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Determinants Of Visitors' Perceptions Of Tourist Attractions: Sociodemographic Characteristics And Visit Patterns

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Abstract

Visitor perception is an important aspect of tourism destination development, as it reflects visitors' evaluations of destination attractions, facilities, and travel experiences. This study aims to examine the relationships between sociodemographic characteristics, visit patterns, tourist locations, and visitor perceptions of coastal tourism attractions in Bengkulu Province, Indonesia. A quantitative approach using a cross-sectional survey design was employed, involving 400 respondents from five coastal tourism destinations in Bengkulu Province. Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation and multiple linear regression at a 5% significance level. The results indicate that the independent variables are jointly associated with visitor perceptions, as demonstrated by an F-statistic of 9.603 and a p-value of less than 0.001. The partial regression results reveal that gender, age, occupation, visitor origin, income, visit frequency, and visit purpose are significantly associated with visitor perceptions. In contrast, tourist location and educational attainment do not exhibit statistically significant partial relationships. These findings suggest that visitor perceptions of coastal tourism attractions are associated with variations in individual characteristics and visit experiences. Therefore, destination management should consider visitor segmentation when developing facilities, improving services, and formulating promotional strategies to better accommodate tourists' diverse needs.

Keywords: Visitor Perception; Coastal Tourism; Sociodemographic Characteristics; Visit Patterns; Tourist Attractions.

INTRODUCTION

In the tourism sector, visitor perception refers to the way tourists evaluate a tourist attraction and its supporting facilities, encompassing both positive and negative impressions formed during their visit. Visitor perceptions play an important role in tourism development, as tourists evaluate destinations based on their experiences and communicate their assessments to other potential visitors. Positive perceptions of a

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tourist attraction can encourage greater interest in visiting, potentially generating new employment opportunities and increasing the income of communities surrounding the destination (Setiyarti et al., 2021).

Nevertheless, visitors' perceptions of tourist attractions are not formed uniformly, as they may vary according to individual characteristics and experiences during their visits. Sociodemographic characteristics, including age, gender, educational attainment, occupation, income, and place of origin, may shape differences in visitors' needs, preferences, and expectations regarding a destination. Visitors from different sociodemographic backgrounds may also apply different standards when evaluating tourist attractions, supporting facilities, accessibility, cleanliness, and destination comfort. Therefore, understanding visitors' sociodemographic characteristics is essential for identifying heterogeneity in visitor perceptions and providing a basis for formulating tourism development strategies that are more responsive to market needs.

In addition to sociodemographic characteristics, visit patterns are also relevant in explaining variations in visitor perceptions. Visit frequency may be associated with visitors' familiarity with a destination, while the purpose of a visit may influence the aspects they consider when evaluating their tourism experiences. First-time visitors may have different perceptions from those who have visited a destination repeatedly. Similarly, visitors whose primary purposes are recreation, enjoying natural scenery, or engaging in other activities may have different expectations and evaluation priorities. Accordingly, examining visit patterns is important for understanding how travel experiences and visit purposes are associated with perceptions of tourist attractions.

From a development economics perspective, visitor perceptions are also relevant to the sustainability of economic activities surrounding tourism destinations. Positive evaluations of a tourist attraction may strengthen destination image, encourage repeat visits, and generate positive word-of-mouth recommendations. Increased tourist arrivals may subsequently create economic opportunities for local communities through the expansion of accommodation, culinary businesses, transportation, trade, and other supporting services. However, these economic benefits do not occur automatically, as they also depend on destination management quality, local community participation, and the distribution of economic benefits. Therefore, understanding the factors associated with visitor perceptions is important not only from a tourism marketing perspective but also for supporting local economic development.

Research on visitor perceptions and destination image has increasingly examined individual characteristics and travel experiences as factors associated with the formation of tourists' evaluations. Beerli and Martín (2004) demonstrated that destination image after a visit is associated with several personal factors, including travel motivation, previous travel experiences, and sociodemographic characteristics. Their study of

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tourists visiting Lanzarote also indicated that sociodemographic characteristics and travel experiences are associated with both the cognitive and affective components of destination image. These findings highlight that destination evaluations are not entirely uniform but may vary according to tourists' characteristics and experiences.

More recent empirical evidence further demonstrates the relevance of visitor characteristics in explaining variations in perceptions. A study of domestic tourists in Da Nang, Vietnam, found that gender, age, education, visit frequency, and income were associated with several dimensions of tourist perceptions and behavior. However, these relationships were not consistent across all respondent characteristics. Meanwhile, research examining visit frequency and length of stay has indicated that certain aspects of cognitive destination image do not necessarily differ according to previous visitation experience. These findings suggest that the relationship between visit patterns and visitor perceptions should be examined by considering the specific dimensions of evaluation and the context of the destination under investigation (Li & Huynh Ngoc Phuong, 2025a).

Despite these developments, further empirical evidence is needed to explain the relationships between sociodemographic characteristics, visit patterns, and visitor perceptions across multiple tourism destinations within a unified analytical framework. In particular, this study incorporates differences in tourist destination locations when examining the relationships between visitor characteristics, visit frequency, visit purpose, and perception scores. This approach enables the analysis to go beyond describing general patterns of visitor evaluations by examining whether the relationships between visitor characteristics, visit patterns, and perceptions remain statistically significant after accounting for differences across destinations.

Accordingly, the contribution of this study lies in its simultaneous empirical examination of sociodemographic characteristics, visit patterns, and tourist destination locations in explaining variations in visitor perceptions. This contribution is contextual and methodological rather than a claim that the relationship between individual characteristics and tourist perceptions has not previously been investigated. The findings are expected to enrich empirical evidence on the heterogeneity of visitor perceptions and provide insights for destination managers in considering the needs and visit patterns of different tourist segments. These implications should, however, be interpreted in accordance with the perception indicators measured and the characteristics of the research locations.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the determinants of visitors' perceptions of tourist attractions, with particular emphasis on sociodemographic characteristics and visit patterns. Specifically, it examines the relationships between visitor characteristics, visit frequency, visit purpose, tourist destination location, and visitors' perceptions of the destinations. The findings are expected to contribute empirical insights to the literature on visitor behavior and provide useful considerations for

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destination managers and relevant stakeholders in formulating tourism development strategies that are more responsive to visitors' characteristics and needs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted at five coastal tourism destinations in Bengkulu Province, Indonesia, from April to July 2026. A quantitative approach with a cross-sectional survey design was employed. The quantitative approach was selected to examine the relationships between visitors' sociodemographic characteristics, visit patterns, tourist destination locations, and perceptions of tourist attractions through statistical analysis (Suherlan & Hidayah, 2025a). A cross-sectional survey enables the measurement of respondents' characteristics and perceptions within a specific observation period, making it appropriate for analyzing variations in perceptions across different visitor groups.

The unit of analysis in this study was individual visitors to the five selected coastal tourism destinations, comprising a total of 400 respondents. The dependent variable was visitor perception (Y), while the independent variables consisted of tourist destination location (X1), gender (X2), age (X3), educational attainment (X4), occupation (X5), place of origin (X6), income (X7), visit frequency (X8), and purpose of visit (X9). The study focuses on examining the relationships between visitors' sociodemographic characteristics, visit patterns, tourist destination locations, and their perceptions of tourist attractions.

Data analysis involved descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression. Categorical variables were incorporated into the regression model using dummy variables, with a designated reference category for each variable. Model diagnostics included multicollinearity and heteroscedasticity tests, while robust standard errors were applied where necessary to address potential violations of the regression assumptions. Hypothesis testing was conducted at a 5% significance level. Where visitor perception scores were constructed from multiple questionnaire items, the internal consistency of the measurement instrument was also assessed before conducting further analysis (Wasiaturrahma & Rohmawati, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. **Relationships Between Visitor Characteristics and Perceptions of Tourist Attractions**

   Based on the Pearson correlation analysis involving 400 respondents, the relationships between sociodemographic characteristics, visit patterns, tourist destination locations, and visitors' perceptions of tourist attractions reveal several noteworthy findings. The interpretation considers the direction and strength of the

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correlations, as well as their statistical significance at the 5% significance level. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Correlation Analysis of Visitor Characteristics and Perceptions of Tourist Attractions

Variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Sig. (p)	Interpretation
Tourist Location (X1)	0.052	0.297	Positive, not significant
Gender (X2)	0.240	0.000	Positive, significant
Age (X3)	-0.017	0.735	Negative, not significant
Educational Attainment (X4)	-0.002	0.964	Negative, not significant
Occupation (X5)	0.071	0.158	Positive, not significant
Visitor Origin (X6)	0.125	0.012	Positive, significant
Income (X7)	0.058	0.248	Positive, not significant
Visit Frequency (X8)	0.149	0.003	Positive, significant
Purpose of Visit (X9)	-0.079	0.114	Negative, not significant

Source: Primary data analysis, 2026

Based on Table 1, gender, visitor origin, and visit frequency have statistically significant relationships with visitors' perceptions. The correlation coefficient between gender and perception is 0.240, indicating a positive association of relatively weak to moderate strength. Visitor origin has a positive correlation coefficient of 0.125, while visit frequency has a positive correlation coefficient of 0.149. Both associations are considered weak. These findings suggest that differences in gender, visitor origin, and visiting experience are associated with variations in perception scores within the study sample. However, the substantive direction of the relationships involving gender and visitor origin cannot yet be determined without knowing how the categories were coded. For example, a positive coefficient does not automatically indicate that male visitors have more favorable perceptions than female visitors; such an interpretation depends on the coding scheme applied to each category. Meanwhile, tourist location, age, education, occupation, income, and purpose of visit do not exhibit statistically significant linear correlations with perception scores in this correlation analysis. This does not necessarily mean that these variables are unrelated to visitors' perceptions; rather, the correlation evidence obtained is insufficient to establish statistically significant relationships.

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Overall, the findings indicate that gender, visitor origin, and visit frequency are significantly correlated with visitors' perceptions of tourist attractions. In contrast, tourist location, age, education, occupation, income, and purpose of visit do not show statistically significant correlations at the 5% significance level. These findings suggest that the relationships between visitor characteristics and tourism perceptions are not consistent across all variables. A study by Nago et al. (2024) found that tourists' overall perceptions of Tilalohe Beach were categorized as good, with a score of 73.51%. More specifically, perceptions of facilities and infrastructure reached 75.52%, accessibility 61.25%, natural resources 77.73%, and the quality of the tourism area 79.53%. The researchers also noted that some visitors continued to give low ratings to the destination. Meanwhile, Wahim (2024) found that service quality had a positive and statistically significant relationship with revisit intention. Destination image was also positively and significantly associated with revisit intention. Conversely, perceived tourist value was not statistically significant. These findings indicate that not all dimensions of tourist perceptions are significantly associated with the intention to revisit.

2. **The Relationship between Tourist Destination Locations and Visitors' Sociodemographic Characteristics**

The correlation analysis between tourist destination locations and visitors' characteristics reveals several statistically significant associations. Tourist destination location is positively correlated with age ($r = 0.197$; $p < 0.001$) and income ($r = 0.372$; $p < 0.001$). The correlation with income represents one of the relatively stronger associations in the correlation matrix. These findings indicate that the distribution of visitors across age and income groups varies according to the numerical codes assigned to the tourist destinations. However, since tourist destination location is a categorical variable, Pearson correlation coefficients calculated using numerical location codes cannot be directly interpreted as indicating that particular destinations are more frequently visited by older or higher-income groups. Such interpretations should be examined through cross-tabulations, descriptive statistics for each destination, or analytical methods appropriate for categorical variables.

A study by Suherlan and Hidayah (2025b), which examined the tourism preferences of 1,008 respondents in Indonesia, found that the influence of demographic characteristics on tourism preferences varied across different attributes. Gender and visitor origin were relatively more influential factors, whereas age and income were comparatively less influential. These findings suggest that the relationships between demographic characteristics and tourism choices or preferences are not necessarily consistent across all dimensions examined.

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3. **The Relationship between Sociodemographic Characteristics and Visit Patterns**

Several sociodemographic characteristics also exhibit statistically significant relationships with visitors' travel patterns. Age and income are positively correlated ($r = 0.388$; $p < 0.001$), representing a relatively stronger association than most of the other correlations. However, the substantive interpretation of this relationship still depends on how the age and income categories were coded.

Gender and visit frequency are positively correlated ($r = 0.138$; $p = 0.006$), although the strength of this association is weak. Occupation and visit frequency show a negative correlation ($r = -0.443$; $p < 0.001$). This is the strongest association in absolute terms among the variable pairs reported in the correlation matrix. Nevertheless, because occupation is a nominal categorical variable, the negative direction of the coefficient is highly dependent on the numerical coding assigned to occupational categories. It should not be interpreted directly as indicating that visitors with higher occupational status tend to visit tourist destinations less frequently.

Furthermore, education and visitor origin are positively correlated ($r = 0.186$; $p < 0.001$), while gender and purpose of visit exhibit a negative correlation ($r = -0.282$; $p < 0.001$). These findings indicate that certain sociodemographic characteristics are associated with variations in visitors' travel patterns, although the interpretation of the direction of these relationships requires consideration of the measurement and coding of each variable.

A study by Pujilestari and Julfi Restu Amelia (2021), which examined tourists' characteristics and food safety practices in the Old Town area of Jakarta, DKI Jakarta, used a cross-sectional design involving 86 respondents and the chi-square test. The study found that education was significantly associated with food safety practices ($p < 0.001$), whereas age was not significantly associated with these practices ($p = 0.144$). These findings demonstrate that the relationships between tourists' characteristics and their behavior are not necessarily consistent across different variables and behavioral dimensions.

The Effects of Sociodemographic Characteristics and Visit Patterns on Visitors' Perceptions

F-Test

The simultaneous significance test (F-test) was conducted to determine whether tourist destination location, gender, age, education, occupation, visitor origin, income, visit frequency, and purpose of visit are jointly significantly associated with visitors' perceptions of tourist attractions. This test was used to assess the overall statistical

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significance of the regression model in explaining variations in visitors' perception scores. The results of the F-test are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Results of the F-Test

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Keterangan
Regression	1.580.919	9	175.658	9.603	<.001	Signifikan
Residual	7.134.059	390	18.292			
Total	8.714.977	399				

Source: Primary data analysis, 2026

Based on the F-test results presented in Table 2, the calculated F-statistic is 9.603, with a significance value of $p < 0.001$. Since the significance value is below the 0.05 threshold, the regression model is statistically significant overall. Thus, tourist destination location, gender, age, education, occupation, visitor origin, income, visit frequency, and purpose of visit are jointly significantly associated with visitors' perceptions of tourist attractions. This finding indicates that variations in visitors' perceptions should be examined by considering sociodemographic characteristics and visit patterns simultaneously, rather than focusing on a single individual characteristic.

The findings of Iordanova (2017) also indicate that visitor characteristics, particularly age, gender, and visitor origin, are associated with destination image formation, although the strength of these associations varies depending on the characteristics examined and the measurement context. Both studies support the relevance of the approach adopted in this research, namely, examining sociodemographic characteristics and visit patterns simultaneously to understand differences in visitors' perceptions across five coastal tourism destinations in Bengkulu Province.

The results of the simultaneous test should subsequently be interpreted alongside the individual significance test (t-test) results presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Results of the t-Test

Variabel Independen	B (Unstandardized)	Std. Error	Beta (Standardized)	t hitung	Sig.	Ket (α = 5%)
(Constant)	6.720	2.000		3.360	< .001	Significant
Tourist Location (X1)	0.169	0.164	0.051	1.032	0.303	Not Significant

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Gender (X2)	3.045	0.505	0.313	6.032	< .001	Significant
Age (X3)	-1.288	0.370	-0.193	-3.483	< .001	Significant (Negative)
Educational Attainment (X4)	-0.010	0.274	-0.002	-0.035	0.972	Not Significant
Occupation (X5)	0.649	0.120	0.299	5.404	< .001	Significant
Visitor Origin (X6)	4.295	0.818	0.260	5.250	< .001	Significant
Income (X7)	0.744	0.291	0.142	2.555	0.011	Significant
Visit Frequency (X8)	0.989	0.258	0.204	3.831	< .001	Significant
Purpose of Visit (X9)	-0.863	0.409	-0.105	-2.109	0.036	Significant (Negative)

Source: Primary data analysis, 2026

The partial significance test (t-test) indicates that gender, age, occupation, visitor origin, income, visit frequency, and purpose of visit have statistically significant relationships with visitors' perceptions. In contrast, tourist destination location and education do not exhibit statistically significant partial relationships at the 5% significance level. These differences in the results confirm that the overall statistical significance of the regression model does not necessarily imply that all independent variables are individually significantly associated with visitors' perceptions.

Li and Huynh Ngoc Phuong (2025b) found that the relationships between demographic characteristics and tourists' perceptions varied depending on the variables and dimensions of perception examined. Gender, age, education, visit frequency, and income were relevant in explaining several constructs related to tourists' perceptions and behavior, whereas occupation had a more limited influence. These findings provide an empirical point of comparison for the present study, particularly in explaining why some visitor characteristics are significantly associated with perceptions, while others do not exhibit statistically significant partial relationships.

1. **The Relationship between Tourist Destination Location and Visitors' Perceptions**

   The regression results show that tourist destination location has a coefficient of 0.169, a t-statistic of 1.032, and a significance value of 0.303. Since the significance

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value is greater than 0.05, tourist destination location does not exhibit a statistically significant partial relationship with visitors' perceptions after controlling for the other variables in the model. Therefore, the hypothesis proposing a significant relationship between tourist destination location and visitors' perceptions is not empirically supported by these results.

This finding does not imply that all five coastal tourism destinations examined in this study have identical characteristics and quality. The five destinations may differ in terms of natural beauty, accessibility, facilities, cleanliness, and service quality. However, based on the model specification employed, differences in destination location have not been shown to have a statistically significant partial relationship with visitors' perception scores.

A study by Gunawan and Rachim (2022) on preferences for selecting tourist destinations in West Java found that destination choices may vary according to visitors' characteristics and their preferred types of tourism activities. This finding provides context for understanding that destination evaluations need to consider visitor characteristics rather than destination identity alone. Nevertheless, that study did not directly examine the coefficient of tourist destination location within a regression model comparable to the one used in the present study.

In the context of coastal tourism development in Bengkulu Province, these results indicate the need for a more detailed evaluation of destination attributes as perceived by visitors. Further analysis could compare perception scores across individual destinations to identify aspects requiring improvement, such as facilities, cleanliness, accessibility, and comfort. In this way, destination development recommendations can be based on identified needs rather than merely on differences in the names or locations of tourist attractions.

2. **The Relationship between Gender and Visitors' Perceptions**

The gender variable has a regression coefficient of 3.045, a t-statistic of 6.032, and a significance value of $p < 0.001$. These results indicate that gender is significantly associated with visitors' perceptions after controlling for the other characteristics included in the model. The magnitude of the coefficient represents the estimated difference in perception scores based on the gender coding scheme applied in the regression model.

These findings can be compared with the study by Tosun et al. (2024), which involved 1,424 visitors and examined the role of gender in the relationships between destination service quality, affective image, and revisit intention. The study found that gender moderated several relationships in the model. The influence of hospitality on affective image was stronger among female visitors, whereas the effects of local transportation and airport services were stronger among male visitors. These results

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suggest that gender may be associated with differences in how visitors respond to destination attributes and service quality.

In the context of the present study, the statistical significance of gender indicates that visitors' perceptions of coastal tourist attractions in Bengkulu Province differ according to gender, after accounting for the other variables in the model. These differences may be associated with variations in preferences, tourism experiences, or the destination attributes that visitors consider important. The findings of Tosun et al. (2024) provide a contextual explanation of how male and female visitors may evaluate particular destination attributes differently. However, that study examined the moderating role of gender in the relationships between service quality, affective image, and revisit intention, whereas the present study examines the relationship between gender and visitors' perceptions of tourist attractions. Therefore, the two studies are conceptually related but do not examine exactly the same relationships.

The positive coefficient of 3.045 in this study indicates a difference in perception scores according to the gender coding scheme used. If male visitors are coded as 1 and female visitors as 0, the positive coefficient indicates that the predicted perception score for male visitors is higher than that for female visitors, holding the other variables constant. Conversely, if the coding scheme is reversed, the interpretation also changes. Therefore, the direction of the difference in perceptions must be determined based on the operational definitions and coding scheme applied in the regression model.

From a practical perspective, this finding highlights the importance of considering the diverse needs and experiences of visitors in coastal tourism management. Destination managers may evaluate various destination attributes, such as service hospitality, comfort, accessibility, and facility availability, to identify the aspects most closely associated with visitors' evaluations. Nevertheless, this study does not establish that these attributes cause gender-based differences in perceptions, since they are not separately included as independent variables in the reported model. Thus, the findings of Tosun et al. (2024) strengthen the argument regarding the relevance of gender in tourism research, while further investigation is needed to identify the destination attributes underlying differences in visitors' perceptions in Bengkulu Province.

3. **The Relationship between Age and Visitors' Perceptions**

The regression results show that age has a coefficient of −1.288, a t-statistic of −3.483, and a significance value of $p < 0.001$. These results indicate a statistically significant negative relationship between the age coding and visitors' perception scores, after controlling for the other variables in the model. These findings can be related to the study by Karakaş et al. (2022), which involved 806 tourists and

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analyzed differences in perceptions of country and destination image across generational groups. The results revealed variations in evaluations across generations. Baby Boomers had greater destination experience and expressed more positive evaluations than Generation X, whereas Generation Z demonstrated relatively less positive perceptions. These findings suggest that tourists' perceptions of destinations may differ according to generational groups and their tourism experiences.

Nevertheless, the findings of Karakaş et al. (2022) do not necessarily indicate a linear relationship between age and destination perceptions. The differences in evaluations across generations suggest that the relationship between age and tourists' perceptions may vary depending on group characteristics and the destination context. In the present study, the negative age coefficient indicates that an increase in the coded age variable is associated with a decrease in the perception score predicted by the model. In destination management, differences in visitor characteristics may be considered when evaluating comfort, accessibility, safety, cleanliness, and available facilities. However, this study does not specifically identify which destination attributes account for the decline in perception scores as the coded age variable increases. Therefore, further analysis based on age groups and perception indicators is necessary to understand which destination attributes need improvement for different visitor groups.

4. **The Relationship between Education and Visitors' Perceptions**

The education variable has a regression coefficient of −0.010, a t-statistic of −0.035, and a significance value of 0.972. The significance value, which is substantially greater than 0.05, indicates that education does not have a statistically significant partial relationship with visitors' perceptions in the model employed. Thus, there is insufficient statistical evidence to conclude that differences in educational attainment are associated with differences in perception scores after controlling for the other characteristics.

These results indicate that, across the five coastal tourism destinations examined in this study, educational attainment has not been established as a statistically significant factor differentiating visitors' perceptions. Visitors' evaluations of tourist attractions may be associated with direct experiences, destination conditions, facilities, comfort, and their needs during visits. However, this study does not directly examine these mechanisms; therefore, such explanations should be regarded as possibilities requiring further investigation. The findings concerning education should also be considered in the context of research on tourist preferences. Gunawan and Rachim (2022) emphasized the importance of understanding visitor characteristics in mapping destination choices and tourism activities. However, their findings cannot

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be used to conclude that education is necessarily associated or unassociated with perceptions in the present study.

The practical implication is that destination managers should not use educational attainment as the sole basis for differentiating service or promotional strategies. Visitor segmentation should consider more direct evidence, such as visit purposes, travel patterns, activity preferences, and evaluations of available facilities.

5. **The Relationship between Occupation and Visitors' Perceptions**

The regression results show that occupation has a coefficient of 0.649, a t-statistic of 5.404, and a significance value of $p < 0.001$. These results indicate that occupation is significantly associated with visitors' perceptions after controlling for the other variables in the model. Differences in occupation may be related to variations in daily activities, leisure-time allocation, spending capacity, and recreational needs. Visitors with different occupational backgrounds may have different considerations when selecting destinations and evaluating tourism experiences. Nevertheless, these mechanisms cannot be confirmed solely on the basis of the available regression results.

Pasaco-González et al. (2023) analyzed differences in perceived tourism experience quality, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions based on demographic characteristics and previous tourism experiences. Their study showed that the relationships between individual characteristics and evaluations of tourism experiences were not consistent across all dimensions examined. More pronounced differences were found based on gender, whereas differences across several other characteristics were not always statistically significant. These findings emphasize that demographic characteristics need to be analyzed in relation to the specific dimensions of tourism experience under investigation.

In the context of the present study, the positive and statistically significant relationship between occupation and visitors' perceptions indicates that occupational categories are associated with differences in evaluations of tourist attractions. This finding complements the discussion by Pasaco-González et al. (2023) by suggesting that another individual characteristic, namely occupation, may also be relevant in explaining variations in visitors' perceptions across different destination contexts. Nevertheless, the present study does not specifically establish a causal effect of occupation. Therefore, the previous study is more appropriately used to support the general argument that relationships between individual characteristics and evaluations of tourism experiences may vary, rather than as direct evidence confirming the occupational variable's result.

Conceptually, occupational differences may be associated with variations in daily routines, recreational needs, leisure time availability, and tourism expenditure

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considerations. However, these mechanisms cannot be established based on the available regression results. The interpretation of the positive coefficient of 0.649 must also take into account the reference category and coding scheme used for the occupation variable. If occupation is measured as a categorical variable, the coefficient represents the difference in perception scores relative to the reference category, according to the coding scheme applied in the model.

6. **The Relationship between Visitor Origin and Visitors' Perceptions**

   The visitor origin variable has a regression coefficient of 4.295, a t-statistic of 5.250, and a significance value of $p < 0.001$. These results indicate that visitor origin is significantly associated with variations in perception scores after controlling for the other characteristics in the model. Visitor origin may be related to differences in travel experiences, destination familiarity, travel distance, and pre-visit expectations. Visitors from surrounding areas may have different experiences and knowledge compared with those coming from outside the region. However, this explanation remains interpretative and requires support from information about respondent characteristics and the coding scheme applied to visitor origin.

   These findings can be related to the study by Wahyudin et al. (2025), which analyzed 544 domestic tourists in the Bangka Belitung Islands. The study found that familiarity developed through personal experience and information significantly influenced destination image. This finding suggests that tourists' knowledge and experiences of a destination are relevant aspects in the formation of destination perceptions. Although the study did not directly examine the effect of visitor origin, its findings provide a perspective for understanding why visitors from different geographical backgrounds may evaluate tourist destinations differently.

   In the context of the present study, visitor origin may be associated with familiarity with tourist attractions, previous visiting experiences, information obtained before traveling, and expectations regarding destination facilities and attractions. Visitors from surrounding areas, for example, may be more familiar with destination characteristics because they have visited previously or obtained information from their local environment. Conversely, visitors from outside the region may have different experiences and expectations. These differences may be associated with how visitors evaluate tourist attractions. However, this explanation remains interpretative because the available regression results do not establish whether familiarity or travel experience underlies the relationship between visitor origin and perceptions.

7. **The Relationship between Income and Visitors' Perceptions**

   Income has a regression coefficient of 0.744, a t-statistic of 2.555, and a significance value of 0.011. Since the significance value is below 0.05, income has a statistically

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significant relationship with visitors' perceptions at the 5% significance level. Income may be associated with visitors' ability to finance trips, their choice of tourism activities, and their expectations regarding available facilities. Visitors with different economic capacities may have different considerations concerning costs, comfort, accessibility, and services. However, this study does not directly identify which specific aspects explain the relationship between income and perception scores.

Research on travel patterns and changes in tourist expenditure in Bali indicates that travel preferences are associated with tourists' considerations when allocating their travel budgets. This research provides a context for understanding that tourism decisions are closely related to economic considerations. Nevertheless, tourism expenditure and perceptions of tourist attractions are two different variables; therefore, these findings cannot be regarded as direct evidence of the relationship between income and perceptions.

The positive income coefficient in this study indicates a positive relationship based on the coding scheme employed. If income is recorded in categories, its interpretation must consider the ordering of the income categories. Therefore, an examination of perception score distributions across income groups is necessary to identify which groups provide relatively higher evaluations. From a destination management perspective, this finding may serve as a consideration in providing facilities and tourism activities across different price ranges to accommodate various visitor segments. Such strategies should be based on visitor needs survey results to avoid assuming that all visitors within a particular income group have identical preferences.

8. **The Relationship between Visit Frequency and Visitors' Perceptions**

Visit frequency has a regression coefficient of 0.989, a t-statistic of 3.831, and a significance value of $p < 0.001$. These results indicate that visit frequency is significantly associated with visitors' perceptions after controlling for the other variables in the model. Visit frequency is relevant to tourism behavior analysis because it may be associated with direct experience and familiarity with a destination. Visitors who have visited previously have opportunities to compare destination conditions, become familiar with available facilities, and evaluate their tourism experiences. Conversely, first-time visitors may form their evaluations based on initial experiences and pre-visit expectations.

The study by Anugrah et al. (2022), which examined destination image, motivation, perceived risk, satisfaction, and revisit intention at a mountain biking tourism destination in West Lombok, found that destination image, motivation, and perceived risk were associated with tourist satisfaction and revisit intention. This study demonstrates the relevance of tourists' experiences and evaluations in understanding travel behavior. However, revisit intention is not equivalent to actual

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visit frequency. Therefore, these findings serve as conceptual support rather than direct evidence of the visit frequency coefficient in the present study.

The positive coefficient of 0.989 indicates that an increase in the coded value of visit frequency is associated with an increase in the perception score predicted by the model. If higher codes represent more frequent visits, this result can be interpreted as a positive relationship between visit frequency and perceptions. However, if a different

9. **The Relationship between Purpose of Visit and Visitors' Perceptions**

Purpose of visit has a regression coefficient of −0.863, a t-statistic of −2.109, and a significance value of 0.036. These results indicate that purpose of visit is significantly associated with visitors' perceptions at the 5% significance level, with a negative coefficient based on the coding scheme employed. Differences in travel purposes may be associated with variations in visitors' expectations and priorities when evaluating destinations. Visitors who come for recreation, to enjoy natural scenery, to participate in family activities, or to pursue specific purposes may pay different levels of attention to facilities, cleanliness, comfort, and available activities. Therefore, purpose of visit is a relevant characteristic to consider when understanding variations in visitors' perceptions.

Research by Reza Dasangga and Tri Ratnasari (2022) on halal destination attributes and destination attractiveness evaluations highlights the importance of destination attributes and visitors' perceived value in explaining evaluations of destination attractiveness. Meanwhile, Gunawan and Rachim (2022) demonstrated that activity preferences and destination choices may vary according to visitor characteristics. Both studies provide a context for understanding why destination evaluations need to consider tourists' needs and preferences, although neither directly examines the purpose-of-visit coefficient in the regression model used in the present study.

The negative coefficient of −0.863 cannot be directly interpreted as indicating that a particular purpose of visit results in lower perceptions without knowing the reference category and coding scheme applied. If purpose of visit is a nominal variable with several categories, an appropriate dummy-variable specification is required to ensure that differences in perceptions across visit purposes can be interpreted validly. In practical terms, destination managers can use information on visitors' purposes of visit to adjust the available activities, facilities, and services. However, such strategies should be based on descriptive analyses of each visit-purpose category so that visitor needs can be identified more accurately.

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Overall Discussion

Overall, the t-test results indicate that gender, age, occupation, visitor origin, income, visit frequency, and purpose of visit have statistically significant partial relationships with visitors' perceptions of tourist attractions. In contrast, tourist destination location and education do not exhibit statistically significant partial relationships in the model employed. These results demonstrate that visitors' perceptions cannot be understood through a single characteristic alone. Instead, a combination of sociodemographic characteristics and visit patterns needs to be considered. Literature on destination preferences, tourism experiences, and visitor evaluations provides a basis for understanding the importance of tourist heterogeneity in destination management. Nevertheless, each relationship identified in this study should be interpreted in accordance with the operational definitions, variable coding schemes, and limitations of the research design.

From a regional economic development perspective, understanding visitor characteristics can provide useful input for local governments and coastal tourism managers in Bengkulu Province when designing service strategies, promotional activities, and facility development that are more responsive to market needs. The potential economic benefits of such strategies should be interpreted proportionately, since this study measures visitors' perceptions rather than the direct impact of tourism on local community income or regional economic growth.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that visitors' perceptions of coastal tourism attractions in Bengkulu Province are associated with tourists' sociodemographic characteristics and visit patterns.

1. The simultaneous test results indicate that all independent variables included in the model are jointly significantly associated with visitors' perceptions, with an F-statistic of 9.603 and a significance value of less than 0.001. In the partial analysis, gender, age, occupation, visitor origin, income, visit frequency, and purpose of visit exhibit statistically significant relationships with visitors' perceptions. Meanwhile, tourist destination location and educational attainment do not show statistically significant partial relationships. These findings demonstrate that variations in visitors' perceptions are associated not only with demographic characteristics but also with tourists' travel experiences and purposes of visit.
2. The findings have implications for coastal tourism development in Bengkulu Province, which should take into account the heterogeneity of visitors' characteristics and needs. Local governments and destination managers need to develop more responsive management strategies by improving facility quality,

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accessibility, cleanliness, comfort, and tourism services. Furthermore, visitor segmentation based on sociodemographic characteristics and visit patterns may serve as a consideration in designing promotional strategies and developing tourism activities that correspond to market needs. Thus, destination management should not focus solely on natural resource potential but should also consider visitors' experiences and evaluations as part of efforts to enhance destination attractiveness and sustainability.

3. This study has several limitations because it employs a cross-sectional design; therefore, the results indicate relationships between variables but cannot establish causal relationships. Future research is recommended to extend the analysis by incorporating more specific destination attributes, such as facility quality, accessibility, cleanliness, safety, and service quality. Further studies could also examine the relationships between visitors' perceptions and satisfaction, revisit intention, as well as the economic impacts of tourism on local communities.

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