

# Performance Optimization of Staff in Improving Guest Satisfaction

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## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history:

Received September 07, 2022

Revised September 13, 2022

Accepted November 11, 2022

Available online November 25, 2022

### Kata Kunci:

Optimalisasi, Kinerja Pelayan,  
Meningkatkan Kepuasan Tamu

### Keywords:

Optimization, Waitress  
Performance, Increasing Guest  
Satisfaction



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## ABSTRAK

Di masa pandemi Covid-19, pariwisata Bali mengalami masa-masa sulit, sehingga banyak usaha di bidang akomodasi pariwisata yang hancur. Berbagai upaya dilakukan agar mereka bisa bertahan di masa sulit, salah satunya pengaturan keuangan yang ketat, pengurangan karyawan, PHK dan PHK karyawan. Kinerja pramusaji memegang peranan penting dalam kelancaran operasional sebuah restoran, sehingga perlu dilakukan optimalisasi kinerja pramusaji agar kepuasan tamu meningkat. Di restoran Warung Mesari, pelayan tidak hanya menjadi pelayan untuk tamu yang berkunjung, tetapi juga menjadi duta dalam memperkenalkan dan menjaga citra restoran. Penelitian ini melihat kinerja pramusaji dalam upaya meningkatkan kepuasan tamu dan upaya apa saja yang dilakukan pihak restoran Warung Mesari dalam mengoptimalkan kinerja para pramusaji. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah deskriptif-kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data berupa wawancara, studi dokumentasi, dan observasi. Penelitian ini menghasilkan temuan sebagai berikut: para pelayan mampu memberikan pelayanan yang baik dan menjalin hubungan baik dengan tamu yang berkunjung ke restoran; para pelayan telah melakukan pekerjaan mereka dengan sukses; restoran telah menerima banyak komentar tamu yang positif dari para tamu; restoran juga mendapat tamu repeater; dan tamu yang sudah berkunjung kembali mengajak teman-temannya untuk berkunjung ke restoran Warung Mesari.

## ABSTRACT

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Bali tourism experienced difficult times, so that many businesses in the tourism accommodation sector were destroyed. Various efforts were made, so that they could survive in difficult times, one of which was strict financial arrangements, reduction of employees, laying off and laying off employees. The performance of the waiter plays an important role in the smooth operation of a restaurant, so it is necessary to optimize the performance of the waiter so that guest satisfaction increases. At the Warung Mesari restaurant, the waiter is not only a waiter for visiting guests, but also an ambassador in introducing and maintaining the restaurant's image. This study looks at the performance of waiters in an effort to increase guest satisfaction and what efforts are made by the Warung Mesari restaurant in optimizing the performance of the waiters. The research method used is descriptive-qualitative with data collection techniques in the form of interviews, documentation studies, and observations. This study resulted in the following findings: the waiters were able to provide good service and establish good relationships with guests who visited the restaurant; the waiters have done their job successfully; the restaurant has received many positive guest comments from guests; the restaurant also gets repeater guests; and guests who have visited again invite their friends to visit the Warung Mesari restaurant.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Bali tourism experienced difficult times, so that many businesses in the tourism accommodation sector were destroyed. Various efforts were made, so that they could survive in difficult times, one of which was strict financial arrangements, reduction of employees, laying off and laying off employees (Liang et al., 2022; Susilawati et al., 2020; P. Wirawan et al., 2020). According to previous study one of the tourism potentials that will continue to run during the pandemic in Bali is backpacker tourism (P. Wirawan et al., 2021). Through this tourism, in fact it is still an economic income

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for local residents who have been serving backpacker tourists. In Bali, tourist tourism is an alternative, because in practice its implementation is individualistic and not in large numbers, so it can still be conditioned (Iwayan & Utama, 2016; Mustika et al., 2013; Surya Suamba et al., 2022). In addition tourism potential that is very environmentally friendly, health-based and much in demand by special interest tourists is a green village destination such as by using environmentally friendly transportation like eco bikes (Han et al., 2010; I. N. S. Wirawan et al., 2020; Yusof et al., 2017). So it is to be able to realize activities that lead to increased welfare. The community and establish an active role in the community with tourists.

As the rate of transmission of the corona virus in Indonesia begins to decline, various industrial groups engaged in the tourism sector are starting to prepare themselves. One of them is tourism in Gianyar Regency. Gianyar Regency is one of the tourist destinations in Indonesia and the world (Cynthia et al., 2021; Dewi et al., 2019; Yuni, 2011). Various tourist objects, such as cultural tourism objects, ancient tourism, youth tourism, marine tourism, and color tourism objects can be found in the area. Each tourist attraction is able to provide stunning and amazing tourist attractions, so that many tourists visit the area, both domestic tourists and foreign tourists (Atmojo, 2008; Ni Kadek, 2018; Yasa et al., 2016). However, tourists are more interested in art and cultural tourism which are still preserved by the community and tourism actors in Gianyar Regency. One of the areas in Gianyar Regency that is most in demand by tourists is in the Ubud area. The Ubud area has various types of tourism and cultural activities organized by various groups (Diana et al., 2017; Pitanatri & Pitana, 2019; Susrawan et al., 2020). In fact, Ubud is included in the 10 best tourist cities in and was also awarded the 25 Best Cities in the World in the World's Best Awards 2020 version of Travel & Leisure, a travel magazine based in the United States (US) (Bell, 2019; Primadewi et al., 2021; Sambou et al., 2019). The large number of tourist visits is certainly supported by a variety of accommodation options. Currently in Ubud, there are various types of accommodation, from inns to 5-star hotels (Lamopia, 2022; Mahyuni, 2016). There are many places to eat ranging from simple restaurants to luxury restaurants with the concept of fine dining.

Like hotels, restaurants also play an important role in increasing the tourism industry in the Ubud area. In running its business, restaurants need professional workers in their fields in order to provide the best service to consumers (Karadag & Kim, 2006; Putra et al., 2018; Vigilia et al., 2021). The waiter has no small role in providing information about food and beverage menus, various promos available, or information on the layout of the food and beverage menu set ups served in restaurants to guests, both from inside and outside the hotel (AbuKhalifeh & Som, 2012; Leivas et al., 2020; Scott et al., 2017). In carrying out activities as a waiter, he must be polite in speech and body expression. The waiter will always be noticed by guests and will determine the reputation of the restaurant itself (AbuKhalifeh & Som, 2012; Oka, I, M et al., 2020; Tsui & Chen, 2020). When talking to guests, for example, the waiter must be able to detect the wishes and needs of guests to make it happen. Waiters sometimes have to know more about food and drinks, from ingredients to the manufacturing process. This will be an added value for a waiter to support his duties in providing good food and drink services to guests. This all needs to be done to increase guest satisfaction. Professional waiters must be able to provide services that are in accordance with the standards set by the restaurant itself.

Researcher have conducted observation in Warung Mesari Restaurant as one restaurant in Ubud, Gianyar Bali. This research was carried out starting from the researchers conducting observations and interviews on with the General Manager and the waiters. From the results of these observations and interviews, researchers found problems that occurred at the Warung Mesari Restaurant based on Guest Comments, namely about the unsatisfactory service provided by the waiter to guests. The guest comments show that guests cannot give good ratings, because the staff is overwhelmed by service so guests wait 1 hour to get the food ordered. Other guest's comments show that Warung Mesari looks very good and the food provided is also good but the service provided is very bad because the food ordered came quite long. The service provided by the waitress was not satisfied because the waitress paid less attention to the guest.

Based on those problems, there are two questions that will be answered in this research. First, how is the performance of the waiter in an effort to increase guest satisfaction at the Warung Mesari restaurant. And second, researchers want to know how the efforts made by Warung Mesari in optimizing the performance of the waiters and waitresses. The aim of this study is to analyses the performance of waiters in an effort to increase guest satisfaction and what efforts are made by the Warung Mesari restaurant in optimizing the performance of the waiters.

## 2. METHODS

The research method used is descriptive-qualitative with data collection techniques in the form of interviews, documentation studies, and observations. The data obtained in this study include primary data and secondary data. Primary data which is data obtained by researchers from original sources and the main sources that will be used as objects of this research, in the form of interviews with the General Manager, waiters, polls from individuals or groups of Guests. In other words, researchers need to collect data by answering research questions. While secondary data in which the researcher does not collect data directly, but is taken from other parties, is in the form of books, notes, existing evidence, or archives, both published and unpublished in general to support research (Usman, 2006).

Because this study uses a qualitative approach, the researcher uses the term that Spradley put forward, namely "social situation" or a social situation consisting of three elements, namely: place, actors, and activities that interact synergistically. The social situation in this study includes all people who work at Warung Mesari and visiting guests. The sampling technique used by researchers in this study is purposive sampling. Theoretically, purposive sampling is used if the researcher has a personal judgment in selecting the individuals sampled and he views that only certain individuals can represent (representative) because in the opinion of the researcher. These selected individuals know about the population (Suhardi, 2001). The researcher determined that the sample came from the Warung Mesari Restaurant, namely the general manager, 3 waiters, and 50 guests.

In collecting data, the author uses 3 methods: First. Participatory observation, which is a data collection method used to collect research data through observation and sensing where the observer or researcher is really involved in the daily life of the respondent. This means that researchers make direct observations to obtain an overview of the work process of waiters and waitresses during their work. In conducting participatory observation, the researcher observes the place, actors, activities, space, time, goals, and emotions that are felt and expressed by the people at Warung Mesari Restaurant. Second. In-depth interviews, namely the process of obtaining information for research purposes and face-to-face questioning between interviewers and informants or interviewees, with or without using interview guidelines, where interviewers and informants are involved in social life for a relatively long time. In-depth interviews in this study were in the form of structured questions and answers with two informants who had insight into the Warung Mesari Restaurant. Respondents interviewed in this study included owners, waiters and waitresses, and guests. Third is documentation Study, namely data collection using documents in the form of records of events that have passed. Documentation in this research is by reading reviews from TripAdvisor.

In this study, researchers looked for valid data by using data triangulation which includes technical triangulation and source triangulation. Technical triangulation is the collection of different data to obtain data from the same data source. Triangulation techniques can be reached by conducting participant observation where the researcher observes the waiter and waitress while doing their work and records data from phenomena that are considered necessary in the study. Conducting structured interviews, namely giving pre-arranged questions and documenting or recording evidence in the form of documents and photos that support the results of the research, is for technical triangulation, while source triangulation is getting data from different sources with the same technique. The data analysis used in this research including several stage such as, data reduction (data reduction), data presentation (data display), and drawing conclusions (conclusion) which will later be presented in a qualitative descriptive form (Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, 2018).

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Results

#### *Waitress Performance in Improving Guest Satisfaction at Warung Mesari Restaurant*

The result of interview by the general manager said that in a restaurant, the performance of the waiter can be seen from providing good and quality service to guests, carrying out their duties properly according to the standards that have been set. Warung Mesari Restaurant implements a special service in the form of giving flower necklaces to guests who have come more than once, holding cooking class facilities, and preparing facilities for guests' children. This facility for guest children is carried out by providing facilities for painting, so that the guest children can be taught to paint by the painter of the Warung Mesari restaurant directly. With such activities, the waiter directs the guests according to the activities they will undergo at the Warung Mesari restaurant.

The following are the activities carried out at the Warung Mesari restaurant: First, cooking class activities for guests. Cooking class activities are always carried out if there are Very Important Person (VIP) guests and guests who have come more than once to the Warung Mesari restaurant. At the time of

the cooking class, the menu used was a typical Balinese menu. Kitchen staff and waiters will teach the guest directly. Second, the activity of giving flower necklaces to guests. Wreaths are given to guests who have visited more than once and VIP guests. The flower necklace is given when guests enter the Warung Mesari restaurant which is given directly by the waiter and is greeted directly by the general manager of the Warung Mesari restaurant. Third, painting activities for guest children. This activity is one of the facilities provided by the Warung Mesari restaurant for guests who take their children to the Warung Mesari restaurant. The guest children will be taught directly by Mr. Lord Robert Lan Walker, the painter of the Warung Mesari restaurant and accompanied by a waiter.

The waiter must carry out the facilities provided by the Warung Mesari restaurant which aims to establish good relationships with guests, with the hope that guests will feel given good service and, in the future, will return to the Warung Mesari restaurant. The researcher also conducted interviews with 3 waitresses. They have been working for about three years. They also stated that they always try to do their best to fulfill the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) that has been made by the Warung Mesari restaurant. From the results of interviews with researchers, they also stated that in addition to complying with SOPs, they also felt responsible for maintaining guest satisfaction by establishing good communication with guests, always trying to have a one step ahead mindset. This means that the waiters can quickly and accurately provide service when guests need something. The details activities of the waiters as a whole which are the results of Observation of Waitress Activities is show in [Table 1](#).

**Table 1. Results Observation of Waitress Activities**

No	SOP at Warung Mesari Restaurant	Details	Observation results form waiters at The Warung Mesari Restaurant			Description
			Often done	Rarely done	Is not done	
1	Pre operation	Before starting operations, the general manager did a morning briefing with all the staff of the warung mesari restaurant.	√			Well done
		The waiter cleans the table and restaurant area before the restaurant opens.	√			Well done
		The waiter does the table set up	√			Well done
		Waiters check completeness and clean chinaware, silverware, and napkins.	√			Well done
		Prepare menu lists and check menu conditions	√			Well done
		The waiter always checks the captain's order.	√			Well done
		The waiter always checks the table cloths, and replaces them if they get dirty.	√			Well done
		The waiter always pays attention to the cleanliness of the restaurant.	√			Well done
2	During operation	Do greetings, use the guest's name if you recognize the guest's name, eye contact, always smile, and say the name of the restaurant and lead guests to sit down.	√			Well done
		Help invite guests to sit down, make sure the guest seats are comfortable,	√			Well done

No	SOP at Warung Mesari Restaurant	Details	Observation results form waiters at The Warung Mesari Restaurant			Description
			Often done	Rarely done	Is not done	
		always prioritize ladies, then do the unfolding of napkins from next to the guests. Give meny and serve ice water when guests are looking at the menu.				
		Explaining today's special menu, explaining the composition of the menu, then providing a list of drinks, asking if you want to order drinks now.	√			Well done
		Taking Orders.	√			Well done
		Make sure whether the table set up is in accordance with the food ordered.	√			Well done
		Serving food.	√			Well done
		If a guest's drink is halfway through the glass, the waiter asks if they want to order another drink.	√			Well done
		Clearing plates, if at a table one of the guests orders more than one food, and one of the food is empty, the waiter must take the plate.		√		Note done well
		Doing crumbing down, is done when guest has finished enjoying the main course.	√			Well done
		Offers guest whether you want to order a dessert, coffee and tea menu.	√			Well done
		Billing, wait for the guest to ask for the bill, give the bill that already contains a pen, take the bill when the guest has finished signing it.	√			Well done
		Thank the guest for visiting the restaurant, then escort the guest out of the restaurant		√		Note done well
3	After operation	Cleaning the table then bringing the remaining equipment to the kitchen and placing it in its original position.	√			Well done
		Tidying up the restaurant back to how it was, placing the menu neatly.	√			Well done



Based on [Table 1](#) show the observations made by the researchers, the researchers concluded that all activities had been carried out well by the waiter. There are only two activities that have not been carried out properly by one of the waiters, namely clearing and not taking guests out of the restaurant. When the researcher asked one of the waiters who made the mistake, the waiter explained that he was not used to his new workplace and was still in a state of insecurity, so the service that should have been done was not done well.

### **Guest Satisfaction Level**

In order to determine the level of guest satisfaction at the Warung Mesari restaurant, the researchers used two different sources. The first source was obtained by looking at reviews from the TripAdvisor site. The second source of researchers obtained from distributing questionnaires to guests who had visited the Warung Mesari restaurant. The following are the results of a review from two sources that have been carried out.

First is an online review from the TripAdvisor site. Researchers chose the latest data available on TripAdvisor which researchers then summarized into one. From this summary, the researcher draws conclusions about the services obtained by guests who have visited the Warung Mesari restaurant. From all the reviews from TripAdvisor. It can be seen that there are only 3 reviews that allude to the performance of the waitress. The three reviews discussed the slow service provided by the waiter. The remaining 30 reviews said that the service was well appreciated by the visitors. While, others 20 reviews discuss the quality of food and prices which are beyond the authority of a waiter.

Second is based on the assessment of visiting guests. The assessment of these guests was obtained by using the questionnaire method. The questionnaire given by the researcher to the respondents describes what the determining factor for a service is provided that can be categorized as good or bad service. From the results of the questionnaire that the author has distributed to 50 guests, the authors get all feedback from the 50 guests it found that: 1.) 94% of respondents answered that the waiter had been able to provide clear information to guests and 6% who stated that the waiter had not been able to provide clear information to guests. 2.) 94% of respondents answered that the waiter was able to consult and was able to provide advice to guests when guests needed something they did not know, and there were 6% who stated that the waiter had not been able to do this. 3.) 96% of respondents answered that when taking orders the waiter had done well, namely from how the waiter asked the menu he wanted to order, recorded guest orders correctly, repeated orders from guests according to what they said. 4.) 92% of respondents stated that the waiter was friendly and polite to guests when providing services and there were 8% who stated that the waiter was not fully friendly and polite to guests.

5.) 96% of respondents state that the waiter has served guests with full attention and there are 4% who state that the waiter has not done this. 6.) 94% of guests stating that the waiters have been able to provide solutions when they need help when choosing food and 6% of guests who stated that the waiters have not been able to provide good solutions to guests. 7.) 94% of respondents state that the waiter has billed the bill properly, seen from the way of providing the bill, speed and suitability in processing payments, and there are 6% who state that the waiter has not billed the bill properly. 8.) 92% of respondents state that the service provided by the waiter is in accordance with the expectations desired by the guest and 8% which states that the service provided by the waiter has not met the guest's expectations. All of these responses concluded that the service provided by the waiter was able to provide good service to guests so as to meet the expectations of the guests.

### **Discussion**

In addition to providing good service to guests, the general manager also strives to optimize the performance of the waiters to ensure the satisfaction of visiting guests. The effort that has been made is that the general manager always makes observations to the restaurant. This is done to find out what are the shortcomings of the service provided by the waiter ([Destiana, 2018](#); [Suh et al., 2015](#)). From the results of these observations, the general manager then noted things that were considered less than the service provided by the waiter. These notes will then be discussed during the morning briefing. To optimize the performance of the waiter, apart from making observations, the general manager also always checks the log book to find out whether there are complaints from guests or not, and find out what problems are happening in the restaurant. The results of the examination were also discussed when the general manager did the morning briefing. In addition, the general manager also always checks guest comments on tripadvisor. The goal is to find out what comments are given by guests who have visited.

From these efforts, the general manager can find out and fix the mistakes made by the waiter and can decide what training should be given to the waiter. Training is given once a month. The most frequently given training is the provision of SOPs from the Warung Mesari restaurant. The general

manager then provides service techniques that are in accordance with predetermined standards, how to up selling, and communication techniques (Castañer & Oliveira, 2020; Chadès et al., 2011). In addition to providing training, the general manager motivates all employees to remain enthusiastic in carrying out their duties. The motivation given to all employees is motivation in the form of lure: A waiter who does a good job will be given a reward, and a waiter who has not done his job well will be given an enthusiastic motivation from the general manager (Afroz, 2018; Ganta, 2014; Ronquillo et al., 2021).

It is in line with previous study the main purpose of this study was to examine the quality dimensions that affect guest satisfaction in restaurant industry (Gagić et al., 2013). The result found that food and beverage quality, the quality of service delivery, physical environment and price fairness are analyzed as a key components of restaurant experience. Moreover it reinforce by other study which investigates how restaurant image and customer orientation affect the relative importance of both process and outcome service quality in customer satisfaction, focusing on restaurants during the COVID-19 pandemic (Pan & Ha, 2021). Using a moderated moderation process and macro-based approach ( $M = 3$ ), our findings show that process service quality impacts restaurant satisfaction; however, they also reveal that outcome service quality has a stronger main effect on restaurant satisfaction than process service quality.

The implication of this study is providing overview about performance of the current waiters to experience many improvements from years. The results could be helpful tool for restaurant managers to invest their resources more efficiently, making changes to crucial quality attributes that elicit the guests' satisfaction level. A management approach focused on guest satisfaction can improve restaurant business performance. The limitation of this research lies in the research subject which only involves one restaurant, so perspectives from other restaurants around the Gianyar tourist area are not presented. Based on the results of the study and the conclusions above, the researchers can provide several recommendations as follows: (1) The facilities provided by the Warung Mesari restaurant are to be maintained and run properly by the waiters to maintain the good name and sustainability of the Warung Mesari restaurant in the future. (2) To optimize the performance of the waiter, the general manager needs to invite a language teacher when providing training to the waiter so that when a guest uses a language other than English, the waiter is able to communicate well with the guest.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

From the discussion above, the researcher can draw several conclusions. First, related to the performance of the waiter in increasing guest satisfaction at the Warung Mesari restaurant. The waiter increases guest satisfaction in terms of implementing the standard operating procedures provided by the warung mesari restaurant. Providing quality and good service to guests, and carry out the facilities provided by the Warung Mesari restaurant for guests properly. It is undeniable that the performance of the waitress is very important in ensuring the smooth running of an effort that has been implemented by the Warung Mesari restaurant. The waiters can be said to have been able to provide good service and establish good relationships with guests who visit the Warung Mesari restaurant. It can also be said that the waiters have carried out their duties successfully, general manager at Warung Mesari restaurant ensures that the performance of the waiters remains good by making the following efforts: (a) Always doing morning briefing; (b) Always make observations; (c) Check guest comments on TripAdvisor; (d) Asking guests who have finished eating whether they enjoy the food and also asking how the service is provided; (e) Always conduct regular training once a month; (f) Provide motivation.

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