



## Visitor satisfaction with tourism services: A case study on pricing and service quality in a cultural tourism destination in Indonesia

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### Abstract

Globally, cultural and educational tourism has gained increasing attention as destinations strive to balance heritage preservation with visitor satisfaction. One emerging trend is the integration of traditional cultural elements into tourism experiences, which can enhance both educational value and economic sustainability. Kampoeng Dolanan Nusantara Borobudur, established in 2013 in Central Java, Indonesia, exemplifies this approach by preserving traditional games and promoting cultural values to younger generations. This study aims to measure visitor satisfaction with regard to pricing, tourism products, and service quality at this cultural-educational destination. A qualitative approach was applied, combining in-depth interviews and questionnaires with 50 respondents, including tourists and representatives of travel agencies. The findings indicate that price transparency and service quality have a significant influence on visitor satisfaction. Notably, the perceived affordability of tourism packages improved, with average scores increasing from 4.47 in July to 4.78 in August 2024, suggesting that visitors consider the prices fair relative to the facilities and experiences provided. The discussion highlights the synergy between competitive pricing and high-quality service as key drivers of satisfaction and loyalty. These results provide practical implications for cultural tourism managers in designing value-based service strategies. Furthermore, the insights from this case study contribute to the broader international discourse on how culturally grounded tourism models can be adapted to different contexts, supporting sustainable heritage tourism worldwide.

**Keywords:** Visitor satisfaction, tourism services, pricing strategy, service quality, cultural tourism, case study

### Introduction

Tourism is one of the strategic sectors that plays an important role in encouraging national economic growth and is included in the creative economy industry which has an environmentally friendly and sustainable character. Global trends show a significant recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization [UNWTO] (2024) <sup>[30]</sup>, the number of international tourists is expected to reach around 1.4 billion in 2024, an increase  $\pm 11\%$  compared to 2023, with Asia-Pacific being one of the regions experiencing an acceleration of recovery. This increase emphasizes the importance of managing the quality of experience and visitor *satisfaction* to strengthen the competitiveness of destinations.

Nationally, the development of Indonesia's tourism also shows a positive trend. Data from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (2023) recorded that foreign tourist visits until October 2023 reached 9.5 million people, with a foreign exchange value until the end of December 2023 of USD 10.46 billion, a contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 3.8 percent, the added value of the creative economy of IDR 1,050 trillion, and the value of creative economy exports of USD 17.38 billion. The movement of Indonesian tourists was recorded at 688.78 million trips. The government through Presidential Regulation Number 79 of 2019 designated Borobudur as one of the Super Priority Tourism Destinations (DPSP) to encourage infrastructure development, increase attractions, extend the length of stay of tourists, and grow a community-based creative economy ecosystem.

Borobudur has high historical and cultural value, integrated with the existence of Borobudur Temple, the largest Buddhist temple in the world built in the 8th century by

King Samarungga of the Syailendra Dynasty (Damayanti & Puspitasari, 2024) <sup>[5]</sup>. Administratively, the region consists of 20 villages, with the majority of the population working in the agriculture, trade, small-medium industries, and tourism service sectors. In the context of tourism village development, the Borobudur area has villages at various stages of development, ranging from pioneering to independent. One of the prominent educational attractions is Kampoeng Dolanan Nusantara in Bumiharjo Tourism Village, which was inaugurated on June 16, 2013 by Endi Aras, Reny Djayusman, and Abbet Nugroho as an effort to preserve traditional games that are full of educational values such as cooperation, sportsmanship, honesty, and mutual cooperation.

Carrying the concept of rural-based thematic-educational tourism, Kampoeng Dolanan offers a variety of interactive activities such as folk games, *live-ins*, traditional handicraft and toy workshops, gamelan and angklung music arts, traditional dance, herbal medicine making, to village tours and cultural arts workshops (Soesanta *et al.*, 2023) <sup>[29]</sup>. This approach has been proven to strengthen local economic resilience post-pandemic through community collaboration (Diarta, 2017) <sup>[6]</sup>. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Enforcement of Community Activity Restrictions (PPKM) policy have reduced the number of visits and income, as well as hindered excellent educational programs. In the context of tourism, *service quality* is a key factor in shaping tourist satisfaction. Global studies show that satisfaction is influenced by a combination of *perceived value*, *price fairness*, destination image, and service quality (Ghorbanzadeh *et al.*, 2021) <sup>[12]</sup>. A meta-analysis of 61 studies found that *value for money* and staff interaction are the biggest drivers of traveler satisfaction. On the other hand, the literature highlights the increasing sensitivity of

travelers to price transparency, particularly in the context of algorithm-based dynamic pricing (Hilsen, 2016) <sup>[13]</sup>. Meanwhile, the SERVQUAL instrument which includes the dimensions of *tangibles*, *reliability*, *responsiveness*, *assurance*, and *empathy* remains the dominant framework for measuring the quality of services in tourist destinations, including cultural heritage sites (Ijadi *et al.*, 2019) <sup>[14]</sup>.

Although the international evidence is quite rich, there is a *research gap* that is relevant to this context. First, studies that integrate price, product, and service variables in community-based educational-cultural destinations are rare, as most studies focus on large-scale hotels, airlines, or theme parks (Malviya, 2005) <sup>[20]</sup>. Second, research on price justice and value perception in cultural preservation-oriented community destinations, such as Kampoeng Dolanan, is still minimal (Hilsen, 2016) <sup>[13]</sup>. Third, although the SERVQUAL framework is widely used, the combination of the *experience economy* dimension (Chatterjee *et al.*, 2023) <sup>[3]</sup> and the price justice variable in a single measurement model in community destinations has not been widely done.

Based on this, this research has a novelty value by focusing on evaluating tourist satisfaction with prices, products, and services in Kampoeng Dolanan Nusantara, as well as associating it with the perception of value and loyalty. The results of the research are expected to make a real contribution to improving the quality of services and management strategies for cultural-based community tourism destinations in the Borobudur area.

## Research Methods

This study uses a quantitative descriptive approach to analyze the perception of cultural authenticity based on the domicile of the respondents. This approach was chosen because it is able to describe social phenomena in a systematic, objective, and measurable manner through the collection of numerical data processed using statistical techniques. The population in this study is 275 people, consisting of individuals who have visited or had direct experience with Kampoeng Dolanan Nusantara. The determination of this population is based on the manager's internal data on the total active visitors during a certain period of time that is the scope of the study. This population is considered relevant because all its members have the potential to provide an assessment of the aspects of cultural authenticity that are the focus of the research. To determine the number of samples, the Slovin formula with a margin of error of 10% is used, as follows:

$$n = N / (1 + N \times e^2)$$

$$n = 275 / (1 + 275 \times 0.01)$$

$$n = 275 / 3.75$$

$$n = 73,33 \approx 73 \text{ responden}$$

Based on this calculation, the ideal sample number is 73 respondents. However, in the practice of data collection, 50 respondents were obtained from various regions in Indonesia such as Magelang, Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Semarang, Bekasi, and other regions. Although this number is smaller than the initial calculation, the sample is still considered representative based on several justifications:

1. Referring to Roscoe (1975), a sample size between 30 to 500 respondents is feasible for use in quantitative research.
2. The number of 50 respondents comprised about 17.5% of the total population, which exceeded the minimum

limit of 10% suggested in descriptive studies (Gay & Diehl, 1992) <sup>[11]</sup>.

3. The wide geographic distribution of respondents provides a varied range of perceptions and reinforces the external validity of the findings.

Data was collected through a closed-ended questionnaire designed to measure perceptions of cultural authenticity. The questionnaire used a Likert scale of 1 to 5, where a score of 5 indicated the highest perception of perceived cultural authenticity. Before use, the research instrument has gone through validity and reliability tests to ensure the accuracy and consistency of measurements. All data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, which included frequency distribution, average, and score spread to illustrate perceptions of cultural authenticity based on respondents' domicile.

This quantitative descriptive approach is globally relevant because it is able to provide a standardized empirical picture of the perception of cultural authenticity across regions, so that the results can be compared or replicated in other tourist destinations in various countries. International studies in the field of *heritage tourism* and *cultural studies* often use similar methods to identify differences in perceptions between geographical segments, which are important for the management of global market-oriented destinations (Peters *et al.*, 2011) <sup>[25]</sup>. The selection of Kampoeng Dolanan Nusantara as the research location was based on its status as a community-based educational tourism destination in the Borobudur area, one of Indonesia's Super Priority Tourism Destinations which has a rich cultural heritage of traditional games. This makes it relevant not only for local studies, but also for international discourse on cultural preservation through sustainable tourism.

## Results and Discussion

### Result

#### Narrative Analysis of Tourism Services and Visitor Satisfaction in Kampoeng Dolanan Nusantara

##### 1. Introduction to Services in Kampoeng Dolanan Nusantara

Kampoeng Dolanan Nusantara is a cultural tourism destination located in Borobudur, Magelang, with an orientation on the preservation of traditional games and local culture. Tourism services in this place are divided into three main stages, namely pre-service, service during activity, and post-service. Each stage has a strategic function in shaping overall visitor satisfaction. This study aims to analyze how the service at each stage affects the level of visitor satisfaction based on the SERVQUAL model and various related theories such as Expectation-Confirmation Theory, Customer Loyalty, and Service Brand Equity.

##### 2. Pre-Activity Service

The pre-activity stage includes information services and initial surveys provided to prospective visitors before making a reservation. The reservation system at Kampoeng Dolanan is done online via WhatsApp or phone, which is managed with a formal communication approach using standard Indonesian and occasionally regional languages (Javanese krama), depending on the characteristics of the visitors. The information service includes an explanation of the activity packages, prices, and facilities provided. The

admin provides a digital brochure in PDF format so that potential visitors can learn the necessary information in advance. The package prices offered target the student segment with a range ranging from IDR 25,000 to IDR 195,000 per person, covering various educational and cultural activities. Surveys are conducted by prospective visitors to ensure the readiness of the facilities and programs offered. In this process, the Kampoeng Dolanan team provides direct assistance. The survey process is part of personal service that can affect the final decision of visitors to continue the reservation by paying a down payment (DP).

**3. Visitor Satisfaction with Pre-Activity Services**

A quantitative analysis of price affordability using arithmetic averages showed an increase from July to August 2024, by 4.47 and 4.78, respectively. Pearson's correlation analysis between price transparency and initial satisfaction gave a value of  $r = 0.450$ , indicating a moderate positive relationship. These findings support the Expectation-Confirmation Theory (Oliver, 1980) [24], in which satisfaction is formed from the correspondence between expectations and actual performance. The fairly high correlation coefficient between the perception of affordability and price transparency (94%) shows consistency with Equity Theory and Customer Value Theory (Woodruff, 1997) [32]. Price stability is also positively associated with timeliness of service and clarity of information, as affirmed in Consumer Trust Theory (Morgan and Hunt, 1994) [23]. Visitor Satisfaction with Post-Activity Services is presented in Figure 1.

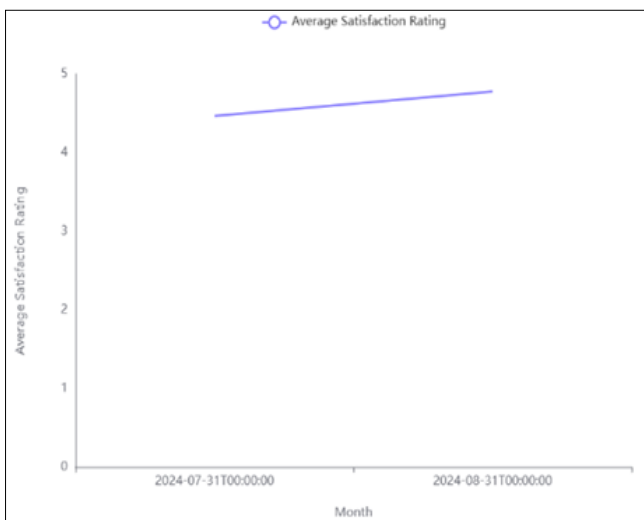


Fig 1: Visitor Satisfaction Graph for Pre-Activity Services

**4. Service During Activities**

Services during the activity include guidance, provision of facilities, culinary services, documentation, and souvenir stalls. The Kampoeng Dolanan team welcomes visitors with a warm welcome, provides traditional drinks and snacks as a "welcome drink", and guides the entire series of activities. Dining service is served buffet and is available after the main activity. Documentation of the activity is prepared in the form of photos and short videos, while the sale of souvenirs is carried out after the activity is completed to maintain the focus of visitors. This approach shows a systematic and organized service structure. The Activity Package Price Chart as Obtained is presented in Figure 2.



Fig 2: Activity Package Price Chart According to Obtained

**5. Visitor Satisfaction with Service During Activities**

The level of satisfaction with the service during the visit varies based on the visitor's work background. Civil servants, travel agents, housewives, and traders gave the highest satisfaction score (5.0), while teachers gave the lowest score (3.0). These results reinforce the relevance of Market Segmentation Theory (Smith, 1956), as well as the urgency of personalized service strategies. Staff friendliness obtained an average score of 4.77 with a standard deviation of 0.39, and a strong correlation to overall satisfaction ( $r = 0.82$ ). The implementation of the 5S system also showed a significant increase from 4.68 to 5.00 between July and August 2024, reflecting the principles of Organizational Learning Theory (Senge, 1990). The cleanliness and comfort rating reached an average of 4.45 with a standard deviation of 0.58. However, outliers were found in the statistically significant aspect of waste management (value 3.0) ( $z > 1.96$ ). The perception of cultural authenticity received a high score (average of 4.82), supporting the Authenticity Theory (Wang, 1999) [31], although there were variations in perception based on the domicile of the visitor, as described in Cultural Distance Theory (McKercher and du Cros, 2003) [21]. Visitor Satisfaction with Service During Activities is presented in Figure 3.

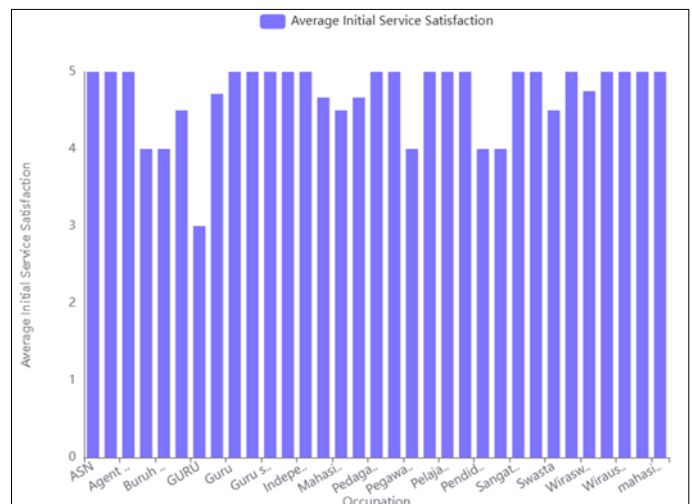


Fig 3: Visitor satisfaction with the service during the activity

### 6. Post-Activity Service

Post-activity services include the delivery of workshop results (e.g. batik or pottery) and documentation after going through the editing process. Goods are sent directly or through a courier service depending on the distance of the visitor's location. In addition, follow-up communication via WhatsApp is an important means of establishing long-term relationships with visitors.

### 7. Visitor Satisfaction with Post-Activity Service

The average satisfaction with the ease of post-activity communication was 4.74, supporting the Customer Loyalty Theory (Dick and Basu, 1994). Friendly and responsive interactions affect the desire of visitors to come back. The correlation between price stability and ease of communication ( $r = 0.511$ ) strengthens the Relationship Continuity Theory (Berry, 1995), and explains the importance of information consistency in building loyalty. The post-visit staff friendliness obtained a score of 4.64, showing that the service does not stop at the time of the visit, but continues in the form of communication and guidance. Visitor Reception Service is presented in Figure 4.



Fig 4: Visitor Reception Service

### 8. Integration of Prices and Services in Increasing Satisfaction

Visitor satisfaction with Kampoeng Dolanan Nusantara is the result of the integration between price perception and structured service quality. The Service Brand Equity Model (Berry, 2000) [1] is the main framework for understanding how interconnected service elements form a strong service brand perception. A positive correlation between price transparency and initial satisfaction ( $r = 0.450$ ) indicates the importance of clear information in shaping initial expectations. The increase in affordability scores from July to August (4.47 to 4.78) also indicates a continuous improvement process appreciated by visitors. By maintaining the integration between responsive service and transparent pricing, Kampoeng Dolanan Nusantara can strengthen visitor loyalty and increase long-term customer value as formulated in the Customer Lifetime Value model (Berger and Nasr, 1998).

### Discussion

The results of this study show that integrated tourism services in Kampoeng Dolanan Nusantara, which includes

the pre-visit, during visit, and post-visit stages, have a significant influence on visitor satisfaction levels. This finding strengthens the position of Kampoeng Dolanan as an educational cultural tourism destination that is able to meet the needs of tourists holistically and based on local values. In line with international literature, integrated services across travel stages have proven to be an important determinant of visitor satisfaction and loyalty in various tourism contexts.

### 1. The Relationship Between Pre-Activity Services and Early Satisfaction

Pre-activity services at Kampoeng Dolanan have proven to play a crucial role in shaping visitors' expectations and initial decisions. Responsive communication and the use of digital media such as WhatsApp for reservations and the provision of information effectively build initial engagement. Pearson's correlation results ( $r = 0.450$ ) between price transparency and initial satisfaction showed that clarity of information and affordability of price influenced the initial perception of service quality. These findings are in line with *Expectation-Confirmation Theory* (Oliver, 1980) [24] and *Equity Theory*, and are reinforced by a study by Li & He (2025) [18] who found that perceptions of price fairness have a significant impact on the satisfaction of cross-border travelers.

### 2. Variation in satisfaction during activities based on visitor segments

The variation in satisfaction during the activity is seen based on the visitor's profession. Civil servants and travel agents scored high for being accustomed to systematic service, while teachers gave lower scores, indicating the need for improved educational content. This supports *the Market Segmentation Theory* (Smith, 1956) and is in line with the findings of Engström *et al.* (2017) which emphasize the importance of adjusting services based on segment characteristics to increase *visitor engagement*. The strategy of adding interactive educational modules and cultural discussions can strengthen the experience for the education and academic segments.

### 3. The Role of Interpersonal Interaction and the Physical Environment

Staff friendliness obtained a very high score (4.77) with a strong correlation to overall satisfaction ( $r = 0.82$ ), demonstrating the importance of the empathy dimension in the SERVQUAL model. These findings are in line with *Relationship Quality Theory* (Crosby *et al.*, 1990) [4] and are supported by research by Isa *et al.* (2020) [16] which shows that quality personal interactions increase *emotional connection* and intention to revisit cultural destinations. A clean and comfortable physical environment reinforces the findings of *the Servicescape Model* (Bitner, 1992), although a low score on the waste management aspect (3.0) indicates a crucial area for improvement as it has an impact on the perception of destination management professionalism.

### 4. Perception of Cultural Authenticity and Cultural Distance

The perception of cultural authenticity obtained a very high score (4.82), strengthening *the Authenticity Theory* (Wang, 1999) [31]. However, the variation in scores based on domicile shows that visitors from culturally closer areas

(e.g. Borobudur) tend to score lower, in line with the *Cultural Distance Theory* (McKercher & du Cros, 2003)<sup>[21]</sup>. The Liu *et al.* (2018)<sup>[19]</sup> study confirms that cultural distance influences the perception of uniqueness and value of cultural experiences, with visitors from different cultures tending to place a higher appreciation on authenticity.

### 5. Post-Visit Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty

Post-visit communication, such as the delivery of workshop results and documentation, received a positive score (4.74). These findings reinforce the role of post-interaction services in building *customer loyalty* (Dick & Basu, 1994) and are in line with Berry (1995) in *Relationship Continuity Theory*. A recent study by Rajaobelina *et al.* (2021)<sup>[28]</sup> shows that continuous communication through social media strengthens *brand attachment* and positive *word-of-mouth*. The correlation between price stability and ease of communication ( $r = 0.511$ ) confirms the importance of service consistency to maintain long-term relationships.

### 6. Service and Price Synergy as a Brand Equity Builder

The integration of transparent price perception with the quality of service at all stages of the visit forms a positive image and trust in the Kampong Dolanan brand. This is in accordance with the *Service Brand Equity Model* (Berry, 2000)<sup>[1]</sup> and is strengthened by the findings of Mengkebayaer *et al.* (2022)<sup>[22]</sup> that perceived *value* is the main foundation in building destination brand equity. The increase in affordability scores from July (4.47) to August (4.78) indicates that continuous improvements to the price element can have a direct impact on satisfaction, loyalty and positive recommendations from visitors.

### Conclusion

This research shows that price transparency and service quality are the two main factors influencing visitor satisfaction in Kampong Dolanan Nusantara, Borobudur. Clear and accessible pricing information, a structured reservation process, and responsive communication from the management team have built a positive perception of the destination. The rise in affordability scores from July to August reflects not only improved service strategies but also more effective engagement with potential visitors.

These results emphasize the importance of a quality-driven approach in managing educational and cultural tourism destinations. Kampong Dolanan functions not just as a recreational site but also as a platform for preserving traditional values and promoting cultural education for younger generations. By maintaining high service standards and continuously adapting its service model to visitor needs, Kampong Dolanan has strong potential to strengthen its position as a leading destination in the Borobudur area.

From an international perspective, the findings demonstrate that the integration of service quality with transparent and fair pricing remains a universally relevant driver of visitor satisfaction. This insight is applicable to small- and medium-scale cultural destinations around the world that aim to balance cultural authenticity with market competitiveness. The focus on transparent communication also aligns with global trends toward ethical and sustainable tourism practices, offering a model that can be adapted in other countries.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the understanding of how perceptions of fairness, value, and service experience interact within a community-based heritage tourism context. It also validates the role of service brand equity in smaller destinations, showing how consistent service delivery and transparent pricing can work together to strengthen brand trust and loyalty. By connecting these concepts with the dynamics of cultural authenticity and cultural distance, the study bridges the gap between established tourism theories and locally grounded practices.

### Suggestion

#### 1. Increased Pricing Transparency Digitally

It is recommended that managers strengthen price transparency by utilizing digital platforms (websites and social media) to convey cost information in more detail and consistently. This is important to build trust and speed up the traveler's decision-making process.

#### 2. Excellent Service Training for Management Teams

Providing regular training to the service team on communication ethics, complaint handling, and culture-based educational tourism service techniques will improve the overall quality of the visitor experience.

#### 3. Diversification of Tour Packages

Kampong Dolanan needs to consider the development of a variety of tour packages that suit the age segment, interests, and needs of visitors, such as family packages, school packages, and agency/educational institution packages.

#### 4. Periodic Evaluation of Visitor Satisfaction

Conducting regular satisfaction surveys can help managers monitor service areas that need improvement, while maintaining service quality in the long term.

#### 5. Strategic Partnerships with Educational Institutions and Communities

Collaboration with schools, campuses, and cultural communities can expand the reach of promotion, while strengthening the educational function of Kampong Dolanan.

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