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The Role of Tour Guides in Enhancing Tourist Experience and Satisfaction at Taman Mini Indonesia Indah Jakarta

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the impact of tour guides' interpersonal communication on tourists' experiences at Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (TMII), with tourist satisfaction as a moderating variable. The research uses a quantitative method with a descriptive and causal design. Data was collected through questionnaires distributed to 200 tourists visiting TMII who were directly involved in guided tours. The data analysis technique used is Smart PLS to test the relationships between variables. The results show that interpersonal communication of tour guides has a positive and significant effect on tourists' experiences, and tourist satisfaction serves as a moderating variable that strengthens this relationship. Open, friendly, and clear communication from the tour guide can enhance tourist satisfaction, which in turn improves tourists' experiences. This study concludes that the quality of communication between tour guides and tourists plays a crucial role in creating a memorable and satisfying tourism experience. Recommendations for TMII management include placing more emphasis on interpersonal communication training for tour guides and optimizing the system for measuring tourist satisfaction. Tour guides are encouraged to continuously improve their communication skills, while tourists are advised to actively participate in interactions with tour guides for a more enriching tourism experience.

Keywords: Interpersonal communication, tourist satisfaction, tourist experience, tour guide

A. Introduction

The tourism industry in Indonesia continues to grow rapidly, and one sector with significant potential is cultural tourism. Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (TMII) Jakarta, as one of the iconic cultural destinations, offers tourist an opportunity to explore Indonesia's cultural diversity through replicas of traditional houses, museums, and art performances. Behind this experience, tour guides play a crucial role in creating a connection between tourists and the information shared. A social phenomenon that arises is how the interaction between tourists and tour guides can enhance understanding and appreciation of Indonesian culture, as well as create unforgettable experiences for tourist. However, the direct influence of tour guides on tourists' experiences at destinations like TMII remains underexplored.

Although literature on the role of tour guides in interpersonal communication influencing tourists' experiences has developed, most research focusing on tourist satisfaction as a moderating variable is still limited. For instance, Topler et al. (2017) examined the role of tour guides in interacting with tourists, emphasizing the importance of interpersonal communication in creating a satisfying tourist experience, but this study did not explore tourist satisfaction as a moderating variable in this relationship. Ouerhemmi et al. (2023) conducted research on virtual experiences and communication by tour guides that can influence tourists' intentions. However, this research did not delve deeper into the impact of tourist satisfaction as a moderating factor in the tourism experience.

Similarly, Tu et al. (2019) analyzed the relationship between tourist satisfaction and their behavioral intentions after a tour, but focused more on satisfaction rather than the role of interpersonal communication by tour guides. This indicates that research involving moderating variables like satisfaction is still limited. Mai et al. (2023) identified the characteristics of tour guides that affect tourist satisfaction, but did not further investigate how effective interpersonal communication can serve as a moderating variable in tourists' experiences. Meanwhile, Cetinkaya & Oter (2016) studied factors influencing tourist satisfaction and their intentions to revisit a destination but did not directly connect this with the role of tour guides in interpersonal communication or how it functions as a moderation.

In practice, tourism destination managers face challenges in enhancing the quality of tourists' experiences. Despite offering various tourist attractions, the role of tour guides in enhancing tourists' experiences is often overlooked. Many tourists may feel dissatisfied with their experience because the information presented by the tour guides is less engaging or does not meet their expectations. Destination managers and tour operators need a better understanding of how to improve tour guides' competence to influence tourists' perceived value and create more satisfying and memorable experiences.

This research is expected to make a significant contribution to tourism literature by providing deeper insights into the role of tour guides in enhancing tourists' experiences, particularly in cultural tourism destinations. By analyzing

the role of tour guide competence as a moderating variable, this study offers a new perspective on how the quality of interactions between tour guides and tourists can influence satisfaction and tourists' behavioral intentions. Additionally, the findings of this research are expected to provide practical recommendations for tourism destination managers to improve the quality of tour guides and cultural tourism programs, as well as support destination marketing strategies based on cultural tourism.

This research specifically focuses on the role of tour guides of Indonesian cultural tourism, particularly at Taman Mini Indonesia Indah Jakarta. It adopts an approach integrating tour guide competence as a moderating variable, which has not been widely applied in previous studies. By addressing this gap, this study not only offers a more comprehensive model for examining the relationship between perceived value, satisfaction, and tourists' behavioral intentions but also makes a significant contribution to the development of both theory and practice in cultural tourism management.

B. Literature Review

Perceived Value

According to Luo et al. (2022), perceived value is largely influenced by economic aspects, such as the price paid in comparison to the benefits received. Meanwhile, Wu & Huang (2023) emphasized that perceived value is more subjective, influenced by the emotional and psychological experiences that consumers go through during their interaction with a product or service. Ercsey (2011) argued that perceived value is determined by social and cultural factors, which alter how consumers assess the benefits of an experience or product within a specific social. However, Dehghan et al. (2015) stated that perceived value is mainly focused on one key aspect, such as functional or emotional benefits.

Customer Satisfaction

Tukiran et al. (2021) suggested that customer satisfaction is influenced by how well customer expectations are met by a product or service, with satisfaction being achieved when the received experience exceeds expectations. In contrast, Uzir et al. (2020) argued that customer satisfaction is more related to a cognitive evaluation of the quality of products and services, without considering initial expectations too much. Akbar & Wadud (2024) stated that customer satisfaction is influenced by affective or emotional factors, focusing on the personal feelings and experiences of customers. Meanwhile, Ali & Amin (2014) regarded satisfaction as the outcome of a rational and objective evaluation of a product or service's performance. Rajendran & Suresh (2017) mentioned that the concept of customer satisfaction is not only complex but also varies depending on the perspective taken in analyzing it.

Tourist Experience

Ratih & Noer (2024) argued that tourist experience results from intentional and planned interactions between tourists and various elements of a destination, which can create deep and meaningful memories. On the other hand, Al-Msallam (2020) viewed tourist experience as a more spontaneous and emotional process, influenced by external factors like weather conditions or social interactions with other tourists or local residents. Sari et al. (2024) viewed the tourist experience as more focused on physical and material aspects, such as the comfort of facilities or service quality. Arevin (2024) highlighted the subjective and social dimensions of the experience, involving the meaning and personal interpretation given by tourists to the destinations they visit. Lujun (2022) added that tourist experiences reflect the complexity and diversity of how such experiences are formed and assessed by individuals.

Interpersonal Communication

Susilo & Nurdiawati (2023) argued that effective interpersonal communication, which involves listening skills, empathy, and clarification, is crucial in creating a satisfying tourist experience, as it fosters positive relationships between tour guides and tourists. However, Islam & Kirillova (2021) suggested that focusing solely on verbal communication is insufficient, and that non-verbal aspects, such as body language and facial expressions, play a larger role in influencing tourists' perceptions. Tankovic et al. (2021) stated that communication in tourism is not only dependent on the quality of interpersonal relationships but is also influenced by external factors such as local culture and social media, which can affect how messages are received and interpreted by tourists.

Hypothesis Development

Based on the findings of this study and supported by previous research by Mai et al. (2023) and Asmin (2022), it can be hypothesized that there is a positive and significant relationship between tour guides' interpersonal communication and tourists' experiences. The better the communication delivered by the tour guide particularly through clear, friendly, and open interaction the more positive the experience perceived by tourists. Effective communication not only enhances comfort and satisfaction but also strengthens the emotional bond between guides and tourists, which ultimately has a direct impact on the overall quality of the travel experience. H1: Tour guides' interpersonal communication influences tourists' experiences.

Based on the results of this study and supported by the findings of Almasooudi & Rahman (2023) and Susilo & Nurdiawati (2023), a second hypothesis can be formulated: that tour guides' interpersonal communication significantly affects visitor satisfaction. High-quality, friendly, and responsive communication between tour guides and tourists can shape a positive perception of the service provided, thereby increasing overall visitor

satisfaction. Good communication creates a positive relationship, making tourists feel appreciated and more engaged in the tour activities, which ultimately contributes to their level of satisfaction during the trip.
H2: Tour guides' interpersonal communication influences tourist satisfaction.

Research by Ratih & Noer (2024) and Arismayanti et al. (2020) shows that tourist satisfaction significantly affects their travel experience. The higher the level of satisfaction tourists feel toward the services provided, the more positive their travel experience becomes. Satisfaction gained through positive interactions and adequate services will form a better perception of the overall travel experience, making it more enjoyable and memorable.
H3: Tourist satisfaction influences tourists' travel experience.

Effective and high-quality communication between tour guides and tourists not only has a direct impact on the tourists' experience, but also indirectly enhances it through increased satisfaction (Pusparani et al., 2024). Satisfaction derived from good communication strengthens the tourists' experience during the tour, indicating that the role of interpersonal communication in enhancing satisfaction also contributes to creating a more positive travel experience.

H4: Tour guides' interpersonal communication influences tourists' travel experience through tourist satisfaction.

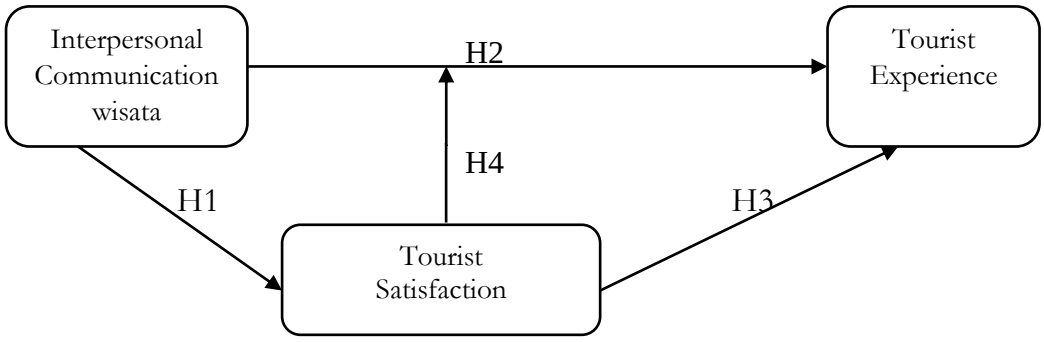

Figure 1. Framework Reserch

C. Research Methods

Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative research design aimed at measuring and analyzing the relationships between tour guide interpersonal communication (as the independent variable), tourist satisfaction (as the moderating variable), and tourist experience (as the dependent variable). The research is descriptive and causal in nature, seeking to determine the extent to which tour guide interpersonal communication influences tourist experiences, with tourist satisfaction serving as a moderating factor in this relationship. Data will be collected using a questionnaire distributed to tourists visiting Taman Mini Indonesia Indah Jakarta.

Population and Sample

The population in this study consists of all tourists visiting Taman Mini Indonesia Indah Jakarta during the research period. Tourists who participate in guided tours by official tour guides and have direct interactions with the tour guides during their visit will be part of the study population. The sample for this study will include tourists who visited Taman Mini Indonesia Indah Jakarta during the data collection period and were involved directly in guided tours. According to Sugiyono (2017), an appropriate sample size for quantitative research ranges from 30 to 500 respondents. The sample size will consist of 200 tourists, based on the assumption that this number is sufficient for appropriate statistical analysis. The sample will be selected using specific criteria, such as tourists who have participated in a tour for at least 2 hours and have had direct interactions with the tour guides.

Sampling Technique

The sampling technique used is purposive sampling. This technique is chosen because the researcher wants to ensure that selected respondents are tourists who have had direct experiences with tour guides at Taman Mini Indonesia Indah Jakarta. The tourists selected for the sample must meet certain criteria, such as having interacted with a tour guide during their visit and having relevant experiences with the research subject.

Data Analysis Technique

The collected data from the questionnaires will be analyzed using Smart PLS analysis techniques, as it allows for testing relationships between variables and modeling complex relationships between independent variables, moderating variables, and dependent variables. Before further analysis, the collected data will be tested for the validity and reliability of the research instruments (the questionnaire). Bootstrapping will be used to test the significance of the direct, indirect, and moderating effects of tour guide interpersonal communication on tourists' experiences.

D. Result and Discussion

Result

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Respondent Characteristics	Total	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	120	60%
Female	80	40%
Age		
18-25 years	50	25%
26-35 years	70	35%
36-45 years	50	25%
46 years and above	30	15%

Respondent Characteristics	Total	Percentage (%)
Education		
High School/Vocational	40	20%
Associate Degree/Bachelor's	130	65%
Master's Degree and above	30	15%
Frequency of Visit		
First time	60	30%
1-2 times	80	40%
More than 2 times	60	30%

Source: Data processed by the researcher (2025)

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondent characteristics based on gender, age, education, and visit frequency. The majority of respondents are male (60%), which may reflect the survey topic's relevance or higher male involvement in the category of study. Most respondents are between the ages of 26-35 (35%), which is typical for active social, work, or educational participation. The largest group in terms of education is those with an Associate Degree or Bachelor's degree (65%), indicating a more educated population. Regarding visit frequency, 40% of respondents have visited the location 1-2 times, showing that many people return after their first visit but are not yet regular tourist, with variation between new and more frequent tourist (30% each).

Table 2. Convergent Validity Test Results

Indicator	Loading Factor
Interpersonal Communication	
The tour guide opens the conversation with a warm greeting	0.801
The tour guide provides opportunities to ask questions or express desires	0.752
The tour guide always provides explanations that are easy to understand about the visited sites	0.649
The tour guide responds to complaints or requests for breaks empathetically	0.630
The tour guide shows an open and friendly attitude through facial expressions, eye contact, and body language	0.777
Tourist Satisfaction	
The tour guide provides clear and useful information during the tour	0.756
The tour guide shows a friendly attitude and greets guests well	0.780
The tour guide answers my questions well and adequately	0.785
The tour guide maintains order and comfort during the tour	0.749
The tour guide provides interesting and entertaining explanations during the trip	0.732

Indicator	Loading Factor
Tourist Experience	
This tour provides good value for my time	0.842
I am satisfied with the overall tour experience provided by the tour guide	0.709
I feel the tour guide manages the tour well and effectively	0.810
I feel valued during the tour	0.781
I would recommend this tour guide to others	0.774

Source: Data processed by the researcher (2025)

Table 2 shows the results of the convergent validity test for various indicators related to interpersonal communication, tourist satisfaction, and tourist experience. The factor loadings vary between 0.630 and 0.842, showing the contribution of each indicator to the constructs being measured. Higher factor loading values indicate better validity for each indicator.

Table 3. Reliability Test Results

Construct	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Interpersonal Communication	0.904	0.701
Tourist Satisfaction	0.886	0.725
Tourist Experience	0.910	0.748

Source: Data processed by the researcher (2025)

Table 3 shows the results of the reliability test for three constructs: interpersonal communication, tourist satisfaction, and tourist experience. The composite reliability (CR) values range from 0.886 to 0.910, and the average variance extracted (AVE) values range from 0.701 to 0.748, indicating that these constructs exhibit good reliability and validity.

Table 4. Determination Coefficient (R^2) Test Results

Dependent Variable	R^2	Description
Tourist Experience	0.627	Moderate
Tourist Satisfaction	0.509	Moderate

Source: Data processed by the researcher (2025)

The R^2 value for tourist experience indicates that 62.7% of the variation in tourist experience can be explained by interpersonal communication and tourist satisfaction. The R^2 for tourist satisfaction shows that 50.9% of the variation in Tourist satisfaction can be explained by interpersonal communication.

Table 5. Direct Effect Test Results

Relationship	Path Coefficient	t-statistic	P-Value	Description
Interpersonal Communication → Tourist Experience	0.452	3.980	0.000	Significant
Interpersonal Communication → Tourist Satisfaction	0.603	5.211	0.000	Significant
Tourist Satisfaction → Tourist Experience	0.507	4.100	0.000	Significant

Source: Data processed by the researcher (2025)

Table 5 shows the results of the direct effect test between interpersonal communication, Tourist satisfaction, and tourist experience, with all relationships showing significant path coefficients (p-value < 0.05).

Table 6. Indirect Effect Test Results

Relationship	Indirect Effect	t-statistic	P-Value	Description
Interpersonal Communication → Tourist Satisfaction → Tourist Experience	0.309	3.350	0.001	Significant

Source: Data processed by the researcher (2025)

Table 6 presents the indirect effect results, testing the influence of interpersonal communication on tourist experience through tourist satisfaction. The indirect effect value is 0.309, with a t-statistic of 3.350 and a p-value of 0.001, indicating that this indirect effect is significant.

Discussion

The relationship between interpersonal communication and tourists' experiences shows a positive and significant path coefficient (p-value < 0.05). This indicates that the better the communication carried out by the tour guides at Taman Mini Indonesia Indah, the more positive the experience perceived by the tourists. Good interaction between the tour guide and tourists through clear, friendly, and open communication can enhance tourists' comfort and satisfaction, which ultimately affects their experience during the tour.

The study by Mai et al. (2023) shows that the quality of communication between tour guides and tourists has a direct impact on their satisfaction and experience. Good and effective communication helps create a more satisfying experience for tourists. Additionally, the research by Asmin (2022) found that open and friendly communication between tour guides and tourists improves emotional relationships, which leads to a better tourist experience. This study supports the finding that interpersonal communication positively affects tourists' experiences.

Interpersonal communication has a significant impact on tourist satisfaction, with a relatively high path coefficient. This indicates that the quality of communication between the tour guides at Taman Mini Indonesia Indah and the tourists can influence their satisfaction with the tour. Effective and friendly communication will improve tourist positive perceptions of the service quality and the experience they receive, which ultimately contributes to their satisfaction.

Almasooudi & Rahman (2023) study concludes that effective and responsive communication between tour guides and tourist greatly influences satisfaction levels. Good communication creates a positive relationship that enhances tourists' satisfaction with the tour service. Meanwhile, Susilo & Nurdiawati (2023) found that good interpersonal communication by tour guides significantly increases tourist satisfaction because tourists feel valued and more engaged in the tour, which aligns with the finding that interpersonal communication influences tourist satisfaction.

Tourist satisfaction shows a significant impact on the tourist experience at Taman Mini Indonesia Indah, meaning that the more satisfied tourists are with the service provided, the more positive their experience will be. Satisfaction is a key factor in shaping a satisfying tourist experience. Satisfaction achieved through good service will improve tourists' perceptions of the overall tour experience, making it more enjoyable and memorable.

The study by Ratih & Noer (2024) shows that tourist satisfaction greatly influences their tourist experience. Satisfaction achieved through positive interactions and adequate service will enhance a more satisfying tourism experience. Furthermore, the research by Arismayanti et al. (2020) states that the level of tourist satisfaction is directly related to the quality of their experience during the trip. Tourists who are satisfied with the services and facilities available will have a more positive and memorable experience.

Good interpersonal communication has an indirect effect on tourists' experiences through tourist satisfaction, and this indirect effect is significant. This means that effective communication between tour guides and tourists not only directly affects tourists' experiences but also influences their experience through increased tourist satisfaction. The satisfaction gained from good communication will improve tourists' experiences during the tour. This indicates that the role of interpersonal communication in enhancing tourist satisfaction contributes to a better tourist experience.

D. Conclusion

This study shows that interpersonal communication carried out by tour guides at Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (TMII) has a significant impact on tourists' experiences. The better the communication established between the tour guides and tourists, the more positive the experience perceived by the tourists. Open, friendly, and clear communication not only enhances tourist satisfaction but also contributes to creating a more satisfying tourism experience. Furthermore, this study found that tourist satisfaction acts as a

moderating variable that strengthens the relationship between interpersonal communication and tourists' experiences. This means that effective communication not only has a direct impact on tourists' experiences but also enhances their experience through increased satisfaction. Therefore, it can be concluded that the quality of communication between the tour guides and tourists plays a crucial role in creating a memorable and enjoyable tourism experience, as well as improving tourists' perceptions of the tourist destination itself.

For the management of Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (TMII), it is recommended to pay more attention to the importance of regular interpersonal communication training for tour guides, including skills in both verbal and non-verbal communication that can improve interaction with tourists. Management should also make use of feedback from tourists to evaluate and improve service aspects, including communication and the quality of information provided. Additionally, management needs to provide a platform or system to measure tourists' satisfaction in a more structured manner, so they can identify areas that still need improvement.

For tour guides, it is essential to consistently maintain a friendly, empathetic, and open attitude, as well as to explain information in an interesting and easy-to-understand way so that tourists feel valued and engaged in their tourism experience. For tourists, it is recommended to actively participate in interactions with tour guides by asking questions and providing feedback, in order to receive more complete information and enhance the overall quality of their tourism experience. Through cooperation between management, tour guides, and tourists, it is hoped that the tourism experience at TMII can improve in quality and leave a deeper impression on every tourist.

E. Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that no financial arrangements, institutional affiliations, or personal interests created a conflict of interest in the preparation or publication of this study.

F. Declaration of AI Use

During manuscript preparation, the authors used Google Gemini to summarize scholarly articles relevant to tour guides' interpersonal communication, tourist experience, and tourist satisfaction. The authors checked these summaries against the original publications to verify their accuracy, preserve the intended meaning, and avoid misinterpretation. The authors made all decisions regarding the selection, interpretation, and citation of the literature and remain fully accountable for the final manuscript.

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