



The Front Office Strategy on Service Quality Improvement

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Abstract

Purpose: This research aims to determine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in improving the quality of service to guests staying at 5 star hotel in Seminyak, Kuta, Badung, Bali.

Research methods: The method of data analysis is a descriptive qualitative, descriptive quantitative, the matrix of IFAS, EFAS, IE Matrix, and SWOT analysis (strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat). This research sample uses 27 people coming from the management and team of Front Office Department.

Findings: The results of this analysis show that there are internal and external factors affecting the improvement of the quality of front office services that get from the results of the questionnaire and interviews.

Implication: The advice that can be given is to maintain cleanliness in the villa area to avoid complaints and add staff to the front office to help accelerate operational activities.

Keywords: quality, service, guest, strategy.

INTRODUCTION

Hotel is one of the most important supporting facilities in the world of tourism (Prasetyo, 2017; Cahyani, 2020). It is one type of accommodation which plays a very important role in tourism industry (Artini, 2020). There are different types of hotel depending on the perspective. Villa is a resting house (however different from a regular home) located outside the city like mountains and beaches used to relax in leisure or vacation by its owner (Marlina, 2008).

A hotel is composed of several departments. One of the departments which is first encountered by guests when entering the hotel is the Front Office Department.

The frontest place with a variety of connections with guests is the front office, front desk, cashier, and Information section of the front office which is usually placed in the lobby. The front office desk itself is the center of activity in the front office because it is where the guests register, book rooms, and check out (Komar, 2016).

Based on TripAdvisor reviews, the hotel researched currently ranks 18th of the 162 hotels in Seminyak area with 2,028 reviews. 2,028 reviews existing to this hotel are divided into 5 more ratings and can be seen in Figure 1.

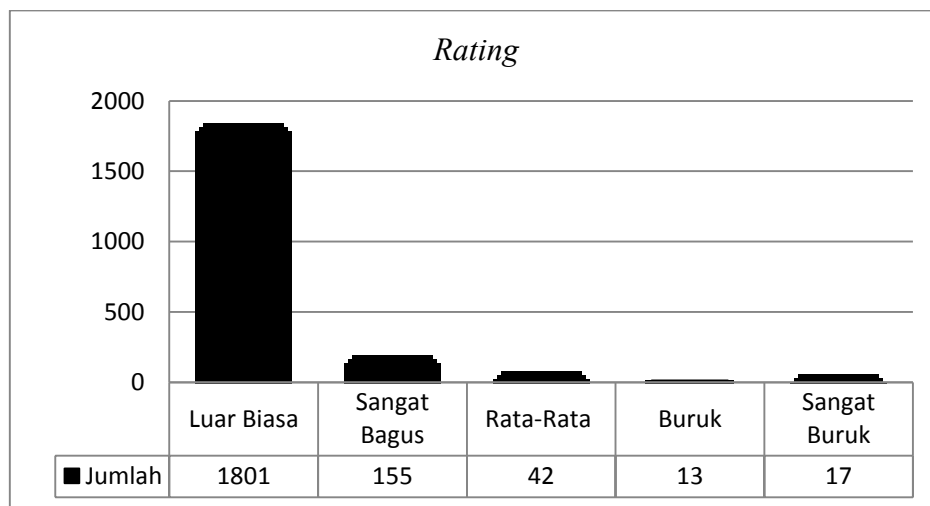


Figure 1. Tripadvisor Rating on the Hotel Researched

In Figure 1, the rating given by travelers who have stayed at the hotel mostly gives a great impression (excellent), but there is still some very bad rating. It shows that the service provided is good. However, the fact of observation during the fieldwork practice activities still receives complaints from guests. According to Bell and Luddington (in Budiarta and Sujana, 2017) complaints of customers usually due to problems, such as weak responsibilities (responsiveness), weak assistance from the company staff (helpfulness), product availability, shop policy/company (store policy), and repair services (service recovery).

The quality of service is the level of excellence that companies expect and control over such excellence to fulfill the wishes of customers (Tjiptono, 2006). The results of the direct observation, namely complaints delivered by guests given by the Front Office Department can be seen from the 5 dimensions of service quality (Parasuraman, 2013), namely directly or tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy.

Based on that condition, there are still many employees who work at the hotel especially in front Office Departement has not been able to apply the maximum service to guests staying at the hotel especially to achieve the satisfaction of the guests who get the service from the front office of the hotel, while the guests are very important people who use the hotel facilities (Sujatno, 2008). In the success of a hotel, a strategy is indispensable. The strategy is a process of determining the value of choice and decision making in the utilization of resources that raises a commitment for the organization concerned with the actions that lead to the future (Marpaung, 2002).

Related to the quality of service, many researches have been conducted. Some of them are Becti Nurhidayah (2017) under the title "Quality of service of Front Office of Syariah Departement of Hotel Solo to Individual Guest Satisfaction Rate"; Silvia Ferawati Nur Dianah (2019) under the title "Marketing strategy in improving the occupancy of New Kuta Hotel-A Lexington Legacy Pecatu"; Putu Sukma Jayanti (2019) under the title "The Front Office Improvement Strategy through the Mastery of Foreign Languages Other than English", and Dewa Ayu Dwi Septiani (2018) under the title "Marketing Mix Strategy to Improve the Cccupancy of Hotel Rooms at Mercure Bali Nusa Dua". The differences from the above research are research object, research time, analysis used, and the number of the questionnaire spread.

Based on the explanation described, the authors raised the above problems to be researched using internal and external factors to know the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats so that it can be found a strategy to achieve the quality of service. The purpose of this research is to determine the quality of front office service to guests staying at the hotel researched and what strategy is done by the hotel in improving the quality of front office services.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research was conducted at The Front Office Department at the hotel for 6 months. This research strategy is improving the quality of front office services to guests staying at the hotel. Identify variables from indicators in variables divided into internal variables and external variables. The data used is quantitative and qualitative data with data sources of primary and secondary data. The method of sampling using purposive sampling and data collection is done by observation, questionnaire using 27 people from management and team of Front Office

Departement, interviews, and documentation. The analytical techniques used are qualitative, quantitative descriptive, IFAS matrix, EFAS, IE Matrix, and SWOT analysis.

FINDINGS

The first step is to spread the questionnaire to the respondents who numbered 27 people from the management and team of the Front Office Department. Its purpose is to identify internal and external factors used for IFAS and EFAS matrix. The data analysis techniques used in this study are the Internal Factor Analysis Summary (IFAS) and the external Factors Analysis Summary (EFAS), the final score of this analysis is derived from the weights and ratings. The next step is to determine the position of the hotel in The Internal-External Matrix (IE Matrix) (Rangkuti, 2016). The next analysis is the SWOT analysis used to determine the alternative strategy.

Internal Factors Analysis Summary (IFAS)

The IFAS Matrix Analysis method aims to determine The great influence of internal factors in the hotel. Once the internal strategy factor is identified, it is necessary to evaluate the Internal Factor Analysis Summary (IFAS) by specifying the total value and rating (score) of each indicator to achieve the value of the total weight and the rank of the IFAS as in Table 1.

Table 1. Internal Factor Analysis Summary (IFAS) Quality of Service

No.	Strength	Weights	Rating	Score
1	The front office staff is dressed and neat.	0,07	3,70	0,259
2	The condition of the workplace Front office.	0,07	3,59	0,251
3	The front office staff is always smiling and giving guests a friendly attitude.	0,07	3,70	0,259
4	Able to provide information about the facilities available, how to use them, and an orderly order in the hotel.	0,06	3,70	0,222
5	Patience and attention from the front office staff from the check-in process to check out.	0,07	3,56	0,249
6	The front office is consistently courteous to guests.	0,06	3,67	0,220

7	The front office has adequate knowledge to answer questions – guest questions.	0,06	3,04	0,182
8	The staff of office fonts has an honest attitude towards guest circumstances.	0,06	3,59	0,215
9	The front office provides individual attention to guests.	0,06	3,52	0,211
	Total	0,58		2,070
No.	Weaknesses	Weights	Rating	Skor
1	Provide fast and precise service to guests staying at the hotel.	0,06	2,44	0,146
2	The front office staff can handle problems quickly and professionally.	0,06	2,41	0,145
3	Speed of response regarding guest complaints.	0,06	2,48	0,149
4	Speed of guest complaints processing.	0,06	2,48	0,149
5	The settlement of complaints faced by guests can be completed by the hotel staff.	0,06	2,48	0,149
6	The front office always prioritizes the interests of guests staying at the hotel.	0,06	2,48	0,149
7	The front office understands the specific needs of guests staying at the hotel.	0,06	2,48	0,149
	Total	0,42		1,035
Total Weight & Internal Factors Score		1,00		3,105

External Factors Analysis Summary (EFAS)

The next analysis is to determine the total weight value and rating value (score) of each indicator to get the total weight and the rating of the EFAS value as in Table 2.

Table 2. External Factor Analysis Summary (EFAS)

No.	Opportunities	Weights	Rating	Score
1	Accommodation located on the beach.	0,08	3,74	0,299
2	Accommodation located on the beach.	0,08	3,63	0,290
3	The number of foreign tourists visits the hotel.	0,08	3,41	0,273
4	Progress and development of technology and	0,08	3,33	0,266

	information.			
5	Indonesia's tourism image in the eyes of other countries is still relatively good.	0,08	3,33	0,266
6	The positive response from the Balinese community especially the neighborhood community around the hotel..	0,08	3,48	0,278
7	Indonesia has a large number of foreign tourists to visit.	0,08	3,41	0,273
	Total	0,56		1,946
No.	Threat	Weights	Rating	Skor
1	Competition among tourism industry actors	0,08	2,48	0,198
2	Global economic crisis	0,07	2,44	0,171
3	Natural disasters	0,07	2,33	0,163
4	Political issues and terrorism	0,07	2,48	0,174
5	Environmental exploitation	0,07	2,48	0,174
6	The emergence of more interesting tourist destination areas	0,07	2,48	0,174
	Total	0,43		1,053
	Total Weight & External Factors Score	1,00		3,000

Position in IE matrix

After conducting an analysis of the internal and external environments, the next is to move scores of values into the IE matrix table (Internal-External). In previous calculations, it is known that the weighted value or total score on the IFAS matrix is 3,105 (3.10), while the total score for the matrix of EFAS is 3,000 (3.00). This shows the quality of service at the front office of the hotel in the position of Growth Sel I (a concentration through vertical integration), which can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. IE Matrix (Internal-External)

		3.10		
		High 3,0 - 4,00	Average 2,0 - 2,99	Weak 1,0 - 1,99
Total Skor Faktor Strategi Eksternal	High 3,0 - 4,00	I GROWTH Concentration through vertical integration	II GROWTH Concentration through horizontal integration	III RETRENCHMENT Turn Around
	Medium 2,0 - 2,99	IV STABILITY Be careful	V GROWTH Concentrations through horizontal integration STABILITY No change in strategy profit	VI RETRENCHMENT Captive Company Divestment
	Low 1,0 - 1,99	VII GROWTH Diversifikasi Konsentrik	VIII GROWTH Diversifikasi Konglomerat	IX LIKUIDASI Bangkrut atau Likuidasi
	Total Skor Faktor Strategi Internal			

SWOT Analysis

The next step is to choose the strategy that is done by the hotel in improving the quality of front office services using the SWOT matrix. This SWOT matrix will be matched with all factors of strength, weakness, opportunities, and threats. It aims to obtain an alternative service quality strategy. The alternative strategies found in the SWOT matrix can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. Matriks SWOT

IFAS EFAS	Strengths (S) S1,S2,S3,S4,S5,S6,S7,S8, ,S9	Weaknesses (W) W1,W2,W3,W4,W6,W7, W8
	Strategi SO	Strategi WO
	1. The front office section serves guests by leveraging the progress	1. Training to front office staff to enhance the understanding of the

<p>Opportunities (O) O1,O2,O3,O4,O5,O6, O7</p>	<p>and development of the technology and information. 2. Provide information about tours outside of Seminyak by providing local guides who have already worked with the hotel.</p>	<p>guests ' specific needs and hone the skills of the staff. 2. Maximize the processing speed of guest complaints to preserve Indonesia's tourism image in the eyes of other countries.</p>
<p>Threats (T) T1,T2,T3,T4,T5,T6</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Strategi ST</p> <p>1.Participating in the beach clean up activities in the vicinity of Petitenget Beach. 2.Create a combined promo package for guests staying more than 4 days in the form of 2 hours massage per person voucher or free-flow drink at the bar and restaurant.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Strategi WT</p> <p>1. Added front office staff to improve service. 2. Provide a complimentary form of spa Voucher/lunch voucher.</p>

1. Strengths-Opportunities (SO) strategy

The SO strategy is of using all the power it has to seize and capitalize on the opportunities that exist. Based on the strengths and opportunities, the strategy is done by: (a) Developing knowledge on the front office in serving guests by leveraging the progress and development of technology and information. Developing knowledge by utilizing technological advances is one way to improve the quality of front office services to guests staying at the hotel. (b) Providing information about sightseeing tours outside of the Seminyak area by providing local guides who have already worked with the hotel. Providing information to guests staying about tours that are outside of the Seminyak area can also open to the have for the hotel to cooperate with local people.

2. Strengths-Threats (ST) strategy

ST strategy is a strategy to use the power that companies have to cope with existing threats. Based on the strengths and threats, the strategy is done by: (a) Participating in beach clean-up activities around Petitenget Beach is one of the ways to preserve The natural beauty and environment around the hotel. It can attract foreign tourists to visit and holiday in Bali because tourism in Bali is a big economic

source so that the people of Bali remain. (b) Creating a combined promo package for guests staying at the hotel. The choice strategy is done by attracting tourists to stay more comfortable by making a combined promo package for guests staying more than 4 days are entitled to a 2 hours massage per person or a free-flow drink at the bar-restaurant.

3. Weaknesses-Opportunities (WO) strategy

WO strategy is this strategy to overcome weaknesses by taking advantage of existing opportunities. Based on the weaknesses and opportunities that have been, then the hotel should do: (a) Training to front office staff to enhance the understanding of the guests' specific needs and hone the skills of the staff. The hotel has a considerable number of foreign tourists visiting but the front office staff is less aware of the needs of staying guests. To maximize the quality service, the management is required to provide training about service quality to front office staff. (b) Maximizing the processing speed of guest complaints to preserve Indonesia's tourism image in the eyes of other countries. Front office staff should maximize the processing speed of guest complaints to reduce the occurrence of the complaint and improve the quality of service to the guests who stay and attract the interest of staying guests to return to stay at.

4. Weaknesses-Threats (WT) Strategy

WT strategy is a strategy to minimize existing weaknesses and avoid threats. Based on weaknesses and threats, the strategy is done by: (a) Adding a front office staff to improve quality services is one of the strategies that the hotel can do to minimize the complaint at a certain time, with the increasing number of front office staff then the work is more structured to support operational activities and provide quality services to guests staying at the hotel. (b) Providing a complimentary form of spa Voucher/lunch voucher. By providing complementary to the complaint guest so that the guest is comfortable again with the service provided and adds a sense of loyalty customer who will benefit the hotel.

CONCLUSION

IFAS Matrix analysis gets a total score of 3.10. There is the main power of front office staff of the hotel dressed and neat. The front office staff always smiles

and gives guests a friendly attitude to score 0.259. Weakness owned by the front office staff has not been able to handle problems quickly and professionally get a score of 0.145 which shows that the internal position of the hotel has a good enough strength in improving the quality of service in the year 2020. While the total score of the matrix of EFAS is 3.00. There are opportunities that have accommodation located on the beach and get a score of 0.299. Threats owned by natural disasters get a score of 0.163. If reviewed based on The IE matrix table, the position is in the I-cell that is a Growth position. In the IE matrix that indicates that the current strategy of growth concentrations through vertical integration and should be maintained. The results of a SWOT matrix analysis resulted in a new strategy including 2 SO strategies, 2 ST strategies, 2 WO of, and 2 WT strategies.

Strategy expected to be done is that the hotel can choose an alternative strategy that has been the author of the research results to be applied to the company. So that it can help the hotel in improving the quality of front office services to guests to staying at.

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