



# The influence of UMKM service and product quality on tourist satisfaction

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## ABSTRACT

Tourist satisfaction is influenced not only by the attractions of a destination but also by the quality of services and products offered by local Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). However, limited attention has been given to how MSME performance affects tourist perceptions. This study aims to examine the influence of service quality and product quality of MSMEs on tourist satisfaction in several tourist destinations in North Sumatra, Indonesia. A quantitative research method was employed, using a survey approach with 150 respondents who had direct experience with local MSMEs. The data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis. The results indicate that both service quality and product quality have a significant positive effect on tourist satisfaction ( $p < 0.05$ ), with a coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of 0.68. These findings support the SERVQUAL and customer satisfaction theories, highlighting that modern tourists evaluate their travel experience not only through attractions but also through interactions with local businesses. The study recommends strengthening MSME capacity through improved service delivery, innovation of culture-based products, and the digitalization of marketing and transactions to enhance the competitiveness of tourism destinations.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as one of the countries with an extraordinary wealth of tourist destinations, ranging from natural, cultural, historical, to unique and authentic culinary. Based on data from the Travel and Tourism Development Index (WEF, 2024), Indonesia occupies a strategic position in Southeast Asia as a tourist destination that continues to experience growth in visits, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. Along with the trend of tourism that is increasingly inclusive and oriented towards authentic experiences, tourists are now not only interested in natural beauty, but also want to interact directly with local communities and try local products typical of a region (Yusof et al., 2022; Hamzah & Ismail, 2021).

In this context, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have a strategic role as a supporting ecosystem for tourism. MSMEs not only provide products such as handicrafts, special foods, and souvenirs, but also services such as local accommodation (homestays), transportation, and tour guide services. The presence of MSMEs provides added value to tourist destinations by creating a unique and different atmosphere (Kusumawati et al., 2022). A study by Setiawan et al. (2023) shows that the contribution of MSMEs to local tourism development is not only in the economic aspect, but also in preserving cultural identity and traditional values. This is in line with the latest

findings by Rahim et al. (2023), which emphasizes the importance of integrating local culture in the development of community-based tourism products.

However, amidst the increasing number of tourist visits and the need for quality services, a major challenge faced by MSME actors is the inequality in the quality of services and products. Some phenomena that often occur in the field include: unfriendly or inconsistent service, product packaging that does not meet global tourism standards, and a lack of understanding of the importance of tourist satisfaction (Nasution & Siregar, 2022). In the digital and competitive era like today, quality is the main differentiating factor in maintaining and attracting tourists (Haryanto & Putri, 2021; Widyaningsih et al., 2023).

Service quality itself can be understood as customer perception of the excellence and reliability of the services provided (Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2020). The SERVQUAL theory developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988) and updated by Kundu et al. (2021), emphasizes that dimensions such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles are the main benchmarks in assessing services. A study by Ali & Raza (2019) also showed that the adaptation of SERVQUAL in the context of MSME-based tourism has been shown to increase tourist loyalty. On the other hand, the quality of MSME products includes aspects of uniqueness, novelty, aesthetic value, quality of raw materials, and local cultural appeal (Fitriani & Nugroho, 2022; Asfar & Lubis, 2020).

In the framework of modern tourism management, tourist satisfaction is a key indicator of success. Satisfaction is the result of consumer evaluation after comparing initial expectations with the actual performance of a product or service (Oliver, 2015; Kim & Kim, 2020). Satisfied tourists tend to give positive reviews, make repeat visits (revisit intention), and recommend the destination to others (word-of-mouth) (Pramudyo et al., 2021). A study by Lee & Jan (2021) proved that tourist satisfaction is significantly influenced by their perception of the quality of services and local products they enjoy during their trip. Similar findings were also shown by Syahputra et al. (2024), who stated that the perception of MSME service quality is directly correlated with the loyalty of foreign tourists.

The phenomenon of digitalization and the role of social media have also strengthened the importance of MSME service and product quality in shaping public perception of a tourist destination. Tourists now easily share their experiences online, so poor service or products that do not meet expectations can quickly degrade the image of an area (Wijaya et al., 2023). Therefore, managing service and product quality is crucial as a long-term strategy in supporting sustainable tourism and the local economy (Alamsyah et al., 2022; UNWTO, 2023).

With this background, this study aims to empirically analyze the influence of service quality and product quality of MSMEs on tourist satisfaction in Indonesia's leading tourist destinations. This study is expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions in understanding how MSMEs as local economic actors can improve their capabilities through a quality management approach and customer orientation (Santoso & Lestari, 2023; Yunus et al., 2024).

Service quality is a central element in creating a positive customer experience, especially in the tourism sector which relies heavily on direct interaction between service providers and tourists. In general, service quality is defined as the extent to which the service received by customers meets or exceeds their expectations (Parasuraman et al., 1988). The most well-known model for measuring service quality is SERVQUAL, which includes five main dimensions 1. Tangibles (physical appearance of facilities, equipment, staff, and communication materials), 2. Reliability (ability to deliver services accurately and reliably as promised), 3. Responsiveness (willingness and speed in helping customers), 4. Assurance (knowledge, politeness, and ability to instill trust), 5. Empathy (individual attention given to customers).

Along with the development of the service sector and the digitalization of services, several researchers emphasize the importance of integrating digital service quality (DSQ), including in online reservation platforms, social media, and e-payment. According to (Kundu et al. 2021), the modern dimension of service quality in the tourism sector must also consider factors of digital interaction, online customer engagement, and consistency of information on social media.

MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) products in the tourism sector include a variety of local goods and services such as specialty foods, handicrafts, homestays, and culture-

based services. These products contribute to the creation of authentic experiences for tourists, which is a major trend in modern tourism.

(Kotler and Keller, 2016) state that quality products must have functional and emotional utility value, and provide meaningful experiences. In the context of tourism MSMEs, superior products are products that have local uniqueness, are oriented to the needs and preferences of tourists, carry cultural values and local stories (storytelling), and are designed and packaged professionally and attractively (packaging innovation).

According to research by (Lestari et al. 2023), product innovation, visual design, material sustainability, and integration of digital technology (such as QR codes for product narratives) contribute to increasing the value of MSME products in the eyes of tourists, as well as building competitive advantages.

Tourist satisfaction is the main indicator in assessing the success of a tourism destination. According to (Oliver, 1997), satisfaction is the result of tourists' evaluation after comparing expectations and actual experiences during a visit. In tourism, satisfaction is not only influenced by tourist attractions, but also by social interactions, service quality, and local products consumed.

The latest theory from (Kim & Kim, 2020) emphasizes that tourist satisfaction is formed from a combination of sensory, affective, behavioral, and intellectual experiences while at the destination. In addition, the digital involvement of tourists through social media, online reviews (e-WOM), and digital interactions also influence the perception of satisfaction.

Research by (Al-Ababneh, 2022) confirms that tourist satisfaction is closely related to revisit intention and loyalty to the destination, and is the basis for sustainable destination marketing strategies.

Several previous studies have examined the relationship between service quality, MSME product quality, and tourist satisfaction, namely (Suryani, 2020) found that the quality of service provided by local business actors in Yogyakarta tourist destinations, such as friendliness, response speed, and communication skills, have a positive and significant effect on the level of satisfaction of domestic and foreign tourists. (Hidayat et al. 2021) revealed that the diversity of MSME products, especially those with local cultural characteristics and attractive packaging, significantly increase tourist spending and form a positive perception of the destination. (Putra & Rahmawati, 2022) added that the integration of digital services, product innovation, and personalized experiences contribute greatly to shaping tourist loyalty after the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

This research is quantitative with a survey approach, to measure the relationship between variables statistically. The population of the study were tourists visiting tourist destinations in North Sumatra. Samples were taken purposively as many as 150 tourists who had purchased MSME products and used local services. The instrument used was a closed questionnaire using a Likert scale of 1-5, which included questions about perceptions of service quality, product quality, and level of satisfaction. Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression to see the simultaneous and partial effects between service and product quality on tourist satisfaction, with the help of SPSS/SmartPLS software.

## **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **3.1. Respondent Description**

The respondents in this study consisted of 150 tourists who visited tourist destinations in North Sumatra and interacted with local MSMEs, either in the form of purchasing products or using services. Of the total respondents, 60% were domestic tourists and 40% were foreign tourists, indicating that the destination has attracted the interest of international tourists. This composition reflects the reality that MSMEs not only serve the local market, but also play an important role in shaping the image of the destination in the eyes of the international community.

In terms of demographics, the majority of respondents are in the 25-40 year age range (65%), followed by 18-24 year age groups (20%) and over 40 years of age (15%). This indicates that productive age tourists and young adults dominate the visiting population and have the potential to be strategic target markets for MSME actors. Most respondents (72%) have a minimum educational

background of a Bachelor's degree (S1), indicating that their perceptions and expectations of service and product quality tend to be high and critical.

### 3.2. Validity and Reliability Test

Before further analysis was carried out, the validity and reliability tests were carried out on the questionnaire instrument. The results of the validity test showed that all question items had an item-total correlation value  $> 0.5$ , which means that each item has good measuring power against its respective theoretical constructs.

The reliability test using Cronbach Alpha showed that Service quality had  $\alpha = 0.823$ , MSME Product quality had  $\alpha = 0.846$ , and Tourist satisfaction had  $\alpha = 0.873$ . Because all  $\alpha$  values were  $> 0.7$ , this research instrument was declared reliable and suitable for use in data collection in this study (Hair et al., 2019).

### 3.3. Regression Analysis Results

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to test the simultaneous and partial effects of service quality and MSME product quality on tourist satisfaction. The results of data processing using SPSS/SmartPLS software show that Service Quality ( $X_1$ ) has a significant effect on Tourist Satisfaction ( $Y$ ), with a p value = 0.000  $< 0.05$  and a positive regression coefficient, indicating a positive relationship between the two. MSME Product Quality ( $X_2$ ) also has a significant effect on Tourist Satisfaction ( $Y$ ), with a p value = 0.001  $< 0.05$ , reinforcing the importance of innovation and uniqueness of local products in building positive tourist perceptions. The Determination Coefficient ( $R^2$ ) of 0.68 indicates that 68% of the variation in tourist satisfaction can be explained by the two independent variables, namely service quality and MSME product quality. The remaining 32% is influenced by other factors outside the model such as price, accessibility, digital promotion, or destination infrastructure conditions.

This finding shows that the two independent variables together have a strong contribution to the formation of tourist satisfaction, which is in line with various previous studies (Kim & Kim, 2020; Al-Ababneh, 2022).

Table 1. Tourism MSME Regression Results

Variable	Regression Coefficient	p-value
Service Quality	0,45	0
UMKM Product Quality	0,39	0,001

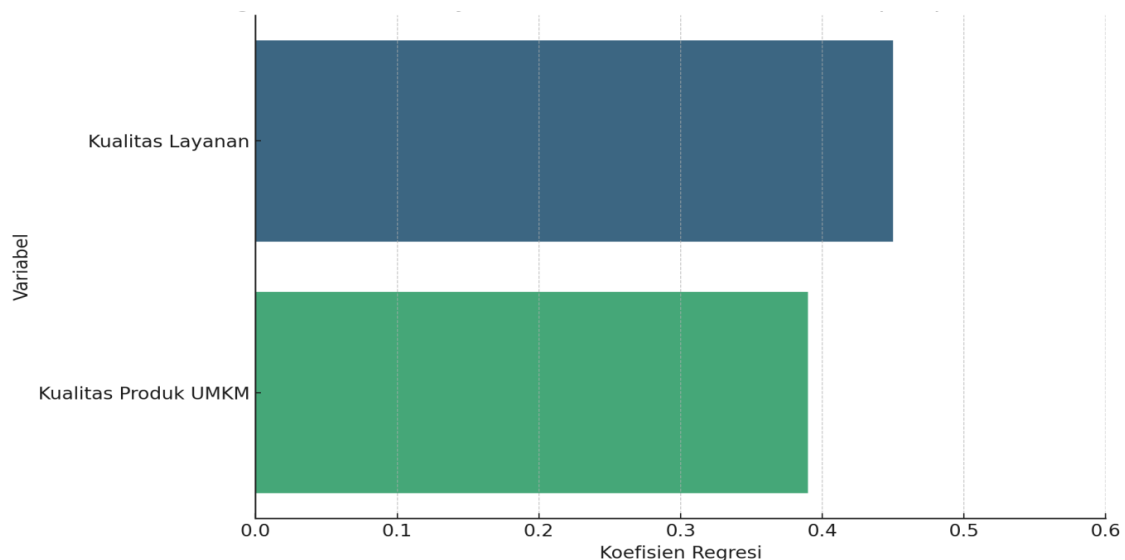


Figure 1. Regression Coefficient Graph

### 3.4. Interpretation and Discussion

The findings on the significant influence of service quality on tourist satisfaction emphasize the importance of human interaction and professionalism in the local tourism industry. Tourists highly value the friendliness of MSMEs, the speed in responding to needs, and the ability to explain products well. This is in accordance with the SERVQUAL theory which places assurance and responsiveness as crucial dimensions in influencing customer perceptions (Zeithaml et al., 2020).

When MSMEs are able to create a pleasant and personal service experience, tourists feel appreciated and emotionally involved, which ultimately creates a positive impression of the destination. Research by (Lee & Jan, 2021) shows that perceptions of friendly and communicative service are closely correlated with revisit intentions.

On the other hand, the significant influence of MSME product quality on tourist satisfaction shows that tourists highly value the uniqueness, originality, cleanliness, and aesthetics of local products. Products such as traditional food, handicrafts, and regional clothing are not only souvenirs, but also a form of tourist interaction with local culture. Moreover, in the era of sustainable tourism, tourists tend to look for products that are not only visually attractive, but also have social value, cultural storytelling, and are environmentally friendly (Lestari et al., 2023).

From these results, it can be concluded that MSMEs must apply a holistic approach to their services and products. Quality does not only cover technical aspects, but also emotional and symbolic aspects. Products and services that have high cultural value and are delivered with humanistic services will leave a memorable tourism experience.

This finding also implies that MSME development policies in the tourism sector need to emphasize increasing the capacity of MSME human resources in hospitality-based services, product and packaging standardization, and digitalization of promotions and transactions, so that they are in line with the expectations of modern tourists.

### Discussions

The findings of this study consistently support the SERVQUAL theory developed by (Parasuraman et al. 1988), as well as the customer satisfaction theory proposed by Oliver (1997). In the context of tourism, tourist experiences are not only formed from the main attractions of a destination such as natural scenery, local culture, or historical sites but are also greatly influenced by direct interactions with local economic actors, in this case MSMEs that provide tourism support products and services. The quality of service provided by MSME actors is the main determinant of tourists' perceptions of their entire trip. When tourists feel served in a friendly, fast, and attentive manner, they will form a positive impression, feel appreciated, and have an emotional bond with the destination. Conversely, if the service received is unprofessional, unfriendly, or disappointing, it can ruin the overall tourism experience even when the tourist attraction itself is very interesting. Furthermore, MSME products such as local specialties, souvenirs, handicrafts, or services also play an important role in strengthening or damaging the tourist experience. Modern tourists now tend to look for authenticity, quality, and cultural value in every product they consume. Unique products, attractively packaged, and reflecting local identity will provide an unforgettable immersive experience.

The results of this study indicate that when the quality of service and product quality of MSMEs are both well met, high tourist satisfaction will emerge. This satisfaction not only creates tourist loyalty in the form of revisit intention, but also encourages very strong word-of-mouth promotion, especially through social media. This confirms that sustainable tourism development cannot be separated from strengthening the capacity of MSME actors as frontliners in interacting with tourists. MSMEs need to be empowered not only in terms of capital, but also through ongoing training in the field of service excellence, product design and innovation that is relevant to market tastes, and the use of digital technology for promotion and transactions. This discussion also opens up space for local governments and tourism stakeholders to develop MSME development strategies that are more oriented towards the quality and experience of tourists. This approach is more effective than simply boosting the number of tourist visits without paying attention to the quality of services and local products they enjoy during their trip.

Thus, improving the quality of MSME services and products is a strategic investment in building the reputation and competitiveness of Indonesian tourist destinations in the eyes of the world. Sustainable and inclusive tourism performance is highly dependent on the quality of interactions experienced by tourists, which are largely mediated by MSMEs as local actors.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study reveals that both service quality and product quality of MSMEs in tourist destinations in North Sumatra significantly and positively affect tourist satisfaction. The two variables jointly explain 68% of the variation in satisfaction, highlighting the pivotal role of MSMEs in shaping positive tourist experiences. The key findings show that aspects such as friendliness, responsiveness, and communication (service quality), as well as the uniqueness, cultural value, and cleanliness of products (product quality), are crucial in enhancing satisfaction levels. These findings reinforce the SERVQUAL theory, particularly the dimensions of assurance and responsiveness, as central components in achieving customer satisfaction within the tourism sector. In practical terms, the results underscore the importance of strengthening MSME capacity through targeted training in service skills, encouraging culture-based product innovation, and promoting digital transformation to improve competitiveness in the tourism market. For future research, it is recommended to expand the scope by including a more diverse range of tourist destinations across Indonesia and examining other potential influencing variables such as pricing strategy, digital customer engagement, or environmental sustainability. In addition, a longitudinal study approach could help assess how improvements in MSME quality over time influence long-term tourist loyalty and destination image. These directions may offer richer insights and better inform policies for sustainable and inclusive tourism development.

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