Tourism Destination Competitiveness Perception of Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach at Central Sulawesi

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ABSTRACT

This research purpose is to understand the tourist perception about destination attraction of Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach at Central Sulawesi. The problem formulation is How tourist perceptions about tourism destinations attraction of Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach at Central Sulawesi. Competitiveness studies have been dominated by quantitative research. It cannot able to explain phenomena behind reality. Therefore, it is necessary to develop in-depth research through an approach to captures the reality of truth revealed by tourists, society and government. Because there is no correct measurement, all depends on context. This research subject is tourists who have been came to Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach at Central Sulawesi. To achieve the research objectives, qualitative research methods used is phenomenological analysis. Through phenomenology, this research captures the tourist perception and also to get a transcendental meaning of "meaningfulness", in order to get a competitiveness concept from different viewpoints. Data is collected through observation, description and analysis of in-depth interviews. Researchers will attempt to mix and mingle with research subject/informants to find a description of competitiveness concept of tourism destinations based on what is behind the tourist behavior phenomenon. The results are expected to find a new proposition to become a benchmark to establish a concept of marketing strategy to increase competitiveness.

INTRODUCTION

Background:

Tourism has become a very competitive market (Mezak, 1999). This becomes reason the importance of tourism destinations competitiveness measurement to identify strengths and weaknesses to develop future strategies of tourism destinations. Dwyer and Kim (2003) said that most competitive tourism destinations is the most effective way to create sustainable prosperity for people nearby.

The issue of tourism destinations competitiveness is interested to explore because this strategic issue has not been widely explored seriously. Increasing competitiveness of tourism destinations is seen as a strategic move to expand market share of tourists and optimize the utilization of tourism potential. Competitiveness largely determine show far ability to penetrate the tourism product and achieving top position in global tourist market competition increasingly fierce. Every tourism destination is required to demonstrate a superior competitive position in order to facilitate the promotion and marketing activities more effectively in global marketplace.

Efforts to improve tourism destinations competitiveness have theoretical and empirical basic. Some tourism marketing experts believe that these actions area strategic choice. Spending fund sources for promotional activities will undoubtedly inefficient regardless of tourism products position in competition arena with other competitors (Hassan, 2000). Deep understanding of competitive position is very important because it can simultaneously deal with development of alternative products. Repositioning of tourism products competitiveness need to be done by considering shifting psychographic profile of tourist market (Plog, 2001) which leads to destination search and high quality products (Swarbrooke, 1999; Weiler, 1992; Kasali, 2003). The implication will be seen in promotion activities. The emphasis is not only on provision of infrastructure and services for tourists.
only, but also for local community to provide value for their pride as host (Damanik, 2013).

Scott and Lodge (1985) in Damanik (2013) defines competitiveness as a country's ability to create, produce, distribute or serve products in international economy and same opportunities to get benefit from resource increase. The key is to create value advantage over products produced and distributed in market. Sharperer definition is formulated by Porter (1990); competitiveness is country ability to design, produce and market goods and services, characteristics of price and price of a product that makes it more attractive than competing countries and products while ensuring the continuity of product market. Competitiveness evidence can be seen from quantity of products and services consumed or purchased by user of international market.

Government Regulation No. 50 Year 2011 on National Tourism Development Master Plan defines tourist destination, hereinafter referred to as the tourism destination, as a geographical region located in one or more administrative regions which there is a tourist attraction, public facilities, tourism facilities, accessibility, and society are interrelated and complementary to realize tourism.

Central Statistics Agency (CSA) recorded the number of foreign tourists who came to Indonesia in 2012 are 8.04 million, higher 5.16 percent compared to visits in 2011 which reached 6.75 million people. Although the increase is not too high, but it must be recognized that more tourists reflects Indonesia becomes one of tourism destinations. (CSA, 2012).

Statistical report of Central Sulawesi show that tourist arrivals in 2010 are 1.41223 million people. In 2011 are 1,672,935, with 9,225 foreign tourists visit Central Sulawesi. When compared with tourists in year 2011 (7,163 people), this means an increase of 2,062 or 18.74%. Central Sulawesi 2011-2012 contributes to foreign exchange earnings of Rp. 41,025 billion.

Three main activities in tourist visits are marine diving, snorkeling, bird watching, and a great lake. Tourists stay with range 5-10 days with a total expenditure of US $ 80 per day. In 2012, Number of foreign exchange earned by average length of stay of 8 days with a total expenditure of Rp. 750,000/day/person. This means that within 1 (one) tourists spend Rp. 6,000,000. If calculated from the number of tourist arrivals in year 2012 namely 3,421 people, total foreign exchange in Central Sulawesi are Rp. 20 526 Billion (Sulawesi Market Analysis 2009).

In addition, issue that tourism has been able to reduce poverty tourism has been recognized by several researchers (Zenga & Ryan, 2012; Liu, 2006; and Ateljevic, 2007). It is confirmed that current tourism sector is a sector that should be considered and developed by local government. Tourism is an endless natural resource and can increase local revenue. That is one important step that must be done to improve the competitiveness of tourism destinations to attract tourists.

Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach is one tourism destinations in Central Sulawesi. It is located in Donggala District. Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach has natural scenery potential and beautiful beaches and breathtaking panoramic white sand. The sea is very pleasant place for water activities such as swimming, snorkeling, diving, boating along the beach, sunbathing while enjoying sun shine. Tourists who come to this place very like to beach, sand, sea and sun. Tourism destination Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach has a fairly complete accommodation facilities and most of lodging place rents snorkel gear.

Low tourists visit can show slow competitiveness of this tourism destination. Logically, if there is uniqueness and distinctiveness of tourism destination, more tourists will come to visit. In fact, Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach has been equipped with facilities and infrastructure, such as cottages, places of worship, places to eat and other. Therefore, it needed a research to uncover the meaning behind the phenomenon.

Research Focus: This research focus is to trace the tourist perception about tourism destinations at Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach.

Research problems: How tourist perception the tourism destinations at Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach?

Research purposes: This research purpose is to understand the tourist perception about Tanjung Karang tourism Donggala Beach.

Research contributions: These research contributions are:
1. Developing strategies implementation in context of tourism strategic management, especially to improve competitiveness
2. Assigning the policy development of tourism sector, and as a material consideration to formulate research and planning of tourism marketing strategy.
3. Investors who engaged in tourism field can use this research to makes business strategy in order to increase the product value of tourism services.
4. Government can use this research as a reference to create a policy on tourism development.

Literature review: Marketing Concept:
American Marketing Association (AMA) offers the following formal definition: Marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes to create, communicate, and deliver value to customers
and to manage customer relationships in ways to benefit the organization and its stakeholders. Kotler and Armstrong (2008) stated that marketing is the process where companies create value for customers and build strong relationships with customers to capture value from customers. Most basic concept underlying marketing is a human need. Human needs are a state of deficiency feeling. Desires are a human need formed by culture and personality of a person. When backed by buying desire, desire can become a demand.

Exchange process handling requires a lot of work and skill. Marketing management occurs when at least one party in a potential exchange can think about ways to achieve the desired response of others. Therefore, marketing management is seen as art and science to choose target markets and achieve, maintain, and grow customers by creating, delivering, and communicating superior customer value. The main elements of marketing management process are strategic and in-depth marketing plan to guide the creativity and marketing activities.

Marketing concept defines that organizational goals achievement depends on knowledge about needs and desire of target markets and deliver them better than competitors. Based on this concept, focus and customer value is the path for sales and profit. Philosophy of “make and sell” centered on product today changes to marketing concept philosophy of “sense and respond” centered on customer. This concept sees marketing not as “hunting” but as “gardening”. The work that must be done not find the right customers for your product, but find the right product for your customers.

Generally, every company devotes to one concept or marketing philosophy as basis of any activity to satisfy needs and desires of customer. Along with passage of time, these concepts experiences growth or evolution. It does not mean the latter concept is the best. Selection and application of a particular marketing concept is influenced by several factors as values and vision of management, internal environment and external environment.

In order to compete, company should be able to design a marketing strategy. Marketing strategy concern to which customers will be served and how companies create value for customers. Marketers develop an integrated marketing program that will actually deliver the desired value to customer’s target. Marketing programs build customer relationships by transforming marketing strategy into action. Company’s marketing program consists of marketing mix. It is a collection of marketing tools used by company to implement marketing strategy.

The main tools of marketing mix are 4 (four) P of marketing: Product, Price, Place and Promotion. Services companies add 4 P with 3 P, namely: People, Physical Evidence and Process. To deliver this value proposition, company must first create market offerings (products) to satisfy customer need. Company then decide how the cost of supply (price) and how to make the offer available to customer’s target (spot) finally, company must communicate with customers target about supply and entice them with services offered (promotion). The company must integrate all tool of marketing mix into a comprehensive integrated marketing program to communicate and deliver the expected value for selected customer.

Tourism Concept:
Yoeti (1996) provide a restriction of tourism concept as follows: Tourism is traveling. Tourism is trips from one place to another and Travelers are people who travel, in English can be referred to as “tourists”.

Indonesian Dictionary argued that tourism is an activity in associated with leisure travel. Tourism term is first time used in 1959 in National Conference of Tourism II in Tretes, East Java. Definition of tourism is used by practitioners with different goals and perspectives for appropriate goals. Here are some definitions of tourism, according to some experts, in Pitana (2009):

“Tourism comprises the ideas and opinions people hold which shape their decision about going on trips, about where to go (and where not to go) and what to do or not to do, about how to relate to other tourists, locals and service personnel. And it is all the behavioral manifestations of those ideas and opinions”. (Leiper, 1995).

Definition of tourism can not exactly same among the experts. It is common, same as in academic world, as well as in several other disciplines.

Tourism Destinations:
Destination is a place visited by a significant time during one’s travel person compared to other places during the trip (for example the transit area). A place definitely has certain limits, either actual or legal. According Richardson and Flucker (2004) in Pitana (2009), tourism destinations are defined as: “A significant place visited on a trip, with some form of actual or perceived boundary. The basic geographic unit for the production of tourism statistics.”

Tourism destination has much type. Kusudianto (1996) classify tourism destinations by characteristics as follows:
1. Natural resources destination, such as climate, beaches, forests
2. Cultural resources destination, such as historic sites, museums, theaters, and local communities.
3. Recreational facilities such as amusement parks
4. Events such as Balinese arts festival, Lake Toba Party, Funfair
5. Specific activity, such as the casino at Genting Highland Malaysia, Shopping Tourism in Hong Kong 
6. Psychological appeal, such as adventure, a romantic trip, remoteness.

In addition, various lattices to understand tourism destinations is adapted from many definitions that have been given by expert, such as: Cooper, Fletcher, Gilbert, Shepherd and Wanhill (1998) in Sunaryo (2013) that contains same purpose that tourism destination development framework. It should covers the main components as follows:

1. Object and attractions, It includes the attractiveness based on natural resources, culture, and artificial such as events or often referred to as special interest.
2. Accessibility, it includes transport system support as transportation routes or paths, terminals, airports, ports and other transportation modes.
3. Amenities, it includes facilities and tours support as accommodation, food and beverages, retail, gift shop, money changer facilities, travel agencies, tourist information centers, and other leisure facilities.
4. Ancillary service, it is availability of support facilities used by tourists, such as banks, telecommunications, postal, hospitals, and so on.
5. Institution, it is associated with presence and role of each element to support the implementation of tourism activities, including local community as the host.

This tourism destinations cannot be understood as a manifestation of a set of objects and tourist attraction with one dominant theme, but it should be understood holistically as a systemic relationship between objects and tourist attraction along with all supporting elements as accessibility, amenity, local communities and other supporting elements to work synergistically in one unified system of mutual support and complement.

Research methods: 
Research Design:
This research use qualitative method with phenomenological analysis tool. According to Kirk and Miller (1986) in Fatchan (2011), qualitative research stems from a qualitative observation to records naturally everything that happens in nature and human life. They are recorded with description of words in a given sentence without gradation or numerical (eg, percentage, mean, chi-square, correlation, path analysis or various kinds of other statistics).

This research used a qualitative method. The reason is imbalance of beauty scenery of Tanjung Karang Beach, namely: with unique and enchanting each, it should become destination for a lot of tourists, but the reality condition is differ.

Research Location:
This research is conducted in Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach at Central Sulawesi province. The reasons to select Tanjung Karang Donggala as research site are as follows.
1. Tanjung Karang Beach is a leading destination in Donggala District and Central Sulawesi. It has natural scenery and beautiful beaches, and became one of tourism development project in Central Sulawesi.
2. Most activities carried out by foreign tourists at Sulawesi are diving/snorkeling (30.4%). This indicates that marine tourism is most popular tourism in Central Sulawesi. Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach is one of maritime destination.
3. Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach is a unique tourism destination, but unable to attract tourists and having low competitiveness.

Research Subjects:
This research subjects are informants. Informants are parties to provide information about something and its environment. Selection of subjects and informants in phenomenological approach can use "snowball" technique for the individuals that will be studied or Condio Sain quanon (Fatchan, 2013). Informants in this research are tourists who ever visit the Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach. Informants are derived from 8 domestic tourists and 2 foreign tourists, bringing the total informants about 10 people.

Researchers Attendance:
Researchers’ position as instrument in this research is very important. Researchers have a vital role in research process. Researchers’ presences have been known as a researcher by subjects or informants, by first asking permission to related institutions. Researcher role in this research are as observers. Observations are made directly to know phenomena occurred. Generally, presence field research is conducted in three phases:
1. Preliminary research to know the research field
2. Gathering data required in research process
3. Data evaluation to assess suitability between data obtained in field and the fact

Data Collection and Analysis Techniques:
Data collection is done in several ways, namely: (1) observation (2) interview and (3) documentation. Data is collected through in-depth search of facts and phenomena. It will useful as a material analysis in this research (Creswell, 1994).

Data analysis technical in this research uses steps proposed by Miles and Huberman (2009), namely: (1) Data Collection; (2) Data Reduction; (3) Data Presentation; and (4) Conclusion.
Data Validity:
Data validity checking is an important concept from validity and reliability. It is adapted to demands of knowledge, criteria, and paradigm itself. Examination of data validity is done by triangulation. Triangulation is a technique to use data validity checking from other parties outside the data to check purposes or as a comparison against the data. This technique is used to reveal the meaning of a group based on discussion results centered on issue.

Data of interim or final results is exposed in analytical discussion with colleagues. Confirmation of one informant with other can find data similarity.

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Close to province capital city:
Cooper theory states that accessibility has an important role in a tourism destination. Accessibility means all travel infrastructures to facilitate tourists to reach a tourism destination, including transportation system support as transportation routes or paths, airport terminal facilities, ports and other transportation modes to achieve a tourism spot.

Close to Palu City Capital of Central Sulawesi is one attractions owned by Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach, with only about 40 km or travel time of approximately 45 minutes. Tourist able to see the beauty of nature, since there is no congestion along the roads, and condition of road to Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach is relatively good.

Tourists can directly dive at beach without use a boat or ship. This is very different from other maritime destination located in eastern Indonesia, such as Bunaken, Raja Ampat, Wakatobi and Togean that requires at least 12 hours from the Palu City, 8-hour road trip from Palu to Ampama (capital of Tojo Una-una, as far as 360 km) and sea travel 4 hours from Ampama to Wakai (Togean Port). Ships from Ampama to Wakai only once a day, departing at 10 is. Tourist who wants to dive must do a considerable journey and tire.

Mutia Sis Al Jufri airport is located in Palu city. The operated airlines are Garuda Airlines, Sriwijaya Air, Lion Air, Wings Air and Express Air for flights between districts. Travel from Jakarta to Palu needs 2:30 minutes, from Makassar to Palu needs 55 minutes, while from Bali to Palu needs 45 minutes and 2 hours from Surabaya. Passenger vessel (PELNI) is served by Pantoloan Port at east end of Palu city, travel time to Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach ± 1.30 minutes.

Nature Panorama:
The charm of Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach is the land that juts into sea and located at mouth of Palu Bay, hills at south, east side orientate to Palu Bay, the west side orientate to Makassar Strait. It becomes exotic scenery and rarely contained in other areas.

First natural scenery as main attraction of Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach can see soft white sand everywhere and so beautiful by sun shine. This sun shine makes many foreign tourists very love sunbathing on white sand. Some tourists use 3 S term, namely: Sun, Sea, Sand. It means natural beauty for combination of sun, sea and white sandy.

The second is Marine Park. Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach is rich of coral reefs and marine life. It makes Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach has a beautiful marine park. Coral is one most important ecosystem for resources sustainability in coastal areas and oceans, and are generally grown in tropics, as well as having a high primary productivity. This led to collection of diverse animals as fish, shrimp, mollusks, and other at surrounding of coral reefs.

Investigation results of Donggala Diving Club (DDC) shows a group of hard coral reef with various types namely: branching, tabulate and sub massif. In addition, there are also soft corals. There are about 26 families of reef fish species as Chaetodontidae, Pomacentridae and Labridae. The macro animals are Pygmy seahorse, nudi branch, gosh pipe fish, and so forth (Media Donggala, 2013). Marine lives are grouper, yellow fin tuna, rabbit fish, and snapper. Sometimes the lucky tourists will see a flock of dolphins and sharks migration in certain months.

Research result:
Dwyer and Kim (2003) and Sunaryo (2013) say that tourism resources and attractors should be recognized as basis for destinations competitiveness, including the appeal. The destination attraction is anything unique, beauty, and having value in form of natural diversity, culture, and result of man-made. In-depth interviews result with tourists show that theme of Tanjung Karang attractiveness in tourist perception is shown in following table 1.


**Beach activities:**

First beach activity is on water or around the coast, such as sunbathing and swimming. Freshness of sea in Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach invites tourists to swim or just soak. In addition, there is a boat tour or Glass Boat for tourists who cannot dive but they want to see the underwater beauty of Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach. Other alternative is to hire a boat tour with glass at the middle to see the coral reefs and marine life. Banana Boat is a water recreational game, with a banana-shaped rubber boat at a large size, can be boarded by four tourists and one guide. It is similar with horseback riding and boat will be pulled by a speed boat to travel around beach. Usually speed boat is driven by one or two guides. For a single round, game duration is about 15 minutes.

Second underwater activities as diving. Diving offers an amazing life adventures and adrenaline. Diving is equipped by respiratory equipment, commonly use two ways namely snorkeling and diving. At first glance, snorkeling and diving seems to have the same meaning. But there is a difference between the two, especially on equipment used and techniques used.

Snorkeling is a technique to enjoy the beauty of seabed such as coral reefs and fish, shells, starfish, seaweed, jellyfish, and others at the region. It is carried out in shallow waters using the basic scuba equipment such as snorkel (respirator with hose J shape), frog legs and goggles. Snorkeling is a popular recreational water activity, especially in tropical beach. Duration for snorkeling is relatively limited, depending on technique's ability to hold breath. Snorkeling activities can be done everyone. Divers who cannot swim or cannot float can wear lifebelt. Snorkeling activities do not require special education. Beginners who have never done snorkeling can learn it in a short period from dive guider.

Diving is a dive technique performed below sea level with a certain depth and duration, using complete scuba gear as fins, mask, oxygen tank and its regulators. This immersion technique is quite complicated and divers must know many techniques. Diver must be able to swim, health and do not have respiratory problems, mental ability to cope panic, and overcome the fear of strange sea creatures. Diving becomes one most popular water sports with one million people get divers certificate every year.

Most snorkeling and diving activities at Tanjung Karang Donggala are done by foreign tourists. Snorkel gear is rented at coast, but for complete diving equipment available only in certain cottages, as Prince John and Natural Cottages.

Research results shows that tourists perceive Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach as beautiful and unique, creating appeal of Natural Panorama (white sand and marine parks) and water activity (on and in water). It is consistent with theory proposed by Porter (2014) that in order to face the competition, companies must become the best and unique. In other words, if Tanjung Karang Beach wants to compete with other tourism destinations, it should have uniqueness as described above. Theory of Cooper et al. (1993) stated that a destination must have 4 (four) elements attraction. One of them is natural beauty as mountains, lakes, beaches and hills.

In addition to above theory, this research results are also consistent with research of Dwyer and Kim (2003) that a tourism destination should interesting to have a competitive advantage. They are climate, scenery, flora, fauna and etc. Mazilu (2000) said that basic elements of a tourism destination are the location, geographical, climatic, natural conditions, historical relics and architectural heritage. Blanke & Chielsa, (2013) al stated at World Economic Forum those Human Resources, culture and nature is one of three components of tourism destinations competitiveness. Synchronization the theories and research findings can be seen in figure 1 below.

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**Fig. 1:** Synchronization the theory with reality at Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach.
Above figure explains that natural scenery and water activities are uniqueness of Tanjung Karang beach. It can be used as a competitive advantage to compete with other tourism destinations today. This uniqueness is proven to attract tourists locally, nationally and internationally. It is a gift from God that must be preserved because not all tourism destinations have these two assets. For example, most foreign tourists come from Europe because their natural conditions are very different. Tourists at Tanjung Karang beach can feel the fresh sunlight. Based on research results, the research propositions are follows: the competitiveness of coastal tourism destinations is natural excellence attraction of unique natural resources, accessibility, and amenity.

Conclusions and suggestions:

Conclusion:

Based on problem formulation, research purpose and research results, the conclusion are follows: tourists perceive that Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach as tourism destination has attraction in form of close proximity to provincial capital of Central Sulawesi, having beautiful natural scenery and tourists can do a wide range of beach activities. It means that Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach has competitive advantage, but until today number of tourists still not been able to provide welfare for people who live in environment of tourism destination.

Suggestion:

Based on conclusion, the suggestions are follows: Tanjung Karang Donggala Beach should not only depend on natural resources, but it must develop human resources in form of reviving the cultural attractions as curing ceremony (baila), safety ceremonies (pompoura), and process to make traditional sarong called buya sabe. In addition, government is expected to develop local communities’ competence through training. This activity is fundamental to give good quality service to tourist. Local community should be involved in order tourism impact is also felt by people who live in environment of tourism destination.

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