
TOURIST SATISFACTION DIMENSIONS OF HOMESTAYS IN LEBAKMUNCANG TOURISM VILLAGE: A QUALITATIVE APPROACH THROUGH FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Kinanti Aulia Suryadi, Fatimah Nur Hanifah Nasution, Verza Aldirindra Nugraha,
Qurrota'ayun Fidelitasari, Heri Puspito Diyah Setiyorini

Magister Pariwisata, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

kinantiaulia@upi.edu, fatimahnasution@upi.edu, verzaaldirindra@gmail.com, qurrotafidelita26@upi.edu,
heri.setiyorini@upi.edu

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Abstract: This research discusses the dimensions of tourist satisfaction with homestays in the Lebakmuncang Tourist Village using a qualitative approach through Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The study involves two groups of students, each from the English Language Program at STBA Yapari Bandung and the Catering Science Management Program at UPI, who participated in the Real Work Lecture (Kuliah Kerja Nyata - KKN) program. In this research, the author attempts to identify and classify the dimensions of tourist satisfaction with homestays in the Lebakmuncang Tourist Village, taking into account factors such as service, homestay facilities, interaction with the local community, and the village's environmental atmosphere. The FGD method is used to gain in-depth insights into the perceptions, expectations, and experiences of tourists staying in the homestays. The results of this research are expected to provide a strong foundation for formulating policy recommendations and development strategies for destinations or tourism services with a focus on improving quality and competitiveness. The recommendations generated from this study are expected to enhance the services and staying experience in homestays in the Lebakmuncang Tourist Village, thus better satisfying tourists.

Keywords: Tourist Satisfaction Dimensions; Homestay; Tourist Village; Staying Experience; Qualitative Approach.

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary tourism landscape dominated by modern attractions, the need for experiences that offer closer connections to local life has become increasingly urgent. Rural tourism villages have emerged as compelling destinations that provide tourists with profound experiences of Indonesia's cultural and natural wealth. Desa Wisata Lebakmuncang stands out as a destination offering such immersive experiences, with homestays serving as its primary accommodation option. These homestays enable visitors to experience the warmth of local hospitality while enjoying the natural beauty and daily life of the village community.

Homestays in Desa Wisata Lebakmuncang transcend their function as mere temporary lodging facilities. They represent the main attraction for tourists seeking deep and authentic experiences. By offering opportunities to live

alongside local communities, visitors can experience genuine local hospitality, immerse themselves in local wisdom, and enjoy the tranquil atmosphere of village life. These homestays provide a unique and personal dimension to travel, enriching tourists' journeys through direct interactions with the culture and daily life of the friendly village community.

As alternative accommodation, homestays have evolved beyond simple resting places to become integral components of the tourist experience. They play a crucial role in bringing authenticity and cultural proximity to life. Tourists who choose homestays gain rare opportunities to engage directly with local community life, explore traditions, and experience the rhythm of daily activities that conventional accommodations rarely offer. Furthermore, homestays contribute significantly to preserving the cultural and traditional heritage of Desa Wisata Lebakmuncang. By providing

platforms for tourists to experience daily life, homestays create awareness and appreciation for local culture. The preservation of traditional practices such as handicrafts, dances, and distinctive culinary traditions becomes more meaningful when tourists directly participate in these experiences.

The economic impact of homestays on the village community is also substantial. Revenue generated from homestays flows directly to local communities, providing economic stimulus that can improve villagers' living standards. Thus, homestays not only serve as lodging facilities but also as means to support sustainable local economic development. In the context of Desa Wisata Lebakmuncang, homestays form the backbone of authentic and memorable tourism experiences. By opening their homes to tourists, village communities share not only sleeping spaces but also invite visitors to become part of the living story and sustainability of Desa Wisata Lebakmuncang.

Understanding tourist satisfaction with homestay services is essential for the sustainable development of rural tourism destinations. Tourist satisfaction encompasses various dimensions, including service quality, facility adequacy, and the quality of interactions with local communities. However, comprehensive research exploring these satisfaction dimensions through tourists' direct perspectives remains limited, particularly in the context of Indonesian rural tourism villages. This gap necessitates in-depth investigation to understand the factors influencing tourist satisfaction and to provide valuable insights for homestay management improvement.

This study employs a qualitative approach through Focus Group Discussion (FGD) to investigate the dimensions of tourist satisfaction with homestays in Desa Wisata Lebakmuncang. The FGD method was selected to provide deep insights into the perceptions, expectations, and experiences of tourists staying at the homestays. This group dialogue is expected to reveal factors affecting guest satisfaction levels, ranging from service quality and homestay facilities to interactions with local communities. By understanding these dynamics more deeply, this research aims not only to provide richer understanding of tourist preferences regarding homestays in rural tourism villages but also to offer valuable perspectives for homestay managers and stakeholders in enhancing service quality and supporting the sustainable development of rural tourism destinations.

Specifically, this research seeks to address three primary objectives. First, to identify and classify the dimensions of tourist satisfaction with homestay services in Desa Wisata Lebakmuncang through a qualitative approach

using Focus Group Discussion. Second, to understand tourist expectations and hopes regarding homestays in the Desa Wisata Lebakmuncang environment and how these factors influence their perceptions of accommodation experience quality. Third, to determine the extent to which tourist interactions with local communities, homestay facilities, and the village environment atmosphere play roles in shaping their satisfaction levels with the homestay experience in Desa Wisata Lebakmuncang, and to explain these findings through FGD analysis. Through achieving these objectives, this study is expected to contribute to the body of knowledge on rural tourism management and provide practical recommendations for improving homestay service quality in Indonesian rural tourism contexts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourist and Tourism Behavior

The definition of tourists adopted in this study aligns with the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) recommendation, which defines a tourist as any person traveling to a main destination outside their usual environment for less than one year, for any main purpose including business, leisure, or other personal purposes, other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country visited. This definition encompasses the broad spectrum of temporary travel motivations. Kallen (2008) further elaborates that tourists are individuals who temporarily travel voluntarily to visit a place with specific purposes to gain experiences different from their previous ones. This perspective emphasizes the experiential nature of tourism, where the pursuit of novel experiences becomes a fundamental driver of tourist behavior.

Understanding tourist behavior and motivations has become increasingly important in contemporary tourism research, as these factors directly influence destination selection, accommodation preferences, and overall satisfaction levels. The experiential aspect of tourism has gained particular significance in rural tourism contexts, where authentic cultural immersion and community interaction constitute primary attractions for visitors seeking alternatives to conventional tourism experiences.

Tourist Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction represents a critical construct in tourism industry quality assessment and destination competitiveness. As customers in the tourism industry, tourists' satisfaction levels serve as valuable metrics for evaluating and promoting tourism destinations. The concept of tourist satisfaction has evolved from customer satisfaction principles in tourism marketing

developing into a specialized field of study that examines satisfaction through the perspectives of service quality management and revisit intentions. Research findings on tourist satisfaction have proven valuable for evaluating and enhancing service quality in hospitality and tourism destinations (Chen et al., 2013).

The relationship between tourist satisfaction and loyalty has attracted considerable scholarly attention, with empirical evidence consistently demonstrating that tourist satisfaction serves as a reliable predictor of destination loyalty (Tian et al., 2020). This relationship underscores the importance of understanding satisfaction dimensions, as satisfied tourists are more likely to return to destinations and recommend them to others, thereby contributing to destination sustainability and competitiveness.

Shahrivar (2012) developed a comprehensive research model examining tourist satisfaction through destination attributes including natural factors, cultural factors, shopping opportunities, accessibility, infrastructure, hospitality, services, and costs. The model demonstrates that the relationship between destination attributes and tourist satisfaction is mediated by several factors: demographic characteristics, tourist characteristics, travel behavior characteristics, cultural characteristics, and information sources. This multidimensional approach highlights the complexity of satisfaction formation and the necessity of considering various influencing factors when assessing tourist experiences.

Oliver (1997), as cited in Saayman et al. (2018), defines tourist satisfaction as an evaluation of product or service features provided by destination managers that meet consumer or customer needs, resulting in feelings of pleasure and contentment, while also addressing deficiencies and excesses during tourism activities. Pizam, Neuman, and Reichel (1978), cited in Saayman et al. (2018), conceptualize tourist satisfaction as a collection of tourist attitudes regarding specific domains within their holiday experiences. Furthermore, tourist satisfaction involves comparing what tourists expect to receive with what they actually receive, representing an orientation toward whether their expectations have been met during their tourism experience at visited destinations (Kuntarto & Mumisari, 2016). This expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm remains fundamental in understanding satisfaction formation processes.

Service Quality Dimensions

Service quality assessment forms the foundation for evaluating tourist satisfaction. The present study adopts the service quality dimensions developed by Parasuraman, as cited in Tjiptono (2000), which comprise five fundamental dimensions. First, reliability refers

to the ability to deliver promised services promptly, accurately, and satisfactorily. Second, responsiveness denotes staff willingness to assist customers and provide prompt service. Third, assurance encompasses staff knowledge, competence, courtesy, and trustworthiness, ensuring freedom from costs, risks, or doubts. Fourth, empathy includes ease of relationship building, effective communication, personal attention, and understanding of individual customer needs. Fifth, tangibles encompass physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication tools.

These five dimensions provide a comprehensive framework for assessing service quality in tourism contexts, particularly in homestay accommodations where personal interaction and physical environment quality significantly influence guest experiences. The multidimensional nature of service quality necessitates holistic approaches to satisfaction assessment that consider both tangible and intangible service aspects.

Homestay Accommodation

Accommodation represents a crucial tourism product component supporting tourism activities. Homestays constitute a specific accommodation type where tourists or visitors stay in local residents' homes that provide homestay services. This accommodation model has become an emerging trend across various countries, viewed as an approach to utilize rural area potential. However, particular attention must be given to facility needs and improved service provision (Singh, 2014).

The challenges and aspirations of local communities in managing homestays vary across different contexts. In Indonesia, Junaid et al. (2019) identified that training needs and empowerment for sustainability constitute critical concerns in homestay management. Their research highlights the importance of capacity building for local communities to ensure the long-term viability of homestay operations. In Sri Lanka, Wijesundara and Gnanapala (2016) identified distinct development challenges including limited local youth participation, community leadership issues, and management organization deficiencies. These findings suggest that homestay development faces context-specific challenges requiring tailored solutions.

Focusing on Indonesia's context, Lombok, a region frequently visited by tourists, exemplifies homestay proliferation. Sugandi et al. (2020) proposed community-based homestay management strategies as approaches to address welfare distribution, program organization, and conflicts of interest. Their research emphasizes the importance of community involvement in homestay management to ensure equitable benefit distribution and sustainable development.

The community-based approach aligns with sustainable tourism principles, where local communities actively participate in tourism development and benefit directly from tourism activities.

Rural Tourism Villages

Rural tourism village development in Indonesia has experienced significant growth, focusing on cultural and natural potential. A rural tourism village is defined as a rural area or territory that integrates locally managed attractions as tourism destinations, particularly emphasizing community empowerment and economic enhancement (Topowijono & Supriono, 2018). This definition emphasizes the dual objectives of rural tourism: providing authentic experiences for tourists while generating economic benefits for local communities.

Rosalina (2021) provides a more comprehensive definition, identifying multiple aspects of rural tourism villages with primary aspects including location, sustainable development, community-based management, and experience. This multidimensional conceptualization recognizes that successful rural tourism villages must balance environmental sustainability, community participation, and tourist experience quality. The experiential dimension particularly resonates with contemporary tourism trends, where tourists increasingly seek authentic, immersive experiences that connect them with local cultures and lifestyles.

The integration of homestays within rural tourism villages creates synergistic opportunities, where homestays serve not merely as accommodation facilities but as platforms for cultural exchange and authentic rural experience. This integration aligns with sustainable tourism principles by distributing economic benefits directly to community members while preserving cultural heritage and local authenticity. Understanding tourist satisfaction with homestays in rural tourism contexts therefore becomes essential for ensuring the sustainability and competitiveness of these emerging tourism destinations.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using Focus Group Discussion (FGD) as the primary data collection method, selected for its effectiveness in enabling participants to articulate perspectives in detail and identify satisfaction-influencing factors through group interactions (Paramita & Kristiana, 2013; McQuail, 1997). The research focused on two groups of university students who participated in Community Service Programs (KKN) at Homestay Desa Wisata

Lebakmuncang: five students from the English Language Study Program at STBA Yapani Bandung who stayed for four weeks, and five students from the Catering Industry Management Study Program at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia who stayed for three weeks. These populations were selected based on their diverse educational backgrounds and sufficient immersion periods to form comprehensive evaluations. The research was conducted from October to December 2023, including field observations on October 27 and November 3, followed by two online FGD sessions via Zoom Meetings on November 30 and December 1, 2023. The first FGD with STBA Yapani students lasted 1 hour and 10 minutes (20:00-21:10 WIB), while the second FGD with UPI students lasted 1 hour and 35 minutes (20:00-21:35 WIB). Each session was facilitated by a moderator who guided discussions using semi-structured questions covering homestay facilities, service quality, local community interactions, cultural experiences, and overall satisfaction levels, with all sessions recorded with participants' consent. Data analysis followed a systematic thematic analysis approach where recorded sessions were transcribed verbatim and analyzed through iterative coding stages: initial coding to identify preliminary patterns, organizing codes into potential themes, reviewing and refining themes, and interpreting findings in relation to tourist satisfaction literature (Krueger, 1998). Cross-checking between researchers was conducted to enhance analytical rigor, with analysis specifically focused on identifying satisfaction factors, comparing expectations with actual experiences, and uncovering improvement areas for homestay services.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the data analysis generated from the Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and explains their meanings based on existing theories on tourist satisfaction, service quality, community-based tourism, and homestay management. The FGDs were conducted with two groups of students from the English Study Program of STBA Yapani Bandung and the Industrial Catering Management Study Program of UPI who stayed in homestays in Lebakmuncang Tourism Village as part of a community engagement program. Their experiences provided a detailed understanding of the dimensions of tourist satisfaction, their expectations before arrival, and the factors influencing their overall homestay experience.

The findings reveal that tourist satisfaction is influenced primarily by service quality

dimensions, which correspond to the SERVQUAL model that includes tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Participants from the English Study Program identified warm communication, clear explanations about facilities, and the friendliness of homestay managers as the most influential aspects shaping their satisfaction. These aspects reflect the importance of empathy and assurance in service delivery, where interpersonal warmth and reliable information contribute to positive service evaluations. The affordable monthly lodging cost, which was approximately IDR 1,500,000 for one house accommodating 10 to 15 guests, was also perceived as appropriate and contributed to their sense of value.

Participants from the Industrial Catering Management Study Program provided similar yet more facility-oriented feedback. Cleanliness, adequacy of water supply, and functional facilities were viewed as central determinants of satisfaction. Although occasional issues such as temporary water outages occurred, the homestay owner's prompt response to resolve the problem helped maintain guest satisfaction. This supports the principle in service recovery theory that rapid corrective action can reduce dissatisfaction and maintain service trust. Nevertheless, several participants expressed that the actual facilities did not fully meet their initial expectations. This finding aligns with expectation–confirmation theory (Oliver, 1980), which explains that satisfaction is shaped by the extent to which initial expectations are met or exceeded during actual service encounters.

Across both groups, interaction with the local community emerged as a significant factor influencing satisfaction. Participants valued the opportunity to interact with residents, gain cultural understanding, and receive practical support during their stay. These experiences align with community-based tourism theories emphasizing that meaningful engagement with local communities enhances the authenticity and memorability of tourist experiences. The rural environment and social atmosphere of Lebakmuncang Village similarly contributed to the sense of comfort and satisfaction reported by participants.

Despite many positive aspects, participants from both FGDs provided constructive suggestions for improvement. These included recommendations for better lighting in rooms, additional electrical outlets, modernized bathrooms, water heater installation, and the development of standardized facilities across all homestays. Such suggestions reflect the increasing expectations of tourists for both comfort and consistency, which is supported by the argument that standardization can enhance

destination competitiveness and ensure a more uniform visitor experience.

The analysis of the FGDs shows that non-physical factors, such as hospitality, communication, and responsiveness of the homestay managers, exert a stronger influence on satisfaction than physical features alone. This finding is consistent with previous studies stating that emotional and relational elements in service delivery significantly shape customer satisfaction, particularly in homestay and small-scale accommodation contexts where personal interaction is more prominent. Even so, the participants emphasized that physical improvements remain essential to support guest comfort and to meet the growing expectations of tourists in rural destinations.

Overall, the results indicate that satisfaction with homestays in Lebakmuncang Tourism Village is shaped by a combination of service quality, facility adequacy, interaction with the local community, and the ambience of the village environment. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of tourist satisfaction in community-based homestays and provide a strong foundation for future improvements. The study highlights the importance of strengthening both relational and physical aspects of homestay services to align with established theories of tourist satisfaction and to support the sustainable development and competitiveness of rural tourism destinations.

CONCLUSION

This study provides a comprehensive understanding of tourist satisfaction with homestays in Lebakmuncang Tourism Village based on insights gathered through Focus Group Discussions involving two groups of student participants. The findings indicate that overall tourist satisfaction is generally positive, with respondents reporting that their actual experiences aligned with, and in several cases exceeded, their initial expectations. Satisfaction was particularly evident in the quality of interaction with local residents, which was perceived as warm, supportive, and conducive to meaningful cultural engagement. This reinforces the notion that community interaction is a defining element of community-based tourism and contributes substantially to the overall homestay experience.

The results also highlight that the dimensions of tourist satisfaction encompass several interrelated aspects, including service quality, facility conditions, interaction with the local community, and the environmental atmosphere of the village. Non-physical aspects, such as hospitality, responsiveness, and effective communication from homestay managers, emerged as the most influential components in

shaping visitor satisfaction. These findings align with existing theories that emphasize the importance of emotional and relational elements in service delivery, particularly within small-scale and community-based accommodation settings.

Despite the generally positive assessments, respondents identified several areas for improvement that could enhance future tourist experiences. Suggestions include improving basic facilities such as lighting and electrical outlets, upgrading bathrooms and introducing additional amenities such as water heaters, and implementing standardized facilities across all homestays to ensure consistent service quality. Participants also expressed the need for clearer information regarding available facilities, better preparedness of homestays prior to guest arrival, and stronger efforts to maintain cleanliness as a fundamental requirement of accommodation services.

The overall conclusion of this research is that tourist satisfaction in Lebakmuncang Tourism Village is shaped by a balance between interpersonal service quality and the adequacy of physical facilities. The positive experiences reported by participants underscore the strengths of the village's community-oriented approach, while the recommendations provided signal important opportunities for improvement to meet rising tourist expectations. These findings offer valuable insights for homestay managers, community leaders, and tourism stakeholders in planning future service enhancements and strengthening the competitiveness of homestays in rural tourism destinations.

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