



# DETERMINING THE POPULARITY OF ISLAND TOURIST DESTINATIONS USING GOOGLE TRENDS ANALYSIS

by

I Gusti Bagus Rai Utama<sup>1</sup>, I Wayan Ruspindi Junaedi<sup>2</sup>, PA Andiena Nindya Putri<sup>3</sup>, Ni Putu Dyah Krismawintari<sup>4</sup>, I Made Sumartana<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1,2,4</sup> Universitas Dhyana Pura, Bali, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup> ITB Stikom Bali, Bali, Indonesia

<sup>5</sup> Universitas Ngurah, Bali, Indonesia

Email: <sup>1</sup>[raiutama@undhirabali.ac.id](mailto:raiutama@undhirabali.ac.id), <sup>2</sup>[ruspindiunaedi@undhirabali.ac.id](mailto:ruspindiunaedi@undhirabali.ac.id), <sup>3</sup>[dinaputri1991@gmail.com](mailto:dinaputri1991@gmail.com),  
<sup>4</sup>[krismawintari@undhirabali.ac.id](mailto:krismawintari@undhirabali.ac.id), <sup>5</sup>[sumartana63@gmail.com](mailto:sumartana63@gmail.com)

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## ABSTRACT

*This study uses the Google Trends Tool to determine the popularity of four island tourist destinations in the world, namely Phuket, Bali, Hawaii, and Langkawi. The most popular tourist destinations are Hawaii, then Bali, then Phuket, and finally Langkawi. The results of the analysis show that from the beginning of 2020 to the end of 2021, almost all island tourist destinations in the world. Phuket destination is very popular for tourists who come from Thailand itself, Russia, Turkey, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Bali is very popular among tourists from Indonesia, the Netherlands, India, Australia, and Belgium. Hawaii is very popular among tourists from the United States itself, Japan, Canada, Brazil, and South Korea. While Langkawi is very popular among tourists who come from Malaysia itself, Singapore, Pakistan, Hong Kong, and Egypt. Limitations: The limitation of this study is that it only measures popularity based on the frequency of keyword searches on internet users who use the Google search engine only. For a more tangible measurement of popularity, you can use tools or applications that are located in certain tourist attraction areas, for example by synchronizing with the Google Map application.*

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## Corresponding Author:

I Gusti Bagus Rai Utama

Universitas Dhyana Pura, Bali, Indonesia

Email: [raiutama@undhirabali.ac.id](mailto:raiutama@undhirabali.ac.id)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the digital era, social media has experienced a very significant increase in the number of users, which has now become a trend in marketing communications in this decade. Social media is an online media, with its users can easily have access, share, and create content including blogs, social networks, wikis, forums and virtual worlds. Blogs, social networks, and wikis are the most common forms of social media used by people around the world and are becoming a new adaptation in accessing information (Maulana & Salsabila, 2020). Social media as a group of internet-based applications that build on ideological and technological foundations that can encourage users to access information available in the internet domain which is accessed by entering keywords so that search results will appear from various existing sources. The results of a study conducted by an expert (Kim et al., 2013) stated that while traveling, social media platforms such as Facebook have great potential to cause perceptions and also have an impact on experiences, building tourists' emotions during travel so that the experience has a diverse picture. for tourists on their way. This experience will be uploaded by tourists through various social media accounts they have to other social media users in various parts of the world (Prasetyo & Febriani, 2020).

Indirectly, these tourists contribute in helping to promote the tourist areas that have been visited by these tourists. Social media can also be used in shaping the branding of a tourist destination. Branding itself has a meaning as a name or can be called a nickname for a product. Where to do branding by introducing areas that have the potential to become tourist destinations for tourists who like to travel. The identity of a tourist destination area that is presented through a name, logo, color, or tagline can also be categorized as an effort to carry out branding activities.

The advantage of social media itself in an effort to increase brand awareness for a tourist destination is that it expands the reach for potential tourists who want to travel and details about these tourist destinations already display a very detailed picture.

The potential to become the top keyword search in search engines, especially web users or travel activists so that these tourist destinations can appear on the user's homepage with the order of the destinations being the top order, this is one of the advantages if using social media properly, resulting in the place is often a popular topic of discussion for active users and has also been widely reviewed in various travel forums, for example: Tripadvisor, Facebook forums and also various other Social Media platforms. By maximizing the branding activities of a tourist destination, it is hoped that it will create active users of social media who become part of the followers in personal accounts, official accounts, websites or pioneers of tourist destination information, whether the information is in the form of advertisements aimed at tourists. With the latest things about various tourist destinations that you want to promote so as to increase the potential of the destination, it has a higher chance of becoming the next tourist destination to be visited in the future (Damayanti et al., 2021).

In several measurements of the number of visitors or the number of tourists on most islands as tourist destinations in the world, it has not become an urgent problem to be done. Most only measure the number of visitors based on the number of tourists who come in a certain period, whereas nowadays, online reviews are important to get an idea of the popularity of a tourist destination. Online reviews are a form of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) consisting of people who have purchased products or services, commented, and posted who have previously used them (Mirza, 2013). This study uses the Google Trends Tool to determine the popularity of four beach resorts in Bali (Carneiro & Mylonakis, 2009); (Nafah & Purnaningrum, 2021). The four island destinations, namely Phuket, Bali, Hawaii, and Langkawi.

Comparing the popularity of four well-known island destinations will be easier to do using the google trend tool. The use of Google Trends is increasingly reliable because Google reads data using big data technology that comes from the history and track record of tourist visits who have visited the location. On the other hand, Google Trends can also measure the trend of enthusiasts who are more likely to visit the tourist destinations they are looking for from internet search engines (Katal et al., 2013). With the advent of information and communication technology in this century, tourism has also begun to be pushed into online channels. Suppliers and intermediaries are now struggling in fierce competition to sell their services through e-commerce. As long as consumers are connected to the internet network, every consumer can access and get information about hotels or resorts wherever and whenever they want. As well as the ease of accessing all available information, both through social media Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TripAdvisor (Vilarinho-Pereira et al., 2021).

Measurement of the popularity of a tourist destination is not widely carried out on a national and international measurement scale. Currently, the measurement is only carried out on visitors who visit a tourist destination without collecting data on the origin of tourists or visitors who come to a tourist attraction. This study tries to solve this problem, by determining the popularity of island destinations based on the origin of tourists and then answering the market segmentation of each island destination based on the geographical factors of tourists or visitors.

This study aims to determine the popularity of four island destinations, namely Phuket, Bali, Hawaii, and Langkawi using the Google Trends tool based on a historical database of the last five years. In addition to popularity, this study also determines the market segmentation of each island tourist destination based on the geographical origin of tourists. It is hoped that the information and findings from this study can be used as consideration for the destination marketing strategy, and also determine promotion as effective advice on the geographical origin of tourists.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The scope of this research is marketing research that focuses on market segmentation analysis based on geographical factors to determine visitor segmentation on four island destinations, namely Phuket, Bali, Hawaii, and Langkawi. This study uses descriptive analysis with the help of the Google Trends tool to determine the popularity of four island destinations. This research uses the Google Trends Tool to determine the popularity of four island tourist destinations in the world, namely Phuket, Bali, Hawaii, and Langkawi.

### 2.1 Consumer Perception

According to (Putra & Suyuthie, 2022), There are two sources of perception: direct perception and indirect perception. Indirect perceptions are formed from the various media used by producers to introduce their products in the form of human voices, beautiful words, and numbers printed in the mass media. While direct perception is formed from the senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. Direct perception can be further differentiated based on the source into three types of perception: (1) First, the perception of a product is derived from indicators that are



directly related to a particular product. These indicators include, for example, how much crowd visits a beach tourist attraction. (2) Second, the perception obtained after being compared with similar products or other similar attractions, is that Kuta Beach is considered to be better than Sanur Beach in a certain measure. (3) Third, the perception that is formed from direct observation, is most important because it comes from direct observation and interaction of a person with certain situations (Utama, 2016).

Perception is the way a person views something. A positive perception will encourage someone to buy a product, while a negative perception will prevent someone from buying the product. Perception is the raw material for determining product positioning and then building a certain image of the product in the eyes of consumers in the target market, relative to similar products or competitors. Perception is expected to be formed from direct observation by visitors or consumers of the attributes of tourist destinations, which will provide positioning information for these tourist destinations.

## 2.2 Electronic Word of Mouth

Online Review is a form of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) consisting of people who have purchased a product or service, commented, and posted it who had previously used it. (Al Mana & Mirza, 2013). Another understanding of online consumer review as a form of electronic word of mouth can be said as a new and influential way of marketing that also plays a role in the decision-making process. (Aprianingsih et al., 2020). From several opinions, online reviews are reviews that have been posted on online media by consumers who have purchased or used products or services and can lead to potential purchases for the next consumer. (Krisnayani et al., 2021); (Sulistiyafani & Sastrawan, 2021).

This study also refers to previous research by researchers (Marie & Widodo, 2019) using several online review indicators, namely General persuasiveness, General Credibility, Susceptibility to online product reviews, and Content. (Zhao et al., 2015), said that there are 6 requirements for Online Consumer Reviews to be effective, namely: Usefulness of Online Consumer Reviews is an online review that is useful to facilitate the process of making consumer purchasing decisions. Online Consumer Reviews are useful as a benchmark for other users to measure decision making. The amount of information is so large, that only comments and opinions are of value that will influence consumer decision-making.

Reviewer Expertise is one of the hallmarks of Online Consumer Reviews is that it is made by individuals anonymously. The amount of information from various sources, to filter information users can follow market experts (market mavens) who are experts in certain fields. A person who has high expertise is someone who has more knowledge about a product or service. On social media or the internet, someone who writes or writes a review on the internet about information, it will make other people interested in discussing it because that person has felt and is considered expertise. Consumers can identify and follow market experts in purchasing decisions (Carneiro & Mylonakis, 2009) (Nafah & Purnaningrum, 2021) (Nafah & Purnaningrum, 2021).

Market experts are determined by the extent to which an information source is considered and determined by someone who has expertise in a particular topic of interest. Timeliness of Online Consumer Review is an information search process, consumers are faced with relevant information in large quantities associated within a certain period. Timeliness refers to a most recent message. The "spotlight review" message is a message that can display a review first before another review. The latest reviews will get more attention from potential customers. The volume of Online Consumer reviews is an important part of word-of-mouth communication and is useful for measuring the number of interactive messages. The volume of Online Consumer Reviews is the number of comments or reviews from a reviewer about a specific product or service. The number of reviews made is part of the word of mouth because it contains a collection of reviews from everyone who made it. Variations in the volume of online reviews are evidence that not all products and services are treated the same, so, naturally, not all consumer ratings are not the same (Carneiro & Mylonakis, 2009) (Nafah & Purnaningrum, 2021) (Nafah & Purnaningrum, 2021).

The valence of an Online Consumer Review is the value of a message given in an Online Consumer Review which is divided into 2, namely messages that focus on positive things (benefit gain) and vice versa, namely messages containing negative things (benefit lost). The Online Consumer Review can provide negative and positive messages simultaneously. The comprehensiveness of Online Consumer Review is the Completeness of Online Consumer Reviews used to measure how detailed a review is. Online Consumer Reviews on social media or the internet vary, ranging from simple messages to more detailed and complex explanations based on facts because in containing a decision in an unfamiliar situation, consumers need more detailed and specific information. (Trimurti & Utama, 2020); (Nafah & Purnaningrum, 2021); (Nafah & Purnaningrum, 2021).

## 2.3 Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing in general is also called marketing using social media in the form of digital marketing that utilizes social platforms and network websites to advertise an organization's products or services through paid and unpaid methods. Social media marketing is based on digital marketing that uses social media and networking websites to promote an organization's products or services through paid or organic means. The organic way means not using funds in it and comes purely from the popularity of the content (Tuten & Solomon, 2017).

This platform is an activity that makes it easier for users where producers can interact with their customers, answer questions or complaints, inform new products and services, get feedback and recommendations, and form their community. Social media marketing includes activities such as establishing a user presence on the network of each social media account, providing and sharing awareness of a brand, bringing in prospects and customers by viewing content, driving traffic to websites, and so on. Social media marketing utilizes social media to become a pioneer on popular social platforms, find and reach its customers and potential customers, then promote these products and services and engage audiences to increase company value (Tuten & Solomon, 2017).

Social media marketing strategy as the basis for the discussion above in order to create concepts for individuals and then put them together. Following are the steps of a marketing strategy through social media: (1) Direct customer contact: Social media can be used as a means of creating services to customers. Customers contact the company by means of messaging, rating or posting a status on a personal account. In companies with immediate or relatively fast reactions, there is a closeness with customers that other media often cannot reach. (2) Stakeholder building: Using a Group, blogs and forums can be used to create a purposeful network of shared interests. While this is only possible for a particular product and service, the meeting of users with a genuine interest in the product and the possibility of exchange can almost only occur on social networks. (3) Events: Taking advantage of a Concert or event is a popular way to reach customers, especially in the culinary trade. (4) Interactive Campaign: Through a Sweepstakes, distributing vouchers, a game application and surveys are ways to attract consumers by engaging potential customers. (5) Sales and Distribution: Sales of products that have declining inventories and other sales concepts can be realized here by using the help of a franchisee or a third party. (6) Reputation, Image and Authority: By disseminating information about the expertise possessed in the form of campaigns with interesting content to build a reputation thus increasing the value of profitability. (7) Viral Marketing: Downloading Uploading Content with a unique concept can encourage users to share the content. This content is managed virally by being distributed by many users. This marketing is done by people who are usually called influencers. (8) Search engine optimization: With the existence of Social Networks, what is mentioned (Social Signals) can be sent to search engines by entering keywords. Profiles on social media accounts such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook are usually indexed by search engines. High Interaction Rates (Likes, Comments, Shares) are signals that have this added positive allowing search engines to know that users find the offer attractive. (9) Social media monitoring: Monitoring services and reports on social media have a greater opportunity for companies to conduct research. This data can be managed in many ways. This method is often used for a company to find out customer interest and build a sense of customer loyalty or it is also used to achieve targets within the company by conducting regular monitoring. (10) Traffic (Timeline): Marketing with this method is considered effective in generating user interest to visit blogs or websites. The concept of interesting content has a very important war (Kurniawati & Arifin, 2015); (Siswanto, 2013); (Asse, 2018).

### 3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a Descriptive Statistics analysis tool with the help of the Google Trends tool to determine the popularity of four island destinations in the world. Google Trends is a tool to research keywords that are often used and hot topics that are being discussed. This service is specifically for marketers who want to find Google search data to create interesting content. Google Trends was first released in 2006 and is still being developed. Google Trends is a fairly complete Google service because it has many interesting functions and features; displays topics that are being discussed a lot, look for frequently used keywords, compares performance between keywords, and displays a simple and easy to understand. In addition, Google Trends can be used for free. This service can provide information about what people are looking for on the Google Search search engine (Nafah & Purnaningrum, 2021).

Google Trends provides fairly complete information. Information obtained from Google Trends can be used to create content as attractive as possible according to the appropriate keywords. Of course, this raises a sense of optimism to occupy the top position in search results. However, it is not that easy. Keep in mind that not only writers use Google Trends as an analysis application, but competitors, bloggers, AdSense seekers, and so on. (Mavragani et al., 2018) (Nafah & Purnaningrum, 2021).

### 4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS



Based on the results of an analysis using Google Trends, it is known that the polarity of each island tourist destination in the world is as follows:

#### 4.1 Popularity of Phuket Island Destinations

Phuket is famous for its tropical beaches, hidden temples, local markets and lively clubs. Phuket attracts tourists who want to enjoy the day and explore the night. In Phuket Town in the center of the island, tourists can enjoy chili and blue ginger dishes at various restaurants and stroll through the old quarters for a glimpse of the city's past. Although small and in a less strategic location, there is a wide variety of restaurants, accommodations and adventures throughout the year to satisfy travelers looking for cheap and luxurious excursions. The destination of Phuket Island as one of the favorite tourist destinations to become a mainstay of Thai tourism can be identified using google trends analysis. When viewed from the frequency of searches using the keyword "Phuket", Phuket's popularity has decreased since the beginning of May 2020. The trend of Phuket's popularity can be seen in Figure 1.

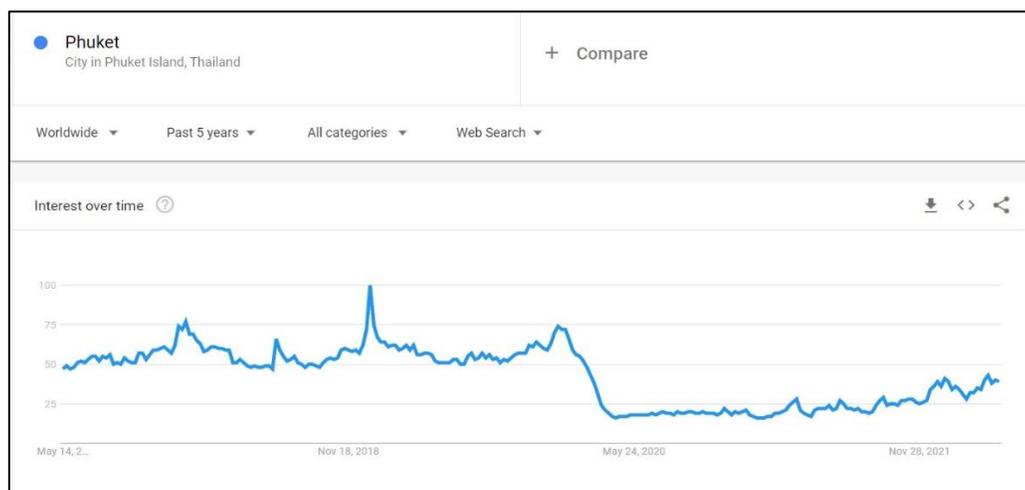


Figure 1. Google Trend Phuket Analysis Results

In the indicator of the origin of tourists, those who seek information about Phuket come from Thailand itself, Russia, Turkey, Hong Kong, Singapore, and others are presented in Figure 2 below:

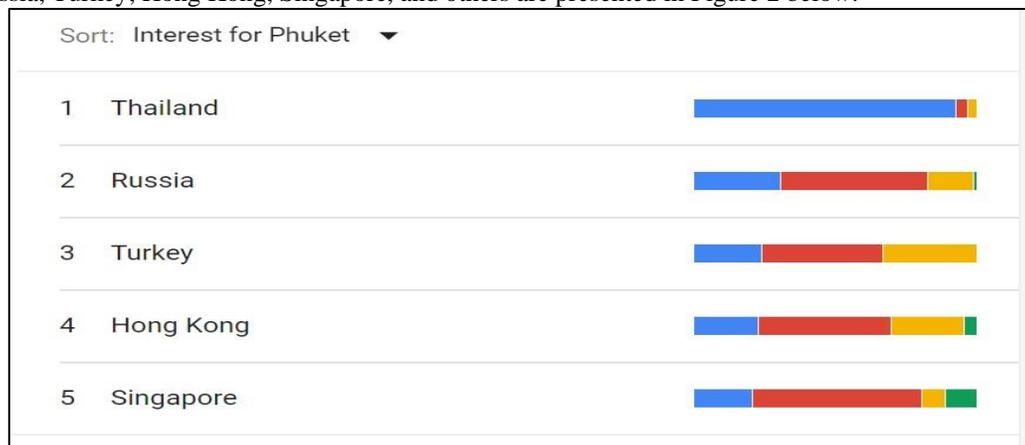


Figure 2. The results of Google Trend Phuket Analysis are based on the origin of tourists.

The implication for Phuket tourism destination managers is to maintain the quality of the destination based on online consumer reviews as a form of electronic word of mouth and can be a new and influential marketing method in the decision-making process of visiting tourists in the future.

#### 4.2 Popularity of Bali Island Destinations

The island of Bali is one of the best tourist destinations in Indonesia. There are so many tourist attractions on the island of Bali because this place not only offers beautiful natural scenery in the form of clean beaches with soft white sand. However, the waves are also calm and suitable for water activities such as kayaking, sea hiking,

diving or snorkeling. Cultural attractions are the main attraction of Bali Destinations (Violinaa & Suryawana, 2016). The island of Bali is one of the best tourist destinations in Indonesia. There are so many tourist attractions on the island of Bali because this place not only offers the beauty of the natural scenery of a clean beach with soft white sand. But also the waves are calm and suitable for watersport activities such as kayaking, sea walking, scuba diving, or snorkeling. Cultural attractions are the main attraction for Bali Destinations (Violinaa & Suryawana, 2016). When viewed from the frequency of searches using the keyword "Bali", Bali's popularity has decreased from the beginning of 2020 to the end of 2021. The trend of Bali's popularity can be seen in Figure 3.

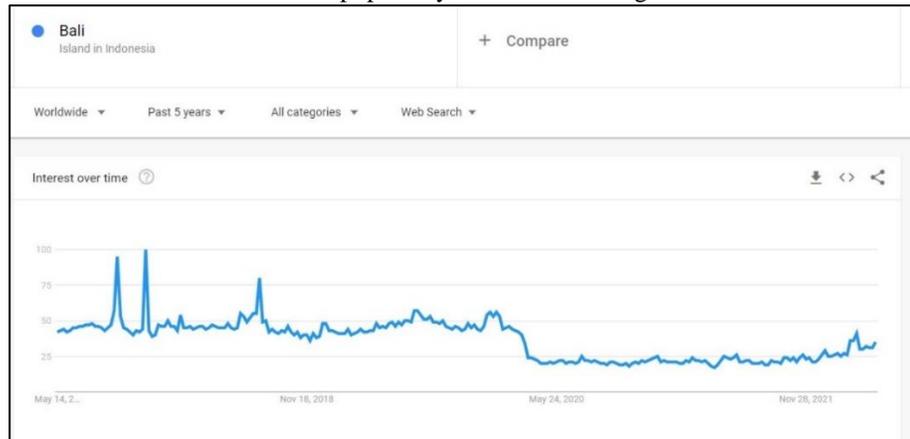


Figure 3. Google Trend Analysis Results for the Island of Bali

In the indicator of the origin of tourists, those who seek information about Bali come from Indonesia itself, the Netherlands, India, Australia, Belgium, and others as shown in Figure 4 below:

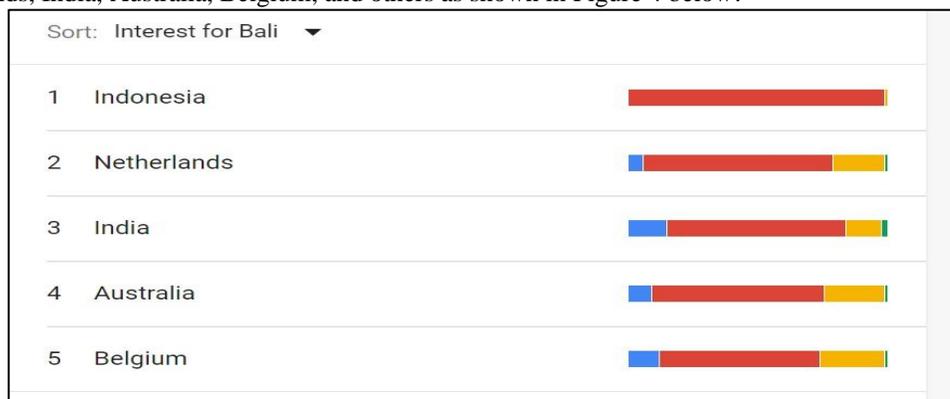


Figure 4. Google Trend Analysis Results for Bali based on the origin of tourists.

The implications for Bali tourism destination managers are to maintain the quality of destinations based on online consumer reviews as a form of electronic word of mouth and can be a new and influential marketing method in the decision-making process of visiting tourists in the future.

**4.3 Popularity of Hawaii Island Destinations**

Hawaii is an archipelago consisting of 8 main islands and several smaller islands, all located in the North Pacific. The Hawaiian Islands are an archipelago of eight large islands, several atolls, many smaller islands and seamounts in the North Pacific, extending about 1,500 miles (2,400 kilometers) from the island of Hawaii in the south to Kure Atoll in the north. The group was formerly known to Europeans and Americans as the Sandwich Islands, a name James Cook chose in honor of the First Lord of the Admiralty, John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich. Cook discovered the islands by accident while crossing the Pacific Ocean aboard the HMS Resolutio on his third voyage. The island's contemporary name dates back to the 1840s and is derived from the name of the largest island, the island of Hawaii (Wardhani, 2015). Hawaii Island Destinations is one of the best tourist destinations owned by the United States even though the location of these islands is quite far from mainland America. When viewed from the frequency of searches using the keyword "Hawaii", Hawaii's popularity has been quite stable over the last 5 years. Hawaii's popularity trend can be seen in Figure 5.

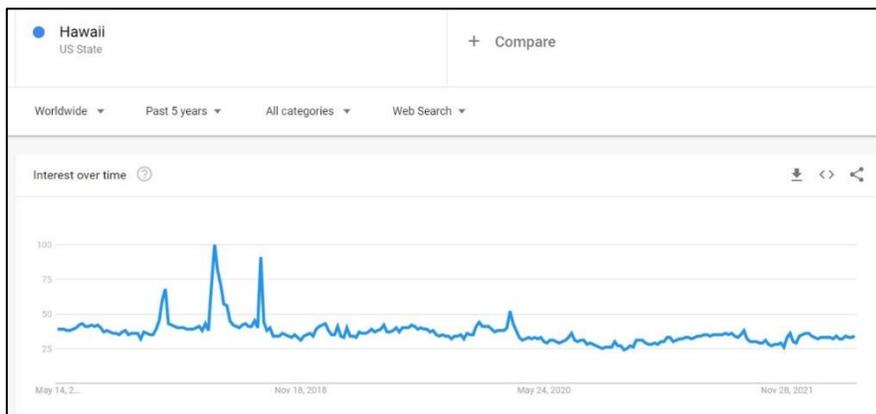


Figure 5. Google Trend Hawaii Analysis Results

In the indicator of the origin of tourists, those who seek information about Hawaii come from the United States itself, Japan, Canada, Brazil, South Korea, and others as shown in Figure 6 below:

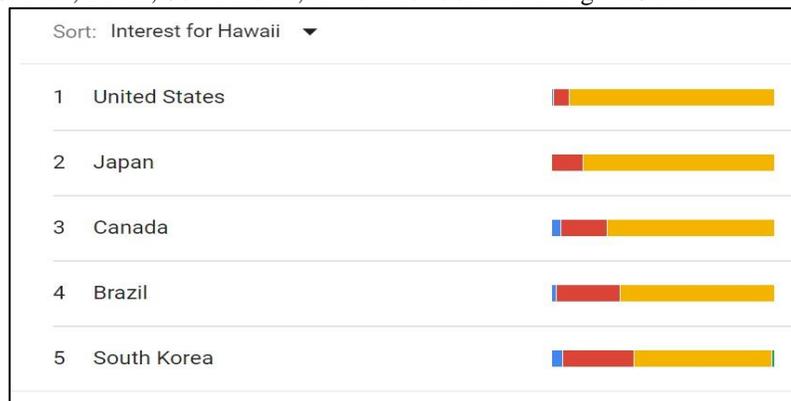


Figure 6. Google Trends Hawaiian Analysis results based on the origin of tourists.

The implication for Hawaii tourism destination managers is to maintain the quality that is popular enough for online consumer reviews as a form of electronic word of mouth and can be a new and influential marketing method in the decision-making process to visit tourists in the future, especially for domestic tourists.

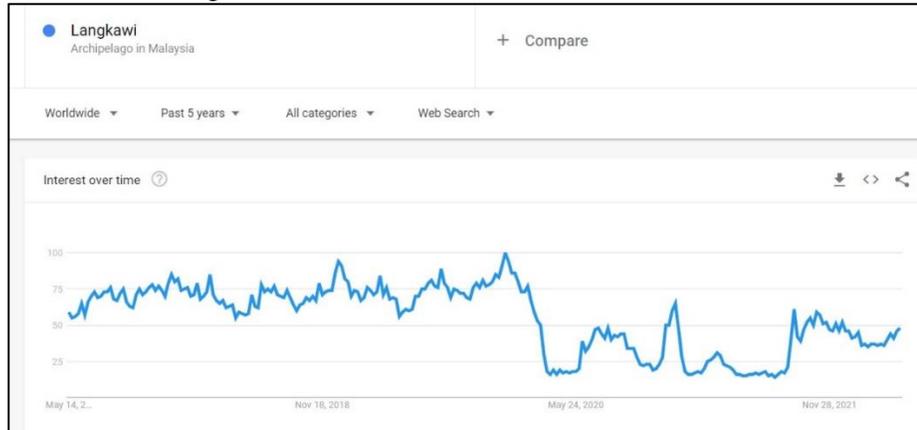
#### 4.4 Popularity of Langkawi Island Destinations

Langkawi is an archipelago in the Malacca Strait about 30 km off the northwest coast of Malaysia. Over the years, this popular tropical destination has captivated tourists with its natural and cultural heritage. Although the pandemic is currently ongoing in many countries, Langkawi has opened its borders to tourists who have been fully vaccinated and tested negative for Covid-19. Of course there are other protocols that apply if you want to enter this area. Some of them are required to book trips with Malaysian tour operators and carry out regular Covid-19 tests, especially when traveling to/from ports. After seven days in Langkawi, tourists can continue their journey to other destinations in Malaysia. However, while in Langkawi, paradise awaits tourists, complete with various attractions and affordable facilities. No wonder this island is a popular destination for travelers in Southeast Asia (Roslan et al., 2016).

Apart from visiting the beautiful beaches, you should not miss some of the tourist attractions here. Call it the Langkawi Sky Bridge which is located at an altitude of 660 meters above sea level at the peak of Mount Mat Cintang. At a height of 125 meters, this bridge offers panoramic views of the green hills and the open sea. The Sky Bridge itself can be accessed via the Langkawi Cable Car. Eagle Square is another interesting destination in Langkawi. Covering 19 acres, the square features the iconic eagle statue, fountain, bridge, pavilion, plunge pool, and shops selling souvenirs and snacks (Roslan et al., 2016).

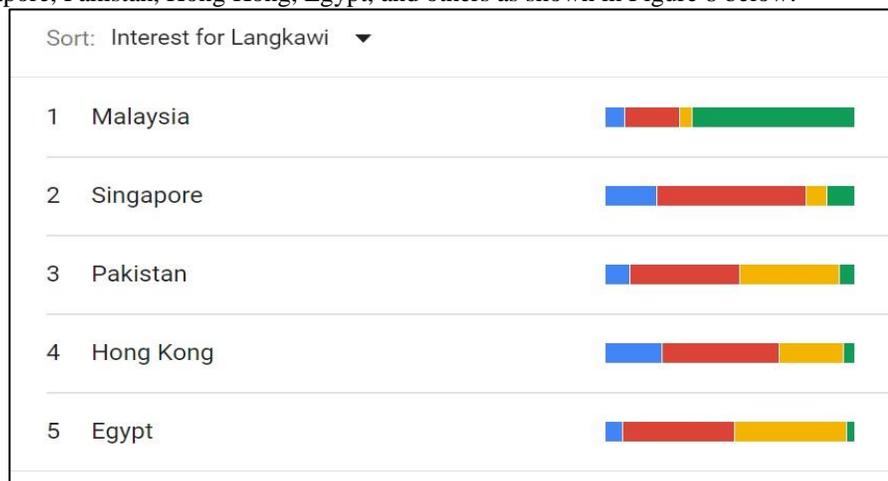
Langkawi Island Destinations are one of the best tourist destinations owned by Malaysia. When viewed from the frequency of searches using the keyword "Langkawi", the popularity of Langkawi tourist destinations

experienced a decline in early May 2020 but increased from mid-2020 to the end of 2021. The trend of popularity of Langkawi Island can be seen in Figure 7.



**Figure 7. Google Trend Analysis Results Langkawi**

In the indicator of the origin of tourists, those who seek information about Langkawi are dominant from Malaysia, Singapore, Pakistan, Hong Kong, Egypt, and others as shown in Figure 8 below:

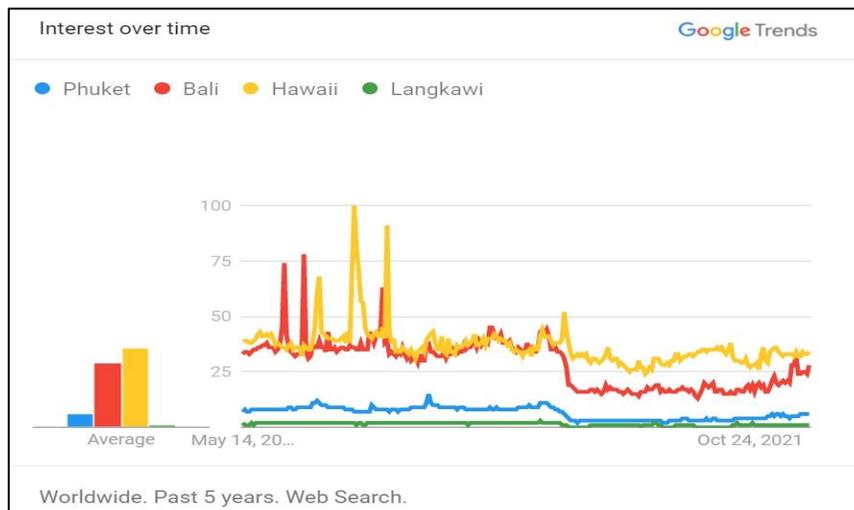


**Figure 8. Google Trend Analysis Results of Langkawi based on the origin of tourists.**

Langkawi Island has become popular by providing online consumer review media as a form of electronic word of mouth and can be a new and influential way of marketing in the decision-making process to visit tourists in the future, especially for domestic tourists.

**4.5 Comparison of the Popularity of Island Destinations in the World**

When viewing the popularity of Island Destinations in the World, the most popular tourist destinations are Hawaii, then Bali, then Phuket, and the last is Langkawi. The results of the analysis show that from the beginning of 2020 to the end of 2021, almost all island tourist destinations in the world. The results of the analysis can be seen in Figure 7.



**Figure 9. Google Trend Analysis Results for Four Island Destinations**

When viewed from its popularity, Hawaii is very popular among tourists from the United States itself, Japan, Canada, Brazil, and South Korea. Bali is very popular among tourists from Indonesia, the Netherlands, India, Australia, and Belgium. Phuket destination is very popular for tourists who come from Thailand itself, *Russia, Turkey, Hong Kong, and Singapore*. While *Langkawi* is very popular among tourists who come from Malaysia itself, Singapore, Pakistan, Hong Kong, and Egypt.

## 5. CONCLUSION

### 5.1 Conclusion

This descriptive analysis using the Google trend tool produces some information, namely: From the beginning of 2020 to the end of 2021, island tourist destinations have decreased in popularity, this is most likely due to a travel ban for tourists during the Covid-19 pandemic. This research concludes that:

The most popular tourist destinations are Hawaii, then Bali, then Phuket, and finally Langkawi. Popularity Hawaii is very popular among tourists from the United States itself, Japan, Canada, Brazil, and South Korea. Bali is very popular among tourists from Indonesia, the Netherlands, India, Australia and Belgium. Phuket destination is very popular for tourists who come from Thailand itself, Russia, Turkey, Hong Kong, and Singapore. While Langkawi is very popular among tourists who come from Malaysia itself, Singapore, Pakistan, Hong Kong, and Egypt.

### 5.2 Suggestions

In the last two years, 2020 to 2021, these four island destinations are more popular among tourists who come from their own country. This finding indicates that domestic tourists in the four island destinations need to be segmented, target market, and positioning demographics in marketing tourist destinations. Island destination managers should always keep the beaches clean because of the four island destinations analyzed by Google Trends, all of them have become popular because of the attractiveness of the beaches on the four islands.

### 5.3 Research Limitations

Limitations: The limitation of this study is that it only measures popularity based on the frequency of keyword searches among internet users using the Google search engine. For a more tangible measurement of popularity, the next researcher can use tools or applications located in certain tourist attraction areas, for example by synchronizing with the Google Map application.

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