

DOMESTIC TOURISTS' SATISFACTION WITH FACILITY QUALITY IN NEW NORMAL ERA AND ITS INFLUENCE ON WORD-OF-MOUTH IN TOURIST DESTINATION

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Abstract

In a new normal era, tourism should be able to adapt to the innovation in the tourism sector and attempt to obtain the tourists' trust back. This study attempted to measure the effect of facility quality satisfaction on word-of-mouth (WOM) behavior among domestic tourists in the new normal era. In addition, this study also aimed to examine tourist satisfaction with tourist destination service. SmartPLS-SEM analysis was used to examine the influence of tourist satisfaction on WOM intention. Whereas, to investigate the key attributes of facility quality affecting tourist satisfaction, importance – performance analysis (IPA) was used. From 100 respondents, this study revealed that facility quality significantly explained tourist satisfaction by 71.7% and 92.2% of variance in WOM behavior. Tourist satisfaction was found to mediate the relationship between facility quality and word of mouth behavior. This study generates crucial elements that tourist destination managers should consider when creating marketing strategies specific to market segments.

Keywords: facility quality, tourist satisfaction, word of mouth

Introduction

Tourists and the tour-guides must simultaneously carry out health tourism education. The ongoing implementation of this education aims to increase awareness of the importance of complying with health protocols during the Covid-19 pandemic. Indoor tourist attractions have a substantial risk of Covid-19 transmission (Nurlaila et al., 2022). The virus can also spread in poorly ventilated and/or crowded indoor settings, where people tend to spend longer periods of time. This has an impact on one of the indoor tourist attractions in Indonesia, Jakarta Aquarium and Safari (JAQS). JAQS is an artificial tourist attraction and is an indoor aquarium with the theme of ex situ conservation located in the largest mall in Indonesia. The concept of Jakarta Aquarium & Safari is edutainment. The visitors not only get entertainment but also information about animals at Jakarta Aquarium & Safari.

The pandemic has caused a decrease in visitors at the Jakarta Aquarium & Safari. Before the pandemic, visitors reached 500 per day. During the implementation of restrictions on community activities (PPKM), the number decreased to 100-200 visitors per day. When DKI Jakarta Province entered PPKM level 4 status, Jakarta Aquarium & Safari must be closed to the public. The pandemic conditions that were starting to be controlled have encouraged DKI Jakarta Province to open tourist attractions with a limited capacity of 50%, but there is still a ban for children under 12 years of age. This has an impact on the Jakarta Aquarium and Safari, where the target audience is families and children (Kristiana et al., 2022). During the restrictions, Jakarta Aquarium & Safari will continue to operate for maintenance. The decline in the number of visitors is a problem faced by Jakarta Aquarium & Safari. However, this condition does not prevent Jakarta Aquarium and Safari from innovating and adapting.

After WHO provided guidelines for the transition to the new normal or a new life, on May 29, 2020, Indonesia officially announced the implementation of the new normal period which was marked by easing social activities in the regions and still emphasizing the application of physical distancing (Choy et al., 2021). Then the government finally attempted to reopen the tourism industry sector with various implementations of health protocols in the life order of this new era including CHSE (Cleanliness, Healthy, Safety, and Environmental Sustainability) which is also following WHO standards (Illiyiyina et al., 2021).

After the good news, Jakarta Aquarium and Safari as a tourist destination is now open again to the public. However, with the re-opening of tourism places, the tourist attraction of Jakarta Aquarium and Safari must also be accompanied by counseling and the provision of supporting facilities for a new life or new normal from the manager for future visitors or tourists. This needs to be done because if there are no strict sanctions, visitors or

tourists will be more careless and become less alert and consider this new normal-like life when there is no Covid-19 pandemic. The implementation of this health protocol is carried out thoroughly throughout Jakarta Aquarium and Safari area, which is applied to tourists and employees, to provide a sense of security and create comfort for tourists when visiting Jakarta Aquarium and Safari (Kristiana et al., 2022).

Tourism actors are required to prepare certification for destinations and tourism supporting facilities regarding the implementation of the CHSE or the new normal era (Ningsi et al., 2022). Tourism development must be supported by all aspects and other tourism supporting facilities, such as safety building, implementation of physical distancing, attractions, etc. A tourism destination must have 4A (Attraction, Accessibility, Amenity, and Ancillary Service). It is particularly important in determining the quality of a destination (Ningtiyas & Alvianna, 2021). Facility quality has a close relationship with customer satisfaction. Quality places more emphasis on aspects of customer satisfaction and revenue (Alvianna et al., 2020). The influence of facility quality on customers can be said to be especially important because the good or substandard quality of the services offered will affect customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty (Wang et al., 2017). Satisfaction is determined from the expectations that are in the minds of tourists regarding the service or service they get. However, if a tourist is satisfied with the services or facilities provided in a destination, they will automatically recommend the destination to their colleagues or family who can indirectly promote the destination through word of mouth (WOM) (Abror et al., 2020). It will be difficult to achieve overall satisfaction if a negative attitude is formed and could result in complaints, decreasing loyalty and negative promotion of WOM (Kau & Loh, 2006).

Therefore, to address these issues, this study tried to assess the impacts of overall satisfaction of facility quality on their word of mouth behavior. Other than that, this study would analyze the importance and satisfaction of facility quality factor according to the tourists in Jakarta Aquarium and Safari. Importance performance analysis (IPA) would be addressed in this research. This method is popular for evaluating service quality in a multitude of areas. IPA examines the 'importance' customers place on any given product/service attribute. IPA was also employed in designing corporate marketing strategies, in guiding management planning choices, and in evaluating the organization and management of events and programs. In addition, there have been a lack of studies to examine the importance and satisfaction attributes among the tourists in Jakarta Aquarium and Safari in new normal era. The present study aims to bridge this gap in current literature.

Methods

A quantitative study was conducted on a non-experimental design using survey and correlational methods for this research. In addition, the data from this study were used to examine the hypotheses proposed and the research hypotheses of this study proposed the connections between variables in this study. Furthermore, this research used a self-administered questionnaire for data collection tool. The 10 completed questionnaires were used for the constructs' reliability and validity (84%). Calculation of correlation Used Pearson's bivariate correlations in SPSS. All the correlation coefficients between the items and their respective construct were statistically significant ($p < .05$). Meanwhile, Cronbach's alpha (α) result showed that all constructs were reliable since those values were included in exceedingly high reliability category ($0.80 < \alpha < 1.00$). Data collection was done for one month in April 2022. The questionnaire was distributed online. A total of 100 respondents participated in this survey. SmartPLS-SEM analysis used to examine the influence of facility quality satisfaction on word of mouth intention among tourists in Jakarta Aquarium and Safari. Whereas, to investigate the key attributes of facility quality affecting tourist satisfaction, importance – performance analysis (IPA) was used.

Results and Discussions

The first analysis was the evaluation of coefficients of determination (R^2). The R^2 assesses the part of the endogenous factors that the structural model explains. It displays the quality of the modified model. Cohen (1988) indicates that $R^2 = 2\%$ is categorized as having a small impact, $R^2 = 13\%$ as a medium effect, and $R^2 = 26\%$ as having a large effect in the field of social and behavioral sciences. In PLS-SEM diagram, the R^2 could be seen from the number in the circle or report table of R square. As displayed in Figure 1, the determination coefficient for the endogenous latent variable WOM was 0.922. Interpretation of this value was, the latent variable (facility quality) and customer (overall) satisfaction of tourist satisfaction in Jakarta Aquarium and Safari moderately explained 92.2% of the variance in word of mouth (WOM). Whereas Facility Quality satisfaction of tourists in Jakarta Aquarium and Safari together explain 71.7% of the variance of CS since the R^2 of CS was 0.717. In accordance with Cohen (1988) classification, both R^2 were having large effect.

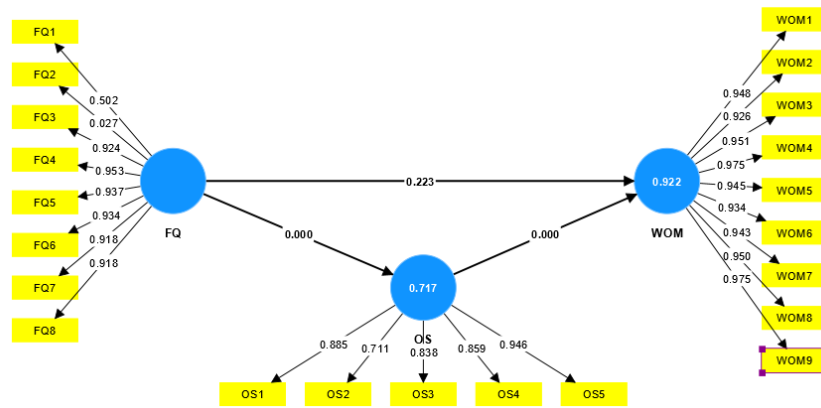


Figure 1. PLS-SEM Path Modeling Estimation Modification

The inner model (structural model) path coefficient was presented by t-statistics path coefficient values. This step determined the relationship between LV and LV statistically. In addition, this step also helped to answer hypotheses for this study. Table 1 presents the result of *t* statistic path coefficient values of inner model from one LV to another. According to Hair et.al. (2010), the *t*-statistics absolute value must be higher or equal to the critical value 1.96 to achieve a significance level of 0.05 for a two-sided test. From Table 4.8, it could be concluded that facility quality has the strongest effect on overall satisfaction with 29.990. Then, the second place was facility quality positively influence word of mouth with 11.292. Along with the relationship between overall satisfaction and word of mouth was significant with *t*-statistics 3.957. Other than that, the standardized indirect effect of facility quality on word of mouth via satisfaction was significant with *t*-statistics 3.688.

Table 4.8 shows the path coefficient result of hypotheses 1 which stated foodservice attributes influence customer satisfaction. The hypotheses results were affected by *t*-statistics score and *p* values. As Hair et al. (2014) declared, if the value of *t* is greater than 1.96 and *p* value less than 0.05 means that there is a significant difference regarding the effect of independent variable on the dependent one.

Table 1. Path coefficient result of the Hypotheses

Hypothesis Number	Hypothesis	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	<i>t</i> Statistics	P Values
H1	Facility Quality → Overall Satisfaction	0.847	0.849	0.028	29.990	0.000
H2	Facility Quality → Word of Mouth	0.727	0.715	0.064	11.292	0.000
H3	Overall Satisfaction → Word of Mouth	0.263	0.276	0.067	3.957	0.000
H4	Facility Quality → Overall Satisfaction → Word of Mouth	0.223	0.235	0.060	3.688	0.000

Table 1 explains that the relationship between facility quality and overall (customer) satisfaction was significant with a *t*-statistics of 29.990 (>1.96). The original sample estimate value was positive (.847), indicating that the direction of the relationship between facility quality and overall satisfaction was positive. Thus, hypothesis 1 was accepted. Hypothesis 1 (H1) engaged routes to overall satisfaction from the facility quality. The results showed that customer satisfaction had a statistically positive effect important in terms of facility quality. The results were consistent with the previous studies. Marcelino et al. (2022) stated that customer satisfaction is closely related to facility quality. The quality of the facility lays more attention to elements of revenue and customer pleasure.

The table above shows that the relationship between facility quality and word of mouth was significant with a *t*-statistics of 11.292 (> 1.96). The original sample estimate value was positive with .727 which indicates that the direction of the relationship between facility quality and word of mouth was positive. Thus, the hypothesis H2 in this study which states that "Facility quality is positive influence of word of mouth" was accepted. The findings revealed that facility quality was statistically significant in predicting word of mouth behavior. This outcome is comparable with the findings of Abror et al. (2021), who claimed that if tourists are

satisfied with the facilities offered in a destination, they will instantly suggest it to their family or friends then indirectly promote the place through Word of Mouth (WOM).

According to Table 1, the relation between overall satisfaction and word of mouth behavior was significant with t-statistics of 3.957 ($> 1,96$). The original sample estimate was .263 which indicates that the direction of the relationship between overall satisfaction and word of mouth behavior was positive. Thus, the H3 hypothesis in this study which states that "Customer satisfaction is positive influence of word of mouth behavior" was accepted. Based on the results, customer satisfaction was highly affected word of mouth behavior among tourists in Jakarta Aquarium and Safari. This finding was compatible with Kim et al. (2009) who discovered elevated correlation demonstrates the positive word of mouth support for elevated customer satisfaction. So that, customer satisfaction that highly and positively corresponds to word of mouth. These results also were supported with previous studies (Li and Petrick, 2010; Ryu, Lee, & Kim, 2012; Bujisic et al., 2014) that WOM was seen by the organizations as a major achievement. The customer will be dissatisfied if the actual situation cannot meet expectations. On the contrary, the customer's satisfaction with the products or services is high if it meets or exceeds the customers' expectations. Hence, customer satisfaction influences the spread of word of mouth significantly. Furthermore, customer satisfaction has a crucial effect on positive or negative word of mouth interactions (Ng et al., 2005).

In hypothesis 4, the standardized indirect effect of facility quality on word of mouth behavior was significant with t-statistics 3.688 (> 1.96). Thus, the indirect effect of facility quality on word of mouth behavior via customer satisfaction was significant. In comparison with the direct model, the mediation model determined whether the standardized coefficient and significance of the direct path (facility quality \rightarrow word of mouth behavior) in the direct model would be decreased but still significant in the mediation model. The comparative results indicated that the standardized coefficient with t-statistics (11.292) was higher and positively significant when compared to t-statistics in the indirect model (3.688). The mediation was present and hypothesis 4 was supported. Therefore, when the tourist was satisfied with the facility quality, it was highly possible that they would express favorable word of mouth.

Importance Performance Analysis Result

Initially established by Martilla and James (1977), IPA provides ideas into what products or services a company should concentrate on in order to attain customer satisfaction. It analyzes quality attributes in two respects: their efficiency (satisfaction) and customer significance (importance). Figure 2 defined he assessment of characteristics on these two dimensions will then be coupled with a matrix to define the main drivers of satisfaction, formulate priorities for enhancement and identify regions of over compliance and acceptable disadvantages (Matzlera et al., 2003).

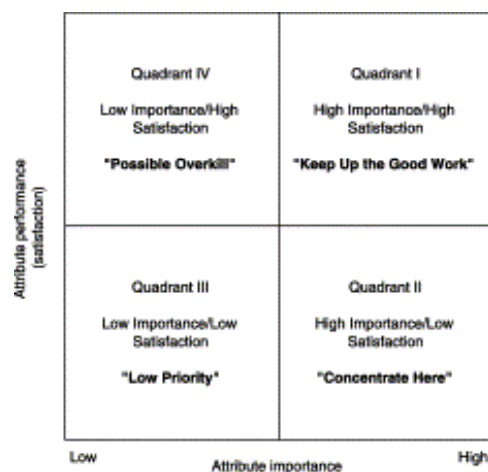


Figure 2. Importance-performance quadrants (Source: Matzlera, 2003)

The mean value of importance and satisfaction of each attribute for the 8 items was shown in Table 2 IPA grid was developed for the facility quality indicators to be analyzed and identified where weaknesses and strengths were. For each indicator, mean values of importance and satisfaction were calculated and used as the

coordinates for each grid. The excellent means of importance and satisfaction for each element were established as the crosshairs and the placement of the axis in the grid (see Figure 2).

Table 2. Importance Performance Means for 8 items of facility quality indicators

No	Items	Satisfaction	Importance	Quadrant
Facility Quality				
1.00	Spacious and clean building at Jakarta Aquarium and Safari	3.99	4.23	1
2.00	The entertainment displayed at the Jakarta Aquarium and Safari is interesting	3.86	4.17	2
3.00	Implementation of self-service management at Jakarta Aquarium and Safari	3.85	4.07	3
4.00	Availability of places or items for cleanliness and disinfection for tourists at Jakarta Aquarium and Safari	3.90	3.86	3
5.00	Safe and reliable building owned by Jakarta Aquarium and Safari	4.35	3.90	4
6.00	Availability of complete emergency facilities (such as: first aid kit, escape equipment) at Jakarta Aquarium and Safari	3.94	4.30	1
7.00	The proportion of public space at the Jakarta Aquarium and Safari is large	3.90	4.37	2
8.00	Implementation of physical distancing at the Jakarta Aquarium and Safari	3.49	3.80	3

As stated on Figure 3, the items “Spacious and clean building at Jakarta Aquarium and Safari” (1.00) and “Availability of complete emergency facilities (such as: first aid kit, escape equipment) at Jakarta Aquarium and Safari” (6.00) are particularly important and the respondents are very satisfied because they fell into Quadrant 1. If the ratings for a certain characteristic property in Quadrant 1 are furthermore given, then one can suppose that an organisation performs an excellent work with a highly significant attribute (Chi, 2005). However, the indicators “The entertainment displayed at the Jakarta Aquarium and Safari is interesting” (2.00) and “The proportion of public space at the Jakarta Aquarium and Safari is large” (7.00) are included in Quadrant 2 means they are especially important but show low satisfaction. Therefore, the findings suggested that special attention is needed for these highly significant performance facility quality indicators. Jakarta Aquarium and Safari operators need to improve on these features. Management may reassign resources to Quadrant 2.

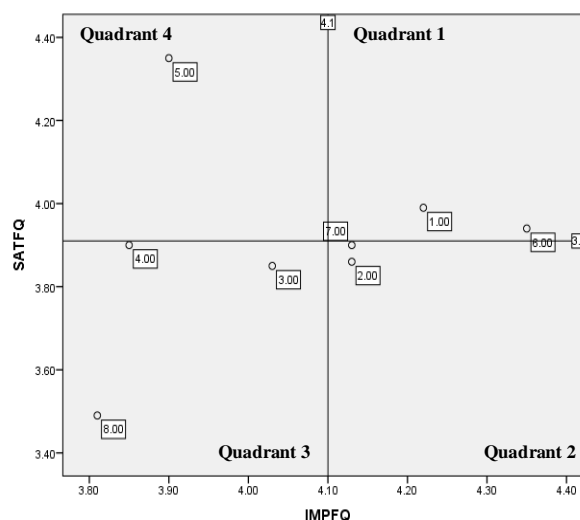


Figure 3. IPA grid for “facility quality”

Other than that, Figure 3 showed “Implementation of self-service management at Jakarta Aquarium and Safari” (3.00), “Availability of places or items for cleanliness and disinfection for tourists at Jakarta Aquarium and Safari” (4.00), and “Implementation of physical distancing at Jakarta Aquarium and Safari” (8.00),

indicates that no special action needs to be taken as this is a low priority item for domestic tourists (Quadrant 3). The items are not an issue because their unenjoyable performance is comparatively irrelevant. In addition, the item “Safe and reliable building owned by Jakarta Aquarium and Safari” (5.00) fell in Quadrant 4 which means the item is included in the high satisfaction quadrant of low importance, indicating the possibility of excessive use of manpower and resources for this item.

Conclusion

The findings suggested that facility quality positively influences customer (tourist) satisfaction. It was also shown that facility quality has the strongest effect on overall satisfaction. Regarding the impact on WOM behavior, the result was shown that facility quality positively influences word of mouth behavior. In addition, facility quality satisfaction also revealed has strong impact and positive antecedent to WOM behavior. Concerning the effect of mediator, customer satisfaction was found to fully mediate the relationship between facility quality and word of mouth behavior.

The items “Spacious and clean building at Jakarta Aquarium and Safari” and “Availability of complete emergency facilities (such as: first aid kit, escape equipment) at Jakarta Aquarium and Safari” were the key driver of customer satisfaction and the management’s job was to ensure that these indicators “keeps up the good work”. However, the indicators “The entertainment displayed at the Jakarta Aquarium and Safari is interesting” and “The proportion of public space at the Jakarta Aquarium and Safari is large” were considered underperforming, as such, representing the product's major weaknesses. They were to ensure that “concentrate here”.

Facility quality in this study explained customer satisfaction by 71.7%. It means that, besides the variables already mentioned, there are other variables that were not measured in this study which affect tourist satisfaction. Further research is needed by using other variables on customer satisfaction and word mouth behavior. Facility quality and overall satisfaction explained word of mouth behavior by 92.2%. So, there are other variables that were not measured in this study which affect word of mouth behavior. Also, we can use qualitative to explore the potential dimension and factors.

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Authors' Bibliography

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