

## Developing Border Tourism in Sota, Merauke through Tourism Festival

*Most studies on border tourism development emphasize the role of government as an actor in developing border tourism. This study will explore the other side of the government's efforts to promote border areas using festival tourism. Cross Border Tourism in Indonesia still meets some problem rooted in the remote location and minimum public facilities. In turn, these problems bring about the minimum visits of the tourists. In order to attract the tourists' visits, The Indonesian government through the Ministry of Tourism conducted Cross Border Festivals in a number of border areas in Indonesia. One of the venues is Merauke, the border area of Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. It is interesting to analyze the implication of Cross Border Festival for the development of the border area, especially the economic impact and the awareness of the local communities. This research bases on documentation study combined by field observation and interviews with key persons and local communities of Sota, Merauke. The result of this study indicates that tourism festivals have succeeded in increasing the number of tourist visits in border areas and increasing the popularity of border areas. The events are successful in attracting more tourists to come to the border area, especially domestic visitors. Although it is successful in improving the tourists' visits and increasing economic impact, it still lacks the widespread involvement of the local people in the border area due to the top-down character of the government's policy.*

**Keywords:** *Cross border Tourism, Tourism Festival, Economic Impact, Community Awareness, Merauke.*

### Introduction

The main problem of Cross border Tourism as a part of *Special Interest Tourism* (SIT) is the long distance from the center of the city and they tend to have a very limited facility. The far distance and the limited facility either the roadway or the telecommunication give a negative contribution to the tourists' visits. SIT or a special trip started to develop in the early 1980s. this kind of trip surely has a limited number of visitors. Those who have a special interest on a special trip choose this kind of trip do not merely want to get some fun but also to have other satisfaction in the form of experience, knowledge, or other spiritual needs. In order to deal with the limitation of cross border tourism and to attract more SIT visitors, the border areas are surely in a great need of better facility as its needs for other tourism product that could attract the visitors' interest.

*Border Tourism* that starts to grow in Indonesia has some similar problems. The far distance from the city center and the limited facility of the roadway and limited communication access implicate in there are not many people who come to visit border tourism. Even there have not been many domestic tourists who are interested to visit the border tourism that tends to be primitive and does not offer special things except a label of being the border of

the country's border area. Either it is the border area of Indonesia and Malaysia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea, or Indonesia or Timor Leste, this area has a minimum public facility. However, the construction of roadway, communication, and the posts of the border area has given a positive change in the Indonesian border area in recent years.

The Ministry of Tourism of Indonesia tried to solve the problem of the limitation in terms of geographical condition and public facility that is faced by Border tourism by administering festival in 2016. The festival plays an important role in the tourism industry both as the asset and the product of tourism (Cudny 2013). The main motivation for people to have a cultural trip is not only to get some amusement from the journey itself but they also tend to get a new understanding and to feel a different atmosphere. The administration of a festival in the border area is expected to be able to be a special attraction for those who like cultural trip and or those who were not interested to SIT, especially the cross border tourism.

Cross Border Festival in Indonesia managed by the Ministry of Tourism was carried out with music concert, bazaar, cuisine and a number of sports events such as horse race and motocross. A huge number of tourists both domestic tourists and visitors from the neighbor country come to enjoy the Cross Border Festivals. The cross border festivals in Atambua, East Nusa Tenggara, for example, could attract around 37000 visitors in 2016. The visitors came from the domestic area and Timor Leste.) the effort to attract visitors through Cross Border Festivals in Indonesia's border area is also done in West Kalimantan, Sanggau and Aruk. They had started to hold a Cross Border Festival by inviting some artists from Jakarta. Besides, they also performed local culture in the form of dances, music, and cuisine. Meanwhile, Papua has held the Cross Border Festival since 2016 in Jayapura and Merauke. Just like other Cross Border Festivals, the one in Jayapura and Merauke were also aimed at increasing the tourists' visits by performing a number of artists from Jakarta and local culture.

This paper will analyze the impact of festival tourism for people's prosperity in border areas. Geographically Indonesia's border area located in the remote area and lack of facilities. Whether or not the Cross Border Festival initiated by the Ministry of Tourism of Republic Indonesia is able to be a motor for the wealth of people in the border area and it is not a merely a temporary euphoria.

## **Literature Review**

Most studies on border tourism development emphasize the role of government as an actor in developing border tourism, both as the main actor or actor collaborating with other parties, including the private sector, communities, another state, or multinational corporations (Sotiriadis & Shen, 2017). This study will explore the other side of the government's efforts to promote border areas using festival tourism.

Getz (2008) locates festival tourism as a part of event tourism. For Getz, all tourisms that are aimed at attending a festival are a part of event tourism. Also referring to the classification of Lord Cultural Resources Planning and Management, the festival is one form of event tourism that becomes a subpart of cultural tourism. Meanwhile, Janiske (1980) defines 'Event' as a series of attractive and interesting activities that are held in a short period of time in a certain area to commemorate a specific happening. A study about the special event as part of tourism management was started in 1970. The study continued to advance so it does not only believe event as an important motivator or image creator of a certain area but it also believes that event could also serve as the people's economic propeller.

Event Tourism could be classified into 3 groups, namely, first, events that refer to a cultural celebration, political activities, and art activities. The second group refers to all activities related to commercial, education, and science. Whereas, the third group refers to the activities of sport, recreation, and special activities. Therefore, the festival is merely a part of the overall tourism events being held in relation to culture. Festival itself is an event that performs local culture from the non-material side (intangible product) like dances, music, customs, or local folktales. The administration of a certain event could become a strategy of an area to attract visitors and investors, become the main propeller for the tourism sector, and become the main contributor in increasing the competitive power of a tourism resort (Getz, 2008). Unquestionably, the event as it is meant by Getz is an event that has the characteristic of showing the feature of a tourism resort related and could become the permanent attraction for the tourism resort.

Meanwhile, Congcong (2014) describes the festival in a more specific way that is by exploring the meaning of the festival itself. *"It (festival) is a kind of social activity according to the needs of people living custom for a long time gradually established and passed from generation to generation"*. Therefore, Congcong defines festival tourism as an effort to construct tourism by utilizing the culture of local people.

*"... is to promote the tourism development of the city and driving the economic development of relative industries, through the system planning, development and utilization of local unique cultural traditions, ethnic customs and characteristic industry, regularly or irregularly held in a particular area has a specific theme, set tourism, culture, economy, life as a whole, with extensive people to participate in the festival celebrations."*

In addition, specifically Congcong affirms the characteristic of festival tourism through some preconditions, that is, first, festival tourism has the feature of offering the local culture and customs and refers to a certain geographical area. Therefore, every festival in every region has its own uniqueness. Second, every tourist could participate and has direct experience in the event they held. Third, culture – besides becoming the main commodity to

1 attract visitors – it also serves as a bridge for cultural communication among  
 2 the citizens of countries. Fourth, festival tourism is a very vast activity that  
 3 includes the matters from local culture, local cuisine, lodgings, to  
 4 transportation, security, and even it also includes political matters that are  
 5 related to the policy of the administration of festival tourism. Last, festival  
 6 tourism is a new form of tourism product that gives a different sensation to the  
 7 tourists because they do not only recognize the different culture but they could  
 8 also understand the different culture in a unique way. As a consequence, this  
 9 new product of the cultural tourism industry ought to have given not only a  
 10 larger economic impact, but also social impact.

11 Looking at the meaning of a festival, therefore festival administration must  
 12 have the element of culture in the form of tangible product as well as intangible  
 13 products like dances and music. Although in reality, the administration of  
 14 festival as a part of tourism could not be placed merely as a local cultural  
 15 product. As a product, in order to attract visitors' arrivals in an area festival  
 16 tourism is administered in line with another form of activities like sport event  
 17 that is wrapped up as a competition and music and art event that do not refer to  
 18 traditional art anymore. The purpose of festival tourism as tourism attraction  
 19 often messes the identity of the area, whereas the identity should be able to be a  
 20 special brand that sticks on the festival being administered. Cudny (2013)  
 21 identifies this problem by warning that the loss of local authenticity due to the  
 22 intention to fulfill the tourists' demands could be the cause of dysfunction of  
 23 the administration of a festival.

24 At the same time, some academicians believe that a festival is held by  
 25 exploring the local culture and done by the local culture, then the festival could  
 26 be a means of forming the community bond itself. For Dunstan, as it is cited by  
 27 Derret (2003), the festival could set aside the bad description to build  
 28 community. Organizing a big festival needs a great number of individuals and  
 29 collective efforts. In order to prepare a festival also needs personal time  
 30 allocation and kindness. With the joint activity, a festival could serve as a  
 31 bridge to make a community bond. Besides the growth of community bond, a  
 32 festival also creates a mutual social relation through the shared culture such as  
 33 myths, folk story, dances, and other traditional product that could raise the  
 34 proud feeling of the local culture that in turns it motivates people to maintain  
 35 and keep the culture. Hence, the festival has an important role in 3 matters,  
 36 namely, first, it grows bonds that are stronger than the bonds between the  
 37 citizen and the place where they dwell. Second, it strengthens the local values.  
 38 By being the host, newcomers of an area in an indirect way will deliver the  
 39 shared value in a community bond. Third, the festival becomes an important  
 40 token of difference (uniqueness) of place and community (Derret, 2003).

41 Apart from how festival tourism is administered, Arcodia and Robb (2000)  
 42 state that event tourism plays a big role in giving a significant contribution to  
 43 the tourism industry because it could create various tourism demands like  
 44 tours, lodging, and other tourism industry so it gives socio-economic  
 45 advantages for the surrounding community. A study by Stanskova and  
 46 Vassenska (2015) reveals that local cultural festival shows a positive impact

on the development of tourism because  $\frac{3}{4}$  respondents of the study show their specific interest to the local tradition and culture. The low local tradition content will influence the visitors' interests of domestic and foreign tourists to come to have a visit. The study also claims that local festival leads to the economic advantage that has a direct impact on the economy such as increasing employment, business earnings, and lodgings. Similarly, O'Sullivan and Jackson (2002) through their study believe that the impact of the festival does not only increase the local people's earning, but it is also able to strengthen the local community and raising the life quality in small cities. In festival tourism, history, culture, and tradition become the main commodity. As a result, besides being an interesting commodity for SIT Tourists, the exploration of knowledge about the history and local culture quite the reverse is able to consolidate the local identity. Even, with good management in wrapping local tradition and culture as a tourism commodity, these matters could be another brand image for the related tourism area. Again, it would intensify the area as an interesting SIT destination.

Event tourism and Festival Tourism that subsequently do not have a strict limitation in the practice are eventually acknowledged by a number of academicians as one of economic empowerment form that is quite respectable for a region. Festival and event could be a main propeller key for the economic development and revitalization by re-branding the tourism object, increasing investments and triggering other economic activity of an area that tends to turn down. A study by Gotham (2005) explains that Mardi Grass commoditization impel the level of consumption in New Orleans. Additionally research by Prentice and Andersen (2003) that sees Edinburg Festival as a trigger of the return of consumption level in Scotland and research by Nagi and Nagi (2013) that finds out that Sziget Festival and Budapest Parade could be able to contribute to economic reparation in Hungary.

## Methodology

This research uses a qualitative approach. The data is collected from field observation and interviews with some authorities and local government staffs, namely the Areal Secretary of Merauke Regency, The Head of Cultural Bureau, the Head of Tourism Bureau, and the staffs of Industry Bureau of Merauke Regency. The interview is also done with the local people in the border area of Sota Merauke, especially with the souvenir makers and sellers in the border area.

The collected data is analyzed with analytic descriptive approach. The data is categorized based on specific issues. Finally, the data is analyzed and interpreted, narrated, and concluded.

## Sota as Cross Border Tourism Destination

1 Sota is a village that is located in Merauke district, Merauke Regency that  
 2 has a direct border with Papua increases in the southern part of Papua Island,  
 3 Indonesia. The village is located 80 kilometers from Merauke. The roadway  
 4 from Merauke regency to Sota ranges from a good-asphalted road that passes  
 5 through the forest and savanna of Wasur National Park. Sota itself is one of  
 6 tourism area owned by Merauke, other than Lampu Satu beach, Onggaya  
 7 beach, Payum beach, Okaba beach, and Lotus Garden in Semangga.

8 Sota has one distinction as a unique tourism destination because it is a  
 9 state's border area. It is located in the east end of Indonesia in the southern part  
 10 of Papua island. It has twin landmarks or the 0 km landmark like the one in  
 11 Sabang, Aceh (the west part of Indonesia, in the northern part of Sumatera  
 12 island). The other uniqueness of this area is the fact that traditional trades  
 13 between Sota citizen, Weam, and Wereaber villages from Papua New Guinea  
 14 still exists. The traditional trade that depends on personal relations is done  
 15 every day with high intensity. There were around 200-300 visitors from Papua  
 16 New Guinea and on average 100 people from Indonesia make visits to Papua  
 17 New Guinea every month (Pos Imigrasi Sota 2013). The citizen of Papua New  
 18 Guinea who comes to Sota usually shops daily needs like a noodle, sugar,  
 19 coffee, clothes, and so on. On the other hand, they come to Sota with some  
 20 items like venison, cassowary, and some simple farming tools. Some recent  
 21 years, the cross border doer from PNG start to sell lances, bags and other  
 22 handicrafts as souvenirs that are managed by a local citizen.

23 Besides having an advantage as an area that has a direct border with other  
 24 country and traditional trade system, it is also located in the area of Wasur  
 25 National Park that is so rich with various flora and fauna. Sota also provides a  
 26 unique phenomenon, that is, ants' nests or Musamus, something that people  
 27 only find in Indonesia and a number of countries in Africa. In the border area  
 28 between Indonesia and Papua New Guinea, there has been a park constructed  
 29 where the tourists come to see the situation or simply spending their time on  
 30 weekends. The number of visits by the tourists in the border area park was only  
 31 high on weekends, Saturday and Sunday. Merauke regency itself has not had  
 32 many artificial tourist resorts such as cinema, theatre, or children's playground.  
 33 People in Merauke prefer nature as a tourism destination, like the border area's  
 34 parks and beaches in the southern beach of Merauke.

35 As a cross border tourism area, Sota was more visited by local tourists that  
 36 come from Merauke or other regions like Jayapura. Some visitors from out of  
 37 Papua or abroad come because they want to see Wasur National Park or  
 38 because they have another business in Merauke. In other words, the border area  
 39 of Sota has not been the main tourist resort in Merauke. The motivation of the  
 40 visitors' visits was merely want to see the country's borderlines that do not  
 41 always exist in other places in Indonesia.

42 A number of attempts have been done to increase the attraction of Sota as  
 43 a tourism destination. Besides the border park constructed by a local citizen, a  
 44 project of ecotourism has ever been tried in the area. In 2013, Sota ever has an  
 45 aid fund for the development of ecotourism for 3 years. Unfortunately, the 3  
 46 years project was not successful because the awareness of the community on

1 the economic potency they have was not adequate to motivate them to use it.  
2 From a number of interviews with a local government official, it is stated that  
3 the main hindrance that comes up precisely emerge from the community. The  
4 minimum awareness on the economic prospect that was accompanied by the  
5 limitation in managing tourism make the idea impossible to be continued after  
6 3 years of giving the aid fund by the central government. Some lodgings that  
7 are constructed stalled and the fruits gardens projected to be tourism  
8 destination were not cultivated anymore. Meanwhile, from the three types of  
9 equipment of cajuput oil distillation, there is only one machine that could be  
10 operated (Dewi & Rachmawati, 2018).

11 The idea of ecotourism was started from the Merauke government's wish  
12 to make Sota not only a cross border tourism object with its zero kilometer  
13 tower, but also give the visitors a different experience through the natural  
14 attraction. Because the area is close to fertile land, they wish to make Sota an  
15 area that looks like Mekarsari Fruit Garden in West Java emerged. Besides  
16 enjoying the beauty of the park and consume the fruits, the visitors could bring  
17 the fruits home as souvenirs (interview 18<sup>th</sup> April 2017). Sota is a village that  
18 produces fruits with the potency of 500 tons per year (Biro Pusat Statistik  
19 2014). The fruits are mango, orange, pineapple, and banana.

20 This failure becomes a note for the government that the community still  
21 needs to get a bigger stimulus to be able to see the positive impact of the  
22 tourism industry for the increase of the local community's wellbeing.  
23 Generally, the local people do not have sufficient education and most of them  
24 work as farmers. Even, most people also still rely on their food from the  
25 surrounding forests. Referring to the condition of the community, it seems that  
26 a stimulus by inviting more visitors to the border area through certain events.  
27 Looking at the celebration of Indonesian's Independence Day on August 17  
28 that could pull hundreds of visitors either from Merauke or PNG, the ministry  
29 of Tourism of Republik Indonesia held a Cross Border Festival. They expect  
30 that the cultural event could attract more tourists' visits to the border area and  
31 hold up the community's awareness about the tourism potency they have.

32  
33  
34

## 1 Merauke Cross Border Festival

2  
3 The Ministry of Tourism of Republic Indonesia holds Cross Border  
4 Festival in a number of areas in Indonesia's border area including Merauke, is  
5 one of the efforts done to increase the tourism in border area through the  
6 administration of an event. A tourism strategy that is Republik Indonesia does  
7 by pulling the visitors through a culture festival. The number of visitors that is  
8 significantly high is expected to increase the community's awareness of their  
9 economic potency. The administration of a culture festival by the central  
10 government could be a real description for the local people that the high  
11 number of visits could open an economic chance for local dwellers. Therefore,  
12 the local people and local government are motivated to manage tourism  
13 potency in a better way. Vinsensius Jemadu, the Deputy Assistant of Asia  
14 Pacific Market Development of the Ministry of Tourism of Indonesia, stated  
15 that this activity is a strategy of the ministry to attract foreign visitors,  
16 especially from Papua New Guinea. Besides, it is also expected to increase the  
17 economic activities of the community in the border area so that the real sector  
18 could be rapidly advanced.

19 Cross Border Festival is conducted in Merauke on August 17, 2016, and  
20 December 13, 2016 in Sota's field, Merauke, Papua. This event was dominated  
21 by band performance with a number of artists from the capital city such as  
22 Sandy Bethany and Black sound Dave Solution. They chose Reggae genre  
23 because according to the Head of Festival of the Deputy Assistant of Marketing  
24 Development of Asia Pacific, Adela Raung, the citizen of Papua New Guinea  
25 like Reggae music very much. This strategy seems to be successful to attract a  
26 big number of visitors from Papua New Guinea to attend Cross Cross Border  
27 Festival that was conducted twice in 2016. Besides music show, this activity  
28 also performed local culture in the form of dances, music, local cuisine, and  
29 local handicraft and bazaar.

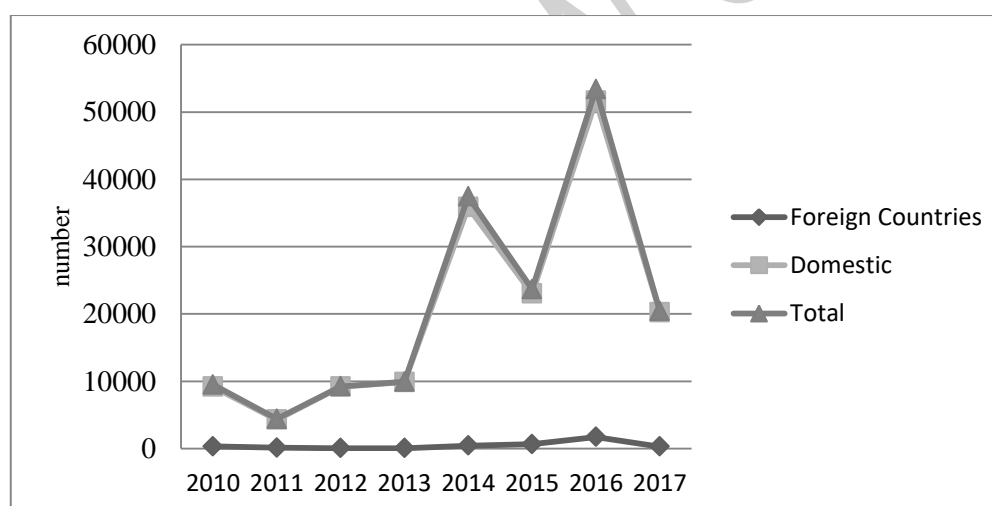
30 This event is considered not only to be able to impel the community  
31 economic activity but also become a media to improve the good relationship  
32 between countries (Gunawan, 2019). In an indirect way, this cultural event  
33 makes the relationship among citizens of the two countries that come from the  
34 same culture, closer. In the villages located exactly on the borderline even have  
35 the same family bonds. Another strategy that is used in the Cross Border  
36 Festival in Merauke other than choosing the right music genre is the  
37 performance of a similar culture, cuisine, and Visa-of-Visit- Free or Bebas  
38 Visa Kunjungan (Tribun, 2016). The General Consulate of Republik Indonesia  
39 in Papua New Guinea, Abraham Lebalauw, states that the local citizen of  
40 Papua New Guinea gives a very positive appreciation for this event. It is very  
41 popular and could attract a number of Papua New Guinea citizens to come.



## The Impact of Cross Border Festival

The Ministry of Tourism of Indonesia noted that the festival was a great success with the high visit rate. There were 1300 foreign tourists came to the Cross Border Festival on August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016 about 850 people came in the festival held on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016. From the data of Statistic Central Bureau “Merauke dalam Angka 2018”, emerged the augment of tourists’ visits in 2016, both domestic and foreign tourists (see figure 1). It is noted that in 2010 the number of tourists’ visit is 303 that declined in 2011 into 110, and continue to decline in 2012 (39 people) and 55 tourists in 2013. It rose in 2013 (420 people) and became 545 in 2015. A sharp rise happened in 2016 (1.720 tourists) and decline again in 2017 (294 tourists). The same thing happened in the arrival of domestic tourists in 2016 when the Cross Border Festival 2016 was held. In the previous years the rate of domestic tourists’ arrivals is only 9000 in 2010-2013 and 37.432 in 2014 and 23.670 in 2015, the number of domestic tourists that come reaches 53.403 in 2016. Unfortunately, the tourist’s arrival declined again in 2017, with the number 20.395.

**Figure 1.** Number of Tourists' Arrival in Merauke 2010-2017



Source: Retrieved from the Report of Merauke Regency 2010-2018.

Not only does it impel the increase of foreign and domestic tourists visits, but the festival also increases the number of lodgings/hotels from 14 in 2016 to 18 in the number of rooms of 391 in 2015 become 495 in 2017. This also triggers the elevation of the rate of employment absorption in a hostelry. Referring to the ministry of Tourism of Indonesia, the increment of employment either direct or indirect in the tourism sector is a form of tourism contribution. The direct employment of tourism sector includes the employment in accommodation, travel agents, airlines, and other passenger services, and it also includes a restaurant and recreational places that directly serve the tourists. The indirect employment includes in the sectors of

1 promotion, furnishing equipment, vehicle rentals, and transportation  
 2 manufactures. In addition, the following employments are those in the sectors  
 3 of food and drinks supply, wholesale, computer utilities, and personal services.  
 4 an increase of tourism according to Bills Number 10 2009, there are 13 kinds  
 5 of business field in the sectors of (1) tourism attraction, (2) tourism resort, (3)  
 6 transportation service, (4) tour travel service, (5) food and drink service, (6)  
 7 accommodation service, (7) management of entertainment and recreation, (8)  
 8 gathering, incentive trip, conference, and exhibition organizer, (9) tourism  
 9 information service; (10) tourism consultant service; (11) tourism guide service;  
 10 (12) water tourism; and (13) spa. The number of increase in hostelry is 194 in  
 11 2015 to 223 in 2017. Meanwhile, in Merauke there are increases in the number  
 12 of restaurant/café although they are not significant that is 24 in 2015 become  
 13 27 in 2016 area (Biro Pusat Statistik 2018).

14 In the area of Sota border, the number of active persons of economic  
 15 activity related to the cross border tourism also significantly raised. Formerly  
 16 there is only one person who opens a souvenir shop in the cross border area of  
 17 Sota. Since the administration of the Cross Border Festival, there are many  
 18 booths that are located on a piece of land that is only 10 meters from the zero  
 19 point of Indonesia-Papua New Guinea border. The 20 booths are aids from one  
 20 of the government's banks in the frame of empowering the border-area  
 21 community. In the booths, the local citizen sells their sale items like cajuput  
 22 oil, ants' nests, T-shirts, hats, key chains, bracelets, sculpture, and noken bags.  
 23 All of the items are the local product that is still very simple from either the  
 24 quality of the presentation. The increase of the number of sellers in the cross  
 25 border area is admitted to be an influence of the Cross Border Festival that  
 26 successfully attracts the tourists to visit. The result of the interview with a  
 27 number of 'mama' (ladies) who sell souvenirs states that the number of sellers  
 28 would be more if there is an event in the border

29 Besides selling, the increase in the number of visitors to the border area  
 30 motivates the local people to produce local souvenirs. Women work harder to  
 31 produce more noken bag. (noken is a traditional crochet bag made from wood  
 32 fiber that is dried, spun, and ornamented with cassowary leathers). On average,  
 33 they can produce 5-7 noken bags if the raw material is available. The business  
 34 of traditional bag production made by the skillful hands of Sota women is one  
 35 of the businesses that they like because those bags are immediately sold  
 36 (interview 26<sup>th</sup> April 2018).

37 Similarly, the business of cajuput oil distillation that had ever been  
 38 activated through the ecotourism project is still maintained by the local people  
 39 although the distillation machine that still runs well is only one. Surprisingly,  
 40 from one unit machine, the citizen in groups could produce cajuput oil that is  
 41 sold as part of specific souvenir from Sota. Although it is put in a very simple  
 42 container (in a re-used energy drink bottles) and the quality is not perfect, the  
 43 people's effort to produce cajuput oil as part of souvenir in border area shows  
 44 that the local people's enthusiasm starts to grow. Meanwhile, the wood  
 45 sculpture and bone craft contribute a number of key chains, bracelet, and other  
 46 ornaments in the booths of the border area. The products that are not produced

1 in Sota that are sold in the booths are t-shirts and hats. Overall, the increasing  
 2 number of booths has absorbed more tourism industry activists that are people  
 3 who make bags, handicrafts, cajuput oil, and ants' nest's collectors.

4 Besides souvenir booths, there are also food courts that have a little  
 5 increase in number. In the area that is not so far from the border park, there are  
 6 only 1-2 stalls that sell drink, simple snack sellers. The food court is not found  
 7 until 500 meters from the location of the border milestone. The addition of  
 8 food and drink booths and food stalls is not significant. However, this change  
 9 is meaningful because it becomes a signal that a better understanding of  
 10 economic potency they have.

11 The positive impact toward the economic condition of the local citizen  
 12 because the administration of an event, referring to O'Sullivan and Jackson  
 13 (2002), Arcodia and Robb (2000), is shown from the side of the number of  
 14 visits of tourists, number of economic activity bonds, or kinds of tourism  
 15 economic activity bonds. However, in the case of Merauke, the positive  
 16 impacts are not only shown by the three things but also shown by the  
 17 improvement of the awareness and the positive response of the local people  
 18 towards the cross border tourism. The impact of Cross Border Festival in 2016  
 19 is a real description that a border area, the area where the people live, is a  
 20 potential area to increase the economy and wealth of the community. In other  
 21 words, the administration of the festival that actually aimed to attract the  
 22 visitors' interest to come to an area, has a positive impact to the awareness and  
 23 is able to motivate the local community to be more active in the tourism  
 24 industry. Their proud feeling on the traditional product that they have also  
 25 increased by making those products, that are packed with meaning, parts of  
 26 tourism product like Noken.

27 Unfortunately, the Cross Border Festival held by the Ministry of Tourism  
 28 is not continued to the following years. In 2017 and 2018, Cross Border  
 29 Festival is only conducted in Skouw, Jayapura and Keerom Regency. In  
 30 Keerom, Cross border Festival is held for three days. It is successful in making  
 31 27.000 visitors come to visit (Suara Merdeka, 2018). Meanwhile, in Skouw  
 32 there were 5.000 visitors from Papua New Guinea came. Both areas are located  
 33 on the border of Indonesia and Papua New Guinea in the northern part that  
 34 tends to be more populated and have better public facility compared to the  
 35 border of Indonesia-Papua New Guinea in Merauke. Nevertheless, the  
 36 administration of Cross border Festival is still taking the same concept, that is  
 37 attracting the tourists by inviting artists from the capital city and reggae music,  
 38 although local culture is performed through dances and local people's  
 39 handicrafts.

40 The discontinuation of Cross Border Festival makes the decrease of the  
 41 tourists' arrivals as seen in Table 1. This also influences the activity of  
 42 souvenir sales by the local people in the border area. The souvenir booths are  
 43 full of sellers if the area in the border has activity or events but they will look  
 44 empty if there is no event. The minimum amount of visitors due to the  
 45 discontinuation of the activity in the border area influences the enthusiasm of  
 46 the souvenir seller in the border area park. If there is no activity or event the

number of booths that serve visitors is 5 out of 20. Some women sellers admitted that the booths will be congested if there is an activity administered in the border area by the local government of Merauke regency or certain institution from Merauke regency (interview 26<sup>th</sup> April 2018).

The administration of festival by the Ministry of Tourism shows the dependency of the local community to the big cultural event held by the central government. Besides, the administration of Cross Border Festival only makes the local people viewers in their own land because the artists from the capital city dominated the event. The festival that should promote local product turns out to be a media of modern culture. A critic by West Kalimantan Forum on the Cross Border Festival mentions that the policy of the central government should be in agreement with the policy of regional government in the frame of developing and empowering efforts that start from the education sector, traditional commodity and skill education and training for local community become more powerful (Ramadhani, 2017) Therefore, festival tourism could be conducted independently by the local community by using their own local culture by utilizing and developing their local culture. The local community's skill and independence in administering an event in a border area still need to be motivated in order that the area becomes an interesting place to visit.

### **Continue or Discontinue?**

The administration of a cultural festival could become a strategy for a tourism resort area to attract visitors. A cultural attraction that reflects the uniqueness of a destination area would be branding for the related region. Besides, it also could be an attraction for tourists to come. In some tourism destination area, the festival has become the tourist destination itself like the Jember Fashion Festival in Jember. Every year, Jember Fashion Carnival could attract thousands of visitors and it yields extraordinary incomes for a number of businesspersons in the tourism industry. Meanwhile, Festival Penyu in Temajok even makes a great success by stopping turtles and turtle eggs hunting. Besides giving positive impacts like the increase of lodgings and restaurants, Festival Penyu or Turtle Festival in Temajok, West Kalimantan is able to conserve the nature and decrease the level of turtle's distinction through the stoppage of turtle's eggs and turtle sanctuary. The turtle festival is signed by releasing baby turtles to the sea.

The Cross Border Festival administered by the Ministry of Tourism of Republic Indonesia also has the same purpose as another cultural festival where tourists' visits become its target. What were done by the Ministry of Tourism is proven to yield the significant presence of visitors in the border areas including Sota, Merauke. The strategy of the utilizing music that is liked by the people who live in the border area, became one of the keys of attraction, besides the performance of the artists from Jakarta and the BVK operation. The arrival of a big number of visitors impelled the local people to take an economic opportunity by providing food and souvenirs. The positive influence

that is truly important from the administration of the Cross border Festival is not the increment in the number of stools and food courts, but in the local people's awareness on the economic potency that they have. This awareness has motivated them to produce a number of souvenirs such as noken bag, key chain, bracelet, necklace, carving, cajuput oil, and ants' nests.

One important note that is taken from the administration of Cross Border Festival is that the central government's domination does not give good advantage for the continuation of a festival. In the case of Cross border Festival in Merauke, the cross border festival was only administered twice and there is no other festival. The people only serve as objects of the festival where they could not administer such an event on their own. This undoubtedly is contradictory to the spirit of the administration of the festival that should be promoting the identity of the culture of a certain area and empowering the tourism destination through the independence of the management of tourism potency. Besides the awareness toward the tourism potency, the self-sufficiency of the local people should be nurtured by the increase of the capability of the active person or the subject of the tourism industry.

## Conclusion

Festival tourism proved to be successful in increasing tourist visits in the border area. Some cases of developing border tourism through festival tourism in Indonesia indicate this trend. Moreover, in the borders area in the Papua region, which has been known as a remote area and lack of visitors. Attractions in festival tourism are magnets that encourage visitors to come to the border area. Thus it is a positive impact on tourism promotion at the border area.

However, tourism festivals on the border have not succeeded yet in encouraging the participation of people in the border areas. This is due to top-down planning. The idea of festival tourism comes from the central government which is implemented in the border area. As a result, packaging and the content of festival tourism are sometimes not appropriate to encourage active participation of border communities. The community is more a spectator than being an actor in festival activities. The top-down nature also causes people to depend on the central government. The case in Sota, Merauke shows that festival tourism activities have not become routine activities. The community is still dependent on the central government and local government initiation.

Thus the success of developing border tourism through festival tourism is largely determined by a good synergy between the government and the community. The government is still expected to be the initiator and provide the budget. Meanwhile, the community should support an active role in festival tourism. It is very important to open a discussion space between the government and the community so that the festival of tourism is no longer top-down.

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