



Travellers' Perception Of Quality Of Local Tour Attendant Service At Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon

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Abstract. Kasepuhan Palace in Cirebon, West Java, is a cultural tourist destination that has extraordinary history and cultural riches. As one of the oldest palaces in Indonesia, this place attracts many tourists looking for an authentic historical and cultural experience. The quality of service provided by local tour guides at Kasepuhan Palace plays an important role in the tourist experience. Understanding tourists' perceptions of the quality of local tour guide services is an important step in maintaining and increasing the attractiveness of this cultural destination in the eyes of visitors. This research uses a quantitative approach, in collecting data obtained through direct observation, questionnaires, interviews and document recording of tourists who visit the Kasepuhan Palace, Cirebon. Determining the number of samples in this study used purposive sampling, sample selection was based on certain criteria, the service quality measurement aspects analyzed were reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, tangible. This research also considers factors that influence tourists' perceptions of frame of reference & field of experience. This research also discusses the problems that arise at the Kasepuhan Palace in Cirebon due to the imbalance between the limited number of tour guides and the significant number of tourist visits. The results of this research provide an overview of the quality of local tour guide services that influence tourists' perceptions, and how these perceptions influence tourist satisfaction during a visit to the Kasepuhan Palace.

Keywords: Perception, Tourists, Service Quality, Tour Guide

Abstrak. Keraton Kasepuhan di Cirebon, Jawa Barat, adalah sebuah destinasi wisata budaya yang memiliki sejarah dan kekayaan budaya yang luar biasa. Sebagai salah satu keraton tertua di Indonesia, tempat ini menarik banyak wisatawan yang mencari pengalaman sejarah dan budaya yang otentik. Kualitas pelayanan yang diberikan oleh pramuwisata lokal di Keraton Kasepuhan memiliki peran penting dalam pengalaman wisatawan. Memahami Persepsi Wisatawan Terhadap Kualitas Pelayanan Pramuwisata Lokal adalah langkah penting dalam menjaga dan meningkatkan daya tarik destinasi budaya ini di mata pengunjung. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif, dalam mengumpulkan data yang diperoleh melalui observasi langsung, kuesioner, wawancara serta pencatatan dokumen terhadap wisatawan yang berkunjung ke Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon. Penentuan jumlah sampling pada penelitian ini menggunakan purposive sampling, pemilihan sampel berdasarkan kriteria tertentu, aspek pengukuran kualitas pelayanan yang dianalisis adalah *reliability*, *responsiveness*, *assurance*, *empathy*, *tangible*. penelitian ini juga mempertimbangkan faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi persepsi wisatawan *frame of reference & field of experience*. Penelitian ini juga membahas permasalahan yang timbul di Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon dengan adanya ketidakseimbangan antara jumlah pramuwisata yang terbatas, dengan jumlah kunjungan wisatawan yang cukup signifikan. Hasil dari penelitian ini memberikan gambaran kualitas pelayanan pramuwisata lokal yang mempengaruhi persepsi wisatawan, dan bagaimana persepsi ini mempengaruhi kepuasan wisatawan selama berkunjung ke Keraton Kasepuhan.

Kata Kunci: Persepsi, Wisatawan, Kualitas Pelayanan, Pemandu Wisata

BACKGROUND

Indonesia is endowed with extraordinary natural and cultural wealth, making it one of the leading tourism destinations in the world. Its stunning natural beauty includes tropical islands, white sandy beaches, vast rainforests, and majestic mountains. From the famous island of Bali to Komodo Island, home to rare ancient reptiles, Indonesia has a variety of attractions that attract visitors from all corners of the world. Not only is nature extraordinary, but Indonesia is also rich in diverse cultural heritage, such as ancient temples, unique traditions, and outstanding fine arts. In addition, the hospitality of the residents, friendly locals, and various culinary options make Indonesia an unforgettable tour.

Tourism as a science has and fulfills the characteristics of a science. This can be seen from two points of view: the point of view of tourists and tourist objects and the point of view of the main object of tourism. These two things are related and closely related between the components contained in tourism; in other words, tourism science is combined with tourist objects, tourism, tourist services, and interactions between tourists and the tourist object environment, interactions between tourists and tourist objects, and services that become formal objects of tourism science.

Each region in Indonesia has different tourist destinations, such as Cirebon and West Java. Cirebon is a city rich in local destinations and culture and has ethnic diversity and acculturation from various ethnic groups, giving birth to a heterogeneous society, namely the Cirebon tribe. The majority of the indigenous population is Muslim, and the historical background of Indonesia includes the entry of Hindu Buddhism in the 4th century. The presence of foreign nations in Cirebon, such as China, the Middle East, and the *nemanbah warna*, has become cultural wealth owned by the people of Cirebon. Not just a place but a living work of art that reflects its identity in all aspects. Cirebon is home to an impressive historical heritage, seen in historical buildings such as Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon City and Keraton Kanoman, which bear silent witness to its magnificent past. The city of Cirebon is a window into the lives of people who maintain traditions and preserve art and men.

Cirebon City has three palaces: Kasepuhan Palace, Kanoman Palace, and Kacirebonan Palace. Each of these palaces has an interrelated history and has similarities and physical differences from one another. The Keraton Kasepuhan area of Cirebon City is the forerunner of the existence of Cirebon City. Keraton Kasepuhan Kota Cirebon is a palace in Cirebon, West Java, Indonesia. It is one of the palaces built during the Walisongo era in Cirebon City. The oldest palace was built in two stages, namely in the 15th century and the 16th century. Currently, the palace functions as a center of customs and cultural traditions, a center for

cultural maintenance and development; this palace has a vital role in preserving culture and promoting Cirebon's cultural wealth. As a center for cultural maintenance and development, the Kasepuhan Palace is also one of the areas that have become a protected area and are included in the category of socio-cultural strategic areas.

They are supported by a direction from the Cirebon City Riparda for 2019-2024, which states that the Cirebon Kasepuhan Palace is an object—tourism with the concept of cultural tourism. The existence of cultural heritage in an urban area can be used as a representation of culture and history to provide its own identity for the city of Cirebon. Keraton Kasepuhan Kota Cirebon is responsible for maintaining and developing the Cirebon culture. Through exhibitions, art performances, workshops, and educational programs, the palace plays a vital role in supporting the sustainability and revitalization of Cirebon's cultural heritage. In addition, this palace also serves as a place of education for the younger generation to learn and appreciate the richness of Cirebon culture.

Keraton Kasepuhan is one of the shining examples of the living past, presenting fascinating historical relics. Local tour attendants are essential in helping tourists explore Cirebon's cultural wealth. Not only as a tour guide who is an expert in explaining the history and cultural significance of each place visited but also as a friendly ambassador ready to answer questions and provide deep insight into the culture of the Cirebon Kasepuhan Palace.

With the help of a competent tour attendant, tourists can dig deeper into the cultural richness of Kasepuhan Palace and feel connected to its history and culture. In the dictionary of tourism and hospitality terms, Drs. Adi Soemarno, M.B.A. in Muhajir (2005) defines a tour attendant as someone in charge of escorting guests to tourist attractions and explaining the attractions. Tour attendants are essential people involved in tourism activities. It can be seen from the function of a tour attendant who provides information and tour guides needed by tourists in making tourist trips. Careful and planned efforts must be made to improve tourists' perceptions of the quality of local tour attendant services at the Kasepuhan Palace of Cirebon to remain positive and satisfying. According to Stenvlet (2004: 210) in Payangan (2014-137) states that the concept of service quality is a perception of the overall quality revolution that is thought of and becomes perception of the overall quality revolution that is thought of and becomes one of the ideas that must be formulated (formulated) so that its determination (implementation) can be tested again (evaluation) to become a dynamic, ongoing, continuous in meeting customer satisfaction.

Local tour attendants are essential in providing insights, bringing history and culture to life, and guiding visitors through unique experiences at the Kasepuhan Palace. By ensuring that tour attendants have in-depth knowledge of local history and culture and good communication skills, the positive perception of tourists will be further enhanced. In addition, maintaining a friendly attitude, friendliness, and ability to answer questions and provide relevant information is also very important. Through continuous training, supervision, and feedback, tour attendants can continuously improve the quality of their services. Thus, tourists will feel satisfied and have a memorable experience at Keraton Kasepuhan, Cirebon, which will help promote and preserve the rich cultural heritage in the region.

Tabel 1. 1 Cirebon Kasepuhan Palace tour guide data

NO	NAME	POSITION
1	Iman Sugiman	Head of Concierge & Information
2	Ernanung Suradi	Deputy Head of Concierge & Information
3	E Mungal	Member
4	Moh. Maskun	Member
5	Rudi Muritno	Member
6	Rudi Mulyana	Member
7	E Sandy	Member
8	E Deny	Member
9	E Farhan	Member
10	E Ryan	Member
11	E Febri	Member
12	E Fery	Member
13	Er Mintarto	Member
14	E Khanafi	Member
15	E Aji	Member
16	Mohammad Satu	Member

Source: Kasepuhan Palace Management Data in 2023.

The problem at the Kasepuhan Palace of Cirebon is the imbalance between the limited number of tour attendants and the significant number of tourist visits. The fundamental question is whether the disproportion between the limited number of tour attendants and the high number of tourists who come impacts the quality of service provided to visitors. Here is the data on tourist visits:

Table 1. 2 Visit data of Kasepuhan Palace attractions

No	Year	Number of visits			
		Common	foreign	student	Total
1	2019	116.288	712	55.596	172.596
2	2020	40.072	102	14.779	54.953
3	2021	22.309	15	4.940	27.264
4	2022	84.473	218	9.298	93.989
5	2023	542	69.417	9.797	79.756

Source: Kasepuhan Palace Management Data in 2023.

With so many tourists visiting, do tour attendants have sufficient capacity to provide each visitor with a satisfying and informative experience? Does the limited availability of tour attendants affect the quality of explanation, service, or interaction between tour attendants and tourists? These issues encourage a better understanding of how service quality affects the tourist experience and whether improvement or capacity-building measures Concierges are needed to ensure better service quality at Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon.

THEORETICAL STUDIES

Theoretical studies are studies of previous research relevant to current research—mainly related to tourists' perceptions of the quality of tour attendant services. Some previous studies used in this journal include Putra, I. B. P. S., Negara, I. M. K., & Wijaya, N. M. S. (2017). This research is on tourists' perception of the quality of tourist service in Bali; the results of the study determine the perception of service quality from domestic and foreign tourists simultaneously. The similarities with the research to be studied examine the quality of tour attendant services. The difference is in the object and location of the study and the problems that will be studied more deeply.

Noor, A. A., & Karwina, W. (2012), in their research "Perceptions of Domestic Tourists on the Quality of Service of Bandung Geological Museum ."The results of this study stated that knowing tourists' perception of the quality of service at the Bandung Geological Museum was important.

Kalebos, F. (2016). In his research, the factors that affect the satisfaction of tourists visiting the archipelago tourist area using quantitative research methods with the results of the research are showing the quality of service, the quality of tourist products, and natural tourism objects and attractions simultaneously or simultaneously affect the satisfaction of tourists visiting tourist objects in the Sitaro Islands Regency.

From the description of the research above, these studies have similarities in problems and research objects but differ in location.

RESEARCH METHODS

Each research activity necessarily focuses on some significant phenomenon or symptom and some other relevant phenomenon. In social and psychological research, generally, the phenomenon is the concept of attributes or traits contained in the research

subject, which can vary quantitatively or qualitatively. This concept is called variable (Azwar, 2007: 59).

This study uses a quantitative approach to collecting data through direct observation, questionnaires, interviews, and recording. The author uses data collection techniques by making observations (observations), interviews, and literature studies. The three data collection techniques are expected to complement each other to obtain the expected information.

Data was collected through observations, questionnaires, interviews, and direct documentation of tourists from the Cirebon Kasepuhan Palace. Documents for tourists visiting the Kasepuhan Palace Cirebon.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Tourist Perception of the Quality of Local Concierge Service at Kasepuhan Palace

There are five variables. Variable 1 reliability, using descriptive analysis, can provide information about the description of variables in this study with the number of tourists totaling 100 respondents to 3 indicators, where the indicator of local tour attendants providing services from the beginning to the end of the destination is known that the mean score on items or questions in the variable Reliability / reliability is 3.92 which means the answer score is high. Indicators of the hospitality of local tour attendants in service and can provide solutions to tourist complaints. The mean score on items or questions in the Reliability variable is 3.86, which means the answer score is high. The last indicator, the friendliness of local tour attendants, provides accurate information to tourists and has a mean score on items or statements in the Reliability variable of 4, which means the answer score is high.

From these results, a total score of the total average value was 3.92, indicating that the respondents' answers to the variable Reliability/reliability were positive. Furthermore, the variable Responsiveness using descriptive analysis can provide information about the description of variables in this study with the number of tourists totaling 100 respondents to 3 indicators, where the indicator of local tour attendants being responsive in providing services at tourist attractions has a mean score on items or questions in the variable Responsiveness / Responsiveness is 3.59 which means the answer score is high, The indicator of local tour attendants is responsive in answering tourist questions related to attractions has a score of 3.55 which means the answer score is high.

The indicator of local tour attendants quickly responding to what tourists need has a score of 3.20, which means the score is high. From these results, the total average value's total score was 3.44, indicating that the answers from respondents to the variable Responsiveness / Responsiveness were positive. Furthermore, the Assurance variable using descriptive analysis can provide information about the description of the variables in this study with the number of tourists totaling 100 respondents against two indicators; the local tour attendant indicator has extensive knowledge about tourist attractions and has a mean score on items or questions in the Assurance variable of 3.85 which means the score is high.

The next indicator is that local tour attendants can provide a sense of comfort and ensure the safety of tourists, having a score of 3.56, which means the score is high. From these results, a total score of the total average value was 3.70, indicating that the respondents' answers to the Assurance variable were positive.

Furthermore, the Empathy / Emphaty variable using descriptive analysis can provide information about the description of variables in this study with the number of tourists totaling 100 respondents to 3 indicators; the first indicator is that local tour attendants can communicate well and correctly have a score of 4.1 which means the score is high. The next indicator is that local tour attendants pay special attention to tourists (providing facilities such as wheelchairs or other facilities), which has a score of 3.33, which means the score is moderate; the indicator of local tour attendants have an approach/attention to tourists has a score of 3.37, which means the score is moderate.

Furthermore, the Direct / Tangible Evidence variable using descriptive analysis can provide information about the description of variables in this study with the number of tourists totaling 100 respondents against three indicators; the first indicator is that local tour attendants understand the needs of tourists and prioritize the interests of tourists have a score of 3.63 which means the score is high. The next indicator, local tour attendants always wearing uniform clothes by the SOP, has a score of 3.84, which means the score is high. The last indicator of local tour attendants always looking clean and polite has a score of 3.96, which means the score is high. From these results, a total score of the total average value was 3.81, indicating that the respondents' answers to the Direct / Tangible Evidence variable were positive.

On average, tourists' perception of the quality of local tour attendant services at Keraton Kasepuhan is good. It can be seen from the research results that show the results of values with high scores. However, some indicators still have shortcomings, with many respondents stating neutral rather than those who strongly agree. For example, the local tour attendant indicator has exceptional attention to tourists who get 22 perceptions, and the local tour attendant indicator

has an approach/attention to tourists who get 28 neutral perceptions. However, from a total of 5 variables, all get an average value, including high in the eyes of tourists who visit and use the services of local tour attendant Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon.

CONCLUSION AND ADVICE

Conclusion

From the results of research on the perception of tourists who have visited the Cirebon Kasepuhan Palace and used the services of local tour attendants as respondents, it can be concluded that the perception of tourists towards the quality of local tour attendant services at the Cirebon Kasepuhan Palace is excellent.

Several indicators can still be improved, such as the local tour attendant indicator's having exceptional attention to tourists and the local tour attendant indicator's having an approach / attention to tourists who only get a score in the medium category. Moreover, the rest of the tourists' perception of the quality of local tour attendant service at the Kasepuhan Palace is very good.

Advice

From the results of this study, there are several suggestions that can be given to local tour attendants and the management of the Cirebon Kasepuhan Palace, namely, maintaining the quality of existing services and also improving the quality of service in several sectors such as local tour attendants have exceptional attention to tourists and indicators of local tour attendants have an approach / attention to tourists. This must be improved so that the quality of local tour attendant services at the Cirebon Kasepuhan Palace can be even better.

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