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## How manageable a person feels the place to be: self-efficacy in supporting tourism

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# How manageable a person feels the place to be: self-efficacy in supporting tourism

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**Abstract.** How manageable a person feels the place exceedingly influences people's satisfaction toward supporting tourism development with the respect of self-efficacy. Individuals with self-efficacious can perform or complete a task as a measure of personal agency. This research aims to investigate the influences of self-efficacy principle in defining place identity on tourism environment in Karo Regency, North Sumatera, Indonesia. A mixed-method was employed to obtain local people' and tourists' perception of comfort, safety, accessibility, and confidence. The result shows that confidence contributes in maintaining self-efficacy in Karo Regency. Meanwhile, the absence of public facilities constitutes the feeling of self-efficacy and threatens the place identity.

## 1. Introduction

As the leading sector of economic, many countries have strived to promote economic development by developing tourism. Significant tourism growth makes it as one of the largest foreign exchange sources for a country that increase in community income, provide for employment, maintain the authenticity and culture of a region, and preserve the environment thus many parties are encouraged to develop it.

The development of tourism is also a foremost priority in achieving Indonesia's economic goals where various unique and distinct natural environments provide tourism resource with noticeable attraction. Its development is potential to accelerate national economic growth which aims to improve people's productivity and competitiveness in international markets. It is also contained in a national development agenda called Nawa Cita, President Joko Widodo's Nine Priorities.

### 1.1. Issue and Objective

By the Regional Spatial Plan (Rencana Tata Ruang Wilayah) of Karo Regency in 2010-2030, where the current research took place, the tourism sector is one of priority development plannings after the agricultural and industrial sectors. The Karo Regency government website lists 20 tourist destinations in the area, including Sipiso-Piso Waterfall, Mount Sibayak, Mount Sinabung, Tongging, Gundaling Hill, Lake Lau Kawar, Lau Debuk-Debuk Hot Spring, Bukit Barisan Forest Park, Mount Sipiso-Piso, Desa Lingga (Desa Lingga), Pasar Buah Berastagi (Berastagi Fruit Market), and many more [1].

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Moreover, Karo regency is also rich in cultural heritage such as traditional ceremonies and dances that are still ongoing until today. This makes it worth mentioning as a natural and cultural tourism destination [2]. Karo Regency also has incredible natural resources. However, this potential has not been well-developed. Many tourism objects are not well-organized and well-maintained, whereas tourism destination that has great natural scenery can affect tourism development. Tourism is an attraction for visitors who come to see with all interesting and valuable things [3][4] which are influenced by tourists' perception toward peculiarity of a tourism environment. It is a mutual relation between a person and his or her environment, within a framework that conceptualizes the environment as a psychosocial construct rather an objective fact [5]. Positive perception indicates satisfaction of local people and tourist alike. Regarding with the topic of sustainable tourism, people satisfaction in tourist destination lies as the main movement toward more socially sustainable development [6].

Personal perception of an area is affected by both of direct and indirect experience, where the character of a tourism environment impacts on embedding positive perception. Tourists will differently value experience depending on their expectation, situation, context, and resources offered. Thus, understanding people's subjective experience is crucial in tourism. The perceived experience indicating the character of a place is important in tourism because it would build meaning of an environment and attachment to the region [7]. Place identity affects the visitor's attitude towards the impact of tourism resulting in a positive and negative evaluation [6][8]. It will support the quality of life and bring the happiness to the residents and tourists alike [8].

The current research aims to examine self-efficacy principle, as one of place identity principles [9], within Karo Regency to analyze associations between self-efficacy and its support for tourism. Previously, researchers examined self-efficacy in a historic corridor in an urban area [8]. The current research took place in tourism environment that has diverse natural resources. Different city population density will affect different perception and concept of self-efficacy in taking a role in a community. The findings will complete prior research (Ginting et al., 2017) that examines distinctiveness principle within Karo Regency [10] toward supporting tourism based on place identity. It will accomplish assessment and reference for the government of Karo Regency in planning tourism development.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. *Self-efficacy and Manageable Environment*

Self-efficacy refers to personal judgments of someone's capabilities in organizing and executing courses of action to attain specific task in a successful way [11][12]. It is a belief about whether a person can carry out the capabilities and abilities to perform a specific goal. Lalli (1992) used "perception of familiarity" term in defining self-efficacy [13]. This perception is an impression of life experience in a place as a result of one's actions in an urban environment which is an expression of the success of one's cognitive orientation. Self-efficacy affects how people feel, think, and perform [12]. Moreover, it significantly influences someone's behavior through cognitive, motivational, affective, and decision processes [14]. A higher feeling of self-efficacy will result in greater effort, performance, and satisfaction [15]. It is closely related to goal orientation, performance evaluation, and job satisfaction [16] while a low sense of self-efficacy is associated with depression, anxiety, and helplessness [12].

Self-efficacy is used to measure personal agency [17][18] which indicates someone's capability to originate and direct actions for given goals. The feeling of self-efficacy must be generated to control the surrounding environment. It is maintained when an environment facilitates people daily life or at least not hinder them from achieving a positive identification [19]. People can perform a task or control an environment in a place so they can carry out their chosen activities. Winkel (1981) stated it as "a manageable environment" where comfort, safety, accessibility, and confidence contribute in controlling an environment [19]. To have a sense of self-efficacy requires direct experience in

overcoming obstacles. In the current research, comfort, safety, accessibility, and confidence indicates as the guiding variables in measuring self-efficacy in tourism environment (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Self- Efficacy Variables

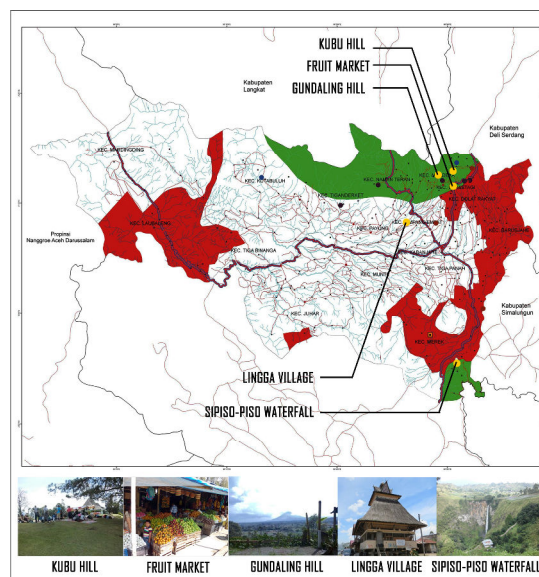
Self- Efficacy Variables	Parameter
Comfort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The feeling of comfort and relax in a place</li> <li>– The facilities relates to comfort (dustbins, sitting areas, public toilets)</li> </ul>
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The feeling of security</li> <li>– The facilities relates to safety (information center, and night-time lighting)</li> </ul>
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The facilities relates to accessibility (pedestrian path, public transportation, and parking spaces)</li> </ul>
Confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ability to complete and perform tasks</li> <li>– Positive information obtained</li> </ul>

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Research Area

The research was conducted in 2016. Five tourism destinations in Karo Regency, North Sumatera Province, Indonesia were chosen as research area include Bukit Gundaling (Gundaling Hill), Pasar Buah (Fruit Market), Desa Lingga (Lingga Village), Sipiso-Piso Waterfall, and Bukit Kubu (Kubu Hill) (figure 1). The places represent the major destination that has the highest number of visitors among nine samples of tourism destinations in Karo Regency based on the pilot research conducted by Architecture students in the University of Sumatera Utara.

Bukit Gundaling (Gundaling Hill) is one of the popular destinations due to the natural panorama that can be enjoyed from the height of 1,575 meter above sea level. Before arriving Bukit Gundaling, there is a row of souvenir shops and traditional market that sell local commodities in Pasar Buah. Meanwhile, Desa Lingga, cultural heritage area, is a historical village that has diverse historical and cultural heritage. Moreover, Sipiso-Piso in Merek Sub-district is a plunge waterfall and a nearby vantage point offering great vistas of the waterfall and Lake Toba. It is located at the northernmost tip of the Lake Toba caldera. The last location is Bukit Kubu (Kubu Hill), a green hill with open space.



**Figure 1.** Research Area

### 3.2. The Method

This research adopts a mixed method -qualitative and quantitative method approach- to obtain respondents' perception of self-efficacy. The qualitative data were conducted through depth interview and field observation at five areas. The depth interview involves eight key respondents consists of tourism stakeholders, local figures, governments, academics, and people who directly or indirectly involved in Karo tourism. Moreover, field observation was done by collecting the physical characteristics, activities of people, the provision of public facilities, the intensity of pedestrians and all things required.

Meanwhile, the quantitative method through questionnaire survey was measured on a five-point scale which ranges from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) to assess the self-efficacy variables. The measurements include comfort, safety, accessibility, and confident [18][19]. The 360 questionnaires were equally distributed to local people and tourists alike at the five tourism area. The results of questionnaire survey were processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 20) to get an overall sense of the mean ratings of the perceptual items.

Furthermore, the results of qualitative and quantitative data are triangulated to find out the convergence. The result of qualitative data will be coded and separated into the same variables. Meanwhile, the quantitative data used percentage and average value to analyze the level of respondents' perception.

## 4. Result and Discussion

### 4.1. Respondents

Each area represents 72 respondents: (36) local people; (22) domestic tourists; and (14) foreign tourists. As a result, of the 360 respondents, 47% were women (n=192), and 53% were men (n=168), the largest age group was 25-49 years old (46%). The other age groups were 18-24 (36%), 50-64 (15%), and 65 years old or above (2%). Tourists were dominated by Malaysian (54%), followed by Singapore (17%). When asked how long they have already visited Karo, 63% of respondents reported one day and 37% two days or more. Regarding travel, 54% of respondents stated that having sightseeing is the main motivation visiting Karo regency where it is their first visit to Karo Regency (53%). Among the respondents, 53% traveled with friends, followed by 32% with groups.

### 4.2. Self-efficacy Principle

The mean scores of 19 items are displayed in table 2. The item with the highest mean scores is: "I would recommend this place to everyone (table 2). This item indicates respondents look forward to Karo regency in developing its tourism. In contrary, the provision of public facilities gets the lowest score (table 2).

**Table 2.** Mean Ratings of Self-efficacy Principle (n=360)

Statements	Pasar Buah		Gundaling		Sipiso-piso		Desa Lingga		Bukit Kubu	
	Local People	Tourist	Local People	Tourist	Local People	Tourist	Local People	Tourist	Local People	Tourist
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
I feel comfortable here	3.39	3.42	3.36	3.39	3.36	3.36	3.36	3.58	3.47	3.83
I feel relax here	3.33	3.44	3.30	3.50	3.33	3.33	3.44	3.28	3.50	3.83
This place makes me feel enthusiastic	3.22	3.31	3.19	3.28	3.42	3.36	3.38	3.25	3.58	3.58
I feel at home here	3.11	3.03	3.00	2.92	3.22	3.11	3.50	2.42	3.50	3.50
There are adequate number of dustbins here	2.69	2.97	2.91	2.83	3.06	2.97	3.00	2.94	3.44	3.44
There are cozy and relaxing sitting areas here	2.47	2.89	2.91	3.08	2.97	3.14	2.97	2.78	3.39	3.39
There are sufficient number of good public toilet	2.56	2.36	2.52	2.36	2.86	2.75	2.52	2.42	3.36	3.36

Statements	Pasar Buah		Gundaling		Sipiso-piso		Desa Lingga		Bukit Kubu		
	Local People	Tourist	Local People	Tourist	Local People	Tourist	Local People	Tourist	Local People	Tourist	
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	
Safety	I feel safe while visiting this place	3.03	3.31	3.02	3.17	3.14	3.31	2.94	3.56	3.50	3.53
	There is an information center here	2.92	2.72	2.72	2.78	2.69	2.89	2.55	3.39	3.42	3.39
	There is night-time lighting	2.53	2.69	2.63	3.00	2.36	2.89	2.86	3.22	3.17	3.28
Accessibility	There is comfortable pedestrian path	2.81	2.67	2.8	2.97	2.94	3.03	2.69	3.11	3.31	3.17
	There is good public transportation system	2.89	2.83	2.97	2.94	2.69	3.00	3.11	3.22	3.39	3.17
	There are sufficient number of good parking spaces here	2.86	2.78	2.58	2.86	2.86	3.42	3.08	2.89	3.39	3.72
Confidence	I can perform my activities well here	3.11	3.42	3.22	3.11	3.22	3.19	3.30	3.39	3.39	3.42
	I feel satisfied while traveling here	3.06	3.50	3.19	3.39	3.25	3.36	3.16	3.67	3.44	3.61
	This place is the best tourist destination to do the things I want	2.83	3.14	2.97	3.17	3.33	2.97	3.08	2.72	3.25	3.31
	This place gives experience and new insights	3.00	3.47	3.25	3.42	3.22	3.39	3.27	3.81	3.31	3.53
	Positive information obtained reveals the condition of the tourism destination	3.03	3.44	3.08	3.22	3.11	3.22	3.19	3.22	3.33	3.50
I would recommend this place to everyone	3.25	3.58	3.19	3.44	3.47	3.36	3.44	3.75	3.64	3.81	
Value Format: 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree	2.95	3.10	2.99	3.10	3.08	3.16	3.10	3.19	3.41	3.49	

#### 4.2.1. Comfort

Comfort is the pleasant feeling when interacting in an environment [20]. It will be created when an individual feels satisfied with his or her need that s/he can perform an act rationally and efficiently [8][18]. The comfort level within a place can be determined from the length of time s/he would spend [20]. With the provision of adequate facilities, tourists will be comfortable and satisfied to stay at the tourist attraction because it can influence visitors' satisfaction and well-being [4][12][21].

Comfort contributes to the positive and negative feelings about the place. Awareness of the comfort will affect someone performs rationally [8][18]. The results indicate that most respondents feel comfortable when they are on their destination (table 2). Comfort will generate satisfaction towards an area [7][8]. They also feel relaxed when they are there and feel enthusiastic when being there (table 2). However, they do not feel like at home (table 2). In this case, facilities and environmental factors affect respondents' perception. Desa Lingga and Bukit Gundaling received the lowest response due to fewer facilities in Desa Lingga and sexual immorality by adolescents in Bukit Gundaling. This makes people bothered and feels uncomfortable. This is also supported by depth interviews with the key respondent:

"Sexual immorality by adolescents in Bukit Gundaling makes people uncomfortable here" (Key Respondent: Cultural Figure/Academics)

An uncomfortable environment is closely associated with sitting area, dustbins, and public toilets. According to most respondents, provision of dustbins in five tourism destinations is still inadequate (table 2). Of the five tourism environments, only Bukit Kubu gets good ratings because there is a sufficient number of a well-maintained dustbin. There are cleaners moving it at any time so that no trash can be found. The dirty environment will affect one's psychology and physical [22] hence the provision of dustbins in the tourist attraction is indispensable whereas general cleanliness and its maintenance of an area will encourage longer place engagement and feeling of safety and security [7]. Its absence will generate uncomfortable environment. A clean environment can make a place more attractive [10][20]. Moreover, respondents also complain to horses dung in Pasar Buah and Bukit

Gundaling which causes a stink. This creates inconvenience feeling both physically and visually as well. This is supported by the key respondents:

"Environment surrounding Bukit Gundaling is dirty and not well-maintained thus required appropriate maintenance and support from various parties, especially government" (Key Respondent: Cultural Figure/Academics)

"There are a lot of rubbish previously in Sipiso-Piso due to unavailable dustbins. However, in last three years, the provision of dustbins is available though still any rubbish at the area today" (Key Respondent: Cultural Figure/Academics)

People's comfort is also essentially generated by the provision of sitting area and public toilets. The findings show that sitting areas in five tourism environment are still lacking (table 2). Respondents argue that they are difficult to find a place to sit. Inconvenience environment is also caused by the inadequate and poor condition of the public toilets (table 2). Moreover, the location of the public facilities is less strategic. It is also in line with interviews with the key respondent:

"Toilets in Desa Lingga are still inadequate; we have to go down the stairs to get there" (Key Respondent: Cultural Figure/Academics)

Only Bukit Kubu gets good ratings because people can easily find a seat and public toilets. Sitting area will build a sense of personalization which encourages human use, social behavior, and social activities [23]. In this case, public toilets contribute to the comfort of an environment. Moreover, the place should also provide public toilets to facilitate people with different abilities. The physical, psychological and environmental comfort contributes to people 'satisfaction and convenience being in place. The degree of comfort will develop an attachment to that place [7].

#### 4.2.2. Safety

Safety is essential to achieve the comfort and satisfaction of visitors [24]. Lack of security will damage place identity and affect the desire of tourists to come. It is also stated that the environment with a high level of crime makes one uncomfortable to stay longer [8][18]. Safe environments make people able to freely move because they feel safe and protected from harm.

The existence of security will make one aware of the efficacy in performing a task [8]. When traveling on five tourism environment, most tourists feel safe (table 2). However, different perception comes from local people in Desa Lingga. The disagreement is supported by interviews with the key respondent:

"We should keep an eye on local people to avoid crime, so tourists are not disappointed (Key Respondent: Cultural Figure/Academics)

The tourism industry is fragile to the cases such as crime, terrorism, or road accidents. The success of tourism depends on being able to provide safe and secure on tourism destination [25]. The increasing of criminal cases will contribute the feeling of anxiety and scare among tourists [25][26]. In this case, the existence of information center and night-time lighting also plays an important role in the safety of visitors of Karo Regency.

Information center should ensure the current and reliable information on important safety for tourists. However, most respondents argue that information centers are difficult to find in research areas (table 2). Its location is not strategic and has fewer facilities. They also argue that night-time lightings in the research are still inadequate (table 2). Appropriate street lighting in tourism environment is important to create a safe environment [23]. It can eliminate crime and violence and decrease the likelihood of pedestrian, bike, and vehicle accidents. The findings show many tourists

leave when the day goes to the night because of inadequate night-time lighting. Night-time lighting is an important public facility that affects human activities and promotes transportation and pedestrian safety [27]. This is also supported by the interview:

"To develop tourism in Karo, the first which is crucial to be improved is accessibility. When we access the tourism destination on the night, surely crime is more potential happened. Thus, required good accessibility where the provision of signages and night-time lighting in tourism destination are exceedingly important" (Key Respondent: Head of Tourism Planning Program)

Bukit Kubu is the only tourist attraction of the five tourist attractions that receives a positive response due to strategic location and cleanliness of public toilet and adequate street lights. Its existence will help them to understand about the place and feel confident while being in place [8]. People can easily access the existing facilities in the area.

#### 4.2.3. Accessibility

Accessibility is one of the important elements in a tourism area [28] and affects one's interests to visit somewhere [8]. The easier access is then, the higher a person's interest to visit. On the efficacy, the existence of good accessibility also helps people to fulfill their work. It is defined as the availability in reaching the destination such connectivity and continuity of pedestrian path, public transportation, parking facilities, and traffic flow. It should be supported by transportation facilities and road infrastructure [4]. The results show that pedestrian path is not good (table 2). The absence of pedestrian path makes tourist uncomfortable whereas it is an essential element of walkability [29]. Width, roofs & shades, and surface condition of path, drainage & lighting systems, grade separation, landscaping & amenities appropriately addressed to provide comfort and safety for the pedestrians [29].

The lengthy travel times, high costs, and entry barriers can impact on the willingness of tourists visit the place. The results find that public transportation is still poor (table 2). Sipiso-Piso and Desa Lingga particularly need additional transport modes. The provision of parking space also needs appropriate management due to the off-street parking. The parking space can help someone to perform his or her activities. In all five tourism destinations, it also lacked positive response from respondents (table 2) due to the less space. This is also supported by depth interview:

"The less spacious parking space in Brastagi becomes a crucial problem. No space to pick-up and set-down, so it often disturbs tourists. To overcome the crowded traffic flow, commonly local police will conduct traffic simulation. Hence, car is not able to pass and park any longer in Brastagi" (Key Respondent: Hotel Manager)

Moreover, all off-street parking areas need more reviewed to achieve and maintain secure car park status though most respondents have not fully considered it. Hence, improving security means reducing criminal activity, the fear of crime, and the perception of crime. Only Bukit Kubu gets positive responses because of sufficient capacity of the parking space.

#### 4.2.4. Confidence

Self-confidence is one's belief that s/he is capable of behaving to obtain the desired result [11]. Everybody has a different level of confidence, depending on how they assess the environment [18]. Confidence will influence behavior in a social environment [30] where human behavior contributes in embedding a concept of a place s/he lives in [21]. It comes from the awareness when one decides to do something. The results show that most respondents can perform their activities well (table 2). They were also satisfied when traveling (table 2). Nevertheless, they do not consider that the place was the best place to do what they wanted due to the lack public facilities (table 2). However, Bukit Kubu gets the highest rating. People can perform effectively which is expressed by key respondent:

"Bukit Kubu has a beautiful natural landscape. People can perform effectively. Every kid also can play in full of happiness there" (Key Respondent: Cultural Figure/Academics)

Though getting negative assessment among tourists, the five tourism environment areas provide new experiences and insights (table 2). The positive information obtained reveals the condition of the tourism destination. The necessity to achieve confidence and comfortable place is a psychological motive for every human being to increase the QoL and preserve culture [12][21]. Hence, respondents would also recommend the five tourist attractions (table 2). Bandura (1986) used term "vicarious experience" to reveal it [31]. In the context of tourism, others' experience or can influence individuals' observation or visualization of a place and raise perceptions of self-efficacy in travel planning. People may believe that they can perform and master similar activities successfully as others' positive experience influences self-confident in travel planning [15].

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

This research examined self-efficacy principle through respondents' perception toward supporting tourism. The perception of being comfortable, safe, provision of accessibility, and confidence observed are influential in indicating satisfaction of local people and tourist alike. Also, self-efficacy constructs personal agency in performing specific goal. Perceived experience in a place affects self-efficacious. Both direct and indirect experience contributed in embedding self-efficacy during traveling creates the image of an area which defines place identity.

Among four variables of self-efficacy principles, only one variable, "confidence" showed an impact on respondents' efficacy. Meanwhile, the public facilities and service of tourism related to comfort, safety, and accessibility got negative responses. Due to the increasing number of travelers and demands from several tourism' parties, a tourism environment cannot just merely offer the natural attraction [10]. The lack of the public facilities and service of tourism will influence the travel planning and someone's performance in completing certain goals. The public facilities and potential tourist attractions of Karo Regency need to be explored continually to empower the improvement of people's welfare.

The current findings will complete prior research (Ginting et al., 2017) in accomplishing reference for the government of Karo Regency in spatial planning based on place identity. More studies are recommended to outline and conceptualize the influential pattern exerted by self-efficacy principle. Believed that different population density, the size of a city, and different status and stage of tourism development may impact on self-efficacy principle in embedding place identity [6]. It is suggested that the interpretation of further research be more comprehensive by including moderating variable that account of this limitation. Moreover, the generalizability of findings may be limited in another place due to a different level of knowledge, attitude, behavior, and culture [10]. Social-cultural factor becomes a border that indicates the distinct and unique character of a settlement [21].

This research has one implication for detail of implementation. Most of the local people do not recognize the provision of public facilities toward supporting tourism development. The results show that the absence of public facilities is not a crucial problem for most local people and tourists alike. Thus other practical implication of this research for tourism planners specifically is that they should identify which cluster of local people are more self-efficacy concerned to further refine tourism development.

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**Appendix A. Demographic Profile of the Sample**

Demographics	Respondents (n=360)	%	Demographics	Respondents (n=360)	%
Gender			Nationality		
Male	192	53%	Asia		
Female	168	47%	Malaysia	38	54%
Age			Singapore	12	17%
18-24 years	130	36%	Japan	2	3%
25-49 years	167	46%	Others	1	1%
50-64 years	55	15%	Europe		
Above 65 years	8	2%	Netherland	5	7%
Status			Germany	6	9%
Single	185	51%	Others	4	6%
Married	175	49%	America	1	1%
Education			Others	1	1%
High School	194	54%	Occupation		
Graduate	143	40%	Alone	7	4%
Post Graduate	23	6%	With family	37	21%
Job			With friends	79	44%
Government	27	8%	With group	57	32%
Private company	119	33%	Goals		
Self-employment	148	41%	Leisure/sightseeing	107	59%
Unemployment	66	18%	Shopping	13	7%
Residential status			Seeing heritage building	34	19%
Karo Regency	160	44%	Visiting friends/relative	8	4%
Outside Karo	130	36%	Business	5	3%
Foregin Tourists	70	19%	Other	13	7%
Intention			Duration		
First Visit	96	53%	One day or less	113	63%
Second Visit or more	84	47%	2 days or more	67	37%

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