

# City Branding Performance Analysis of “Flower City” to Increase the Tourist Visit Interest in Tomohon City

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## Abstract

Tomohon City is a city known as “Kota Bunga” or Flower City as a tourist city located in North Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of Tomohon City in 2021, as many as 75% of tourists stated that they were interested in visiting this city because of the city branding as “Flower City”. However, only around 60% of tourists are satisfied with the quality of its tourism services and facilities. This research aims to analyze the performance of city branding of Tomohon City whether it is in line with expectations according to tourists' assessments so that indicator results are able to be improved and maintained. This research was conducted in Tomohon City, North Sulawesi Province, consisted of two hundred respondents from among tourists to fill out the questionnaire and five respondents from the government and stakeholders for interviews through the sampling technique, namely purposive sampling. The method in this research used Importance Performance analysis, which was then analyzed in the Importance Performance Matrix based on the Cartesian quadrant. The results of this research are based on the importance of performance matrix. Tourism potential indicators are the indicators in quadrant 1, which are considered the most important but have not shown performance that satisfies visitors, causing them to be a priority for improvement. Meanwhile, the attractiveness indicator is in quadrant 2, which means that this indicator is considered important and able to satisfy visitors. The city atmosphere and accommodation indicators are included in quadrant 3 where the performance level of both indicators is low and is considered very unimportant. City physical indicators and community openness are included in quadrant 4 where these indicators are considered unimportant enough and are not expected but have high performance.

*Keywords:* city branding; importance performance analysis; interested visit, tomohon city

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## 1. Introduction

The tourism sector is currently a sector that is a large source of income for the government in each region (Badurina & Frleta, 2021; Çakar, 2023; Kim & Lee, 2022; Siakwah et al., 2020). Therefore, the government is trying to encourage every region in Indonesia to advance and promote the tourism sector. This includes the government in North Sulawesi province, which continues to strive for encouraging the development of the tourism sector in the regions, one of which is in Tomohon City. This city, known as “Flower City”, is a tourist city located in North Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. In recent years, the local government has attempted to increase tourist visits to this city through various city branding strategies. City branding refers to a city strategy created by stakeholders to form a city identity in order to market all things related to the city, such as activities, culture, culinary and tourism (Gómez et al., 2018).

According to data from the Tomohon City Tourism Office in 2021, the number of tourist visits to this city has increased by 20% compared to 2020, reaching around 350.000 visitors. However, this increase does not fully reflect the real tourism potential of Tomohon City. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of Tomohon City in 2021, as many as 75% of tourists stated that they were interested in visiting this city because of the city branding of “Flower City”. However, only around 60% of tourists are satisfied with the quality of tourism services and facilities in this city. Moreover, only 50% of tourists think that promotions and information about tourism in Tomohon City are good. Therefore, it is important for the government and related stakeholders to analyze the performance of the “Flower City” city branding so that the government can design and implement a more efficient and effective city branding program.

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The analysis related to the performance of the “Flower City” city branding in Tomohon City utilized the Importance Performance Analysis (IPA) method, which is expected to provide useful information for the government and related stakeholders in formulating more effective strategies in increasing tourist visits to Tomohon City. In this way, Tomohon City tourism can develop sustainably, providing significant benefits to the economy and welfare of the local community.

The Importance Performance Analysis (IPA) method is a reliable method for measuring city branding performance by considering two main factors, namely importance and performance (Tjipono, 2016). Importance Performance Analysis (IPA) can be used to measure consumer expectations for a brand or marketing program and assess the performance of a brand or program (Jou & Day, 2021; Kim & Lee, 2022; Lee et al., 2021; Luo et al., 2022; Phadermrod et al., 2019; Saviera et al., 2022). Several previous studies have been carried out to measure the performance of city branding using IPA methods and multivariate analysis (Bi et al., 2019; Boley et al., 2017; Esmailpour et al., 2020), including a study that examined the role of city branding on interest in returning to Malang City, East Java, which found that the image of Malang city was able to show good city branding and it is the most influential factor for tourists to return to Malang City. However, there are several factors, namely tourist attractions and promotions that need to be improved to achieve optimal performance (Mujihestia, 2018). Similar research found that low performance tourism attributes were attractions and road access (Irawati, 2019). The results of other research by (Utomo et al., 2022) found that city branding influences the decision to visit and also has a direct influence on interest in revisiting. In research regarding the Losari tourist area, Makassar City, it was found that the image of the tourist attraction needs to be improved. Besides, the cost and attraction factors have satisfied visiting tourists (Maesar et al., 2022). Similar research by Ikasari & Farida (2017) also found that customer service at tourist attractions related to handling complaints is still lacking, and maintenance of tourist attractions is still low.

## 2. Research Methods and Materials

This research was conducted in Tomohon City, North Sulawesi Province. The population in this research involved visitors who had visited tourism destination in Tomohon City in the period from January 2022 to January 2023. The sampling technique in this research was Non-Probability Sampling with the sampling technique used was purposive sampling. The number of samples in this research used the theory by Roscoe in Sekaran & Bougie (2016), which states that a sample size of more than 30 and less than 500 is the most appropriate for research, so the researcher determined a sample of 200 samples, which was added with 5 respondents in interviews from government elements and stakeholders. In this research, the method used is a quantitative research method (Sugiyono, 2017, 2019) using the Importance Performance Analysis (IPA). The Importance Performance Analysis (IPA) method proposed by Tjipono (2016) states that it aims to determine the correlation between consumer perceptions and what should be the priorities for the products/services being developed. This IPA method functions to display information related to factors that indicate expectations, performance and priorities, which can be used to assist in proposals for performance improvement.

In this IPA method, each respondent will be asked to be willing to assess the level of interest and performance of the company, then the data were analyzed based on the following stages:

- a) Determining the level of suitability between importance and performance level of each indicator to be studied by comparing the performance scores with the importance scores.
- b) Analyzing the quadrants by the average assessment of the level of importance and performance for each indicator that were calculated.
- c) Calculating the average assessment of the level of importance and performance for all attributes.
- d) After all the weights of the performance and importance indicators are accompanied by the average performance and importance values, then analyzing on the Importance-Performance Matrix based on the Cartesian quadrant, where the x-axis represents expectations/perceptions, while the y-axis represents performance (Rahardipha et al., 2016). The explanation of the Importance-Performance Matrix is as follows on Table 1.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Respondent Data

There were 200 respondents in this study who were visitors to tourist attractions in Tomohon City as well as interviews with stakeholders, including the Tomohon City Government, tourist attraction owners, and the community.

**Table 1.** Cartesian quadrant

<p><b>Quadrant I: Top Priority (Concentrate Here)</b> This quadrant consists of several factors or indicators that are considered important or that are most expected by consumers. However, the performance of these factors is considered unsatisfactory so that related parties must optimize resource allocation so that the performance of the factors/indicators in this quadrant increases.</p>	<p><b>Quadrant II: Maintain Achievement (Keep Up the Good Work)</b> This quadrant consists of several factors or indicators that are considered important and are expected to become factors or indicators that support consumer satisfaction, so that related parties are obliged to maintain the performance of these factors or indicators.</p>
<p><b>Quadrant III: Low Priority</b> This quadrant consists of factors or indicators that are considered to have a low level of perception or performance and are considered very unimportant by the consumers, so that related parties do not need to make these factors or indicators to be a priority or give these factors more attention.</p>	<p><b>Quadrant IV: Excessive (Possible Overkill)</b> This quadrant consists of factors or indicators that are considered is unimportant enough and is not expected enough by consumers, so related parties should allocate costs to other factors or indicators that have a higher priority.</p>

### 3.2. Research Data Processing Results

#### 3.2.1. Conformity Level

**Table 2.** Results of Conformity Level

Indicator	Total Importance	Mean Importance	Total Performance	Mean Performance
City Atmosphere	597	2.985	568	2.84
City Physical Attributes	596	2.98	614	3.07
Tourism Potential	602	3.010	591	2.955
Attractiveness	620	3.1	607	3.035
Community	584	2.92	618	3.09
Accommodation	583	2.915	596	2.98
	3582		3594	

Source: SPSS data processing results

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Conformity level} &= (\text{Total Importance} / \text{Total Performance}) \times 100\% \\
 &= (3582 / 3594) \times 100\% \\
 &= 1.00
 \end{aligned}$$

According to the results of this research, the level of suitability and expectation is 1.

#### 3.2.2. GAP Analysis

**Table 3.** GAP Analysis

Indicator	Importance	Performance	GAP
City Atmosphere	2.985	2.840	-0.145
City Physical Attributes	2.980	3.070	0.090
Tourism Potential	3.010	2.955	-0.055
Attractiveness	3.100	3.035	-0.065
Community	2.920	3.090	0.170
Accommodation	2.915	2.980	0.065

Source: SPSS Data Processed Results

Based on the results of table 3, it was found that there are three indicators that show negative numbers, namely indicators of city atmosphere, tourism potential, and attractiveness. These indicators show that there is dissatisfaction between the

actual performance and expectations of visitors regarding the atmosphere of the city, tourism potential, and attractions that have been implemented or already exist in the Tomohon City. Based on these two results, including a short interview, it can be analyzed that the atmosphere indicators of the Tomohon City have not yet shown the City Branding identity of “Flower City”, where only a few places in Tomohon City that have been able to show an identity as a city of flowers. In this case, the Tomohon City government together with the community must be able to create a city atmosphere as expected, through showing the beauty of the various kinds of flowers in Tomohon City. The tourism potential indicator is one of the indicators whose performance has not reached visitors' expectations which shows the City Branding identity of “Flower City” as currently the places that are potential tourist attractions in the Tomohon City have not been managed well and optimally. The Attraction of Tomohon City does not yet show its identity as the “Flowers City”. Besides, visitors to Tomohon City feel that the attraction of Tomohon City is not only about flowers that can grow abundantly, but there are also several factors, namely natural conditions and weather which are the attraction of Tomohon City.

The results in table 3 are also a mapping of the performance and expectations of visitors in Tomohon City. From these results, a matrix will be formed consisting of four quadrants, each of which describes the priority scale in taking policies in the form of improving performance or maintaining performance.

### 3.2.3. Test the Difference

**Table 4.** Difference Test

		Paired Samples Test							
		Paired Differences							
				Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Importance - Performance	-.01000	.11739	.04792	-.13319	.11319	-.209	5	.843

Source: SPSS Data Processed Results

Based on the results from Table 4, the results obtained are based on the conditions where Sig < alpha 0.05 means  $H_a$  is accepted, while the different test results from this research are sig 0.0843 > alpha 0.05, meaning  $H_a$  is rejected, which means there is no difference between importance and performance.

### 3.2.4. Importance Performance Analysis (IPA) Matrix

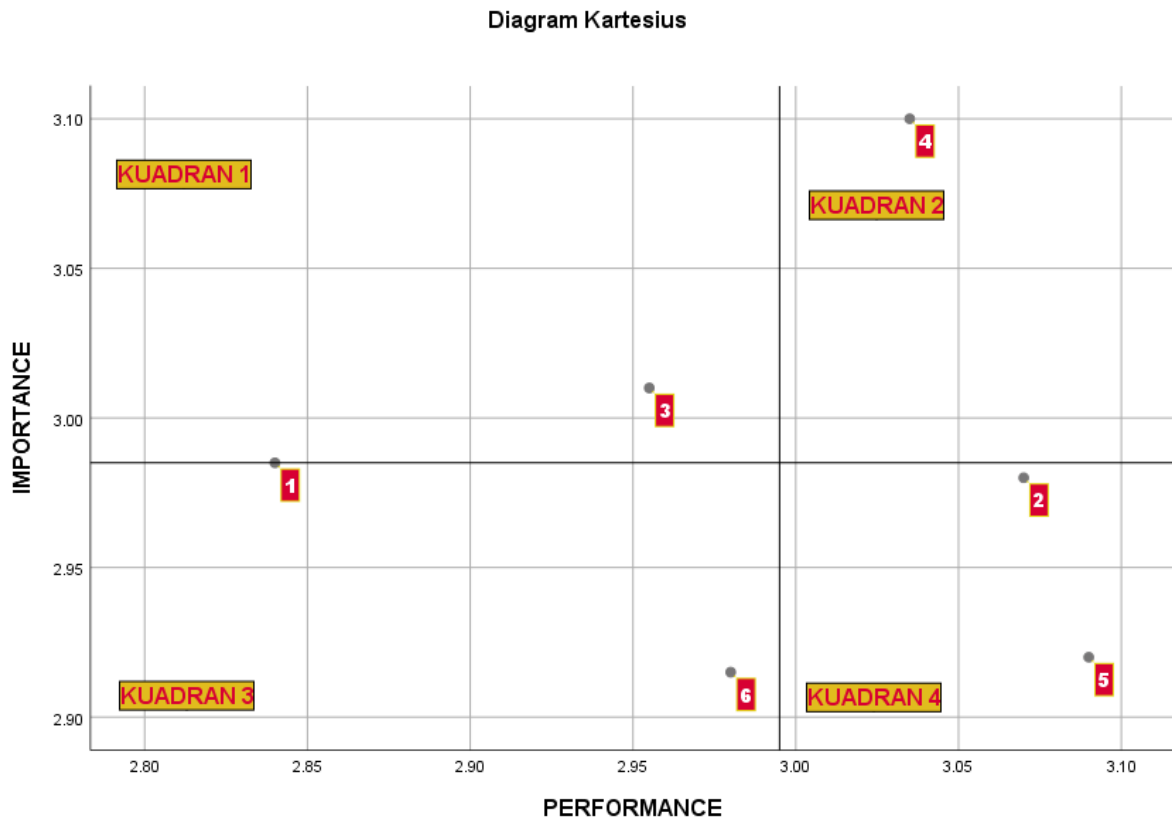
From Figure 1, it can be interpreted as follows:

#### Quadrant 1

Quadrant 1 shows the indicators that are considered important or most expected by a visitor, where the performance of these indicators is considered unsatisfactory. Indicators included in quadrant 1 is indicator of Tourism Potential in Tomohon City. It can be stated that the Tourism Potential indicator is an indicator that is considered important for Tomohon City. Visitors are interested in visiting Tomohon City because of the tourism potential it has, but actual performance has not been able to meet visitor expectations. Thus, the tourism potential indicator is a priority indicator that must be improved by the Tomohon City government. The Tomohon City government must optimize tourism potential and synergize with stakeholders, in this case the private sector and the community. These results are in line with research from Mujihestia (2018), which found that tourist attraction factors are priority factors that need to be improved.

#### Quadrant 2

Quadrant 2 shows indicators that are considered important and are considered capable of meeting visitors' expectations, so that related parties are obliged to maintain these indicators. The indicators included in quadrant 2 is the Attractiveness indicator. The Tomohon City government must be able to maintain the attractiveness of Tomohon City. Based on the results of a short interview, the attractiveness of Tomohon City is its natural conditions, cool weather, as well as religious and cultural diversity. Stakeholders, in this case is the government, private sector and society, must be able to continue to maintain the attractiveness of Tomohon City so that this characteristic does not disappear and will always attract people to visit. These results prove research from Irawati (2019), which found that the attractiveness of a place is an important indicator and must always be maintained and developed.



**Figure 1.** Cartesian diagram

**Quadrant 3**

Quadrant 3 shows indicators that are considered to have a low level of performance and are considered not very important by visitors. Indicators included in quadrant 3 are City Atmosphere and Accommodation. Indicators of City Atmosphere are considered to perform poorly and are less important for visitors because the atmosphere in Tomohon City is not conducive, where the main roads are small, causing the traffic jams often occur, and parking facilities are inadequate. Accommodation in Tomohon City is still lacking, and does not yet have 4 Star certified accommodation. As a result, it is considered that accommodation performance is still lacking, and is considered unimportant because visitors to Tomohon City do not use this city as a place to stay, and prefer to stay in Manado City, which is only a short distance away, approximately 45 minutes from Tomohon City. In this situation, City Atmosphere indicators and accommodation need to be improved but are not a priority to pay attention to. This research also proves the research from Irawati (Irawati et al., 2019), which found that facilities including accommodation do not need to be a priority in the development of the Prambanan temple area. This research also shows differences in results from research conducted by Maesar et al. (2022) who found that accommodation is a priority in developing sustainable creative tourism in the Losari Makassar area.

**Quadrant 4**

Quadrant 4 shows the indicators that are considered is not important enough and is not expected enough by visitors, so the relevant parties should allocate costs to other factors or indicators that have a higher priority. Indicators included in quadrant 4 are City Physical Attributes and Community Openness. Based on the results of this research, City Physics and Community Openness are the indicators that are not important enough and their performance is not expected. The Tomohon City government should allocate costs to other factors or indicators that have a higher priority. The results of this study are different from research from Gómez et al. (2018) who found that Openness and Community Friendliness become important indicators in city branding of European cities.

#### 4. Conclusion

According to the result of this research, it can be concluded that quadrant 1 in Tomohon City means the Tourism Potential indicator that is considered most important but the performance of this indicator has not been assessed optimally by the visitors. Quadrant 2 means the Attraction indicator is an important indicator and is considered to meet visitor expectations. Quadrant 3 of City Atmosphere and Accommodation indicators mean that these have low performance and are considered very unimportant for visitors. Last, quadrant 4 of the Physical and Community Openness mean these indicators are satisfactory but are considered not to be a priority.

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