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TOURISTS' MOTIVATION TO CHOOSE A VACATION DESTINATION: THE CASE OF MANADO, INDONESIA

Yuliana

Hotel Management Department, Faculty of Economics and Communication
Bina Nusantara University, Jakarta, Indonesia 11480
yuli@binus.edu

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ABSTRACT

The increasingly competitive nature of the tourism industry requires tourist destinations to develop effective marketing plans and strategies. Destinations mainly compete based on their unique attractions relative to competitors in the marketplace. For destinations to serve tourists better it is vital to know the motivation of travelers when choosing their destination. The tourism industry is growing fast in South-East Asia and one of the fast growing countries in this area is Indonesia, which offers a variety of attractions. Since studies related to motivation of domestic tourists are still limited in Indonesia, this study plans to find out more about the motivations of domestic tourists who choose Manado as one of the destinations within Indonesia. This research aims to evaluate the critical factors influencing domestic tourists to choose Manado as their destination for vacation. To collect the data self-administrated questionnaires were distributed among 300 domestic tourists in Sam Ratulangi International airport and different tourist attractions around the city. Statistical analysis through SPSS software was used to analyze the data. The results shows the purpose of visiting for sightseeing is the most important factor that motivate local tourists to visit Manado, while novelty seeking is the least motivating factor influencing the choice of destination. This research is one of the first to examine the motivation of domestic Indonesian tourists to choose a destination within their country. A major contribution of this research is its implications for practitioners in the tourism industry such as marketers or travel agencies in order to develop better marketing strategies for Manado.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon that involves people traveling to countries or destination outside their home for either personal or business/professional purposes (UNWTO, 2014). Tourism is an important activity in the economic growth performance, as according to UNWTO, tourism sector is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world.

Tourism is a mixture of a variety of activities, services and industries that offer a travel experience involving transportation, accommodation, food

and beverages, attraction and other services, which are provided tourist who are away from home (Erkuş-Öztürk, 2018; Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012). Tourist is a consumer that produces revenue from the expenditures he makes, that this revenue goes directly to the economics of the tourism sector industry. In general, tourism product is a package that mainly defined in five main components, which are destination attractions, destination facilities and services, images, brands and perceptions, accessibility of the destination (including transport), and price to the visitor (Cuculeski, Petrovska, & Petkovska Mircevska, 2015).

Being the fast mounting industry in the world, tourism is considered as the source of income of a country and its multiplier effect. Tourism activity is positioned within the entire economic industry and is interrelated with other sectors, thus tourism activity is not a separate activity (Ntibanyurwa, 2006; Roudi, Arasli & Akadiri, 2018). For instance, in order to satisfy the tourists demand, tourism does not only require tourism products (e.g. natural attraction and tourism resorts), however also other sectors (e.g. transport, agricultural, and financial). According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) "The total contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP" (including wider effects from investment, the supply chain and induced income impacts, see page 2) was IDR770,310.0bn in 2016 (6.2% of GDP) and is expected to grow by 4.3% to IDR803,499.0bn (6.2% of GDP) in 2017. It is forecast to rise by 6.2% pa to IDR1,464,700.0bn by 2027 (6.8% of GDP) " (Turner, 2017).

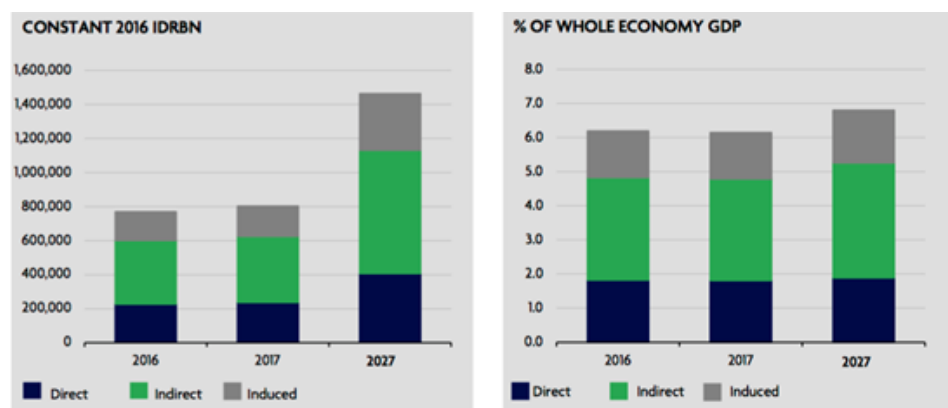


Figure 1. Total Contributions of Travel & Tourism to GDP in Indonesia (Sources: World Travel & Tourism Council; Economic Impact in Indonesia 2017)

Tourist satisfaction is the main element of a successful tourism destination as it affects the tourist choice of destination. Satisfied tourists have higher chance of selecting the destination for their vacation and the higher possibility for the tourist to visit the destination again (Hansae & Mirvaisi, 2011; Yuliana, 2018). Tourist products are intended mainly to satisfy the needs of the tourist through facilities and services. According to the Ministry of Tourism, there are three types of tourism product (Turtureanu, 2005): first, natural Tourism Product: Natural resources, which occur naturally such as areas, climate and its setting, landscape and natural environment. Natural resources are commonly the key elements in a destination's attraction. Second, Cultural Tourism Product: Based on the

traditions, art forms, celebrations and experiences that describe the nation and its societies, and character of a country, such as historical buildings and monuments and museums. Third, man Made Tourism Product: Product created by human for leisure, pleasure or business, such as amusement park, festivals, and zoos.

The three types of tourism product is owned by Indonesia that 60% of the products is Cultural. Each types of tourism product are re-categorized into several types of tourism, as shown in Figure 2.

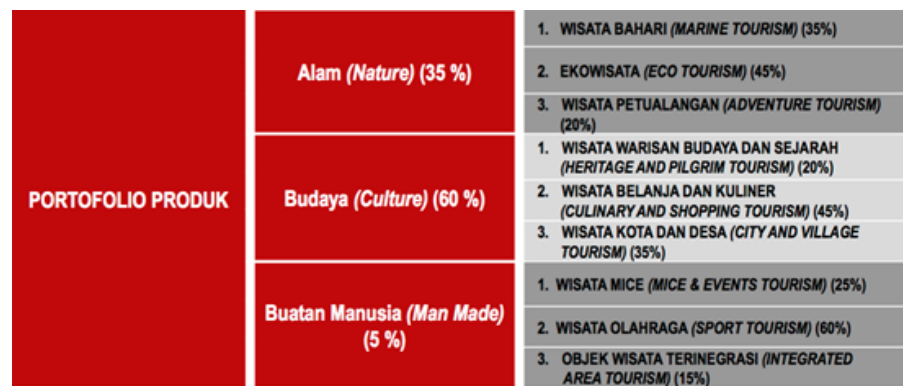


Figure 2. Portfolio Product of Indonesia Tourism
(Sources: Indonesia Ministry of Tourism, 2016)

According to the Manado Bureau of Tourism (2017) the number of domestic visitors as well as international visitors to Manado increases every year. In 2015 to 2016, Manado had the highest growth in the number of international tourists throughout Indonesia, reached 233.68% (Ministry of Tourism, 2017). Moreover, tourism has been one of the highest contributors to the Manado GDP which it contributes: 744,282.2 million in 2010, 836,572.3 million in 2011, 952,819.1 million in 2012, 1,005,730.5 million in 2013, 1,214,067.5 million in 2014, and 1,410,624.9 million in 2015 (Statistics of Manado Municipality, 2016).

The rapid growth of international and domestic visitors in Manado from 2011 to 2016 is very significant especially for domestic tourists. Especially from 2014 to 2016, the number of tourists traveling to Manado increased from 832.015 to 1,223,515 tourists, as depicted in Table 1.

Table 1.
Number of International and Domestic Visitors in Manado City 2011 – 2016

Year	Tourist		Total
	International	Domestic	
2012	50,008	521,247	571,255
2013	50,197	682,231	732,428
2014	34,443	832,015	866,458
2015	38,400	1,070,681	1,109,081
2016	50,653	1,223,515	1,274,168

(Source: Manado Bureau of Tourism 2017)

Manado is the capital city of the North Sulawesi province of Indonesia. Manado is located at the Bay of Manado, and is surrounded by a mountainous area. Manado has several attractive places to visit, either for history, adventure, religion, natural beauty, or simply for leisure purposes. Understanding tourist motivation can be a crucial factor for the planning of the authorities involved in tourism especially in determining the marketing strategies of each destination. However, the selection of tourists' most preferred destination is a complicated process in decision-making and it involves many factors.

According to McKercher, Okumus, and Okumus (2008) "the activities influenced in destination choice in sequences are shopping, sightseeing and culinary". From this statement, there is an opportunity for Manado to be the choice of vacation destination, because of the beauty of nature and the local foods can be found easily around Manado.

This paper aims to determine the motivations of local tourists to choose Manado for their vacation. This study is useful to the state government and also to the travel agencies that promote Manado as a tourism destination to align their planning and strategies in order to attract more visitors locally and internationally to come to Manado.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The sampling technique used for this study is non-probability sampling, which is purposive or judgmental sampling. In a purposive or judgmental sampling technique, the respondents are chosen deliberately due to the qualities or characteristics that they possess. It is a non-probability technique in which the researcher decides what needs to be known and used his or her judgment to choose people who can and are willing to provide information based on their knowledge or experiences (Tongco, 2007).

The questionnaire was distributed to 300 respondents. Those who are eligible for this research are local Indonesians who have visited Manado at least once during the past year. Local Indonesians were selected because the study is about domestic tourism in Indonesia. In addition, they should have prior experience of visiting Manado because the study is based on their experience in Manado.

The on-site survey was conducted by interviewers in the International Airport Sam Ratulangi, a diving center in the Bunaken area and some restaurants in Manado.

Specifically, the first section of the questionnaire includes general questions seeking the basic socio-demographic information of respondents such as gender, age and education level. The second section concerns tourists' pre-travel stage, in which questions were designed to investigate tourists' interest to visit Manado, their preferred images of Manado, their motivation to visit Manado, the information sources they used to find out about Manado, and the perceived importance of tourism in Manado prior to their travel. The third section aims to examine tourists' on-site experience in Manado, and questions were designed regarding tourists' expenditures in Manado and their opinion on the importance of the activities in Manado. In the last section, questions were outlined to assess tourists' post-travel experience in Manado, which involved rating the importance of tourism in Manado, post-travel and willingness to recommend Manado to visit or not.

The questionnaire design involved some questions exploring tourists' attitudes and opinions, using 7-point scales to enable respondents to indicate their opinions most exactly. This study was conducted between May and June 2016 and SPSS was employed to analyze the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results presented in Table 2 shows the demographic characteristics of respondents. Age groupings were not distributed evenly, with approximately 51.3% of respondents between the ages of 31 to 40. However, the gender distribution was fairly balanced, with a slightly higher frequency in the male group (51%). Around 88.3% of respondents had a bachelor degree or above; the sample in this study was characterized by a high educational level. The demographic profile of this study appears to be similar with the demographic characteristics of the tourists in previous food tourism research, where the tourists were young and well-educated (Hendijani & Sulisty, 2017; Kim, Kim, & Goh, 2011; McKercher et al., 2008).

Table 2.
Demographics characteristic of respondents

Variable	Frequency	(%)
Age (years)		
Under 17	7	2.33
17-30	118	39.3
31-40	154	51.3
41-40	16	5.33
>50	5	1.67
Gender		
Male	153	51
Female	147	49
Educational level		
Junior School	5	1.67
Senior School	30	10
Diploma or Bachelor's Degree	189	63
Graduates or Doctorate Degree	76	25.3

Pre-travel Stage

In the pre-travel stage, the objective was to examine the motivation of the tourists to visit Manado. Tourist were first asked to indicate their rating of different interests to visit Manado by using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = least interest; 7 = most interest). Table 3 shows the highest average rating (5.44) of interest, sightseeing, as the traditional form of tourism, is also people's biggest interest to visit Manado. However, it is surprising to note that food was rated by tourists as the second place with a close rating of interest (5.31) to sightseeing.

Almost half of respondents indicates that they have visited Manado more than once, illustrating that is quite common for domestic tourists to return to Manado for visits. They were asked to give their opinions on the four different images of Manado using a 7-point Likert scale (1= very

inappropriate and 7 = very appropriate). The results in Table 3 shows that 'Unique Food' was rated as being the most appropriate image of Manado, followed by 'Dive Tourism', 'Lake Bunaken' and 'Culture Tourism'. The findings are supported by existing research that food is helpful in identifying a destination as well as enhancing the identity of the destination (Babolian Hendijani, 2016; Stone, Migacz & Wolf, 2018). The findings of this study showed 'unique food' as the specialty Manado has potential to exploit tourist as an attraction.

Table 3.

Investigation of the Motivation of Domestic Indonesian Tourists to Visit Manado pre-travel stage

Interests to visit Manado	
Interests	Mean
Visiting for sightseeing	5.44
Visiting for food	5.31
Visiting for friends or families	3.98
Visiting for work or study	3.76
1 = least interest; 7 = most interest	
Image of Manado	Mean
Unique food	5.82
Dive tourism	5.77
Lake Bunaken	5.65
Cultural tourism	4.55
1 = very inappropriate; 7 = very appropriate	
Importance of Food in Affecting motivation	
Level of importance	%
Very unimportant	3
Unimportant	5.7
Neither unimportant nor important	30.5
Important	38.2
Very important	22.6

In the order to explore the role of food affecting tourists' motivation to visit Manado, tourists' were asked to give a score of this motivation using the Likert scale. As observed from Table 3, 60.8% of respondents stated that food is important or very important in affecting their motivation to visit Manado. The findings seem to disagree with Wang (2011) who stated that food is only taken as the lowest level of need for tourists in many of the destinations in China and is not an important factor to attract tourists. The difference might be caused by the fact that food tourism resources have not been developed and promoted in such kinds of destinations.

Although more than half of respondents have stated the importance of food in affecting their motivations, there still 39.2% tourists who believe that food is not important in affecting their motivations. This might be due to tourists considering food as a necessity and not a pleasure activity of a trip as well as in everyday life and take it for granted when evaluating it (Boniface, 2017). The researchers suggest that trying authentic food may be

the main or an important reason for traveling. In this case Manado authentic food is very unique and not common for most people.

During-travel Stage

In order to get an insight into the tourist motivation and how it plays into tourists' decisions to choose destination during the travel phase, tourists' expenditures in Manado were first explored. Different aspects of expenditures were scored using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = least money; 5 = most money). It can be seen from Table 4 that the biggest expenditure of tourists was for accommodation (4.65%), followed by food (4.71%), flight tickets (4.64%), transportation (3.97%) and souvenirs (3.24%) contributed to the income of the tourism industry in Manado. However, the results seem to be different from previous research, in that the expenditure on food only takes up about 17% of the whole tourist expenditures in China (Wu, 2010; Wu & Kang, 2010). Such a difference might be caused by the education level of the respondents in this study, who are more likely to have a higher income and might want to spend more money on food.

Although the expenditure on unique food is not ranked at the first place, the result still indicates that unique food assists in enhancing and extending the tourist spend. It is concluded that food has an economic impact on destination (Andersson, Mossberg & Theriksen, 2017; Kim et al., 2011). However, food consumption is not the only thing to generate revenues for a destination, but also an important part of the tourist experience (Chang, 2017; Choe & Kim, 2018).

According to Everett and Aitchison (2008), food is more than substance, and it is a cultural artefact that can be enjoyed in many locations and through many different activities. In this study, four different food-related activities in Manado were scored using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = least important; 5 = most important). It is demonstrated in Table 4 below that visiting Tomohon fresh market was rated as being the most important (5.85) food-related activity during tourists' travel in Manado, whilst visiting unique food restaurants was ranked very closely in second place (5.35).

Table 4.

Investigation of the Motivation of Domestic Tourists to Visit Manado During-travel stage

Tourists' different expenditures in Manado	
Aspect	Mean
Accommodation	4.65
Food	4.71
Flight Tickets	4.64
Transportation	3.97
Souvenirs	3.24
1= least money; 5 = most money	
Importance of different food-related activities	
Activity	Mean
Visiting local restaurants	5.26
Visiting Tomohon fresh market	5.85
Visiting unique food restaurants	5.35

(served bat, dog, etc.)	
Visiting franchise restaurant	3.03
1= least money; 5 = most money	

With the rating of the importance of the other two activities both above 4, all the four food-related activities are considered to be significant during tourists' travel in Manado, which appears to agree with what Kuang and Bhat (2017) have defined and that the key components of food tourism are in the presence of the specialty restaurants, locally produced food products, food routes and specific locations for special food testing. The findings reflect that tourists in Manado were well engaged and satisfied with the local food-rated activities, proving that food and cuisine can be exceptional tourist attractions in travel destinations due its role as an entertaining and cultural activity (Kim et al., 2011)

Post-travel Stage

With regard to examining the significant of motivation during tourists' post travel stage, several questions incorporated souvenir purchases, rating of food experience and willingness to recommend have been asked. Around 95% of the tourists interviewed said they had bought, or definitely would like to buy souvenirs in Manado, with around 3.2% saying that they were not interested in doing so (Table 5). For the people who were interested in buying souvenirs, it was classified that the majority of respondents (65.3%) would buy local delicacies, 26.5% would buy handicrafts and a very small percentage would buy other things. The findings showed food as a souvenir for tourists in Manado, which also accentuated the fact that food is increasingly regarded by tourists as a typical sign that their destination is an accordance with their preconceived perceptions (Sims, 2009). This is compared with souvenirs like handicrafts or decorative magnets, because when people consume food souvenirs they have personal, sensory memories; therefore, food engages more senses and has stronger connections with place (Boniface, 2017; Sims, 2009).

Table 5 also addresses that most of the respondents (98%) would like to recommend Manado to others, reflecting that most of the tourists were satisfied with the tourism in Manado. At the same time, the recommendation was expected to lead to an increase of motivation to visit Manado in the future.

Table 5.: *Investigation of the Motivation of Domestic Tourists to Visit Manado Post-travel stage*

Purchase of Souvenirs	
Souvenir	%
Local delicacies	65.3
Handicrafts	26.5
Others	5
Nothing	3.2
Willingness of recommendation	
Willingness	%
Yes	98

CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this study was to evaluate the critical factors influencing domestic tourists to choose Manado as their destination for vacation. The results show that visiting Tomohon fresh market was rated as being the most important (5.85) food related activity during tourists' travel in Manado, whilst visiting unique food restaurants was ranked very closely in second place (5.35), which indicates that food plays a varying role in motivating domestic tourists to visit Manado.

Particularly, in the pre-travel stage, the motivation of tourists to visit Manado is visiting for sightseeing (5.44%), followed with food as the motivation (5.31%). A number of tourists did not perceive food as an important motivator before they travelled to Manado. Sightseeing still holds the biggest interest for travelling to Manado. Hence, food tourism is viewed as a supportive attraction in marketing Manado to potential tourists at the early stage prior to their trip. However, tourists have rated food as their second largest expenditure during their travel in Manado, whilst at the same time indicating the great significance of food-related activities during travel. Although food might not be a motivational factor for some people, they might be fascinated with the local food after arriving at the destination. Furthermore, when tourists finished their traveling, food was then perceived as becoming their motivation to travel to Manado compared to that of their pre-travel stage. A major contribution of this research is its implications for practitioners in the tourism industry such as the Ministry of Tourism, and marketers or travel agencies in order to develop better marketing strategies for Manado. By promoting Manado based on its potential, there is a high probability of attracting more local and international tourists to this destination.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Even though this research examined the motivation of domestic Indonesian tourists to visit Manado as a tourist destination, there still are certain limitations that should be taken into account for potential lines of research in the future. First, reviewing the profile of the respondents in the research, it is noted that the age (the age group 31-40 takes up around 51.3%) and the education level (63% having diploma and bachelor degrees) might have an influence on the results of the study. Future studies should pay attention to balancing the number of the respondents from different age groups to avoid this result deviation.

Secondly, regarding the research instrument, a questionnaire survey was the only method adopted in the study. However, in order to achieve the credibility of the research and minimize personal or methodological assumption, various methods are suggested to be implemented in the research design.

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