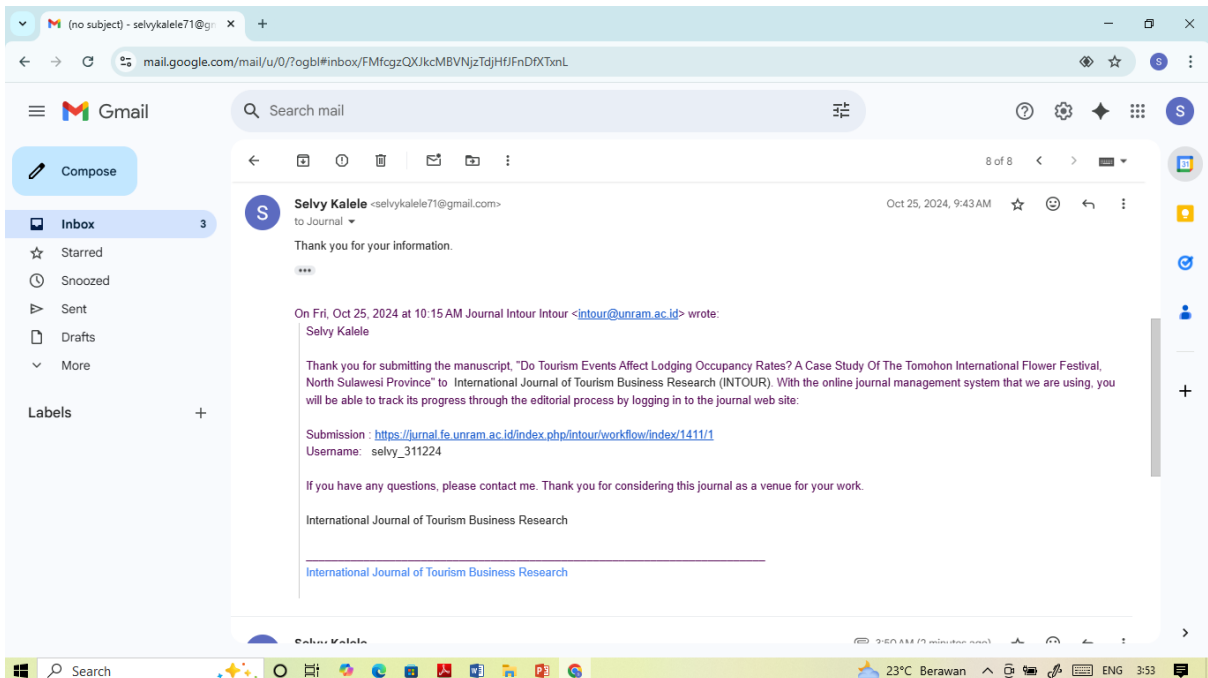
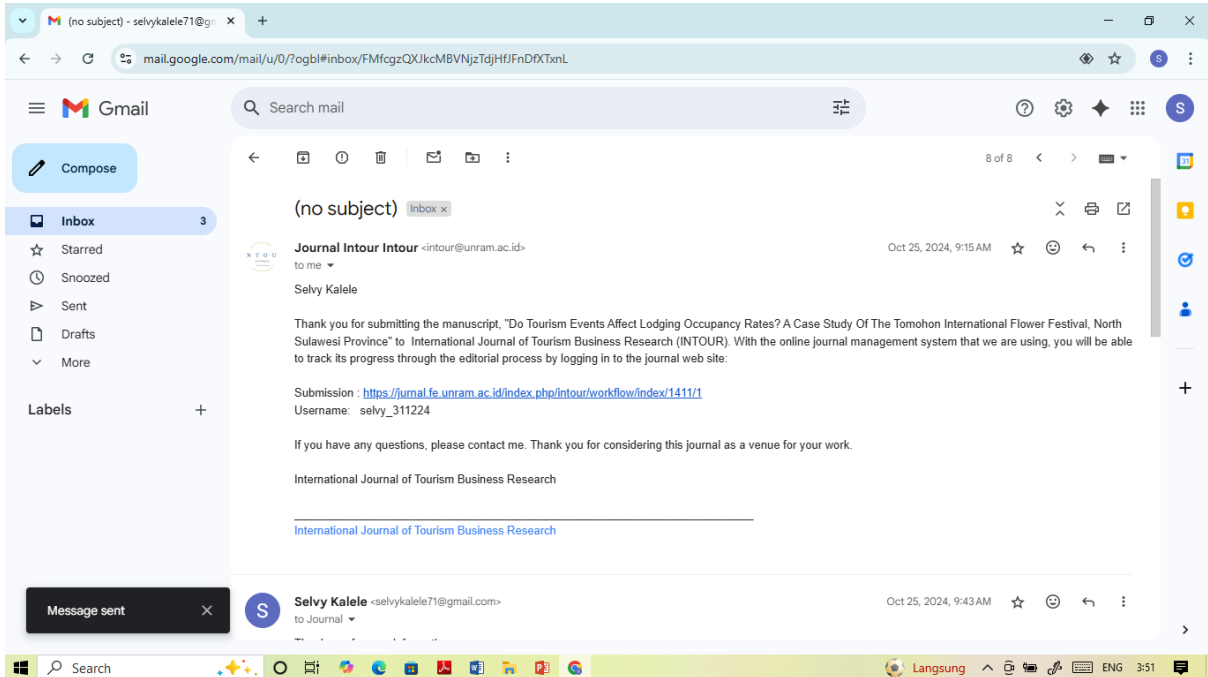


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Department/Faculty/University : <sup>1,2,3,4,5,6,7</sup>Politeknik Negeri Manado

it is true that the person concerned has submitted an article on October 15, 2024 entitled **“Do Tourism Events Affect Lodging Occupancy Rates? A Case Study Of The Tomohon International Flower Festival, North Sulawesi Province”** and has been declared eligible to be published in the International Journal of Tourism Business Research (INTOUR) with E-ISSN 2985-5934 in Vol 3 Number 2, December 2024 Edition at the link <https://jurnal.fe.unram.ac.id/index.php/intour/index>. Thus this certificate is made to be used as appropriate.

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# DO TOURISM EVENTS AFFECT LODGING OCCUPANCY RATES? A CASE STUDY OF THE TOMOHON INTERNATIONAL FLOWER FESTIVAL, NORTH SULAWESI PROVINCE

Selvy Kalele<sup>1\*</sup>, Mauren M. Mandagi<sup>2</sup>, Dianne O. Rondonuwu<sup>3</sup>, Bernadain D. Polii<sup>4</sup>,  
Jemmy Pangemanan<sup>5</sup>, Vesty Like Sambeka<sup>6</sup>, Silvana Mewengkang<sup>7</sup>  
[selvykalele71@gmail.com](mailto:selvykalele71@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [diannerondonuwu@gmail.com](mailto:diannerondonuwu@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>, [gibloki10@gmail.com](mailto:gibloki10@gmail.com)<sup>3</sup>,  
[rudolf.j19650522@gmail.com](mailto:rudolf.j19650522@gmail.com)<sup>5</sup>, [vestylikes@gmail.com](mailto:vestylikes@gmail.com)<sup>6</sup>, [silvanawewengkang12@gmail.com](mailto:silvanawewengkang12@gmail.com)<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1-7</sup>Politeknik Negeri Manado<sup>19</sup>  
e-mail correspondent: [selvykalele71@gmail.com](mailto:selvykalele71@gmail.com)

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## Abstract

This paper aims to examine the impact of the Tomohon International Flower Festival on the occupancy rate of lodging. The International event began in 2006 and until now is still being held because it is considered capable of marketing the tourist attractions in the city of Tomohon. Indeed, every time this event is held, it is certain that many tourists and come to visit the location of the activity, because the distance from Manado to Tomohon is  $\geq 24$ km, allowing many guests to come from surrounding cities. It is suspected that guests may stay at hotels in Manado and not stay in Tomohon. The survey was conducted on 100 staff representing different managerial levels; top management, middle management and lower management at 3 different lodgings namely Grand Master Hotel, Emitta Villa and Gardenia Country with the assumption of representing the status of hotel stars, which are in Tomohon city. The analysis used is validity and reliability, simple linear regression and F test. The results showed that there was an effect of the implementation of the flower festival in Tomohon on the occupancy rate of guests at lodging in the city.

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**Keywords:** tourism events, lodging occupancy rates, tomohon international flower festival,

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## INTRODUCTION

Currently, many countries in the world are targeting tourism as the country's leading sector, because it is considered that in the next few decades this sector will play an important role in improving the economy. This sector involves many workers estimated to have 700 million people spread throughout the world, (Kusni, et.al, 2013). Tourism spending in tourism activities is considered as an invisible export in a tourist destination in addition to stimulating consumption due to foreign tourist visits, (Eugenioet.al, 2004). The economic growth of a country caused by tourism consists of several indicators, among others: First, to obtain capital goods in a production process this sector is able to generate considerable foreign exchange, second, in the development of a large enough infrastructure this sector is considered to be able to bring in investment both from within the country and from outside. (Sakai, 2006). Third, directly or indirectly, in its development the tourism sector will encourage various other sectors to develop together (Frechtling, 2010). Fourth, in its

development it will open up employment opportunities for the local community because it is considered a labor-intensive sector (Lee, & Chang, 2008). Fifth, the creation of positive economic scale growth in the area where the tourism industry is developing (Weng, & Wang, 2004). In addition, this sector plays an important role in disseminating knowledge, increasing research and development in a destination, and increasing the number of workers and the level of job substitution in the local area. (Blake, et.al, 2006).

A few years before covid-19 became a worldwide pandemic, the tourism sector in Indonesia had become the second foreign exchange contributor after CPO. This is calculated based on the flow of tourists entering Indonesia from abroad, and the achievement is considered a success which has an impact on the government's policy at that time to make tourism the leading sector without reducing the role of other sectors. This means that other sectors are mutually supportive of the tourism sector. WTTC data shows that in 2015 the contribution of the tourism sector in 2014 amounted to Rp325,467 billion (3.2% of GDP), and in 2015 it increased by 6.0% to Rp345,102 billion. (Yakup, & Haryanto, 2019).

Increasing the number of tourists in a tourist destination can be achieved through the development or diversification of tourist attractions, the creation of tour packages or the implementation of cultural festivals that are packaged into tourism festivals. These three components do not stand alone but support each other in developing tourism in a destination. But basically, to attract tourists to visit a destination, the right tools are needed, tourism events such as cultural and community festivals are considered the main trigger to encourage many tourists to visit simultaneously at certain locations. Indonesia, which is rich in natural and socio-cultural diversity, is considered capable of making it the main capital for event celebrations into tourism festivals. In some places the event has become a tourist festival not only in the domestic scope but has become an international event, for example: Banyuwangi Etno Carnival, International Tour de Banyuwangi Ijen, Gandrung Sewu Festival, Ngopi Sepuluhewu (ten thousand) Festival, (Simanjuntak, et.al, 2018) and so on. In North Sulawesi Province there is one international festival that has been famous since 2008, namely the Tomohon International Flower Festival (TIFF). TIFF is a flower festival organized by the Tomohon government to support the harvest of flowers grown by the community and as part of a marketing event. Although this festival has not significantly impacted the welfare of farmers, meaning that the presence or absence of this festival has not had a significant impact on flower farmers in the city, (Kalele, & Rondonuwu, 2020).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Tourism**

Tourism is a multidimensional activity which involves many sectors of activity that support the development of tourism and multidisciplinary, also where it involves various scientific approaches in planning the development of tourist areas and attractions. In its development involves various interactions between tourism stakeholders, owners and managers of tourism, tourists, between local governments at the city, district, provincial and

state levels and involving entrepreneurs, (Law No. 10, Year 2009). Tourism is mentioned as a variety of human activities either carried out individually or in groups visiting certain tourist locations that are temporary in nature. Then people who do these activities are referred to as tourists. In addition, tourism is said to be a temporary activity of a group or a person to enjoy life through enjoying nature, social-culture in certain locations to restore balance and harmony and happiness, (Spillane, 1994; Pitana & Gayatri, 2005). Then tourism is mentioned as an activity that arises from the need for health and awareness of the surrounding environment to be preserved for the natural beauty of social-cultural communities, as a result of industrial development in general and massive transportation, as part of modern tourism. (Riani, 2021).

Thus, tourism is a contemporary symptom that arises due to the needs <sup>2</sup> of a person or group of people, to spend time looking for pleasure out of the daily routine of enjoying life, by learning to appreciate nature and social-culture by maintaining a balance caused by massive industrial development with the aim of environmental sustainability and its surroundings.

### **Tourism Event**

In increasing tourist visits to certain tourist destinations, tourism needs tools to help market its tourist attractions. One form of marketing model that is considered capable of moving people from one place to a tourist location is a tourism event. Tourism events have a strong selling point both domestically and internationally. From the event, tourist destinations with various tourist attractions, natural and social-cultural local communities can be recognized so that even though the event is only a few times carried out, it will result in the length of stay of tourists will increase along with the curiosity of tourists about the area where they visit. Event tourism can be developed through traditions, sports activities, culture, then religious rituals and various cultural celebrations, which are well packaged, (Pakarti, et al, 2017). Festivals or events can also be in the form of appearances of beauty or uniqueness of customs, nature, and regional potential that are professionally packaged to serve as tourist attractions and displayed to be enjoyed by many people, (Simanjuntak, et.al, 2018). Meanwhile, Andriani, (2018) and Jannah, et.al, (2014), states that events require the concept of planning, development and marketing in developing resources in a destination, as well as creating an image on tourist attractions. Compared to Getz, et.al, (2010) stated that it takes uniqueness in which there is style, hospitality besides the creation of symbols that reflect the image, the excitement of a festival, a concrete thematic and not forgetting the originality of the event, it will be factors that contribute significantly to a tourism event. (Getz, et.al, 2010). Thus, event tourism is a tourism festival, which raises themes that are originality owned by local communities, then planned, developed and packaged professionally to be displayed as an event, <sup>1</sup> to attract tourists or visitors to come to tourist destinations.

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

The method used in this study was to conduct a survey then to determine the sample using purposive sampling, with consideration of the research time then the respondents were taken as many as 100 people, representatives of each level of staff who work according to the managerial level at the inn in Tomohon City. The number of inns is 3 inns that have hotel star status (\*). The three hotels are Grand Master Hotel (\*\*\*), Hotel Villa Emitta and Gardenia Country (\*\*). Indeed in Tomohon there cannot be 4 and 5 star hotels, there are still dominated by 3 stars (\*\*\*). The choice of the two three-star hotels is because they are quite popular in the city of Tomohon. The instrument used in data collection is an attitude scale, with intervals of 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (undecided), 4 (agree) and 5 (strongly agree), (Boone, 2012). To measure the impact of the implementation of the Flower Festival on the occupancy rate of lodging, simple linear regression analysis was used, while specifically to test the hypothesis, the F-test analysis tool was used.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The first Flower Festival in Tomohon City was held in 2006 in January. The form of activities is only in the form of ordinary ceremonies, this is made because of the habits of people who used to plant flowers. The type of flower that is usually planted by the local community is chrysanthemum. It is recognized that the location of Tomohon city is at an altitude of  $\leq 900 - 1100$  meters above sea level, then flanked by three volcanic mountains namely Mount Lokon, Mount Mahawu and Mount Tampusu, so that it has fertile agricultural land, allowing people in the area to rely more on life from agriculture, including flower farmers. The ceremonial parade was initially held twice in 2006, in January and again in August. The model was only vehicles owned by the local community, and decorated with flowers, followed by *Bendi* (local traditional transport).

Furthermore, by the Tomohon City Government, flowers are used as one of the identities to promote tourism in Tomohon City, because flowers have become a cultural lifestyle in people's lives in general. In addition, seeing the huge public interest in this parade, as well as referring to the blueprint for the acceleration of tourism development of North Sulawesi Province and in accordance with the grand strategy of Tomohon City, the Tomohon City Government took the initiative to organize the Tournament of Flowers event in 2008, because it was considered to have a positive impact on the community's economy.

After that, the Tomohon city government set this celebration as an international agenda with the name Tomohon International Flower Festival (TIFF). Until 2018 before the Covid-19 pandemic, according to data from the Tomohon City Tourism Office reported that the commercial value of this activity was quite significant, the results of the implementation of this flower event showed an economic turnover value of Rp. 202,610,515,000. This means that this activity has a good economic impact on the surrounding community, including farmers and flower sellers in Tomohon City. In 2020, Tiff was canceled, which affected the number of local and foreign tourist visits. The sluggishness of this event lasted until the end of 2022, then the event was held again in 2023. However, after the pandemic, does the TIFF event still have a positive impact on accommodation occupancy in the city?



Figure1. Participants from the Middle East (2024)

Source: <https://eventdaerah.kemendagri.go.id/detail-event/tomohon-international-flower-festival-2>

The following are the results of research<sup>4</sup> obtained from accommodation managers related to the implementation of flower festival. Table 1 shows the results of measuring the validity of the questionnaire, especially variable X,<sup>2</sup> where for this variable the number of questions is 7 questions, with 100 respondents. The<sup>17</sup> results show that the average value of r count for the 7 questions<sup>1</sup> greater than r table (r count > r table) in this case r table 0.196. Thus, these questions are declared valid. 1:

Table 1. Validity Test of Variable X (TIFF event)

Indicators (X)	R-count	R-table 5%	Results
X <sup>1</sup>	0,680	0,195	Valid
X <sup>2</sup>	0,707		
X <sup>3</sup>	0,418		
X <sup>4</sup>	0,829		
X <sup>5</sup>	0,671		
X <sup>6</sup>	0,829		
X <sup>7</sup>	0,829		

Source: processed data.

Where out of seven questions for variable X (TIFF event) is valid because the obtained correlation coefficient value (R-count) of each variable exceed<sup>11</sup> the critical correlation value of 0.195. Furthermore, for reliability, it can be seen that when Cronbach's alpha value of 0.61 to 0.80 is declared reliable, while in this variable X, Cronbach's alpha value is 0.782, so it can be said that variable x is reliable. As for variable Y (occupancy rate) for the validity test, the value is perfect, namely 1 for every 4 questions, as shown in table 2.

**Table 2. Validity Test of Variable Y (Occupancy Rate)**

Indicators (Y)	R-count	R-table 5%	Result
Y <sup>1</sup>	1,000		
Y <sup>2</sup>	1,000	0,195	Valid
Y <sup>3</sup>	1,000		
Y <sup>4</sup>	1,000		

Source: processed data.

All R count results exceed the r table threshold. Furthermore, for the reliability test, the same value of 1 also exceeds Cronbahr's alpha value. Where the Cronbahr's Alpha value of 0.6 is still below the reliability test value, so this variable is declared very reliable.

The impact of the interest festival on the occupancy rate of the inn the analytical tool used is simple linear regression. In this decision making in the simple linear regression test can refer to the things below, namely: If the significant value <0.05 means that variable X has an effect on variable Y, if the significant value > 0.05 means that variable X has no effect on variable Y.

**Table 3. Simple Linear Regression Analyses**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.414	1.345		1.051	.296
	TIFF	.507	.045	.748	11.160	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: TH

Source: processed data with SPSS (2024)

Based on the data above, it shows that the significant value of the coefficients table obtained significant value of 0.001 <0.05 Y is the occupancy rate while X is TIFF  $Y = 1.414 + 0.507x$  so it can be concluded that variable X (TIFF) has an effect on variable Y (occupancy rate), meaning that any change in variable X (TIFF) by 1 score will cause a change in variable Y (occupancy) by 1.414 scores, so any increase in X (TIFF) will cause an increase in Y (occupancy rate, and vice versa any decrease in X (TIFF) will cause a decrease in Y (occupancy rate).

**Table 4. F Test Results**

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	80.590	1	80.590	124.552	<.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	63.410	98	.647		
	Total	144.000	99			

a. Dependent Variable: TH

b. Predictors: (Constant), TIFF

Source: processed data with SPSS (2024)

From the data in the table shows that the value of F count = 124.552 with a significant level of  $0.001 < 0.05$ , thus the influence of variable X (TIFF) on variable Y (Occupancy Rate) can be said to be very influential.

In knowing the magnitude of the contribution of the independent variable in explaining the behavior of the dependent variable, the t statistical test is carried out. The use of simple linear regression usually uses the independent variable as a tool to predict as well as explain the dependent variable. In this study to analyze the t count was taken from the coefficient of the F test results. In this case that the t value is  $11.160 > t_{table} 1, 98447$ . So it can be explained that the flower festival significantly affects the occupancy rate of lodging in Tomohon city. Thus that each variable in the flower festival (X) tested at TIFF has an influence on the occupancy rate.

### CONCLUSION

The results showed that the Tomohon International Flower Festival had an impact on the occupancy rate of lodging in Tomohon City where the significant value of the coefficients table obtained a significant value of  $0.001 < 0.05$ . Y is Occupancy Rate while X is TIFF. The result is  $Y = 1.414 + 0.507x$  so it can be concluded that variable X (TIFF) has a positive effect on variable Y (Occupancy Rate). That any change in variable X (TIFF) by 1 score will cause a change in variable Y (Occupancy Rate) by 1.414 scores, so that any increase in X (TIFF) will cause an increase in Y (Occupancy Rate), and vice versa any decrease in X (TIFF) will cause a decrease in Y (Occupancy Rate). The greater the constant value of A (Tomohon International Flower Festival), the more the coefficient value of B (Lodging Occupancy Rate) will increase. It can be concluded that with the Tomohon international flower festival event, it is very influential on the occupancy rate of lodging in Tomohon City. Suggestions for the city government to maintain this event but need to be increased again on a larger scale of delegate invitations, besides that access to additional tourist attractions should always be improved, so that tourists who come have alternatives to visit destination spots in the city of Tomohon and its surroundings. Because this event is part of marketing, it is an opportunity for tourists to visit to enjoy various other tourist attractions.

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