



## Tourist Preferences in Visiting Marine Tourism Attractions in Makassar City: Case Study on Akkarena Beach, Makassar City

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### Abstract

Tourism directly provides employment opportunities for the community, reduces poverty and unemployment levels, creates new business opportunities, increases regional income, and increases national foreign exchange earnings. The presence of tourism can generate commercial activities that can bring significant social, cultural and economic benefits to the country. This research aims to determine tourists' preferences in visiting the marine tourism attraction Akcepatn Beach, Makassar City. The type of research used is descriptive research using qualitative research methods. The research location was carried out at Akbecause Beach which is located on Jl. Tanjung Merdeka, Tamalate District, Makassar City. The population used in this research were tourists who had visited Akcepatn Beach, Makassar City. The method for determining the sample in this research is using accidental sampling. Data collection was carried out through interviews, observation and documentation with data analysis used namely data exploration, data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions. The research results show that the tourist attractions offered are the main factor for tourists in determining their preferences when visiting Akcaus Beach, Makassar City. Meanwhile, the price indicator is not a choice for tourists to come to visit. Meanwhile, facilities and accessibility also play an important role in determining tourists' preferences in visiting Akcaus Beach.

## Introduction

Indonesia is one of the developing countries with enormous tourism potential, both natural tourism and cultural tourism because Indonesia has various tribes, customs and cultures and because of Indonesia's geographical location as a tropical country that produces natural beauty and animals. Indonesia has a very large area and has various natural resources that have the potential to be processed and utilized. In addition, Indonesia is also rich in regional arts and culture, customs, historical relics, and no less interesting is the beauty of its natural panorama with the potential for proper development. According to Yoeti 2008 in Rismiyanto & Danangdjojo (2015), tourism has proven to be reliable in improving people's welfare and national development. Tourism directly provides jobs for the community, reduces poverty and unemployment, creates new business opportunities, increases regional main income, and increases national foreign exchange earnings (Ramdani & Karyani, 2020). The presence of tourism can generate commercial activities that can bring significant social, cultural and economic benefits to the country. In addition, other sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and industry also encourage the development of tourism, especially in providing food and beverages needed by tourists and crafts needed by tourists, because tourists are stakeholders who play an important role in tourism, one of them (Khotimah et al., 2017; Amerta, 2019).

According to Law no. No. 10 of 2009 concerning Tourism, tourism is a tourism activity supported by services and facilities provided by the government, entrepreneurs, and the community. According to Rulloh, (2018) said that tourism can occur with the availability of resources that can attract tourists. The high number of tourist visits from outside the city has a positive impact on the economy of the surrounding community. If the number of tourists to the attraction increases, it will have an impact on increasing income, so it is not difficult to cover the costs used for the operation of the tourist attraction (Joeastanti, 2012; Wells, 1997).

Based on the results of tourist activities sourced from the Makassar City Tourism Office, it states that domestic tourist activities in 2021 experienced a drastic decline from the previous year (2019) with a percentage of 65.46%. Indonesia is experiencing a tourism industry recession due to the corona virus and has begun to limit public transportation, especially airplanes, resulting in a very drastic decline in the number of domestic tourists from April to June 2020. The number of domestic tourist visits in 2017-2021 was 18,051,657 total domestic tourists.

With the rapid development of marine tourism in Makassar City, competition to attract tourists is getting tighter. So that managers need to provide the best service to visitors to get satisfaction, so that they can visit again and recommend to other potential visitors, thereby increasing new visitors (Hui et al., 2007). One effort to satisfy tourists is to improve the quality of tourism services.

Along with the development of development, more and more tourist attractions offer a variety of interesting tourist facilities and activities (Ginting & Sasmita, 2018). Thus, tourists will have more choices in determining which tourist attractions to visit (Mutinda & Mayaka, 2012). Tourist preferences are the basis for calculating the desires and needs of tourist facility services that will be received. Tourist preferences come from the diversity of tourist facilities and activities to meet the needs of tourists when traveling, (Permadi et al., 2019; Heung & Qu, 2000).

One of the factors that has been proven to influence tourists' interest in visiting is tourist attractions (Khairi & Darmawan, 2021). With the increasing attraction, the interest of tourists to visit also increases, based on that, tourist attractions are considered as a factor that may influence the interest of tourists to visit the city of Makassar. One of the famous tourism areas in South Sulawesi is the Akkarena Beach Tourism area. Makassar City is famous for its amazing marine tourism, some of which are located on the coast of Makassar City. Akkarena Beach is a beach located in the middle of Makassar City, parallel to Losari Beach, the iconic beach owned by Makassar City. Although Akkarena Beach is similar to Losari Beach, the natural conditions of Akkarena Beach are still natural so that it can be a tourist attraction that must be managed properly.

From 2017 to 2019, tourists visiting Akkarena Beach increased significantly, from 286,000 people visiting to 391,000 people. The increase in visitors to Akkarena Beach usually occurs during long holidays, such as New Year's holidays, school holidays or religious holidays. Meanwhile, from 2020 to 2021, there was a decrease in visitors to Akkarena Beach due to the Covid-19 virus outbreak. As a result of the virus, to minimize the spread of the Covid-19 virus, the government took measures to open and close it and even completely close it (Teslya et al., 2020).

Akkarena Beach used to be very neglected beach, unkempt and left alone. However, since the construction of commercial and residential areas along the coast, Akkarena Beach has been utilized and developed into a marine tourism area in Makassar City. This beach is a relatively

new marine tourism destination, so it is necessary to pay attention to the focus of developing this beach and make plans to improve the quality of the beach so that it can increase the number of tourist visits (Hailuddin et al., 2022; Li et al., 2021).

Having the charm of a black sandy beach, visitors can directly feel the sensation of the beach water. In addition, this beach also provides a food court and restaurant for visiting tourists. Various play areas are provided by the management, such as remote control cars and ATVs. In addition, Akkarena Beach is equipped with water sports, such as jet skis, banana boats, and speed boats. And, it is often used as a place for fishing and camping with all the facilities provided.

Visitors' assessment of accessibility to Akkarena Beach is quite adequate, but access to the road crossing to the entrance has not been regulated so that it often triggers congestion. The availability of directions, tourist information boards, traffic signs as part of the public infrastructure and facilities indicators is one of the strategies in developing tourism destinations. The price set by the management is quite affordable to be able to enjoy the beauty of the Akkarena Beach tourist attraction. The thing that makes the lack of interest in visiting is some specific spots that still need to be considered to be managed better.

Judging from the explanation above, the researcher is interested in conducting further research with the title: "Tourist Preferences in Visiting the Marine Tourism Attractions of Makassar City (Case Study of Akkarena Beach, Makassar City)".

## **Methods**

The type of research used is descriptive research using qualitative research methods. The location of the research was conducted at Akkarena Beach located on Jl. Tanjung Merdeka, Tamalate District, Makassar City. The population used in this study were tourists who had visited Akkarena Beach, Makassar City. The method of determining the sample in this study was using accidental sampling, namely anyone who accidentally met the researcher and had previously visited Akkarena Beach at least 1 time if the informant was suitable as a data source, both women and men who were over 15 years old and under 65 years old, because at that age it was considered able to provide objective and reliable information. Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, interviews and documentation. In this study, observations were carried out to observe an object being studied both directly and indirectly to obtain data that must be collected in the study. Observation activities were carried out in the Akkarena Beach environment, Makassar City. The interview technique was carried out directly with tourists who had visited Akkarena Beach, Makassar City regarding the object of observation being studied, the interviews conducted were structured interviews. As well as documentation used by researchers to support research in the form of personal letters and official letters from the research location. The analysis technique is carried out using the qualitative analysis method, which is an interactive method. The analysis techniques used include data exploration, data reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data exploration is carried out by analyzing the data initially to get a general picture of its characteristics. Data reduction is carried out after data collection is complete. Data presentation is displaying information in the format required for interpretation and analysis in the form of tables, graphs or diagrams to facilitate interpretation. Drawing conclusions, interpreting the results of data analysis and drawing conclusions about the research.

## **Result and Discussion**

Akkarena Beach Tourism is one of the privately owned tourist attractions that has been established for a long time and is one of the famous beach tourism in Makassar City. This is

evidenced by the data on visitors to Akkarena Beach in 2023 which shows that the number is not small each month, although it tends to decrease.

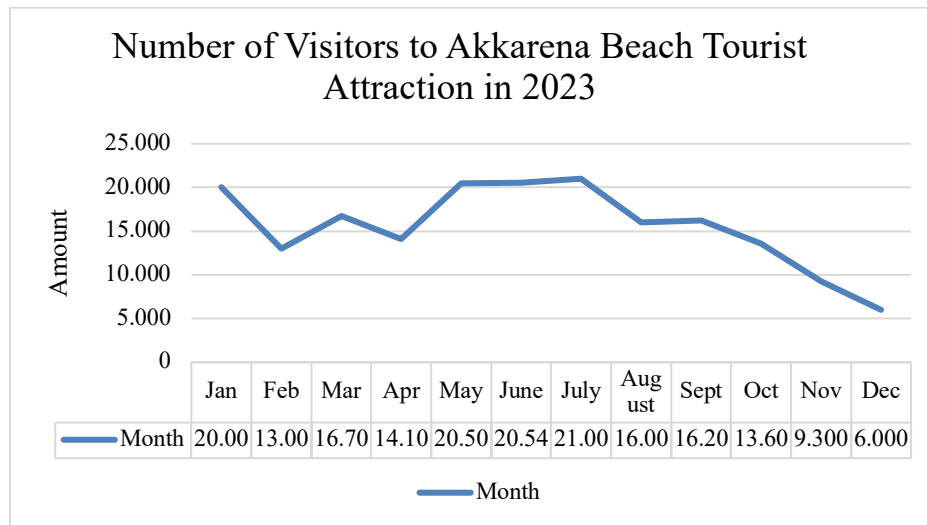


Figure 1. Graph of Akkarena Beach Tourist Visitors in 2023

Based on Figure 1, it can be seen that the tourist attraction of Akkarena Beach fluctuated for 12 months in 2023. In January, the number of visitors to Akkarena Beach was around 20,000 people. Then it decreased in February by 13,000 people. In March it increased by 16,700 people, then experienced a decrease in visitors in April of around 14,100 people. In May to July there was a significant increase, reaching 21,000 people. However, in August it decreased again by 16,000 and increased in September to 16,200 people and in October to December it experienced a consecutive decrease to reach 6,000 people in the last month of 2023.

According to Smith (1989), the grouping of tourist characteristics based on age is divided into three, namely teenage tourists, middle-aged tourists and elderly tourists. Based on the results of the study, where tourists found in the field demographically the age of tourists who visit ranges from 15 to 51 years. Then obtained with the age of informants 15 to 22 years old by 61% and 23 to 37 years old by 25% shows that informants with that age have enough physical strength to travel to Akkarena Beach, Makassar City by utilizing a little supporting tourism facilities there. While for informants aged 38-51 years by 14% they can still enjoy the natural scenery but by utilizing the tourism facilities available while traveling to Akkarena Beach, Makassar City. Based on the data obtained from the interview on marital status, it was obtained that 75% of the informants interviewed had unmarried status and only 25% had married status. Those who are unmarried can freely determine, choose and plan the tourist trip they will take based on their own comfort. Meanwhile, as many as 25% of informants who are married tend to do tourism activities with their families, either husband/wife, and children or in tour groups.

Based on the results of the study, where domestic tourists visiting Akkarena Beach come from the Makassar City area and outside Makassar City. Tourists from Makassar City determine their preferences based on the condition and quality of the beach and usually become tour guides for families from outside Makassar City. Meanwhile, tourists from outside Makassar City choose to visit because of good experiences. However, not only good experiences, tourists from outside Makassar City also feel the difference in the quality of Akkarena Beach by comparing several beaches that have been visited. The results of this study are in line with the Geographical Theory by Stanley Plog which states that the geographical characteristics of the origin of tourists can influence their travel preferences (Lumbanraja, 2022). Tourists from areas

with certain geographical conditions may have preferences for different types of destinations or activities.

Judging from the level of education and employment, namely the results of observations and interviews with several informants, it was found that tourists with a high level of education and who already have jobs obtain information and recommendations for tourist attractions from colleagues. Meanwhile, tourists who work as students tend to visit with friends or relatives to enjoy the beauty of Akkarena Beach. In line with research conducted by Astuti & Yuliawati (2018) who said that a person's social group can be related to their level of education, which will later influence the choice of purchases or decisions to determine a need. There are 4 variables that have a significant influence on tourist visit decisions, namely accessibility, attractions, promotions and income. The results of this study are supported by Smith in his book "Hosts and Guests: An Anthropology of Tourism" (1977) who put forward a theory about the influence of education and work on how to travel, providing a general picture of how tourists with different backgrounds behave while traveling.

Based on the results of tourist visit preferences where Based on the results of research conducted by researchers, it was found that tourists make tourist visits with the aim of vacationing, refreshing to doing water therapy (health). This statement is in line with the Push-Pull theory where the Push factor is an internal factor that encourages tourists to seek new experiences and escape from their daily routines. In addition, Based on the results of research conducted by researchers where tourists who travel to Akkarena Beach, for the first time or those who have visited before tend to come in groups with friends or with family. Tourists admit that they want to try to experience the beauty of other beaches after visiting Akkarena Beach, Makassar City. This research is different from that conducted by Dwiputra (2013) where the results of his research stated that tourist preferences in choosing tourist facilities are influenced by the purpose of tourists traveling, the length of tourists traveling, and tourist friends on the tour. The majority of tourists who have visited tourist attractions in the past year plan to come back to visit. Based on the results of tourist preferences where the results of the researcher's observations when conducting direct research at Akkarena Beach, it was obtained that 66% of tourists said that the tourist attractions offered were the main preference in determining tourist destinations where one of the potentials owned by Akkarena Beach is the beautiful panorama supported by the shade of the beach area. The statement above is also in accordance with the results of interviews with several informants who said that in addition to being supported by beautiful views, this beach is also surrounded by shady trees so that the atmosphere becomes shady which makes visitors interested in coming to visit. In accordance with Kodhyat's theory which states that Tourism Objects/Attractions are the main drivers or the main motivation for tourists to visit the destination in question. In addition, based on the results of the researcher's observations, it can be seen that the tourist attractions of Akkarena Beach are equipped with complete, comprehensive facilities provided to meet the needs of tourists, making this beach the main choice for many tourists. It was found that 20% of tourists said that facilities were the main goal of tourists to visit. The statement above is also in accordance with the results of interviews with several informants who said that there is a gazebo, a place to take shelter if visiting with family. There is also Saung Rindu Alam as a restaurant in the Akkarena Beach area.

However, some visitors admitted that the changing room facilities provided were not safe enough and the bathrooms were not very clean and the location was quite far from the beach. In line with the theory of Value-based Decision Making. This theory refers to a person's decision-making process based on considerations between the value they get and what they sacrifice (Salsabila, 2022). In terms of facilities, tourists will tend to choose destinations that

offer facilities that meet their needs or provide significant added value to their trip. Based on the results of research conducted by researchers, it was found that the prices offered were still very affordable for tourists, they also said that the prices they paid were commensurate with the quality and experience they got. However, what tourists complained about was the price of the playground which was quite expensive for a short time. So, almost all of them come just to spend time with friends or relatives to play on the beach.

Based on the research results obtained by researchers, it was found that 14% of tourists said that accessibility greatly influences the decision to determine their preferences in traveling. Where accessibility is important because destinations that can be reached easily and offer various easily accessible tourist attractions tend to be preferred by tourists than destinations that are difficult to reach. As stated by several informants who said that they had no constraints on the distance traveled and the location was easily accessible. In addition, they can also enjoy the scenery presented along the Tanjung Bunga road. Several beaches in Makassar are also located in the same row as Akkarena Beach, so they don't mind taking a trip with a fairly long distance from where they live.

In line with research conducted by Maharani (2022) that the relationship between attractiveness, facilities, prices, and good accessibility will have an impact on increasing tourists' decisions to visit the tourist attraction of Telaga Ngebel, Ponorogo Regency and in accordance with the theory of consumer preferences where this theory is related to the consumer selection process based on their personal preferences. In the context of tourism, this includes preferences for tourist attractions, facilities, appropriate prices, service quality and easy access.

So, from 44 respondents found, the percentage that describes tourist preferences in visiting Akkarena Beach affects tourist interest in traveling. In this case, as many as 66% stated that Tourist Attractions at Akkarena Beach are the main factor that becomes tourist preferences to come to visit, while 20% for facilities and 14% stated that accessibility also plays an important role in determining tourist preferences to visit. Meanwhile, Price does not have a significant role in attracting attention and influencing tourist decisions.

## Conclusion

Based on the results of the study aimed at determining tourist preferences in visiting the marine tourism attraction of Akkarena Beach, Makassar City, it was found that tourist characteristics influence tourist preferences in choosing a tourist destination. This is because different tourist needs and interests are important factors in determining a person's holiday destination. Tourist attractions tend to be the main factor influencing tourist choices. The ability of a destination to offer unique and interesting experiences is often the center of attention of tourists in determining their choices. The facilities provided by Akkarena Beach including restaurants and recreational facilities play an important role in shaping tourist preferences. The existence of facilities that meet the needs and personal preferences of tourists can be a determining factor in choosing a destination. Ease of access is an important part in shaping preferences. Destinations that are easy to reach, have good transportation infrastructure, and are friendly to all types of tourists tend to be more in demand. Meanwhile, price does not have a significant role in attracting attention and influencing tourist decisions.

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