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Analysis of the tourist experience of management of a heritage tourism product: case study of the Sultan Palace of Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Ani Wijayanti & Janianton Damanik

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Analysis of the tourist experience of management of a heritage tourism product: case study of the Sultan Palace of Yogyakarta, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The Sultan Palace (Keraton) in Yogyakarta city, Indonesia is the main destination for tourists visiting Yogyakarta because it is an integral part of culture-based tourism in the city. The Yogyakarta Palace preserves various aspects of Javanese cultural heritage, including physical goods and local art. The Sultan Palace has a different management system than other tourism destinations because it is also the official residence of the Sultan, the acting head of the Provincial Government of the Special Region of Yogyakarta. This study was conducted by employing a descriptive survey method. The required data were collected using questionnaires distributed to 200 respondents selected by a purposive sampling technique. The study aimed to analyse tourist perception of management variables. Tourist perception was evaluated via index values and calculated using the Three-Box method. The analysis results showed that cultural tourism has a high value (155.62). Meanwhile, tourist perceptions about other variables were included in a moderate category, which is demonstrated by an index value lower than 150. There remains a gap in the cultural tourism management of the Sultan Palace of Yogyakarta between tourist demand and the various in cultural tourism activities offered by the tourism management authorities.

Introduction

Tourism is a multistakeholder industry that involves the government, private sector, business community, and greater society. Cultural tourism, a type of tourism that has grown quite rapidly in Yogyakarta city, offers both tangible and intangible cultural attractions, living culture, and cultural heritage. Cultural heritage is considered to be a product in the tourism industry since it can be an economic resource (Edson, 2004) with tremendous commercialization potential (Shackley, 2001).

At present, many people want to learn about cultures outside of their own environment. This encourages cultural tourism development opportunities. Culture is a hallmark of any society and is formed from the process of a group of people adapting to their environment. The uniqueness of culture and the cultural differences among different societies encourage tourists to visit cultural tourism areas.

Cultural tourism products have a special market segment, comprising what we call ‘knowledge workers’ or ‘mature tourists’. A mature tourist is someone who travels to a tourism area with the goal of gaining experience through direct involvement with the traditions and cultures of that area (Spillane, 2003). Meanwhile, knowledge workers are people whose line of work requires
developing or using knowledge. Both share the characteristic of developing knowledge to obtain the required information. The tourism segment generally consists of social groups from the middle to upper classes, educated people, and those who have time for leisure activities.

Yogyakarta city has very diverse cultural heritage and tourist attractions. Variations in cultural heritage are a product of the distinct prehistoric, Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic, and Dutch colonial periods. The existence of various types of cultural heritage sites, especially the Sultan Palace (Keraton) of Yogyakarta, has encouraged the growth of cultural tourism in Yogyakarta city. The Sultan Palace doubles as a tourist attraction and the residence of the Sultan in accordance with the traditions of the Sultanate. The Sultan Palace building features Javanese architecture with luxurious hallways and spacious pavilions. The Sultan Palace complex is a museum with various historical relics including heirlooms, paintings, chariots, and different kinds of the traditional Javanese orchestral musical instrument called the gamelan.

Every tourist who visits Yogyakarta city always makes it a point to visit the Sultan Palace of Yogyakarta. Yogyakarta Palace is a symbol of the privilege of Yogyakarta city. Keraton Yogyakarta is known as the residence of the king as well as the museum of the cultural life of Yogyakarta, making it the main attraction and most visited site in the city of Yogyakarta. The data of tourist visits to Keraton Yogyakarta in 2015 can be seen in Figure 1: 601,593 people (483,703 domestic tourists and 117,890 foreign tourists) visited. The highest number of visits was recorded in December at 86,906. December is a year-end holiday period that is widely used by families for vacation time.

The management of the Sultan Palace in terms of cultural tourism has both positive and negative impacts. The positive impact of the Yogyakarta Palace management is that the Keraton area does not seem to be closed to the community; the people love the cultural heritage; the society’s economy is experiencing a revival through tourism-related business opportunities, such as guided tours, food, souvenir, and batik merchant services, pedicab driver and photography services, and batik course offerings; and the country’s foreign exchange has also increased. At the same time, the negative impacts can be seen from the emergence of many beggars around the palace, damage to a few buildings (such as walls, floors, and stairs), the influence of foreign cultures contradictory to that of the locals, chaotic environmental conditions, and waste generated after a cultural event held at Yogyakarta Palace.

The cooperation of various parties and government intervention are required to manage and preserve the local culture and avoid cultural commodification. One of the indicators in assessing the

![Number of Tourists at the Sultan Palace in 2015](image)

*Figure 1. Number of tourists at the Sultan Palace in 2015. Source: Observation result, 2016.*
success of tourism management is tourist perception regarding the performance of cultural tourism management. This study aims at analysing tourist perceptions concerning several variables that affect the management, including tourist demand, product availability, tourism product quality, variation in tourism activities, and tourist experience.

Literature review

The concept of 'cultural tourism' stipulated in Law number 9 of 1990 indicates that Indonesia's tourist attractions have diverse cultural and artistic potential. Cultural tourism involves four main points: cultural heritage assets, tourism experiences, products, and tourists (McKercher & du Cros, 2002). Stebbins (1996) defined cultural tourism as special interest tourism aimed at gaining new cultural experiences, such as intellectual, emotional, and psychological aesthetics. Montgomery (2007) defined culture as a sense of place. Cultural tourism has an interesting and mysterious unity, and although it is difficult to explain in words, it can be easily understood and provides a strong experience (Chawla, 2004).

Cultural tourism is the best strategy to preserve traditional culture, develop new cultural resources, and create a cultural image (Richards & Munsters, 2010). Culture and creativity are often used for image branding by some countries (Richards, 2001), and as such cultural production has become a development strategy throughout the world (McCann, 2002). Tourism strategies must be associated with local cultural heritage and community values, and must be unique compared to other regions (Smith, 2007).

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2011) explained the six criteria of cultural heritages: 1) to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius; 2) to exhibit an important interchange of human values over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world in developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design; 3) to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or civilization that is living or has disappeared; 4) to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape that illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history; 5) to be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use that is representative of a culture (or cultures) or human interaction with the environment, especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change; and 6) to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance (UNESCO, 2011). Cultural tourism has both tangible and intangible aspects, including monuments, architecture, galleries, museums, music, exhibitions, theatres, films, knowledge and local community custom (Girard, Forte, Cerreto, De Toro, & Forte, 2003). According to Smith (2007), tangible assets include buildings, infrastructures, and physical quality improvement, whereas intangible assets include local culture, among others. Meanwhile, variation in cultural tourism activities is related to the two components of culture, namely living culture and cultural heritage.

Cultural tourism management cannot be separated from tourist experience. Hence, in order to achieve a competitive advantage in the cultural tourism industry, a destination should be able to offer a specific tourist experience that exceeds other destinations catering to the same tourism segment (Dwyer & Kim, 2003). Tourist experience is associated with at least three aspects, namely, the planning process (the estimation of the travellers'expectations), actual travel (events during the trip), and the memory of the various tourism events (Chandralal & Valenzula, 2013).

The competitive tourism industry emphasizes the activities of designing and fostering memorable personal experiences for each tourist (Verma, Plaschka, & Louviere, 2002). The holistic nature of experiences that are designed within the cultural tourism industry can then create products that are unique and difficult to replicate (Berry, Carbone, & Haeckel, 2002). The uniqueness of the tourism product is very influential on the tourist experience (Wijayanti, Janianton, Chafid, & Sudarmadji, 2017). In the tourism industry, the value of tourism product experience is a major factor...
affecting the customer's motivation to pay for services (Brunner-Sperdin & Peters, 2009); hence, learning about the tourist experience is more important than the tourism product itself (Arnould & Price, 1993). According to Parahalad and Ramaswamy (2004), the experience is everything that gives value and is a result of the interaction of a person at a specific place and time with the environment within a certain context. As such, experience is not focused only on the product, rather, it is also focused on the context of the consumer. According to Larsen (2007), the concept of tourist experience includes expectations, events, and memories.

Tourist experiences are associated with the understanding of everything perceived by the senses (Myers, 2003; Passer & Smith, 2004). The combination of multiple tourist experiences evolves into image perception, which can then be used to determine the ability of a destination to attract visitors (Horrigan, 2009). The image itself is an important element influencing tourists to choose a tourism destination (Kamenidou, Spyridonnin, & Contantinoa, 2010). Experience can be manifested by a tourist's involvement in any kind of tourism activity (Brunner-Sperdin & Peters, 2009; Echeverri, 2005; Poulsson & Kale, 2004). Pullman and Gross (2003) argued that the creation of activities involving customers is used as a basis to design the tourist experience. Tourism managers must know how to create a state that can improve the experience because they cannot provide an experience for tourists, only a set of circumstances or environments where tourists can have memorable experiences (Mossberg, 2007). Aho (2001) developed four core elements of tourist experience: emotional experience, learning experience, practical experience, and transformational experience. Urry (2002) argued that tourism combines two elements, namely, the landscape and the 'sensescape,' which involves various senses as the important components of the tourist experience.

Methodology

This study was conducted by employing a descriptive survey method. Specifically, it focused on tourist perception of the management of cultural tourism products in the Sultan Palace. The study aimed to assess tourist perception of five variables that affect tourism management, namely tourist demand, product availability, product quality, variation in tourist activities, and tourist experience. Data were collected using questionnaires distributed to 200 respondents in addition to observations, interviews (Arikunto, 2006), and documentation (Suryabrata, 2008). The survey instrument was measured using a four-point Likert scale (Riduwan, 2009): strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). The four-point Likert scale eliminates the aspect of doubt in order to avoid uncertain answers, resulting in more precise data.

The survey was conducted by distributing questionnaires to 200 tourists who visited the Yogyakarta Palace. The survey lasted for approximately one month (January 2016). The questionnaire was written in two languages, Indonesian and English. Foreign tourist data were included. The survey was conducted by researchers and assisted by two research assistants, who had already attended training on research methods. The sample selection is based on age not gender. Respondents are tourists who are at least 12 years old and considered capable. The instrument was tested for the reliability and validity of questionnaires by distributing the questionnaires to 30 respondents.

Data analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) for Windows version 21.0 to examine the general characteristics of the respondents and the distribution of variables. The Three-Box method was used to determine the values of respondent perception index (Ferdinand, 2006). The analysis using the Three-Box criteria was performed in three stages as follows.

1. Calculating the frequency of respondents' answers using the analysis tools of SPSS.
2. Calculating the index value of each item using the following formula:
   \[ \text{Index Value} = \frac{(F1 \times 1) + (F2 \times 2) + (F3 \times 3) + (F4 \times 4)}{4} \]
   where:
   - F1 is the frequency of respondents who answered 1,
   - F2 is the frequency of respondents who answered 2,
F3 is the frequency of respondents who answered 3, and
F4 is the frequency of respondents who answered 4.

3. Calculating the average total index of each variable.
4. Determining the range of interpretations with the four-point Likert scale for 200 respondents as follows:
   50.00–100 = low,
   100.01–150 = moderate, and
   150.01–200 = high.

Findings and discussion

Cultural attractions in the Sultan Palace

The Sultan Palace was built in 1756 during the reign of Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono I and was established as a result of the Giyanti Agreement of 1755. The Sultan Palace features traditional Javanese architecture and has an area of 14,000 square metres. It's surrounded by a fortress with a height of 4 metres and a width of 3.5 metres. The map of Yogyakarta Kingdom can be seen in Figure 2, starting from Pangelaran Ward (A1) up to the Sitihinggil (G1) ward.

The Sultan Palace area shows the nuances of life inside the Palace, which can be seen from the traditional building and traditional uniform of Palace servants (abdi dalem). The Palace servants have several main tasks: providing guided tours, taking care of collectibles, and performing artistic

Figure 2. Map of Yogyakarta Kingdom. Source: Observation result, 2016.
and cultural activities. The tourist attractions offered by the Sultan Palace include buildings with traditional Javanese architecture, cultural heritage artefacts, and cultural performances. Various artistic and cultural performances in the Sultan Palace include traditional dance, Macapat (6-line Java verse form), Karawitan (Javanese music accompanied by the gamelan), Wayang Colek (wooden-rod puppets), Wayang Kulit (leather puppets), archery, and various traditional ceremonies. The historical heritage objects that attract many visitors include the collection of Hamengku Brawono IX and the three-dimensional paintings by Raden Saleh; the ceremonies held include the Sekaten (a series of annual events to commemorate the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W) and Grebeg (ceremonies commemorating the Prophet Muhammad’s S.A.W Mawlid) ceremonies.

**Instrument test**

**Validity test**

The validity test was performed to determine the ability of questionnaires to measure what should be measured (Cooper & Schindler, 2006; Malhotra & Birks, 2007). The test was performed by comparing the r-table values and the r-statistic values, as seen in Table 1.

From Table 1, we can see that the statement items in the questionnaires were valid as the r-statistic values were larger than the r-table values (i.e. 0.361).

**Test reliability**

The reliability test was conducted to determine the consistency of the questionnaire in measuring the same symptoms (Umar, 2003). The test was performed by comparing the Cronbach’s alpha values with a critical value of 0.6. The results of the reliability test can be seen in Table 2.

From Table 2, we can see that the Cronbach’s alpha values were greater than the critical value of 0.6 so that all the variables in the instrument were reliable (Umar, 2003).

**Characteristics of the respondents**

The survey results showed that the number of male and female visitors was evenly distributed at 51.5% and 48.5%, respectively. Visitors to the Sultan Palace were predominantly people under 20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statement Items</th>
<th>r-Statistics</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statement Items</th>
<th>r-Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Historical tour</td>
<td>0.423</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Art and cultural tour</td>
<td>0.592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Art and cultural tour</td>
<td>0.471</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>0.744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Language learning</td>
<td>0.456</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Language learning</td>
<td>0.757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Science learning</td>
<td>0.678</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>0.678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Information services</td>
<td>0.466</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Science learning</td>
<td>0.460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Culinary services</td>
<td>0.516</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Historical tour</td>
<td>0.783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Souvenir diversity</td>
<td>0.512</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Technology learning</td>
<td>0.418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Product availability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tourist Experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Educational tourism</td>
<td>0.594</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Language learning</td>
<td>0.749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Parking area</td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Art and cultural tour</td>
<td>0.806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Information services</td>
<td>0.657</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Historical tour</td>
<td>0.817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Toilet facilities</td>
<td>0.644</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Technology learning</td>
<td>0.812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Culinary services</td>
<td>0.692</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Science learning</td>
<td>0.619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Souvenir diversity</td>
<td>0.744</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Facilities for persons with disabilities</td>
<td>0.691</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Educational tourism</td>
<td>0.692</td>
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</tr>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Information services</td>
<td>0.702</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Souvenir diversity</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Culinary services</td>
<td>0.458</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Parking area</td>
<td>0.571</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Toilet facilities</td>
<td>0.572</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Cronbach’s alpha values (α).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>Critical Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourist demand</td>
<td>0.671</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product available</td>
<td>0.717</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product performance</td>
<td>0.639</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variation of tourism activities</td>
<td>0.756</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist experience</td>
<td>0.767</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


years old (65%); the remaining ones (30%) were 20–30 years old. Education levels amongst visitors were evenly distributed: junior high school (35%), senior high school (23%), and bachelor’s degree (29.5%). The first two groups of visitors generally visited the Sultan Palace for study tours, whereas the latter visited the Palace for research purposes. Most of the visitors (67.5%) were from outside the Special Region of Yogyakarta, although they still lived on Java Island. Most visitors were visiting the Sultan Palace for the first time (66%); 34% had visited it two or more times. The distribution of respondents who visited the Sultan Palace can be seen in Table 3.

Perception of the respondents

Respondents’ perception was used to assess the management of the Sultan Palace by looking at the index values of the five variables that affected management.

Tourist demand

The Sultan Palace is known as the residence of the Sultan as well as a living cultural museum. It is a place that preserves traditional Javanese culture. Therefore, it is not surprising that the main motivation of tourists visiting the Sultan Palace is to look at and experience the distinct arts and culture of Yogyakarta city. The tourist demand indexes of the tourists visiting the Sultan Palace are presented in Table 4.

Based on the survey results of an art-and-culture-related tourist demand index of 160.75, we can see that the tourists generally had an intense curiosity about the distinct artistic and cultural experiences offered by the Sultan Palace. The Sultan Palace, as the centre of arts and culture in Yogyakarta city, has a very high level of attraction for both domestic and foreign tourists. In addition to arts and culture, the historical aspect also had a high score of perception among tourists, with the index value of 151.25. The Sultan Palace is the centre of cultural history, and this has

Table 3. Characteristics of the respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency of visits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Origin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

encouraged many tourists to visit it. Another important aspect is the need for information services for tourists concerning tourism attractions in the Sultan Palace and other attractions surrounding it.

Product availability

Tourists generally had a high score of perception on product availability in the Sultan Palace of Yogyakarta (153.75). The calculation of product availability index can be seen in Table 5.

From Table 5 we can see the high score in terms of the availability of education tourism in the Sultan Palace (156). This finding is in accordance with the vision of the Sultan Palace as a centre of art and culture education. The Sultan Palace is one of the cultural tourism destinations that feature various tangible and intangible cultural heritages, including the Javanese gamelan and a museum that stores various historical heritage collections, along with artistic, cultural, and historical knowledge (Girard et al., 2003). However, the availability of tangible aspects (Smith, 2007), such as toilets and parking areas for tourists, was considered as comfortable and adequate based on the high index values of 157.25 and 156, respectively. The Sultan Palace provides seven toilets throughout the complex, each featuring a traditional well as a symbol of the seven springs. Parking areas for the visitors of the Sultan Palace are available at several locations, including east and west of the northern square, with the latter being near the Grand Mosque. Meanwhile, of the seven indicators of product availability, the availability of souvenirs had the highest index at 160.5, thus fulfilling the tourist demand for souvenirs. Tourists can easily buy souvenirs, including t-shirts, hats, wall decorations, key chains, and car accessories, to name a few. The management of the Sultan Palace has one outlet in the Palace, which offers various kinds of souvenirs for tourists. The aspect with a moderate score of perception was information and culinary services, each with an index value of 148.75.

Based on the observation results, the Yogyakarta Palace does not provide a special section assigned to give information services for tourists. Additionally, culinary needs in the Sultan Palace are not yet provided for by the manager, but tourists can obtain typical food, such as gudeg and bakpia, around the Palace. Gudeg is a typical Yogyakarta food made from young jackfruit cooked with

Table 4. Tourist demand index.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement Items</th>
<th>Frequency of Answers</th>
<th>Index Value</th>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historical tour</td>
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<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Art and cultural tour</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>Language learning</td>
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<td>Science learning</td>
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<td>Information services</td>
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<td>26</td>
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<td>Culinary services</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>44</td>
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<td>Souvenir diversity</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Average Value</td>
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<td></td>
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</table>


Table 5. Product available index.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement Items</th>
<th>Frequency of Answers</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational tourism</td>
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<td>Parking Area</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Services</td>
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<td>31</td>
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<td>Toilet Facilities</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Culinary Services</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Souvenir Diversity</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities for persons with disabilities</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Average Value</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

coconut milk; Bakpia is a food made from a mixture of green beans with sugar wrapped in a flour dough and then baked. Meanwhile, tourist demand for information services is high, which is apparent from the perception index of tourist demand for information services, 151.75 (Table 4). This indicates that information services require better management to meet the needs of tourists. From the culinary aspect, the Palace is considered to be adequate to meet the needs of tourists. In this case, tourists can get a variety of traditional Yogyakarta cuisine around the Palace.

Tourists had a good score of perception on the availability of facilities for persons with disabilities, as seen from the fairly high index value of 149. The Sultan Palace accommodated tourists with disabilities by providing wheelchairs and tourism tracks that make it easier for travellers classified as persons with disabilities.

**Product performance**

Generally, tourists had a high score in terms of the quality of products offered at the Sultan Palace, as seen in Table 6.

From the aspect of information services, tourists did not have trouble obtaining information since many Palace servants working as tour guides provide various pieces of information tourists need. In view of cultural tourism, the management of the Sultan Palace was considered quite successful in creating a cultural tourism package, as seen from the high index value of 160.75 for the aspect of education tourism. Tourists can enjoy various historical and art-and-cultural collections, and also directly learn the existing culture. The parking areas and toilets were adequate and comfortable, as seen from the tourist perception score of over 151.

**Variation in tourism activities**

Results of the tourist perception on variation in tourism activities can be seen in Table 7. Generally, tourists had a moderate score of perception with regards to this aspect of management.

Table 7 shows the tourism activities offered by the Yogyakarta Palace. From Table 7, we can see that tourism activities related to history had the highest index value of 159.75, indicating that tourists at the Sultan Palace visited more tourist attractions and participated in activities related to history learning.
such as looking at the collection of historical heritage objects. Based on the results of the observations, tourism activities offered at the Sultan Palace greatly varied, including living culture and cultural heritage (The Fine Art Department of Thailand, 1999). Nevertheless, most tourists have not been maximally involved in cultural tourism attractions as their visiting times were generally very limited. From the results of the survey, 50% of the respondents were junior high school and senior high school students. They generally conducted study tours with very limited time and the relatively crowded agenda of such educational visits. In this case, the managers are required to create an environment that could enhance visitors’ cultural tourism experience at the Sultan Palace (Mossberg, 2007). The effort to create such an environment should be done based on research and adjusted to the needs of the existing market segment. The variation in cultural tourism activities designed by the managers of the Sultan Palace was oriented towards creating experiences for tourists and encouraging them to visit again (Pullman and Gross, 2003). Meanwhile, other indicators, such as tourism activities closely related to the learning of science, new technology, language, and research, had a moderate score of perception for tourists. Learning the Javanese language as a daily language has not been included in a tour package, although some tourists are very interested in learning the native language.

Tourist experience

Generally, tourists visiting the Sultan Palace had a moderate score for perception of cultural tourist experience with an index value of 139.8. In Table 8, it’s recorded that the highest perception is historical tourism experience, with an index value of 149.

The highest score of perception on tourist experience was related to the experience in historical tourism activity. This is also in line with the high score of variation in historical tourism activities, thus affecting the experience of historical tourism itself. This finding is in line with the theory of Myers (2003) and Passer and Smith (2004), indicating that tourist experience is affected by the perception of various tourism products offered by the management of the Sultan Palace. The tourist experience is required to assess the ability of a destination to attract visitors (Hoggan, 2009).

The combination of tourist experiences evolves into image perception, which can be used to determine the ability of the destination to attract visitors in the future. In fact, self-image is an important element influencing tourists in choosing a tourist destination (Kamenidou et al., 2010). The experience is manifested from the involvement of tourists in various tourism activities (Brunner-Sperdin & Peters, 2009; Echeverri, 2005; Poulsson & Kale, 2004), indicating that the creation of tourism activities involving customers must be used as a basis for designing a memorable tourist experience. Tourist activities designed by actual tourists are able to provide a total tourist experience; in the long-term it will promote return visits or at least create lasting memories of the attraction for tourists (Damanik, 2005).

Conclusion

Overall, tourists have not been provided the optimal experience necessary to enjoy the cultural tourism attractions at the Sultan Palace due to the limited time. Most of the study tours are conducted in
a relatively short span of time, while the agenda of tourists visiting is quite extensive. As an example, 3-day tour packages of Yogyakarta city cover 7 until 8 tourism destinations for visitors.

The management of the Palace has not designed the cultural tourism attractions in accordance with the existing market segments. From the tourist’s perspective, the variable affecting tourism management with the highest score of perception is the quality of the tourism products (155.62, Table 6). This shows that tourists generally have a good perception of the products offered at the Sultan Palace. The variable with a high score was demand for art and cultural tourism attractions (160.75, Table 4). Meanwhile, high scores of perception concerning the variation in tourism activities and the historical tourist experience have also been observed (Tables 7 and 8). In this case, there is still a gap between tourist demand on the one hand and the variation in tourism activities and tourist experiences on the other hand. Tourist demand has not been a major factor in designing the variation in tourism activities offered at the Sultan Palace; rather, the process is more affected by other factors, such as prevailing policies and traditions. The management system in the Sultan Palace is different from that of other tourism destinations mainly because the Palace serves not only as a tourist attraction but also as the residence of the Sultan, who acts as the head of the Provincial Government of the Special Region of Yogyakarta. To date, the management system applied in the Sultan Palace is still strongly influenced by prevailing customs and traditions. The results of this research can be used as a reference for managers in designing an effective tour package for the study tour programme, which is of a relatively limited length of time. Tour packages that contain learning in the field of culture are designed according to the needs of tourists, especially students. Potential tourism products that have not been developed are tour packages that incorporate learning the Javanese language. Research has found that the establishment of the experience environment in Yogyakarta Palace is heavily influenced by tour packages designed by the manager and the tourists’ length of stay. To realize an optimal tourist experience, good commitment and cooperation from various stakeholders is required. It’s necessary for the Yogyakarta Palace manager to identify tourist demand and market segment mapping.

Disclosure statement
No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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References


