

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IMPACT IN REDANG ISLAND, MALAYSIA: A STAKEHOLDER'S VIEW

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ABSTRACT

Stakeholder perception is a powerful indication for determining the course of tourism development in a tourism site. Stakeholders expressed worries about the environmental effects, socio-cultural changes, and economic consequences of unstructured tourism development on Redang Island. This qualitative study aims to critically examine the stakeholders' perceptions towards tourism development in Redang Island, Malaysia, focusing on responsible tourism practices. The research also explores the challenges and issues faced in implementing responsible tourism in the area by obtaining feedback from the key stakeholders. A quota sampling approach was employed, resulting in a total of 30 individuals being interviewed in April 2023. Structured, in-depth, face-to-face interviews were conducted to obtain rich and diverse data with regard to the topic. These issues have raised critical questions about the island's sustainability and imbalance of responsible tourism practices. The interviewees also highlighted the need for a unified foundation for informed decision-making and policy development to promote sustainable and responsible tourism on the island. The study provides a compelling insight into the familiarity of responsible tourism practices from the perspectives of multiple tourism stakeholders within the small island realm. This study strengthens the urge for cooperation from all stakeholders for effective understanding and implementation of responsible tourism practices. This study is among a few to offer a comprehensive analysis of responsible tourism practices in Redang Island by critically examining the stakeholder views and recommendations.

Keywords: Tourism impacts, sustainable tourism, responsible tourism practices, stakeholders, Redang Island.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry can increase community awareness and respect for the environment, as well as promote positivism concerning environmental issues (United Nations Environment Programme, 2001). However, tourism may also contribute to adverse environmental impacts (Singh & Mir, 2020), urging many researchers to promote the practice of responsible tourism (Samaddar et al., 2022; Zhao et al., 2022). Environmentally responsible tourism is one of the critical responsible tourism dimensions that focuses on getting the originality and integrity of the destinations, thus encouraging, and building up the tourism destination sustainability (Pan et al., 2018). Besides promoting the term ‘responsible tourism’, other tourism destinations have been coining ‘ecotourism’, ‘sustainable tourism’, and ‘ethical tourism’ to reflect socially conscious tourism activities (Caruana et al., 2014).

Responsible tourism practices should be aligned with the outcome of the interaction between humans and the environment (Wang et al., 2018). It is indeed one with a specific focus on tourism-related stakeholders’ ethical and moral responsibilities. However, each individual has different perceptions of responsible tourism practices or puts a similar effort into each dimension of responsible tourism, whether it is socio-cultural, economic, or environmental aspects (Chiappa et al., 2016). Besides the local residents, searching for efficient ways to educate tourists to prioritise environmental care can be challenging. Encouraging environmentally friendly behaviour among visitors is feasible with the support of various public awareness campaigns (Gautam, 2020). While most admit the cruciality of responsible tourism, not everyone will respond to it equally (Lee et al., 2017).

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), in its recent observation of the changes in consumer trends influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic (UNWTO, 2022), has identified a notable shift towards responsible tourism practices. This emerging trend reflects a growing consciousness among tourists, who now emphasise sustainability, authenticity, and supporting the local community when choosing their destinations. Responsible tourism practices have gained significant importance in light of this shift. This shift signifies a departure from traditional mass tourism, as tourists now prioritise experiences that contribute to preserving local cultures, protecting the environment, and the overall well-being of host communities. Actually, whether it is before or after COVID-19, there is a necessity to bridge the external aspects of the tourism phenomenon, encompassing factual information, behavioural patterns, and perception, with the underlying tourism frameworks that reside within the minds of tourism stakeholders (Pasquinelli & Trunfio, 2022).

The term ‘tourism impact’ has become more common in tourist literature since World War II, and it is frequently related to tourism development, outlook, and features. (Postma & Schmuecker, 2017). Tourism impacts are due to human behaviour that results from interactions between tourism stakeholders and destination subsystems (Vieira et al., 2024). It is critical for authorities and policymakers to understand stakeholders’ perspectives on how tourism affects their quality of life, as these perspectives have a direct impact on the sustainability of tourism destinations (Rubio-

Cisneros et al., 2019). As a result, the study focuses on the tourism implications of Redang Island and the difficulties it faces.

The island's environmental situation, like that of most other parts of the world, is threatened by two interconnected categories of threats: natural risks from climate change and natural disasters (Harrison & Pratt, 2015) and man-made dangers, particularly from tourism development. Pollution, species extinction, the greenhouse effect, and natural resource depletion were among the challenges raised, all of which pose a substantial danger to the environment's long-term viability (Xu et al., 2020). The severity of environmental regulations varies based on the environmental protection policies that apply in different locations (Haibo et al., 2020). Problems concerning ethical tourism activities have been identified on Redang Island. To improve environmental sustainability in the future, individuals' consumption patterns, including their approaches to, purchases of, and consumption of products, should shift toward responsible tourist activities (Halder et al., 2020).

Previous studies have primarily focused on the attitudes of local residents toward tourism development, neglecting a comprehensive examination of the challenges faced by various stakeholders (Ho et al., 2017). Most studies have concentrated on a single stakeholder group, with only a few including multiple stakeholder perspectives (Chan & Tay, 2016; Ho et al., 2017). Thus, engaging additional stakeholder groups in addressing tourism-related concerns on the island is crucial and fostering collaborative efforts among all stakeholders (Ho et al., 2017; Musavengane, 2019). As for the case of Redang Island, a more holistic understanding of the issues encountered on Redang Island can be gained by obtaining feedback from multiple stakeholder groups. Thus, this research aims to incorporate all relevant stakeholders to enhance the comprehension of responsible tourism practices on Redang Island.

There is considerable scope to do further research on the issues in regard to responsible tourism practices from multiple stakeholders' perspectives to bolster the efforts in sustaining the environment. It will also help to expand the literature on stakeholder theory respectively. This study is among a few to offer a comprehensive analysis of responsible tourism practices in Redang Island by critically examining the stakeholder views and recommendations. Apart from that, it is quite noticeable that the study on responsible tourism practices is also lacking in the island study context. The study intends to take the opportunity to fill in the gap by focusing on Redang Island as the main study context for this research.

The research's fundamental question would be, "To what extent have the tourism impacts been influenced by the issues circulating in the tourism sector on Redang Island?". The primary objective of this study is to investigate the challenges and negative repercussions connected with responsible tourism practices on Redang Island, as seen by various tourism stakeholders. By doing so, the study intends to raise awareness among stakeholders regarding responsible tourism practices and assist tourism authorities in prioritising and implementing solutions to address these issues. Furthermore, the research seeks to foster greater collaboration and teamwork among tourism stakeholders, encouraging their active involvement in decision-making processes related to responsible tourism practices.

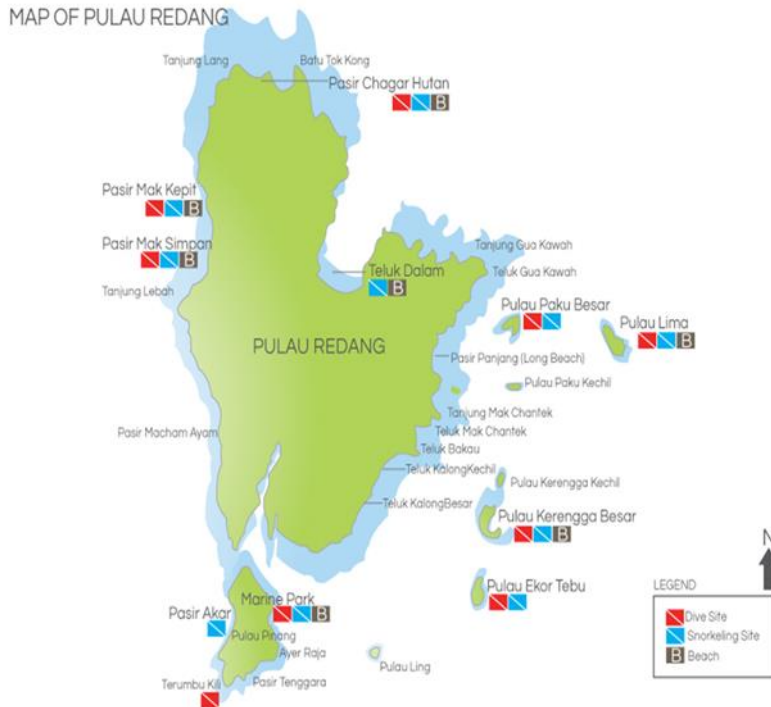
1.1. Redang Island

Redang Island is one of the beautiful islands in Terengganu, Malaysia (Figure 1). The distance from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia's capital city, to Redang Island, Terengganu, is approximately 490 km by travelling overland by road and continuing by ferry from Kuala Terengganu. Redang Island is among the best options for tourists who wish for a holiday on a tropical island. Redang Island is perceived as the most famous marine park that established the necessity for a valuable tourism context with value for nature and education-based tourism (Akmal et al., 2019), with the suitable time to visit is between mid-March to end of September (Lonely Planet, 2019). Prior to COVID-19, Redang Island attracted 162,817 tourists in 2019 alone. However, the island was put under total block in 2020 and 2021, owing to the Movement Control Order (MCO) issued by the government. The statistics indicated a promising return after two years of closure, with 127,470 tourists in 2022 and 129,749 in 2023 (Tourism Terengganu, 2024). Tourist arrival numbers were only counted for 8 months of the calendar year due to annual closures from November to February induced by the monsoon season. Although the number has dropped considerably when compared to pre-COVID levels, it is anticipated that the recovery process is just around the corner.

Previous reports have indicated that Redang Island is facing a number of sustainability challenges. One major source of worry is pollution produced by marine oil leakage, which results in significant beach pollution (David, 2017). The prevalence of rubbish is another visible concern that detracts from the island's allure. Tourists encounter litter at every turn, showing poor management and a lack of concern on the part of local authorities (Fariq, 2020). This unattractive image detracts from the natural beauty of Redang Island and raises concerns about waste management practices and environmental conservation efforts.

The rise in tourist numbers and diverse tourism activities have sparked concerns regarding the long-term sustainability of Redang Island's natural ecosystem (Abdullah et al., 2020). Certain individual behaviours, such as excessive water consumption, energy waste, illegal fishing, coral reef damage from stepping, littering, and harvesting restricted marine resources as souvenirs, represent serious dangers to the maritime environment. Moreover, stakeholders have been accused of neglecting their responsibility in addressing the negative impacts of tourism (Ho et al., 2017). Consequently, there is a pressing need for a study on responsible tourism practices that considers the perspectives of multiple stakeholders to address these issues effectively. In light of these sustainability issues, an urgent and compelling need to raise awareness and promote responsible tourism practices among all stakeholders involved in the tourism industry must happen.

Figure 1: Map of Redang Island



Source: govisitredang.com

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. *Responsible Tourism*

Responsible tourism aims to minimise the negative impacts of tourism and contribute positively to the socio-cultural, economic, and environmental aspects of tourism destinations (Gao et al., 2016). The concept of responsible tourism appeared as a response to the destructive and exploitative practices that accompanied the growth of global tourism in developing nations (Lee et al., 2017). The definition of responsible tourism, as stated in The Cape Town Declaration (2002), is centred around creating better places for residents and visitors. Responsible tourism indicates that all tourism stakeholders are responsible for their activities (Eichelberger et al., 2021). Additionally, responsible tourism involves a range of activities that benefit local communities while minimising negative environmental and social impacts (Caruana et al., 2014). As a result, Musavengane (2019) suggested that responsible tourism is essential for achieving the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. Thus, responsible tourism should become an imperative agenda for all tourism stakeholders (Chan et al., 2021).

The terms responsible tourism and sustainable tourism are distinct concepts with their perspectives and beliefs. However, due to a lack of knowledge, both of these terms are frequently conflated. Unlike sustainable tourism, which addresses global challenges and seeks to transform the entire tourism industry (UNWTO, 2005), responsible tourism focuses on individual acts and locations. Thus, responsible tourism requires recognising economically, socially, and environmentally significant concerns at the local level. It also entails gathering stakeholders to take responsibility for these concerns and take action (The Cape Town Declaration, 2002).

Chan et al. (2021) explained that responsible tourism is a means of ensuring destination sustainability and improving the quality of life for local residents, both of which are essential for efficient destination management. With regard to the principles of responsible tourism, all stakeholders must have an active role in driving positive change (Ahmad et al., 2023). Responsible tourism has become a popular buzzword in recent years, especially in discussing the COVID-19 issue (Ting et al., 2020).

Islands were forced to deal with unique geographic challenges such as remoteness, abandonment, natural vulnerability, inadequate infrastructure, limited access to healthcare and education, high living costs, fewer economic opportunities, and environmental degradation (Thompson, 2022). Adoption of responsible tourism is increasingly important if the island's economy is based on tourism activities (González-Morales et al., 2023). Developing responsible tourist strategies in island locations requires a detailed understanding of the stakeholders involved, as well as a long-term view that prioritises sustainability and the well-being of local residents (Terkenli & Georgoula, 2021).

2.2. *Stakeholder Theory and Responsible Tourism Practices*

Stakeholders are defined as any individual or any group with an influence on or influenced by the development of tourism in a certain area (Freeman, 1984). Meanwhile, stakeholder theory depicts that a destination is based on its relationships with individuals and multiple groups, including government, local businesses, competitors, activist groups, and local residents (Sautter & Leisen, 1999). Stakeholder theory has widely been used to examine stakeholder involvement in tourism research (Ho et al., 2017). The stakeholder's involvement in tourism development is crucial to help mitigate conflict within local communities, as such involvement may help improve tourism planning by providing additional input (Van Nguyen et al., 2020). Poor coordination among stakeholders towards cultural protection measures and environmental conservation campaigns, coupled with an insufficient political commitment to the development of sustainable ecotourism, can considerably limit the current development of ecotourism (Wondirad, 2020).

Responsible tourism practice inspires the preservation and sustainability of the local cultures and natural environment and contributes towards improving the quality of life (Hanafiah et al., 2016). Responsible tourism practice is a constantly growing and complex notion that incorporates a number of tourists concerns of varied intensity and grouped by types of problem (Caruana et al., 2014). Responsible tourism practice is one of the suitable initiatives whereby stakeholders take

part in sustaining the value of the tourism destination environment (Mihalic, 2016). Stakeholders generally play a role in the success or failure of responsible tourism practices (Roxas et al., 2020).

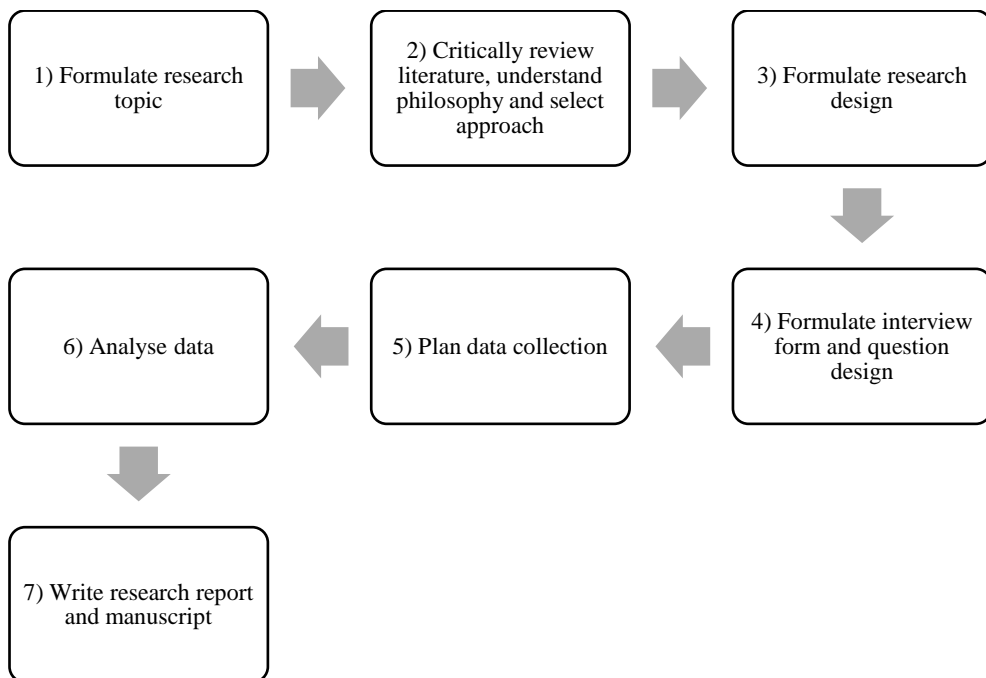
Multiple stakeholders stated that if the policymakers had a practical environmental regulation, they would be more eager to be involved in responsible tourism practice, creating a circular situation in which policies support citizen involvement and citizen engagement aids in terms of environmentally responsible behaviour intention (Van Nguyen et al., 2020). For tourism benefits to be shared efficiently, it is critical to establish interaction among stakeholders involved in the processes (Heslinga et al., 2019). Although significant exploration of stakeholder involvement has been made, the genuine engagement of stakeholders can only be deemed significant when stakeholder groups achieve a comprehensive grasp of responsible tourism practice and its implications on individual lives (Golestaneh et al., 2021). As a result, stakeholder theory was chosen as the study's grounded theory.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative methodology to investigate and explore the subject matter in-depth. Based on Figure 2, this study utilised seven different stages: (i) formulate research topic; (ii) critically review literature, understand philosophy, and select approach; (iii) formulate research design; (iv) formulate interview form and question design; (v) plan data collection; (vi) analyse data, and (vii) write research report and manuscript. The sample size was determined based on data saturation. Grounded theory practitioners have recommended that the range of twenty to thirty interviewees should be utilised (Creswell, 2017). According to the concept of saturation idea, it was suggested that once adequate data has been collected, additional interviewing and information gathering are unneeded, which means the categories or themes have been 'saturated' (Creswell, 2017).

Four sections of interview questions were involved in the study, which includes 1) the demographic questions, 2) tourism impacts questions, 3) responsible tourism practices questions, and 4) the conclusion. The interview guide consists of questions pertaining to 1) the stakeholders' views towards tourism development and issues in Redang Island; 2) the stakeholders' suggestions to solve the issues and further improvement of the tourism sector in Redang Island; 3) the responsibilities of the stakeholders towards tourism development in Redang Island; and 4) the stakeholders' views towards responsible tourism practices in Redang Island. The questions asked were also translated into Bahasa Malaysia, the national language of Malaysia. Most of the residents and tour operators opted to answer in Bahasa Malaysia, whereas some tourists answered in English.

Figure 2: Flow Chart



Source: Saunders et al. (2016)

Structured interview forms, with open-ended questions, were used to guide in-depth face-to-face interviews with each interviewee. In-depth interviews were conducted with each interviewee. Hand-written notes and audio recording was taken during the interviews, and a photographic record was also taken during and after the interview session. The interviewees were selected according to quota sampling, an approach whereby all three groups of tourism stakeholders were divided equally (Zikmund et al., 2013). The inclusion criteria of the eligible interviewees who were selected consisted of i) who are 18 years old and above, and ii) who have stayed, visited, or worked at Redang Island within the last two years at Redang Island. The data were collected in April 2023 from 30 interviewees around the Redang Island. The interviewees consist of multiple stakeholders related to tourism, divided fairly with ten individuals from each group of local residents, tourists, and tour operators.

The audio recordings were repeatedly reviewed to verify the accuracy of the transcripts. These interview transcripts underwent analysis and interpretation using the method of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). IPA focuses on how individuals express their personal experiences and examines how people derive meaning from these experiences through interpretative processes, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2013.) Additionally, the research employed member checks as a means of enhancing the trustworthiness of the transcripts.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Interviewees Demographic

Table 1 reports the stakeholder's demographic profile, which comprises 30 interviewees. The male group participated more, with 63.3 per cent, compared to females, with 36.7 per cent. The largest group of interviewees were taken by age 26-35 and 36-45 with 30 per cent for both groups, followed by 18-25 with 20 per cent, then 46-59 with 13.3 per cent and the smallest group of 60 and above with 6.7 per cent only. The majority of them were undergraduate (degree) holders with 60 per cent overall, followed by secondary school with 20 per cent, then foundation/diploma with 6.7 per cent, and the lowest was postgraduate (masters/PhD) with 6.7 per cent only. In terms of occupation, the private sector leads the group with 46.7 per cent, followed by self-employment with 23.3 per cent, the government sector with 20 per cent, and students with 10 per cent of the total. In terms of stakeholder types, all three were residents, visitors, and tour operators, with 33.3 per cent each. Finally, the survey seeks to determine how many of them are aware of responsible tourism practices; as a consequence, the majority of them (66.7%) claim to be aware of it. Twenty per cent of all interviewees were unaware of responsible tourism practices. Finally, 13.3 per cent of them have no idea what responsible tourism practices are.

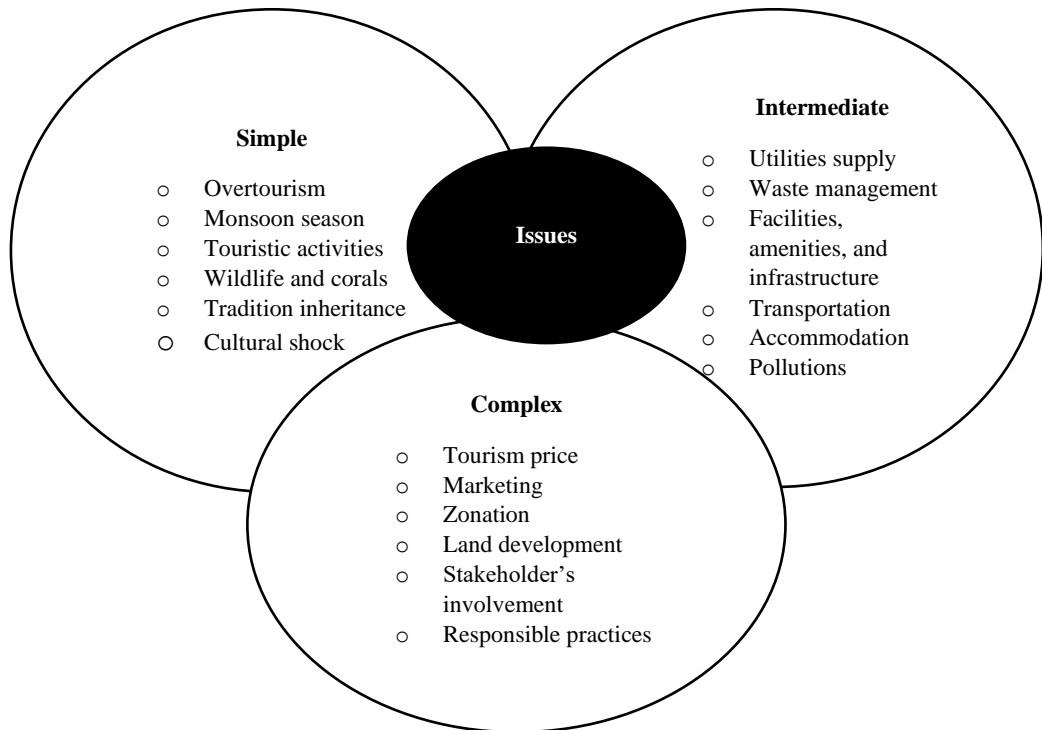
Table 1: Stakeholder's Profile

Demographics		No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	19	63.3
	Female	11	36.7
Age	18-25	6	20.0
	26-35	9	30.0
	36-45	9	30.0
	46-59	4	13.3
	60 and above	2	6.7
Education Level	Secondary School	6	20.0
	Foundation/Diploma	4	13.3
	Undergraduate (Degree)	18	60.0
	Postgraduate (Masters / PhD)	2	6.7
Occupation	Government Sector	6	20.0
	Private Sector	14	46.7
	Self-Employed	7	23.3
	Student	3	10.0
Type of Stakeholder	Local Resident	10	33.3
	Tourist	10	33.3
	Tour Operator	10	33.3
Aware of Responsible Tourism Practice	Yes	20	66.7
	No	6	20.0
	Not Sure	4	13.3

4.2. Redang Island Issues

Figure 3 illustrates the issues compiled from the multiple stakeholders' perspectives according to the complexity level, divided into simple, intermediate, and complex categories. Each issue was discussed, and solutions were suggested based on the respondents' perspectives. There are 18 problems and issues altogether that need attention from related authorities.

Figure 3: Issues of Redang Island



Source: Author's Compilation

4.2.1. Overtourism

Overtourism is expected to be influenced by global tourism demand and relative tourism market share (Peterson & DiPietro, 2021). Overtourism causes sociocultural problems such as deterioration of local residents' quality of life and destruction of cultural heritage sites, environmental issues threatening the sustainability of natural ecosystems, and limited economic benefits to local residents (Mincheol, 2020). The prevalence of overtourism in urban and rural areas shows the inadequacy of policies and management in addressing the escalating problem of surging tourist numbers (Butler & Dodds, 2022). As the issue of overtourism emerges, considerations must be extended beyond the rights of tourists to the sustainability of destinations and the well-being of local residents. Redang Island has experienced overtourism during specific periods. It is generally

acknowledged that the island becomes significantly crowded, particularly on weekends and school holidays, leading some tourists to seek alternative accommodations. Therefore, it is crucial to implement measures to control and prevent further worsening of overtourism's negative effects on Redang Island. Given the spatial limitations of island tourism destinations and their susceptibility to ecological damage, enforcing carrying capacity regulations by the authorities becomes essential.

‘Overtourism slowly causes damage to the island particularly towards coral reefs and sea life. The Marine Park was forced to close down for recovery purposes at one time.’
(Interviewee 14)

4.2.2. Monsoon season

The monsoon season on Redang Island occurs annually from November to February (Yusof, 2023), resulting in the closure of resorts and the tourism sector due to safety concerns regarding sea-related activities. The high tide sea level around the island makes it dangerous to use the sea route for access, and all sea-related activities are prohibited during this period. Consequently, local residents temporarily lose their main source of income and often seek alternative employment on the mainland for approximately four months, leading to significant economic impacts on the entire island. In addition, flash floods are common occurrences in certain areas on Redang Island. Redang Island is prone to flash floods during the Northeast Monsoon season from October to March (Zain et al., 2023). To address this issue, the local authority can establish an organisation dedicated to the welfare of Redang Island’s residents, providing them with suitable job opportunities before the monsoon season arrives. As for the flash flood, it can be minimised by installing wider water piping to cope with the strong sea tide.

4.2.3. Touristic activities

Touristic activities are vital for the sustainability and diversification of a destination, acting as its backbone. However, concerns exist regarding the environmental impact of such activities (Selamat et al., 2016). The capacity of an island destination to adapt to changes in the global environment is constrained by the creation of knowledge, the development of resources and the governance systems to implement and monitor (McLeod et al., 2021). The limited availability of touristic activities on Redang Island, such as snorkelling, scuba diving, turtle sanctuary, and marine parks, may hinder its attractiveness to tourists. Stakeholders identified a lack of diverse touristic activities on the island. This issue is especially true during nighttime since barely enough lamp posts along the roads are available, forcing many to run indoor activities. Introducing new touristic activities, including fire shows, shopping districts, and extreme parks, is suggested as a solution to address this issue.

‘Install the road lights along the way to Teluk Dalam beach so that it can be accessed at night and allow additional tourist activities to be done there at night.’
(Interviewee 2)

4.2.4. *Wildlife and corals*

Stakeholders in the tourism industry can minimise damage by providing proper instructions to tourists, such as avoiding stepping on corals or touching marine life like turtles or baby sharks. Boatmen are also responsible for correctly parking boats and following guidance from fisheries departments. While environmental management is a significant challenge, wildlife and tourism activities can stimulate people to consider their relationship with nature (Newsome, 2021). The uncontrolled tourism developments at Redang Island disrupt wildlife habitats and put pressure on endangered species, particularly monkeys and snakes. Feeding wild animals should be strictly prohibited to avoid aggressive interactions.

‘Monkeys around here are quite aggressive. Monkeys mean danger especially to females by chasing and biting people which can cause them to end up in the hospital. The monkeys also tend to pick up trash and scatter it around which causes a mess.’ (Interviewee 10)

Chalil (2019) reported a decline in coral reefs due to climate change and pollution, particularly on Redang Island. Some stubborn tourists still stepped on the corals despite the advice not to touch them. It is well-known that physically damaged corals are more vulnerable to diseases and increased predation, which poses a disadvantage in space competition and eventually leads to coral mortality (Giglio et al., 2020). Notably, corals are fragile and susceptible to damage from boats and tourists. Recreational activities such as boat collisions and anchor damage can take over a decade for reef recovery (De et al., 2020). The situation shows continuous damage happening to coral reefs and marine life.

4.2.5. *Tradition inheritance*

Traditional inheritance encompasses essential components of intangible cultural heritage, comprising behaviours, occupations, technical crafts, and associated products that have been shaped and passed down through generations among diverse ethnic groups (Zhong et al., 2023). Due to geographical constraints, traditional island villages rely on marine resources for their livelihoods and economic resources, generating unique architectural and cultural attractions with tourism value (Shen et al., 2020). However, as the tourism industry advances and develops, the habits and culture of established communities will experience some extension of changes (Lin et al., 2021). Unfortunately, traditional occupations such as traditional fishing, handicraft work, and dry food production are no longer aligned with the younger generation’s aspirations, creating a stark contrast between the demands of modern society and the traditional way of life. With the ageing of older generations and the departure of younger individuals from the island, the efforts to preserve and sustain cultural traditions have subsided, posing a significant threat to Redang Island and Malaysia’s cultural, lifestyle, traditional, and heritage aspects. Thus, authorities must encourage and support the younger generation in carrying forward the practices of their ancestors by providing the necessary assistance and resources.

4.2.6. Cultural shock

Tourism development will likely improve the community environment, bring positive economic benefits, and raise the living standards of locals. However, it can cause damage to villages and the ecological environment, loss of local cultural characteristics, an increase in local living costs and a decline in the quality of life (Hsu et al., 2021). The tourism industry generates profits, but numerous situations have compelled the local residents to keep up with its several negative influences (Li et al., 2021). Cultural shock can leave local residents confused and stunned by their changing surroundings, leading to frustration, irritability, hostility, impatience, and even a sense of incompetence. The cultural shock experienced by locals often leads them to imitate the behaviours they observe from tourists, such as dress code, communication style, and behaviour. Local residents must be mindful and reconnect with their culture and heritage.

‘In the past, beach boys would dress in full attire from head to toe, but now they only wear shorts and go to work.’ (Interviewee 23)

4.2.7. Utilities supply

Most stakeholders in Redang Island raised concerns about the utility supply crisis, including water shortages, electricity interruptions, and limited phone and internet access (Ho et al., 2017). The island has an ongoing issue with water supply, leading to local residents and accommodation operators resorting to alternative sources such as rainwater or water from the hills. Stakeholders suggested installing a new undersea pipeline as a long-term solution, although this would require a substantial budget (The Star, 2022). Similarly, electricity supply problems have plagued the island for an extended period, with frequent disruptions during weekends and peak seasons (Chia et al., 2018). The proposed solution involves a new power station that will provide a 24-hour electricity supply once completed, ending the 20-year-long suffering (The Star, 2023).

‘There were times when the water supply was not adequate to cater to the locals and tourists. People will opt for water sources from the hills as a backup which is not really clean.’ (Interviewee 3)

‘Electricity cuts happen quite frequently, so the locals consider it a common thing. Some residents resorted to getting their own generators, but this did not fully resolve the issue.’ (Interviewee 14)

In terms of telecommunications, mobile phone reception and internet access are intermittent, limiting connectivity for residents and visitors (Chia et al., 2018; Ho et al., 2017). Furthermore, the limited mobile phone reception is restricted to specific service providers with expensive charges, negatively impacting the island’s appeal to younger generations. The suggested measures include installing more cables and allocating additional budget to telecommunication developers to improve the services (Ho et al., 2017).

4.2.8. Waste management

Most tourism stakeholders are aware of the cleanliness and waste management issues on Redang Island (Fariq, 2020). Redang Island faced a constraint in the eradication of solid waste management that afflicts not only the local residents but also the resorts surrounding the island (Aisyaha & Saputrab, 2019). Currently, waste from the entire island is transported to the mainland only once every two days. During the monsoon season, various types of garbage, including fishing nets and plastic waste, are washed ashore, worsening the problem. Poor waste management not only affects cleanliness but also threatens the fragile ecosystem of Redang Island (Ismail et al., 2020). To address these ongoing issues, Redang Island must establish its own disposal site or dumping area to effectively manage waste. Additionally, providing adequate trash bins in high-traffic areas and ensuring proper maintenance can help control the issue and empower stakeholders to dispose of rubbish responsibly (Ho et al., 2017). Setting an example, some resorts have taken the initiative to organise beach clean-ups, which could be emulated by other accommodation operators surrounding Redang Island (Muhammad, 2022). Some of the stakeholders suggested the installation of trash traps along the hotspot areas to preserve the beauty of the island.

‘Some tour operators claim that even the villagers contribute to the issue by leaving garbage on the beach.’ (Interviewee 25)

4.2.9. Facilities, amenities, and infrastructure

All stakeholders acknowledged the insufficiency of facilities and amenities on Redang Island compared to mainland and larger island destinations (Ismail et al., 2020). Improvements in transportation, utilities, restaurants, and accommodation require collaborative efforts between the authorities and stakeholders. The poor maintenance of public and tourist facilities, such as the poorly maintained jetties, hinders the tourism industry. Accessing public toilets and changing rooms is challenging for tourists. Thus, the authorities must address these issues by providing more suitable facilities and amenities for a tourism destination (Hanafiah et al., 2021). Amenities are mostly available in hotels and resorts rather than being prepared for the public on the island.

‘Facilities and amenities such as toilets and changing rooms are rarely seen or very isolated. Maintenance of the facilities seems to be ignored or poorly managed.’ (Interviewee 4)

Infrastructure development initiatives receive mixed reactions from stakeholders due to concerns about their impact on the island’s natural environment (Selamat et al., 2016). However, prioritising infrastructure is essential as it fulfils people’s basic needs, especially in tourism areas. Proper maintenance and expansion of roads, installation of road lights, and addition of more roads are necessary to improve accessibility and enhance tourism activities. The existing bridge at the jetty requires repair, and the airport needs expansion to accommodate more aeroplanes and promote tourism growth. Addressing sewage and drainage systems is crucial to mitigating occasional flash floods and ensuring proper maintenance of the airport area.

4.2.10. Transportation

As Rahman et al. (2021) explained, some of the transportation issues surround travel arrangements and transportation costs. The island's small size makes transportation crucial, and it can only be accessed by ferry, boat, or aeroplane (Chia et al., 2018). However, transportation costs are high due to limited operators monopolising the ferry and airline services. Additionally, the increasing number of boats raises concerns about potential oil leakage and reusing old and damaged life jackets poses safety risks. Furthermore, these boats must adhere to maximum capacity regulations to avoid tragedies. However, especially during peak seasons, the non-tourism boats sometimes violate regulations. Currently, tour operators primarily rely on vans for transportation within the accessible areas on the island. Renting motorcycles has become the main option for tourists, but it is expensive and inconvenient for those without a motorcycle license. Improvements in transportation on Redang Island are urgently needed, including the expansion of flight and ferry options, airport and jetty expansions, and other infrastructure enhancements.

'The transportation wise is so bad since there is no option other than motorcycle available. The cost is also quite high and not worth it.' (Interviewee 7)

4.2.11. Accommodation

The "informal economy" or "shadow economy", driven by reasons like tax evasion and evading business regulations, has long existed in the form of market-based unregistered entrepreneurial activities (Alrawadieh & Alrawadieh, 2018). Complaints in the hotel industry often revolve around poor service quality, including unfriendly staff, inexperienced employees, slow check-ins, inadequate room maintenance, and subpar food and beverage services (Sangpikul, 2021). While more local residents are entering the guest houses or homestay businesses to accommodate tourists has some advantages, any kind of tourism-related business must receive proper training in hospitality services to avoid negative reviews and feedback from tourists. Additionally, they need guidance on effective promotion strategies, as many lack knowledge in marketing their accommodations properly. Evaluating and assessing the location is crucial for establishing a new hotel or accommodation business and ensuring long-term success. Accommodations should showcase the island's natural beauty and provide a picturesque experience. However, some accommodations located near jungles or in remote areas with dense vegetation may not be suitable for a pleasant stay.

4.2.12. Pollutions

While tourism offers economic benefits, it also brings negative environmental impacts such as noise, garbage, and oil pollution, which can disturb local residents. Locals regard pollution, be it environmental, noise-related or of any kind, as disruptive (Sari & Nazli, 2020). Pollution diminishes the appeal of an island, leading to a slowdown in tourism growth. Despite positive reviews, international tourists often express concerns about the environment, particularly pollution on Redang Island (Rahman et al., 2021). Common pollution issues on Redang Island include oil leakage, open burning, sunscreen usage before snorkelling, littering, and excessive noise from boat horns. This persistent problem lacks specific solutions but can be effectively mitigated through increased awareness and responsible behaviour by individuals to prevent further pollution.

Educating individuals about better practices and emphasising the importance of avoiding pollution can reduce the negative impact on the environment.

4.2.13. Tourism price

The high prices of goods and foods on the island, which can be twice or triple the prices on the mainland, have been observed. A lack of standard pricing for food and beverages on the island was noted, highlighting the need for responsible authorities to play a more active role in regulating prices. Without proper control and enforcement, price hikes become inevitable. The authorities are responsible for monitoring price changes, addressing complaints, and preventing tour operators from taking advantage. Continuous surveillance is essential to protect tourists from exploitation. Stakeholders generally agreed that the higher cost of goods on the island is attributed to transportation costs for bringing goods by boat and ferry (Chia et al., 2018). The higher cost of living on the island stems from the expensive transportation costs for bringing goods from the mainland (Ho et al., 2017). This situation poses a burden on tourism stakeholders as a whole. The authorities need to pay attention to this problem by helping out the underprivileged families that can hardly afford to live with the inflation cost of living.

4.2.14. Marketing

Despite Redang Island possessing the potential as a top-tier tourist destination, its promotion and recognition have been inadequate, hindering its competitiveness compared to other desirable island destinations. To address this, collaborative efforts between the government, tourism bodies, and travel agencies are necessary to generate effective marketing and promotional strategies. Increasing campaigns and publicity are crucial to positioning Redang Island as an ideal tourist spot that appeals to global audiences. Leveraging social media platforms and participating in local or international tourism festivals organised by tourism bodies can also enhance the island's visibility and reputation. Seizing the significant opportunity to promote Redang Island as one of the world's renowned destinations requires heightened efficiency and a multifaceted approach to tourism activities (Rahman et al., 2021). By implementing comprehensive and innovative promotional strategies, Redang Island can position itself as a globally recognised tourism destination, bringing economic prosperity and sustainable growth to the local community.

'Better promotion for Redang Island is much needed to attract more tourists. Do not waste the opportunity in sight.' (Interviewee 22)

4.2.15. Zonation

Coastal zones, characterised by dynamic interactions between the land, atmosphere, sea, and continental waters, are environmentally significant areas (Mestanza-Ramón et al., 2019). Zoning is crucial in regulating environmental aspects, particularly in island tourism destinations where the coastal areas play a vital role. The legislation on zoning must be applied to ensure land and maritime security (Ryan, 2019). In the context of Redang Island, issues have arisen regarding the location of snorkelling and scuba diving sites, boat docking, and other related matters. Improper docking of boats near the coast has led to a negative image and potential harm to swimmers in the vicinity. Enabling zoning regulations is crucial to ensure land and maritime security. Strict law

enforcement and severe penalties for violations, particularly concerning coastal zoning, are necessary to maintain order and protect the environment on Redang Island.

‘There are a number of boats that docked very near to the beach that can endanger people swimming nearby especially the kids. Some of the new boats most likely do not aware on the rules.’ (Interviewee 9)

4.2.16. Land development

Local residents are typically involved in tourism developments superficially, while the main focus is generating profits within the community (Abukhalifeh & Wondirad, 2019). This approach compromises the quality of life for the local residents as decisions made by authorities and landowners prioritise development over their welfare. For instance, a private entity’s acquisition of Teluk Dalam Beach, the only beach available to local residents, threatens their rights to use the beach in the future. Stakeholders emphasise that overdevelopment would diminish the island’s attractiveness. Consequently, local residents demand inclusion in the decision-making processes related to the island’s development. Given the island’s small size and complex tenure or private land arrangements, affected local residents often have limited opportunities to compensate for the loss and damage to natural resources on which they rely. Thus, the authorities should be mindful regarding land ownership and remember to respect the local resident’s rights before anything else.

‘A pressing concern for local residents is the frequent and rapid transition of land ownership to private entities. Furthermore, new landowners’ construction of hotels or resorts result in excessive accommodation options for tourists, posing a threat to local residents who operate their own guest houses or homestay businesses.’ (Interviewee 29)

4.2.17. Stakeholder’s involvement

Stakeholder collaboration is crucial in solving tourism-related problems. However, achieving this can be challenging due to a lack of mutual consideration among stakeholders. The diverse range of stakeholders involved in tourism destinations brings complexity, with differing goals, opinions, and agendas (Roxas et al., 2020). Wu (2021) described that different tourism stakeholders have different perceptions of the issues on the island. However, responsible tourism practices require the active involvement of all stakeholders (Abukhalifeh & Wondirad, 2019). Tourism stakeholders must understand each other’s roles and respect them accordingly. For instance, the voices of local residents should be considered in tourism developments, granting them a say in decision-making processes. Effective stakeholder involvement is essential in governing tourism destinations and conserving the environment (Roxas et al., 2020). Notably, when encountering problems, the cooperation of all stakeholders is vital for efficient problem-solving.

4.2.18. Responsible practices

Environmental issues are particularly evident in island tourism (McLeod et al., 2021). Tourism stakeholders are responsible for the consequences and impacts of their own behaviour (Dias et al., 2021). The lack of awareness among local residents, tourists, and tour operators regarding responsible tourism practices, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, is a significant concern. As responsible tourism practices focus on shaping individuals' attitudes and values, stakeholders must acquire knowledge and exhibit responsible behaviour (Eichelberger et al., 2021). Unfortunately, many individuals choose to disregard their responsibility and remain ignorant, leading to detrimental impacts on the environment and creating unsustainable tourism destinations.

'Not everyone is responsible or irresponsible. It all depends on the individuality of the person. There is a need to educate and create more awareness about responsible tourism practices for all stakeholders.' (Interviewee 6)

Individuals must behave responsibly and possess a good understanding of responsible tourism practices to safeguard the environment for future generations. The dissemination of knowledge about responsible tourism practices should extend to every individual, fostering a sense of responsibility and preserving the environment for the benefit of future generations. The authorities have the capacity to implement a range of strategies aimed at fostering greater environmental consciousness among stakeholders to encourage responsible behaviour (Yilmaz & Anasori, 2022). All stakeholders involved in tourism should exhibit civilised behaviour, patience, politeness, and active participation.

5. STUDY IMPLICATIONS

The theoretical contribution of this study is reflected in various aspects. Firstly, from the stakeholders' perspectives, this study explored the depth of understanding of responsible tourism practices as well as the problems and issues faced by multiple stakeholders. It is not an easy feat for the stakeholders to jump into understanding responsible tourism practices right away. However, it becomes a must to put an effort into understanding it in order to sustain the environment for future generations. The study should help to improve their knowledge of responsible tourism practices and sharpen their handling of the issues highlighted. The study also suggests that responsible tourism practices can be achieved by not only having the tourists respect the environment of the places being visited but also respecting the cultures and societies of the local residents. This includes other groups of stakeholders, which requires every party to always respect each other to achieve responsible tourism practices together.

Secondly, stakeholder theory was applied to study together with responsible tourism practices. It enlightens the importance of participation and cooperation of each stakeholder. The perspectives of only a single stakeholder might produce a one-sided view of the problems faced by a tourism destination and the problems faced by other stakeholders might as well get missed out. The current study enhanced the stakeholder theory by using multiple stakeholder perspectives is hoped to shape the study into a new perspective on responsible tourism practice. The study is hoped to help the

stakeholders understand how responsible tourism practices can minimise the problems that Redang Island is facing. This can be proved by having the stakeholders point out the issues that concern them, which can be similar issues by different stakeholders.

Next, responsible tourism maximises the benefits for tourism stakeholders in terms of economic, social, and environmental impacts while at the same time minimising the negative impacts by assisting the local residents in preserving their cultures and traditions. Ethical values are integral to the good practice of these social and environmental principles in the destinations. Responsible tourism practices were perceived as an ideal framework to sustain tourism's optimal growth and minimise its negative impacts on its development. By having everyone equipped with this mindset, it will allow a much more harmony relationships between the stakeholders.

Meanwhile, practical implications for this study can be divided into a few dimensions. The efforts to determine the problems and issues from multiple stakeholders' perspectives in Redang Island are inevitable. These issues have raised important questions about the island's sustainability and imbalance of responsible tourism practices. All the identified problems can be separated into the urgency and the difficulty to solve based on the complexity level (Figure 3). The solutions could also be planned ahead by having short-term and long-term solutions with the segregation depending on the urgency. For instance, the issue of monsoon season is something that happens occasionally, but it is a must-happen event every year, so the proper actions to be taken can be planned beforehand to minimise the impacts.

Secondly, strengthening the relationship between stakeholders and authorities must be prioritised. The authorities and policymakers can work together to strategise better standard operating procedures for responsible tourism practices, creating a win-win situation for all parties. The interviewees also highlight the need for a unified foundation for informed decision-making and policy development to promote sustainable and responsible tourism on the island. Strengthening this relationship between stakeholders and the authorities can guide the stakeholders to participate in and show support for the tourism industry. Authorities can play a role in supporting responsible tourism practises by fostering the development of sustainable tourism. Good governments should also focus on effective policy instruments and governance structures to create sustainability and accountability. In a tourism destination region, strong governance and equity through fairness, utilisation and distribution of tourism-related resources, community empowerment, and stewardship of cultural, ecological, and social assets are especially important.

Besides that, the utilisation of carrying capacity efficiently is something to ponder in order to control the movement in and out of the island. It is not a secret that the number of tourists to Redang Island will keep increasing to the extent it will inevitably raise the capacity pressure towards the island. This action could prove to be crucial in order to curb the negative tourism impacts from expanding further. The ever-faster tourism development, along with a huge number of tourist arrivals, can be deemed as one of the factors that may harm the island's ecosystem. The authorities and tour operators need to prepare proper planning and management to evade any foreseen negative impacts such as overdevelopment and uncontrolled damages. Hence, to encourage long-term sustainability, proper planning and policies should be readily implemented and improvised from time to time.

Finally, responsible tourism practices can also help promote sustainable tourism development by creating awareness among stakeholders about the cruciality of responsible tourism practices. Stakeholders can be encouraged to participate in activities that promote responsible tourism practices, such as volunteering in community projects, supporting local businesses, and using eco-friendly products. Not to mention, the United Nations 2030 Agenda emphasises the importance of adopting policies that promote responsible tourism, foster job creation, and preserve local culture and products. Thus, the stakeholders can take the opportunity to further understand and put into practice in regard to the responsible tourism practices.

6. LIMITATIONS, FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This study specifically examined the challenges and issues associated with responsible tourism practices in Redang Island from the viewpoints of various stakeholders. It aimed to expand the existing literature on island settings by addressing these issues. The study identified numerous problems that must be addressed to improve the quality of life for all stakeholders. The study includes multiple stakeholder groups, each providing their own perspective, identifying 18 different problems and issues. The study provides a compelling insight into the familiarity of responsible tourism practices from the perspectives of multiple tourism stakeholders within the small island realm.

In line with SDG 2030, the current study considers SDG 8, which is to ‘promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all’. One of the goals was to design and implement policies to encourage sustainable tourism that creates jobs and supports local culture and goods by 2030 (United Nations Development Programme, 2024). Sustainable tourism practices encourage responsible consumption and production among visitors, businesses, and communities. This effort includes initiatives that promote local products and services, reduce waste and pollution, and implement sustainable practices throughout the tourism value chain.

This is directly consistent with the findings of the current study, which advocate effective planning and regulations to improve responsible tourism activities on Redang Island. For example, overdevelopment will have a negative impact because the externalities will be borne by the locals of Redang Island, such as the threat of more job opportunities for outsiders rather than locals, the mixture of influence on local culture, and the mass production of products from outside instead of local products. As a result, appropriate measures and policies to address the predicted impacts must be addressed.

While some individuals are still unfamiliar with responsible tourism practices, more people are recognising their importance for sustainable environments. Cooperation from all stakeholders is essential for the effective implementation of responsible tourism practices. To increase environmental awareness, stakeholders should be exposed to more information about responsible tourism. Stakeholders should also be taught the rules and regulations that apply on Redang Island. For example, stakeholders should be aware of typical illegal actions such as polluting and littering, harming corals, disturbing marine life, and destroying facilities and infrastructure. This can be accomplished by providing stakeholders with instructions or pamphlets before they visit Redang

Island. Most significantly, all stakeholders must agree that participation from all parties is required to fulfil the promise of responsible tourism practices in Redang Island.

Of the 18 issues highlighted, 13 were common issues in other islands' literature. However, this study identified five new difficulties (tradition inheritance, cultural shock, accommodation, tourism price, and zonation) that were previously overlooked and had minimal literature in other island studies but now contribute to the body of knowledge on Redang Island. The lack of knowledge on the five new difficulties shows that the challenges faced by island tourism are not uniform and will be unique to each location. It also reinforces the idea that each island must be treated as a single tourism destination with its research interests.

There are certain limitations to this study that can be addressed in other investigations. First, the current study focuses on the tourist benefits derived from Redang Island stakeholders in general. Future studies should focus on finding short- and long-term solutions to these difficulties. Consider utility supply: for short-term solutions, an electrical generator could be employed; nevertheless, a proper power station is strongly advised for long-term solutions. Second, even on Redang Island, tourist stakeholders' viewpoints may differ from one another. Therefore, future research can examine widening the coverage by incorporating government entities, non-profit groups, and tourism producers in addition to the current study. As a result, tourism developers' perspectives on land development may differ from those of other stakeholders. Third, the findings gained from this study may or may not be applicable to other islands, particularly small islands. As a result, future studies can take the initiative to investigate commonalities between concerns on Redang Island and other islands or even consider doing a comparison of multiple islands. For example, compare Redang Island to Tioman Island for a local context or Redang Island to Koh Samui Island in Thailand for an international perspective.

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