

Factors Influencing Visitors Willingness to Pay at Situtirtamarta Nature Tourism

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Abstract

Although willingness to pay (WTP) has been widely examined in tourism research, empirical evidence regarding the factors influencing visitors' WTP at the Situtirtamarta Nature Tourism Destination in Purbalingga Regency remains limited. This study analyzed the determinants of visitors' WTP at the destination. A quantitative approach with a survey design was employed, involving 100 respondents selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed through binary logistic regression to assess the effects of ten independent variables on the probability of visitors' willingness to pay. The findings demonstrated that the regression model was statistically significant overall. Partially, travel cost, length of visit, occupation, income level, and visit frequency significantly influenced visitors' WTP, whereas gender, age, years of education, marital status, and number of dependents had no significant effects. These results indicate that visitors' WTP is primarily shaped by economic conditions and visit-related characteristics rather than demographic factors. This study extends the tourism economics literature by providing empirical evidence on the determinants of WTP in a nature-based tourism context. The findings also provide practical implications for tourism

managers and local governments in developing appropriate admission-pricing policies, improving service quality, and supporting the sustainable management of the Situtirtamarta tourism destination. Further research may examine psychological factors and perceived destination quality as additional determinants of visitors' WTP.

Keywords: Binary Logistic Regression; Economic Valuation; Nature-Based Tourism; Tourism Pricing; Willingness to Pay

INTRODUCTION

Economic growth is a key development objective pursued by countries around the world, including Indonesia. According to Statistics Indonesia (BPS), Indonesia's economic growth reached 5.03% in 2024, slightly lower than the 5.05% recorded in 2023. Economic growth is driven by various sectors, one of the most important being tourism. The tourism sector makes a substantial contribution to Indonesia's economy by generating foreign exchange earnings, reducing unemployment, increasing local government revenue (Pendapatan Asli Daerah/PAD), improving community income, and ultimately promoting national economic growth. This is consistent with Indonesia's Tourism Law No. 10 of 2009, which states that tourism development should enhance national welfare and prosperity, create business opportunities and employment, support and coordinate regional development, increase national income, promote and utilize Indonesia's tourism attractions, strengthen national pride, and foster international friendship.

Indonesia's tourism sector has experienced rapid growth due to the country's abundant and diverse tourism resources. Tourism development has been implemented at both the national and regional levels. Central Java Province possesses considerable potential for tourism development across various destinations and sectors (Fauzi, 2004). The province is characterized by diverse local cultures and unique indigenous wisdom distributed across its regencies, municipalities, and villages (Ashoer, 2013). Furthermore, the geographical diversity of Central Java, ranging from lowland and highland areas to coastal regions, provides a wide variety of tourism attractions. Purbalingga Regency is one of the regencies in Central Java that has actively developed its tourism destinations to attract visitors. As presented in Table 1, Purbalingga ranks third in the number of tourist attractions among regencies in the region, following Banyumas and Cilacap.

Table 1. Number of Tourism Attraction in Purbalingga Regency, 2024

No	Regency	Number of Tourism Attraction
1.	Banjarnegara	35
2.	Purbalingga	40
3.	Banyumas	80
4.	Cilacap	48
5.	Kebumen	14
Total		217

Purbalingga is located on the slopes of Mount Slamet and is endowed with abundant natural resources, including waterfalls, springs, rivers, cliffs, and rolling hills, which have been developed and revitalized to attract both domestic and international tourists. Its rich cultural heritage and diverse traditions also contribute to increasing regional income through tourism destinations managed by regional-owned enterprises (BUMD), village-owned enterprises (BUMDes), tourism awareness groups (Pokdarwis), and private sector stakeholders. These achievements are the result of collaborative efforts among various stakeholders and active community participation in promoting development, improving public welfare, and reducing unemployment (Zahran et al., 2025). This commitment is reflected in several notable accomplishments, including participation in the 2024 Indonesian Tourism Village Award (Anugerah Desa Wisata Indonesia/ADWI), organized by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia. Three tourism villages from Purbalingga were selected for the 2024 ADWI, namely Umah Wayang Selakambang Tourism Village, Lembah Asri Serang Tourism Village, and Situtirtamarta Karangcegak Tourism Village.

Economic growth is one of the primary indicators of a country's development success, including in Indonesia. According to Statistics Indonesia (BPS), the Indonesian economy grew by 5.03% in 2024, slightly lower than the 5.05% growth recorded in 2023. One of the sectors contributing to national economic growth is tourism, through its role in generating foreign exchange earnings, increasing local government revenue (PAD), creating employment opportunities, and empowering local communities. In accordance with Law No. 10 of 2009 on Tourism, tourism development is directed toward improving public welfare, expanding employment opportunities, and promoting sustainable regional development. In recent years, both the central and local governments have continuously developed nature-based tourism destinations to enhance tourism competitiveness while preserving environmental sustainability (Hasiani, 2013).

Central Java Province is one of Indonesia's regions with significant nature-based tourism potential due to its diverse landscapes, cultural heritage, and local wisdom. Purbalingga Regency is among the regions actively developing its tourism sector through community-based tourism management. One of its leading attractions is the Situtirtamarta Nature Tourism Destination, located in Karangcegak Village, Kutasari District. Managed by the 'Tirta Mandiri Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), the destination has been recognized as one of the most popular tourist attractions in Central Java.

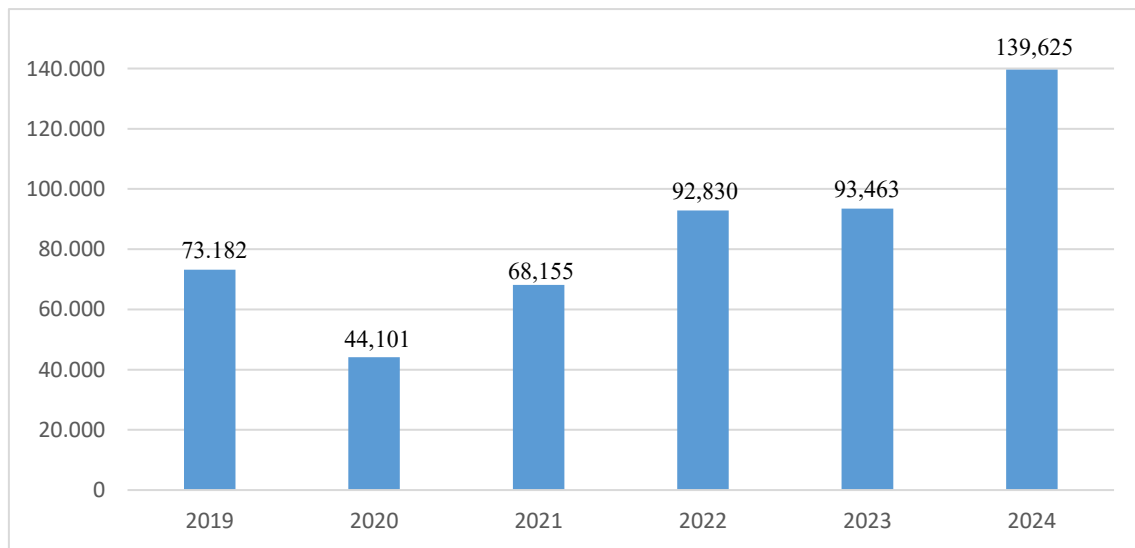


Figure 1. Number of Visitors to Situtirtamarta Tourist Attraction, 2019–2024

As shown in figure 1 although tourist arrivals have steadily increased following the COVID-19 pandemic, the destination continues to face several management challenges, including limited infrastructure, inadequate public facilities, insufficient cleanliness, and suboptimal welfare of tourism workers. These conditions highlight the need for sustainable destination development supported by long-term financing without compromising environmental carrying capacity (Fauzi, 2004).

From the perspective of environmental economics, nature-based tourism destinations constitute public goods whose benefits are largely not traded in the market, making their economic value difficult to measure directly (Nurulita et al., 2025). Therefore, economic valuation is required to estimate the benefits perceived by society. One of the most widely applied approaches is Willingness to Pay (WTP), which refers to the maximum amount an individual is willing to pay to obtain or maintain the quality of an environmental good or service (Nabela et al., 2024). Information on visitors' WTP is essential for

formulating entrance fee policies, allocating conservation funds, and improving the quality of tourism services in a sustainable manner (Ashoer, 2013).

Previous studies have identified various factors influencing visitors' Willingness to Pay at tourism destinations. Yunita and Hasri (2022) found that travel cost significantly influences tourists' willingness to pay. Pranata and Karmeli (2024) reported that longer lengths of stay are associated with higher WTP values. Meanwhile, Cardias and Fandeli (2021), Simarmata et al.(2024), and Annisa & Harini (2017) emphasized the importance of socioeconomic characteristics, such as occupation, income, and visit frequency, in determining WTP. Other studies have also examined the effects of age, gender, educational attainment, marital status, and household size on WTP, producing mixed results across different tourism destinations. These inconsistent findings suggest that the determinants of WTP are highly dependent on destination characteristics and visitors' socioeconomic conditions.

Nevertheless, studies comprehensively examining the influence of socioeconomic characteristics and visitation behavior on visitors' Willingness to Pay at the Situtirtamarta Nature Tourism Destination remain limited. Most previous studies have focused on other tourism destinations, making their findings difficult to generalize to community-based nature tourism in Purbalingga Regency. Furthermore, few studies have simultaneously examined ten explanatory variables travel cost, length of stay, gender, age, educational attainment, occupation, income, marital status, household size, and visit frequency—using a binary logistic regression approach. This research gap provides an important basis for generating more comprehensive empirical evidence regarding the factors influencing visitors' willingness to pay.

The novelty of this study lies in its simultaneous analysis of ten determinants of visitors' Willingness to Pay at the Situtirtamarta Nature Tourism Destination using an economic valuation approach based on a binary logistic regression model. The study integrates both socioeconomic characteristics and visitation behavior into a single analytical framework, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of WTP. Theoretically, this research is grounded in the concept of natural resource economic valuation, particularly the Willingness to Pay approach, which posits that individuals' willingness to pay is influenced by their economic conditions, demographic characteristics, and perceptions of the benefits derived from a tourism destination (Syavira & Priyadi, 2022).

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to analyze the factors influencing visitors' Willingness to Pay at the Situtirtamarta Nature Tourism Destination in Kutasari District, Purbalingga Regency. The findings are expected to enrich the literature on tourism economic valuation and provide practical insights for local governments and tourism managers in formulating entrance fee policies, improving service quality, and promoting the sustainable management of tourism destinations.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a survey method to analyze the factors influencing visitors' Willingness to Pay (WTP) for the development of the Situtirtamarta Nature Tourism Destination. A quantitative approach was selected because the study aimed to examine the relationship between visitors' socioeconomic characteristics and their willingness to pay an additional fee to support improvements in the quality of the tourism destination. The research was conducted in January 2026 at the Situtirtamarta Nature Tourism Destination, located in Karangcegak Village, Kutasari District, Purbalingga Regency, Central Java Province, Indonesia.

This study adopted an explanatory research design with a survey approach to investigate the effects of multiple independent variables on visitors' Willingness to Pay through hypothesis testing. The independent variables consisted of travel cost, length of stay, gender, age, years of education, occupation, income level, marital status, household size, and visit frequency. The dependent variable was visitors' Willingness to Pay (WTP) for improvements in the quality of the Situtirtamarta Nature Tourism Destination. The relationships among the variables were analyzed using a binary logistic regression model because the dependent variable was dichotomous, representing visitors who were willing to pay (1) and those who were not willing to pay (0).

Participants and Sampling Technique

The study population comprised all visitors to the Situtirtamarta Nature Tourism Destination during the study period. Respondents were selected using a non-probability sampling technique with purposive sampling, in which participants were chosen based on predetermined criteria to ensure their relevance to the research objectives (Asrulla et al., 2023). Eligible respondents were visitors who were currently visiting or had visited the

destination, were at least 17 years of age, and were willing to complete the research questionnaire.

The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula, resulting in a minimum sample of 100 respondents. This sample size was considered adequate for conducting the statistical analyses required to examine the influence of the independent variables on visitors' Willingness to Pay.

Data Collection

The study utilized both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered directly to respondents at the study site (Ghozali, 2018). The questionnaire included items covering respondents' socioeconomic characteristics, visitation characteristics, and their Willingness to Pay for improving the quality of the tourism destination. Prior to data collection, the questionnaire was developed based on indicators relevant to the research variables and underwent content validity assessment to ensure its appropriateness for the study objectives.

Secondary data were obtained from official documents and publications issued by the Central Java Provincial Tourism Office, Statistics Indonesia (BPS) of Purbalingga Regency, and the Tirta Mandiri Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis). Data collection was conducted in several stages, including a literature review, questionnaire development, field data collection through questionnaire-assisted interviews, verification of questionnaire completeness, and data coding prior to statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using binary logistic regression because the dependent variable was dichotomous, distinguishing between visitors who were willing to pay ($WTP = 1$) and those who were not willing to pay ($WTP = 0$). This analytical approach was employed to identify the factors affecting the probability that visitors would be willing to pay an additional fee to support improvements in the quality of the tourism destination. Statistical analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics software.

The analytical procedure consisted of several stages. First, the Omnibus Test of Model Coefficients (Likelihood Ratio Test) was conducted to examine whether all independent variables jointly influenced the dependent variable (Sugiyono, 2022). Second, the Hosmer–Lemeshow Goodness-of-Fit Test was used to evaluate the adequacy of the

logistic regression model. Third, the Wald test was performed to assess the partial effect of each independent variable on visitors' Willingness to Pay. Subsequently, Nagelkerke's R^2 was used to evaluate the explanatory power of the model. Finally, Odds Ratios (Exp(B)) were calculated to interpret the likelihood of visitors being willing to pay based on changes in each independent variable. The results of these analyses were used to identify the determinants of visitors' Willingness to Pay and to provide recommendations for the sustainable management of the Situtirtamarta Nature Tourism Destination.

RESULTS

Data were analyzed using binary logistic regression to examine the effects of travel cost, length of stay, gender, age, years of education, occupation, income level, marital status, household size, and visit frequency on visitors' Willingness to Pay (WTP) at the Situtirtamarta Nature Tourism Destination. The dependent variable was dichotomized into two categories: visitors who were willing to pay (WTP = 1) and those who were not willing to pay (WTP = 0).

1. Model Significance Test (Omnibus Test)

Table 2. Result of Model Significance Test (Omnibus Test)

Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients				
		Chi-square	df	Sig.
Step 1	Step	77.866	10	.000
	Block	77.866	10	.000
	Model	77.866	10	.000

As shown in Table 2, the Omnibus Test of Model Coefficients produced a chi-square value of 77.866 with 10 degrees of freedom (df) and a significance value (p) of 0.000. Since the significance value is less than 0.05, the binary logistic regression model is statistically significant, indicating that the independent variables jointly have a significant relationship with the dependent variable.

2. Model Goodness of Fit Test (Hosmer and Lemeshow Test)

Table 3. Result of Model Goodness of Fit Test (Hosmer and Lemeshow Test)

Hosmer and Lemeshow Test			
Step	Chi-square	df	Sig.
1	12.242	8	.141

As shown in Table 3, the Hosmer–Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test produced a chi-square value of 12.242, with 8 degrees of freedom (df) and a significance value (p) of 0.141. Since the significance value is greater than 0.05, the model demonstrates a good fit to the observed data, indicating that the binary logistic regression model adequately fits the data and is appropriate for subsequent analyses.

3. Coefficient of Determination

Table 4. Coefficient of Determination

Model Summary			
Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	40.725 ^a	.541	.779
<i>a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 8 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.</i>			

As presented in Table 4, the Nagelkerke R^2 value is 0.779, while the Cox and Snell R^2 value is 0.541. These values indicate the explanatory power of the binary logistic regression model in accounting for the variation in the dependent variable based on the independent variables included in the study. In particular, the Nagelkerke R^2 value suggests that the model explains approximately 77.9% of the variation in visitors' Willingness to Pay (WTP).

4. Partial Significance Test (Wald Test)

Table 5. Result of the Partial Significance (Wald Test)

Variables in the Equation							
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 ^a	Travel Cost	.000	.000	5.195	1	.023	1.000
	Length of Stay	1.644	.604	7.411	1	.006	5.175
	Gender(1)	-.497	.935	.282	1	.595	.608
	Age	.013	.104	.015	1	.901	1.013
	Years of Education	-.147	.216	.462	1	.496	.863
	Occupation(1)	2.731	1.351	4.086	1	.043	15.352
	Income Level	.000	.000	5.246	1	.022	1.000
	Marital Status(1)	-1.572	1.504	1.092	1	.296	.208
	Number of Dependents	-.083	.492	.028	1	.866	.920
	Visit Frequency	.295	.140	4.472	1	.034	1.344
	Constant	-8.972	3.765	5.682	1	.017	.000
<i>a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Travel Cost, Length of Stay, Gender, Age, Years of Education, Occupation, Income Level, Marital Status, Number of Dependents, Visit Frequency.</i>							

The results of the partial significance test presented in Table 5 indicate that five variables have significance values below 0.05, namely travel cost ($p = 0.023$), length of stay ($p = 0.006$), occupation ($p = 0.043$), income level ($p = 0.022$), and visit frequency ($p = 0.034$). These findings indicate that these variables have a statistically significant effect on visitors' Willingness to Pay (WTP). In contrast, gender ($p = 0.595$), age ($p = 0.901$), years of education ($p = 0.496$), marital status ($p = 0.296$), and number of dependents ($p = 0.866$) have significance values greater than 0.05, indicating that they do not have a statistically significant effect on WTP.

Based on the estimated regression coefficients, the binary logistic regression model can be expressed as follows:

$$\ln\left(\frac{p}{1-p}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 BP + \beta_2 LK + \beta_3 JK + \beta_4 US + \beta_5 PNDKN + \beta_6 PKJ + \beta_7 PNDTN + \beta_8 SP + \beta_9 JT + \beta_{10} FK + \varepsilon_i \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

The $\text{Exp}(B)$ values represent the odds ratios, indicating the relative likelihood that visitors are willing to pay associated with each independent variable. The highest odds ratio was observed for occupation ($\text{Exp}(B) = 15.352$), followed by length of stay ($\text{Exp}(B) = 5.175$), while visit frequency had an odds ratio of 1.344. In contrast, gender, years of education, marital status, and number of dependents had odds ratios of less than 1, indicating a lower relative likelihood of visitors being willing to pay compared with their respective reference categories.

5. Divergent Findings

The results indicate that not all of the variables examined were significantly associated with Willingness to Pay (WTP). Specifically, gender, age, years of education, marital status, and number of dependents had significance values greater than 0.05, indicating that they did not have a statistically significant effect in the binary logistic regression model. These findings are presented as part of the study results and provide insight into the variation in the relationships among the variables included in the model.

DISCUSSION

1. Analysis and Interpretation of the Findings

This study aimed to identify the factors influencing visitors' Willingness to Pay (WTP) at the Situtirtamarta Nature Tourism Destination in Kutasari District, Purbalingga

Regency. The binary logistic regression analysis revealed that, of the ten variables examined, five had a statistically significant effect on WTP: travel cost, length of stay, occupation, income level, and visit frequency. In contrast, gender, age, years of education, marital status, and number of dependents did not have a statistically significant effect.

These findings suggest that visitors' decisions to pay an additional fee are influenced more by economic factors and tourism experiences than by demographic characteristics. In other words, visitors with greater financial capacity and more meaningful tourism experiences are more likely to contribute financially to improving the quality of the tourism destination.

Travel cost was found to have a significant effect on WTP. This finding indicates that visitors who incurred relatively high travel expenses were still willing to pay an additional fee, provided they perceived that the destination offered benefits and experiences commensurate with their expenditures. This result suggests that perceived value, rather than the amount of money already spent, plays a key role in shaping visitors' willingness to pay. Likewise, length of stay had a positive and statistically significant effect on WTP. The longer visitors spent enjoying the destination's facilities and attractions, the more likely they were to contribute financially to maintaining environmental quality and improving tourism services. This finding implies that longer visits reflect higher levels of visitor satisfaction and attachment to the destination, thereby encouraging support for its sustainable management.

Occupation also had a significant effect on WTP, with respondents employed in formal occupations exhibiting substantially higher odds of being willing to pay. This finding suggests that employment stability is closely associated with economic security and income certainty, which in turn influence individuals' ability to allocate financial resources for tourism activities and destination conservation.

Similarly, income level was found to significantly influence WTP. Visitors with higher incomes demonstrated a greater financial capacity to contribute additional funds toward improving the quality of the tourism destination. This finding confirms that economic capacity is a key determinant of visitors' willingness to pay, as it directly affects their purchasing power. Furthermore, visit frequency had a positive and significant effect on WTP. Visitors who had visited Situtirtamarta more frequently were more likely to develop stronger emotional attachment, accumulate more positive experiences, and gain a better

understanding of the importance of preserving the destination. Consequently, they were more willing to pay additional fees than first-time visitors.

Conversely, gender, age, years of education, marital status, and number of dependents did not significantly influence visitors' Willingness to Pay. These findings indicate that demographic characteristics alone are not necessarily reliable predictors of WTP. Instead, visitors' willingness to contribute financially is driven primarily by their tourism experiences, the perceived benefits obtained from the destination, and their economic capacity.

2. Comparison with Theory and Previous Studies

The findings of this study support environmental economics theory, which posits that Willingness to Pay (WTP) reflects individuals' preferences for the benefits derived from a tourism destination. The greater the perceived benefits, the higher visitors' willingness to contribute financially to support destination management and conservation. The significant effects of length of stay, occupation, income level, and visit frequency are consistent with the findings of Pranata and Karmeli (2024), Nurulita et al. (2025), Cardias and Fandeli (2021), Simarmata et al. (2024), Azizah and Cahyadi (2023), and Sanjaya (2019), all of whom reported that tourism experience and economic capacity increase visitors' likelihood of being willing to pay.

However, the findings regarding travel cost differ from those reported by Yunita and Hasri (2022). In the present study, higher travel costs did not reduce visitors' willingness to pay because respondents perceived that the benefits and quality of the tourism experience were commensurate with the expenses incurred. Moreover, gender, age, years of education, marital status, and number of dependents were not found to have statistically significant effects on WTP. These findings are partially consistent with those of Schmidt & Bijmolt (2020) but differ from the results reported by Pertiwi et al (2025) and Rangkuti et al (2023), particularly with respect to the effect of the number of dependents. Overall, the findings reinforce the view that economic capacity and tourism experience are more influential determinants of visitors' Willingness to Pay than demographic characteristics.

3. Research Implications

This study contributes theoretically by reinforcing the concept of Willingness to Pay (WTP) within the framework of environmental economics, demonstrating that individuals'

willingness to pay is influenced by perceived benefits, economic capacity, and tourism experience. From a practical perspective, the findings provide valuable insights for the management of the Situtirtamarta Nature Tourism Destination and local government authorities in formulating entrance fee policies, improving tourism facilities, and designing conservation programs that are aligned with visitors' characteristics. Furthermore, the results may serve as a reference for developing visitor participation-based conservation financing strategies to support the sustainable management of nature-based tourism destinations.

4. Research Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study has several limitations. First, it was conducted at a single tourism destination with a relatively limited sample size, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. Second, the quantitative survey approach relied on structured questionnaires, limiting the ability to explore visitors' perceptions and motivations in greater depth. Finally, the study focused primarily on socioeconomic characteristics and visitation-related factors, without considering other potential determinants of Willingness to Pay.

Future research is therefore encouraged to include multiple tourism destinations and larger sample sizes to improve the generalizability of the findings. Employing a mixed-methods approach would also provide a more comprehensive understanding of visitors' perceptions and decision-making processes. In addition, future studies should incorporate variables such as service quality, visitor satisfaction, perceived value, environmental concern, and tourist loyalty to develop a more comprehensive explanation of the factors influencing visitors' Willingness to Pay.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that visitors' Willingness to Pay (WTP) at the Situtirtamarta Nature Tourism Destination is influenced more by economic factors and visitation characteristics than by demographic characteristics. Factors related to economic capacity and tourism experience serve as the primary determinants of visitors' willingness to provide financial contributions to support improvements in destination quality and sustainable management. In contrast, visitors' demographic characteristics do not demonstrate a significant role in influencing their payment decisions. Therefore, the research objective of identifying the factors affecting visitors' Willingness to Pay has been achieved, providing

insights into the key aspects that require attention in the management of nature-based tourism destinations.

This study contributes to the development of tourism economics research, particularly in explaining Willingness to Pay behavior at nature-based tourism destinations through a binary logistic regression approach. The findings strengthen the understanding that economic capacity and visitation experience are important factors in shaping visitors' willingness to pay. From a practical perspective, the results can serve as a basis for tourism managers and local governments in developing management strategies, establishing appropriate pricing policies, and designing conservation programs and service improvements that align with visitor characteristics.

Future research is recommended to expand the scope of study locations across various tourism destinations to improve the generalizability of findings. In addition, subsequent studies may involve larger sample sizes and incorporate additional variables, such as service quality, satisfaction, loyalty, visit motivation, perceived value, and environmental concern. Combining quantitative and qualitative approaches is also recommended to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing visitors' Willingness to Pay.

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