't go back like everything was back before.

In interviews with accommodation managers, the CHSE certificate program was carried out as one of the supports for accommodation managers in responding to pandemic conditions. The CHSE certification program is carried out in groups through the local PHRI

(Persatuan Hotel dan Restoran Indonesia) association. With the CHSE program, it is hoped by the manager that visiting guests are sure about cleanliness, health, safety and the accommodation environment. The CHSE process, which consists of socialization, verification and monitoring, is expected to be able to continue to prevent the spread of new clusters during the pandemic (Kemenparekraf, 2020)[10]. The participation of rural accommodation in participating in the CHSE program is an added value for the hotel in front of the guests. According to the accommodation manager, guests become more comfortable and safe when they know that the accommodation has met the minimum service standards during the pandemic with the existence of CHSE certification coupled with real implementation in the field.



**Figure 2.** CHSE Program for accommodation  
Source: author photo

The Clean Program is implemented by maintaining cleanliness in every location starting from the entrance by providing a hand washing area especially front of the welcoming door. It such new habit that must be available in every accommodation during pandemic covid condition. Followed by barcode scanning at the entrance to check-in on the Care Protect application as a form of support for government programs. The room check-in process has also provided a hand sanitizer as a minimum as a form of the Health process. For safety, it is carried out by scanning digital payments. This digital payment is recommended by rural accommodation as a

form of minimizing contact with tourists related to the spread of the virus. Finally, carry out a general cleaning of the hotel location on a regular basis in most areas that allow spread.



**Figure 3.** Application CHSE at rural accommodation  
Source: author photo

Next step is the implementation of standard health protocols which implemented starting in 2020. Health protocols from maintaining distance, using masks to using germicidal liquids have become a new habit. (Kementrian Pariwisata, 2020)[11](Kemenparekraf, 2020)[10]. According to the accommodation manager, the initial implementation was quite difficult. Especially for guests usually in fisheries who are used to without masks. These obstacles began to decrease with the existence of education, as well as information and instructions posted around the accommodation regarding the use of masks. Coupled with the many instructions and advice from the government on the road, it will help in educate the guest.





**Figure 4.** Health protocols sign to remind guest and make new habit

Source: author photo

Management is one of the keys to accelerating the development of a place (Pantiyasa dan Semara, 2019) [12]. At the rural accommodation where the research was conducted, the manager tried to make new innovations to increase income during the pandemic period which experienced a decrease in daily guest visits. The sale of accommodation food and drinks using online motorcycle called ojek has become the manager's choice during the pandemic. It is proven that there is an increase in income for accommodation. The use of online ojek, according to the manager, is effective because it reduces the burden of preparing the dining room and services are carried out indirectly. This method makes the real role of accommodation in minimizing contact with guests. Several studies have stated that non-room sales are one of the ways many hotels in surviving during the pandemic[13].



**Figure 5.** Optimize online ojek to create innovation during pandemic condition

Source: author photo

Payment model like “pay now stay later” dan reschedule visit [13], is another method that has not been tried in rural accommodation. The lack of good understanding from guests in the field of fisheries is one of the reasons why the manager does not apply this concept. These two methods have been tested several times for use in accommodation in big cities such as Jakarta, Surabaya and Denpasar, making them interesting to apply to rural accommodation.



**Figure 6.** “Pay now stay later” program sample payment model that can be applied in rural accommodation

Source: valore

Some of the strategies that have been carried out, such as the implementation of CHSE, innovation by selling food online to the implementation of payments with various variations, not all of them can be applied to all times of emergency. In the CHSE certification program, it is not necessarily applicable to every emergency or to a decrease in the number of visitors.

The application of innovation in the sale of products and services is the most appropriate step and can be applied to various conditions. According to the accommodation manager, innovations, especially related to technology, have been proven to be able to maintain visits and income from accommodation. Conditions of decline in certain conditions have occurred before, such as when issues in the fishing industry related to fishing gear previously caused restrictions on the use of certain fishing gear. This decline in conditions has a direct impact on the decrease in guest visits, although not drastically immediately. The condition of tourism which is very vulnerable to

issues has become something that accommodation managers need to pay close to be attention.

Using "pay now stay later" payment method is one form of adaptation to the latest technological developments. This method can be tried for application to rural accommodation as a form of anticipation of emergency conditions in accommodation so as to maintain guest visits and income from accommodation.

The use of technology has become a new direction for the application of various types of accommodation in dealing with the development of the times, so that even if the accommodation is in the countryside, it can still keep up with every latest progress that exists by following every local wisdom possessed. The adaptation carried out also follows the ability of each accommodation so that it does not cause conflicting things.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

This study search for several strategies in maintaining rural accommodation to last during the pandemic and maintaining guest visits, especially in the fishery sector. Some of the steps that can be taken include:

- a. Participate the certification of Cleanliness, Health, Safety and Environment (CHSE) in maintaining tourist visits during pandemic. Participation rural accommodation in certification added value for accommodation in front of visiting guests.
- b. Follow the health protocol which is stated by government. Obedience to the protocol has become a new habit that is always socialized by the accommodation to guests. Understanding and implementing adherence to protocols by rural accommodation is an example to guests of the importance of implementing prokes. Guest trust in the level of cleanliness and guest comfort in accommodation has become much better so as to be able to keep guest visits from being empty every day.
- c. New innovation such as selling product other non-rooms which using online system to facilitate sales and minimize contact with guest.

This step can be carried out properly until the research data is up to June 2021. It is hoped that several other steps, such as the "pay now stay later" method and the rescheduling visit feature, can become other innovations for accommodation. Although this method has few of weakness, the new idea of payment make guest some of choice during pandemic to minimize contact each other.

In the future, the author is interested in knowing the strategy of rural accommodation in maintaining the number of employees without being fired in the midst of

the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the characteristics of the fishery sector guests who have quite a unique character. During the research, there is no reduction employee so that is quiet interesting especially in accommodation which a lot of employee reduction.

Besides the absence of a reduction in the workforce, other forms of adaptation in an emergency period are interesting for research, especially in rural accommodation in the Juwana sub-district which has guests in the field of fisheries and distribution of goods. In the future, this condition can be known to get another characteristic guest in Juwana.

#### AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The first author contributed to a portion of this manuscript which was then supplemented by a second author accompanied by additional literature

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