

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Hotel industry is one of the most important sectors in the tourism and hospitality industry. The growth in the hotel industry has been identified as one of the major facilitators in the development of Tourism and hospitality industry as a whole. No wonder the governments of some countries give incentives to hotel developers and owners in order to further enhance their country's tourism sector.

Of all the various types of accommodation available to the tourist, the hotel is the biggest and most visible sub-sector. It is usually viewed traditionally as an establishment which provides accommodation, food and beverage services on a pay basis to guests who are only for a short stay. However, the modern perception of a hotel is more complex than this due to the fact that not all of the hotels provide services such as food and beverages, at the same time, some hotels even offer additional services such as conference rooms to their guests. (Talabi, 2015)

World market flow have increased real from agronomic to services market. All services business trying hard they to increase or enhance their service quality. It happened because to satisfy basic need and customer expectations. When customer need clearly known and understand, hotel operator is more likely to expect and also be granted customer and their need and will. That happier customer is, that more their possibility will be back their hotel that they stay.

The hospitality industry fight to develop itself and enhance customer experience. Front desk hotel is a front office operation energetic part. It because it embodies first impression customer. In this era competition, hotel used new practice to increasing their performance level and at the same time customer joy. Each customer treated with largest consideration make him or privilege sense he. Because existed a lot of competition in market every hotel distinguish itself by adopting innovative practices to help attract increasing customer. (Hassan, 2018)

Hotel services begin at the front desk when the customers come in to check in with the front desk personnel. Therefore, front desk employees are the face of the hotel, and they have to offer customers professional and positive service in order to ensure customer satisfaction. Front desk employees can contribute to the repeated business if they are friendly and provide exceptional care. In addition, a good first impression on customers has an impact on hotel branding and profits. Front desk employees' high-quality service can affect hotels' financial performance if they demonstrate good behaviors and create strong first impressions, which can help the hotel have a more positive reputation and more repeated customers. (Shao, 2017)

The most important department in hotel industry is front office department. It is one of the hotel departments that is center of activity in a hotel operation. Front office department is one of the first (and often last) point of contact with a hotel guest. It plays a big role in the hotel because it manages in or out flow of guests on a daily basis.

Grand Mercure Medan Angkasa Hotel which is located on Jl. Sutomo No.1, Medan city - North Sumatera is conveniently accessible for leisure and business hotel. The hotel is approximately 39 km away, Kuala Namu International Airport is a 60-minute drive and the train station is within short walking range. Spacious rooms, with free WiFi, modern décor, luxurious bedding and flat-scope TV, unrivaled for everyone, and up to 1200 people can stay in the Grand Ballroom. Grand Mercure offers an optimal venue in all the hotels around the world for meetings, conferences and activities. The properties of the hotels have a broad array of innovative installations with intuitive design and state of the art facilities.

In Grand Mercure Medan Angkasa Hotel, front office department is divided into many sections, such as: reservation, reception, guest relation officer, telephone operator, and concierge. One of the section in front office department is telephone operator. Basically, telephone operator is a section of front office department, which has responsibility to handle incoming and outgoing calls. Besides, it still has many duties and responsibilities in hotel, such as operating the telephone main switchboard and handling telephone from incoming call, staff call, and guest room call, providing hotel information and servicing to guests and callers, taking guests messages, handling wake up call and providing paging request. The job can not go successfully without telephone operator. Therefore, telephone operator must be able to operate the duty quickly, friendly, and politely. He or she needs the equipment to support the job, such as telephone switchboard, computer, notes, DVD player, and message form.

Based on observations done by the researcher at the Grand Mercure Medan Angkasa Hotel, a problem often encountered is miscommunication between fellow telephone operators. If there are guests who submit complaints to operator A and still have not responded, then the guest will submit a repeated complaint submitted to operator B. Furthermore, the complaint will be submitted to the complaint handling or supervisor. However, the problem that arises is the differences of opinion or complaints raised between operator A and operator B, so it is often unknown what the real problem is.

In addition, the procedures for employee recruitment are also deemed inappropriate. For example, there are employees who have just undergone a training period for 2 weeks, but have been given the position as permanent employees. Sometimes, if an employee is unable to come to work, the company will immediately use the training employee because in telephone service positions, the company does not provide backup employees. If there are 2 employees who cannot come to work at the same day, the company will not have employees in this position and arbitrarily take any employees in other positions (for example: office girl, waiter, or anyone who is deemed capable of doing so) to fill the position on the day that.

In this study, the researcher wants to analyze the role of telephone service at hotel Grand Mercure Medan Angkasa and write it in this *skripsi* entitled **“The Role of Telephone Service at Grand Mercure Medan Angkasa Hotel”**.

1.2 Research Focus

In order for research conducted more focused and easily in collecting and processing data, the scope of research is limited as follows. This study is only limited to telephone operator in front office department at Grand Mercure Medan Angkasa Hotel on Sutomo Street No.1, West Medan, Medan City - North Sumatera.

1.3 Problem Formulation

Based on the description on the background of the study above, the research questions in this study are as follows:

1. How important is the role of telephone operator at Grand Mercure Medan Angkasa Hotel?
2. What are the benefits for customers and hotels from phone services in Grand Mercure Medan Angkasa Hotel?
3. What is the effort of Grand Mercure Medan Angkasa Hotel in improving service quality?

1.4 Research Objective

Based on the problem formulation above, the research objectives are as follows:

1. To describe the important role of telephone operator at Grand Mercure Medan Angkasa Hotel.

2. To describe the benefits for customers and hotels from phone services in Grand Mercure Medan Angkasa Hotel.
3. To describe the effort of Grand Mercure Medan Angkasa Hotel in improving service quality.

1.5 Benefit of the Research

1.5.1 Theoretical Benefit

Theoretically, the results of this study are expected to be useful to strengthen the theory in hospitality, especially about the role of telephone operator in front office department of a hotel.

1.5.2 Practical Benefit

The practical benefits expected from this research are as follows:

1. For the writer

This research can provide an overview and knowledge about the importance of telephone operator in front office department in a hotel.

2. For the company

This research is expected to be used as a suggestion to give more attention about the importance of telephone operator in front office department at hotel.

3. For the other researchers

The results of this research are expected to be used as a source of references who concerned in conducting related research in the future.