



## Consumer Education in Service System of Ledok Sambu Tourist Village, Sleman Regency

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**ABSTRACT:** Two factors that affect consumer satisfaction include personal and situational factors, such as consumer behavior while exploring the tourist attraction. Bad behavior exhibited by some consumers, if not handled properly, will affect consumer satisfaction because the other visitors feel disturbed. Hence, the tourist attraction manager needs to give education to their visitors. This study analyzed the implementation of consumer education in the service system, including input, process, and output. This study was conducted at Ledok Sambu Tourist Village, Sleman Regency, where the managers and staff of this tourist village are the subjects of this particular research. This study also measured the visitors' perception of the service system applied in such tourist attractions. Data collecting methods were in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. This study was a case study, where the scope of the study focused only but comprehensively on one case, namely consumer education. The analysis applied was a descriptive approach with an interactive model, where this approach was used to interpret, deduct the conclusion, and validate data using a triangulation model. The study results showed that giving education to the visitors in the service system will help boost consumer satisfaction as expected. The visitors can follow the applicable rules and regulations, where they voluntarily follow the rules and disciplines and are aware to preserve environmental sustainability. Hence, all visitors can enjoy clean, fresh, and comfortable natural tourist destinations. The managers of Ledok Sambu Tourist Village implement consumer education to the tourists by optimizing the tourism competence of all staff, improving available resources, and cooperating with some waste management vendors. The education model given to the visitors includes raising their awareness of cleanliness, rules, and environmental sustainability. Meanwhile, the expected output of this education includes disciplined behaviors and a caring attitude for the environment during their visit to Ledok Sambu.

**KEYWORDS:** Consumer Education, Satisfaction, Service System

### INTRODUCTION

Service companies are a form of enterprise that pursues consumer satisfaction. However, to get the expected satisfaction, the company should be perceptive to the services provided to the consumers. In this case, the tourism industry is one of the business sectors affected by consumer satisfaction. For example, when a tourist is satisfied with the services, they will revisit in the future. On the contrary, an unsatisfied visitor will share their disappointment about certain tourist attractions and tell other people not to visit.

One of the factors that affect consumer satisfaction, as expressed by Rangkuti, is the consumer perception towards the service quality, where some other factors are also measured, including values, prices, and other personal and situational factors[1]. One of the personal and situational factors in the tourism industry is consumer behavior during their visits. Some of the poor behaviors shown by the visitors are being ignorant of cleanliness, throwing waste carelessly, not following rules, and disrespecting other visitors' privacy. Those behaviors, if mishandled, will affect consumer satisfaction at large because the other visitors feel uncomfortable.

Tourism is an industry sector that plays a vital role in certain regions' development[2]. Ledok Sambu Tourist Village is an Ecopark destination located in Kaliurang, Sleman Regency, and is frequently visited by tourists, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, the pandemic situation has ruined other similar destinations because they lost a considerable number of visitors. According to the data from the Tourism Office of Sleman Regency, the tourist visits in 2021 were 704,748, showing a significant decline of 81.48%, compared to 2020[3]. On the contrary, the tourist visits to Ledok Sambu Ecopark Tourist Village in 2021 showed a remarkable increase. The average monthly visits in 2020 reached 3,833 visitors, and in 2021 the monthly visits were 7,000 visitors.



According to a study conducted by Thematic Tourism Development as a Pioneer in Developing Child-friendly Educational Area, the managers of some tourist attractions deal with the most common problems. The problems are: (1) how to manage the sites professionally, (2) how to improve the quality and quantity of human resources capable of managing and developing tourist sites, and (3) how to integrate such places as thematic tourism as an educational site[4].

Being educative is a condition that provides education, understanding, and teaching[5]. Every matter that provides education, comprehension, and mandates can be considered as educative, and educating is the education itself. Educating can be called education, which is a process of dynamic behavioral changes. It means that the changes are not merely a product of knowledge transfer from one person to another nor a set of procedures, but because there is self-awareness exhibited by an individual, group, or society[6]. The purposes of education are as follows[6]:

- 1) Determine their problems and needs.
- 2) Understand what they can do with their problems, using their available resources supported with other external factors.
- 3) Determine the most practical activities to improve the standard of living and public welfare.

According to the definition above, consumer education refers to a circumstance that provides education and understanding and educates the consumer or visitor about tourism-related aspects. This way, the consumers can get their satisfaction as expected.

Meanwhile, a system is a network procedure that is made based on an integrated pattern in performing the main activities of a company, organization, institution, or other foundations[7]. A system is an interrelated procedural framework that follows the overall scheme to perform the company, organization, institution, or other foundations' activities[8]. According to Kristanto, a system is a collection of interrelated elements that works together to register the information (input) about the target of activities to the system itself (process) and then analyzes the input until the expected results are obtained (output). The fundamental concept of the system is illustrated as below[9]:

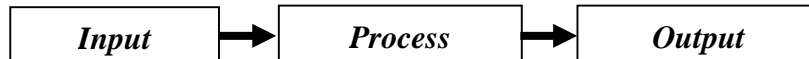


Figure 1. System model.

According to Kristanto, the elements in a system include purposes, boundaries, control, input, process, output, and feedback. These interrelated elements that define purpose, limits, and control will affect the input, process, and output. In this case, the input entered into the system will be processed to obtain the output. Then, it will be analyzed and transformed into feedback for the receivers. Some service systems will also use media to help distribute the services conveniently, such as call center, SMS center, Instagram, email, fax, letter, and others[9].

In short, service includes the activity that is offered by a certain organization or individual to the consumers, which is intangible in forms. Here are the characteristics of services in providing the best amenities:

- 1) Service is impalpable, which is contrary to tangible goods.
- 2) In reality, services consist of real action and influence, which are in the form of social acts.
- 3) Production and consumption of services cannot be separated because they generally are simultaneous and occur in the same place.

According to the findings of the previous study, consumer education was one of the factors that made Ledok Sambu Village successful in maintaining the tourist visits during the COVID-19 pandemic. It showed an increase in consumer satisfaction and revisiting frequency. Thus, to analyze the consumer education implementation further, an objective of the study is formulated as “how is the consumer education implementation in service system of Ledok Sambu Ecopark Tourist Village”?

## METHODOLOGY

This present study was conducted at Ledok Sambu Tourist Village, Sleman Regency, with its managers and operational staff being the subject of research. This study also measured the visitor's perception of the service system applied[10]. The data collecting method included an in-depth interview, observation, and documentation. This study was a case study, where the scope of the study



was focused thoroughly on one case only, in which consumer education. The data analysis applied descriptive analysis with an interactive model to obtain interpretation, conclusion, and data validation using the triangulation model[11].

RESULT

The study results showed the mechanism and implementation of consumer education in each service step at Ledok Sambu Tourist Village. The study consisted of three primary aspects: input, process, and output. Each aspect was comprehensively studied in each interrelated sub-study section.

1. Input

Input includes human resources readiness, infrastructures and educational materials, and the work procedures. The study results found some riveting discoveries. Among others, the implication mechanism in educating the consumers uses a simple plan of action with flexibility. The primary consideration taken by the managers of Ledok Sambu Tourist Village is to actualize the company’s goals in creating a tourist site that is comfortable, affordable, and caring for environmental sustainability, thus giving social benefits for the surroundings.

Ledok Sambu is a natural tourist site and thus requires environmental sustainability to be well-managed. This way, the visitors can enjoy the beautiful, fresh, and comfortable natural atmosphere. Ledok Sambu has 80 workers with one operational manager, with the help of seven permanent employees, who are responsible for managing different sections, including Food and Beverage Services, Marketing, Environmental Maintenance, Engineering, Flying Fox and Outbound Activities, and Parking and Security, while the remaining others are daily workers.

Table 1. Data of Ledok Sambu Tourist Village Employees

No	Section	Position	Minimum Education Degree	Employment Status	Total	
					Male	Female
1	Managerial	Operational Manager	University Degree	Permanent	1	
2	Management	Head Department	University Degree	Permanent	6	1
3	Operational	Operational	High School Degree	Daily Workers	50	22
Total					57	23

The first stage of consumer education implementation is through an internal strengthening of tourism competency in all employees based on their working sections. All employees should possess several competencies, including work mastering, responsible, communicative, service competent, environmentally conscious, and have other specific competencies related to certain services. At the same time, the managers have strengthened the facilities and infrastructures to support consumer education implementation in almost all areas, including the parking area, entrance gate, public areas, food and beverages booths, rest area, prayer room, and outbound areas. All staff on each spot have had sufficient service competencies so they can do their job well.

As stated earlier, an interesting finding is that the managers did not use many instruments in educating the visitors. There are no direction boards or notice boards used in the area that remind the visitors to keep clean or direct them to the nearest garbage cans. The managers would only deliver suggestions to the visitors through the *announcer* at the entrance gate. Furthermore, the staff will educate the tourists directly whenever they exhibit unpleasant behaviors or did something that should not be done, such as throwing out waste carelessly, doing dangerous acts, or disturbing the other visitors.

It is what differentiates Ledok Sambu Tourist Village from other tourist destinations, which commonly use appeal signboards for their visitors. Unlike the other destination manager, the Ledok Sambu managers see the use of signboards as an obstruction of sight. By not providing any physical instruments like signboards, consumer education can be performed in a low-cost situation and thus do not burden the finances. The Ledok Sambu Village managers also forbid the visitors to bring foods or drinks from outside the area to reduce waste volumes. The visitors are also not allowed to use a megaphone in the area or conduct any games that may



disturb the other tourists. The rules implementation and no signboards provided in the area will help the visitors enjoy the scenery, such as birds chirping sound, wind breeze, or the gurgling river.

Overall, the input in the consumer education applied in the service system of Ledok Sambu Tourist Village was to optimize the available resources and maximize tasks and responsibilities of all employees, which prioritizes hospitality and work based on the appointed work procedures. Meanwhile, the education is delivered in the form of suggestions to put forward comfortability and environmental sustainability, which, in turn, allows the visitors to devour the enjoyable atmosphere and create unforgettable memories.

## 2. Process

The results showed that consumer education went hand in hand with service stages and procedures, from arrival to the end of the visit. Upon arrival, the visitors received education through the public *announcer* at the entrance. The education provided includes the implementation of health protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic and reminding visitors to stay clean and dispose of trash in the trash cans provided. Education was also delivered by the staff at the entrance. There are separate locations for individual and group entrances; hence, the activities do not interfere with each other. In short, the education provided to visitors is the same across all areas and all employees have a role to play in alerting tourists when they find they are doing something inappropriate.

One of the success indicators in establishing tourist destinations that attract visitors is the support from all involved employees who do their job at their best. All staff on site must clean up the spots, pick up scattered trash and throw them into the provided trash cans. All those acts and roles have been played regularly by all employees and the management. Besides keeping the area clean and comfortable, environmental consciousness shown by all involved parties become real examples to all visitors. The disciplinary regulations aim to keep the place clean and comfortable, which will lead to consumer satisfaction during their visits to Ledok Sambu. Furthermore, motivation and active participation exhibited by some visitors in implementing the education on-site also improved as they saw the employees did the same.

However, several obstacles should be dealt with by each service aspect. The most prominent one comes from the visitors who have a different level of understanding about the concept of the natural destination and service procedures applied in that particular place. The results showed that this matter relates to the visitor's perception of the regulations introduced by Ledok Sambu Village managers. Firstly, it is related to the prohibition of bringing foods and drinks from outside the Ledok Sambu. Some visitors cannot truly comprehend the purposes and reasons behind this prohibition, which specifically aims to reduce waste. The visitors might assume that the on-site prices of foods and drinks have been marked up to give more financial benefits for the managers. Quite contrarily, the prices are considered affordable.

Secondly, some visitors are reluctant to follow the rules and misbehave, such as carelessly throwing out waste and disturbing the other tourists. Despite that, the employees have to provide the best services, for example, they must clean up the dirty spots before being used by the other visitors. Thirdly, on its peak visit, some dumpsters are found full and thus reduce the panoramic beauty.

## 3. Output

The results define the output as the direct effect of consumer education implementation within the service system. The first output, according to this result, is that the managers can create a good atmosphere, which makes the visitors enjoy such clean, fresh, and comfortable scenery. The average hours that the visitors spend on the site are two to three hours, where they mostly take their time to enjoy the view and enjoy meals provided by some food stalls.

The second achieved output is that the visitors tend to be well-behaved and orderly. They voluntarily get involved in keeping the area clean, not throwing any wastes into the river and using the garbage cans instead, and not making any damages to the facilities. The success in affecting the visitors to follow the rules is achievable because the managers prioritize hospitality and patience in dealing with all visitors. Each staff should pose cordiality and exhibits a caring attitude toward cleanliness, comfort, and environmental sustainability.

The third achieved output is that the visitors express their satisfaction as expected because they can enjoy such a beautiful, clean, and comfortable destination. They also frequently revisit Ledok Sambu and recommend this place to people who have never visited Ledok Sambu before. According to the data of Ledok Sambu Tourist Village, most of the visitors are frequent tourists who have come several times and show an intention of revisiting in the future.



**Table 2.** Data of Visitors at Ledok Sambu Tourist Village

No	Number of Visits	Type of Visitors		Intentions on Revisiting	Recommending Others to Visit
		Individual	Group		
1	First Visit	50%	70%	Yes	Yes
2	2-5 times	30%	25%	Yes	Yes
3	More than 5 times	20%	5%	Yes	Yes
4	Visit Ratio	60%	40%		

Source: Ledok Sambu, 2022

The data shown in the table above express a visit ratio between individual and group was 60:40. *Group inclusive traveler* (GIT) is the most common first-time visitor. Meanwhile, the range of *free individual traveler* (FIT) as first-time visitors and more-than-second-times visitors are balanced. The majority of visitors say that they will revisit the place in the future and recommend it to other people.

Meanwhile, the evaluation of facilities and services improvement implementation is based on the quantities and the types of visits. Some matters can still be developed to raise consumer satisfaction, such as constructing additional access specialized for people with disabilities, revitalizing infrastructures including the garbage cans, benches, and gazebos, and maintaining the environment and the floras around the site.

**DISCUSSION**

The results have found that the Ledok Sambu Village managers applied a simple yet flexible service system, which means they did not use too many instruments and rules for the visitors. The managers opted for emphasizing individual awareness of their rights and obligations. The managers applied a down-to-earth approach in their services, considering that Ledok Sambu has varied market segmentation. Among others, various visitor demographic becomes the most prominent obstacle in creating a satisfying service because they cannot understand the purposes and reasons of such regulations within the service procedures.

However, services in natural tourist destinations have different characteristics from other sectors, where the visitors expect to enjoy beautiful, clean, and fresh scenery. Thus, service system management becomes the key to success in consumer satisfaction. In this case, the Ledok Sambu Village managers had extraordinary ways and mechanisms compared to the other destination managers. They did not sell visit tickets, used an uncomplicated service system, and gave education to the visitors to raise awareness on rights and obligations.

In general, the other destinations will apply tickets to gain operational funding. They will also use some instruments to give direction and suggestions to their visitors. On the other hand, at Ledok Sambu Tourist Village, the service system tends to be simpler, and the education is delivered in direct appeal with a hospitable attitude. This way, the visitors will be more impressed by the employees' cordiality. This approach and education mechanism applied within the service system is proven successful in realizing Ledok Sambu as an affordable yet memorable tourist destination.

**CONCLUSION AND THE IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY**

The study results show that consumer education implementation in the service system will help gain consumer satisfaction as expected. The visitors of Ledok Sambu village can understand the rules, and they voluntarily follow such regulations and participate in maintaining environmental sustainability. This way, all visitors can enjoy the clean, fresh, and comfortable scenery.

The managers of Ledok Sambu Village give education to their visitors by optimizing their available resources and cooperating with some waste management vendors. The education given to the tourists includes instilling self-awareness on behaving and caring to cleanliness and environmental sustainability. Meanwhile, the outputs achieved include the orderly behavior and caring attitude to the environment during their visits at Ledok Sambu.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

This study suggests that the managers of Ledok Sambu Tourist Village should improve the quality of some facilities on-site to boost consumer satisfaction. They should also pay more attention to the garbage circulation so not to reduce the beauty of the place and decrease consumer satisfaction.

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