

**THESIS BY PROJECT**

**A VERTICAL GARDEN PROJECT AS AN  
IMPLEMENTATION OF A SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM  
TO MAINTAIN GUEST ROOM SATISFACTION AT  
STHALA, A TRIBUTE PORTFOLIO HOTEL, UBUD BALI**



**I KADEK TWENTU AGUSTINA**

**POLITEKNIK NEGERI BALI  
BADUNG  
2024**

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**I KADEK TWENTU AGUSTINA  
2215885019**

**TOURISM PLANNING STUDY PROGRAM  
APPLIED MASTER PROGRAM  
TOURISM DEPARTMENT  
POLITEKNIK NEGERI BALI  
BADUNG  
2024**



KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN, KEBUDAYAAN,  
RISET, DAN TEKNOLOGI  
**POLITEKNIK NEGERI BALI**

Jalan Kampus Bukit Jimbaran, Kuta Selatan, Kabupaten Badung, Bali – 80364

Telp. (0361) 701981 (hunting) Fax. 701128

Laman: [www.pnb.ac.id](http://www.pnb.ac.id) Email: [poltek@pnb.ac.id](mailto:poltek@pnb.ac.id)

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**DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY**

The undersigned below

Name : I Kadek Twentu Agustina

NIM : 2215885019

Study Program : Tourism Planning, Applied Master Program, Tourism  
Department, Politeknik Negeri Bali

I hereby declare that the proposed project by thesis entitled “*A Vertical Garden Project as an Implementation of a Sustainability Program to Maintain Guest Room Satisfaction at Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali*” is truly free from plagiarism. Shall in the future proven that there is plagiarism in this scientific paper, then I am willing to accept sanctions in accordance with the implemented regulation.

Thus, I made this statement letter to be used properly.

Badung, 12 July 2024



I Kadek Twentu Agustina

# SUPERVISOR APPROVAL SHEET

## THESIS

**A VERTICAL GARDEN PROJECT AS AN IMPLEMENTATION OF A  
SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM TO MAINTAIN GUEST ROOM  
SATISFACTION AT STHALA, A TRIBUTE PORTFOLIO HOTEL,  
UBUD BALI**

Applied by:

**I KADEK TWENTU AGUSTINA  
NIM: 2215885019**

Has been approved and acknowledged by:

**Counselor I,**



**Dr. Dra. Ni Gst Nym Suci Murni, M.Par  
NIP. 196405251990032001**

**Counselor II,**



**Prof. Ni Made Ernawati, MATM.,PhD  
NIP. 196312281990102001**

**Acknowledged**

**Head of Tourism Department**



**Dr. Ni Nyoman Sri Astuti, SST.Par., M.Par  
NIP 19840908200122004**

**Head of Applied Master of Tourism  
Business Planning Study Program**


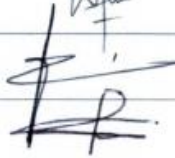

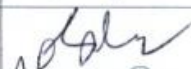
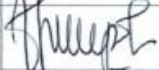


**Dr. Dra. Ni Gst Nym Suci Murni, M.Par  
NIP. 1964052519900320**

## PROJECT THESIS

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**SATISFACTION AT STHALA, A TRIBUTE PORTFOLIO HOTEL,**  
**UBUD BALI**

This thesis has been tested based on **Decree of the Director Politeknik Negeri Bali No: 04791/TU.01.04/2024** and has been passed the examination on:  
Day Friday Date 12, Month July, Year 2024

	Examiners	Signature
Ketua	Dr. Dra. Ni Gst Nym Suci Murni M.Par NIP 196405251990032001	
Anggota	Prof. Ni Made Ernawati, MATM.,PhD NIP 196312281990102001	
Anggota	Dr. I Ketut Budarma M.Par, MMTHRL NIP 196212319900101002	
Anggota	Dr. I Made Darma Oka, STT.Par, M.Par NIP 196510202000031001	
Anggota	Putu Wikantari, SE.,MM Practitioner/Industry	

Acknowledge  
Head of Tourism Department,  
Politeknik Negeri Bali



Dr. Ni Nyoman Sri Astuti, SST.Par.,M.Par  
NIP 198409082008122004

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BALI**

**By  
I Kadek Twentu Agustina, NIM. 2215885019  
Jurusan Pariwisata**

**ABSTRACT**

*A new innovation in meeting guest satisfaction is needed in the hospitality business today. In light of the fierce competition among hotels to secure business, this is particularly important. As a result, a lot of hotels are racing to develop innovative ideas that will have an effect on both the survival of the surrounding environment and the guests. These innovations will be promoted and presented as one of the hotel's selling points and distinctive features. Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali as one of the accommodations in the Ubud area also innovates to keep up with the market based on analysis of guest needs and input. Transforming a chamber that was formerly just a wall into a vertical garden was one of the innovations to create the room's interior's green effect. The history of this invention stems from the many complaints from visitors regarding the view from rooms. This is a common complaint from visitors, particularly those who reserve deluxe rooms with balconies. Although it is the lowest tier, guests seem to favor these rooms the most.*

*Vertical garden project is one of the sustainability projects that aims to anticipate the emergence of guests' dissatisfaction with the view from the inside of the room during their stay in Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali. In addition, this project aims to give a green impression that is one of the characteristics of the Ubud region. As the sustainability program that involving all department leaders to improve the guest satisfaction, the vertical garden project itself was executed in three months with three stages. Those are Project Planning (scope of work, scheduling and budgeting), Project Execution, and Performance & Control.*

*Monitoring and cooperation by all parties in the process of working on this project plays a crucial role. So that within three months the implementation of this project can be carried out well. This vertical garden project is related to one of the SERVQUAL model's implementations, specifically the Tangible dimension, where guests can observe directly the fundamental elements of a hospitality service. Apart from the primary objective of decreasing guest grievances, this project has the potential to enhance the building's aesthetics, establish itself as a distinctive feature that adds value for both guests and agents, and have an effect on the surrounding environment—particularly by generating oxygen space that is highly beneficial for all.*

**Keywords: Vertical Garden, Sustainability, Guest Satisfaction**

## PREFACE

Praise the author's gratitude to Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa, God Almighty, for giving His grace so that the author was able to complete a research entitled "**A Vertical Garden Project as an Implementation of a Sustainability Program to Maintain Guest Room Satisfaction at Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali.**"

The preparation of this thesis is one of the requirements for graduation in the Tourism Planning Study Program, Applied Master Program, Tourism Department, Politeknik Negeri Bali. On this occasion, the author would like to thank all those who have helped in completing the thesis:

1. I Nyoman Abdi, S.E., M.eCom., as the Director of Politeknik Negeri Bali, have given the author the opportunity to study and provided the facilities for the studies at Politeknik Negeri Bali.
2. Dr. Ni Nyoman Sri Astuti, SST.Par, M.Par, as the Head of the Tourism Department, Politeknik Negeri Bali.
3. Dr. Dra. Ni Gst Nym Suci Murni, M.Par., as the Head of Tourism Planning Study Program, Applied Master Program and the first supervisor who has provided a lot of directions and guidance during the process of preparing this thesis.
4. Prof. Ni Made Ernawati, MATM., Ph.D., as the second Supervisor, who has provided support and convenience so far so that the author can complete this research.
5. All lecturers who have been instrumental in sharing their knowledge and guiding the author to the current level.
6. Family and parents who always fully support the author's decision to continue education to the master of tourism level.
7. Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel Ubud Bali and the entire team that has worked very well and supported the completion of this thesis.

Constructive criticism and suggestions from various parties are needed to complete the writing of this thesis. The author hopes that this thesis can be

useful for all parties. Finally, the author would like to apologize if there are still errors in writing this thesis.

Badung, 12 July 2024

Author



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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **1.1. Background**

The hospitality industry today requires a new innovation in the fulfillment of customer satisfaction. This is especially necessary in connection with the stringent competition between hotels in order to win the business. Therefore, many hotels today race to create new innovations that will not only impact the guests but also affect the survival of the surrounding environment. These innovations will be marketed and introduced as one of the sales values and characteristics of the hotel. Expected from the innovation carried out by the hotel will be able to have a different impact on the quality of services and products to be provided to guests. Certainly, the innovations taken are related and take into account the sustainability of the environment and make the hotel itself more competitive in the market. The core of competition in the hotel industry is identified on an axis extending between innovation and sustainability. Oxenswärdh (2020) argues that sustainability applied to the hotel industry might increase the competitive advantage of the enterprises focused on guests aware of sustain-ability issues. However, a shift from professional account-ability towards more human responsibility is demanded. Sustainability must be considered by hoteliers not as a marketable slogan but a core value enabling the development of their enterprise and its stakeholders.

Ulucan (2020) considers location as a crucial resource from the perspective of hotel competitiveness. She confirms that economic factors and agglomeration effects are the main important determinants of previous hotel location decisions.

However, from the perspective of achieving sustainable development goals, benefits of localities and regions should be considered simultaneously in the process of hotel location selection. On the other hand, Parzych & Brkić-Vejmelka (2020) indicate that a hotel location has moderate impact on the overall assessment of the hotel by guests. Instead, innovative technologies (Giousmpasoglou & Thuy Hua, 2020; Napierała, Bahar, Leśniewska-Napierała, & Topsakal, 2020), modern facilities and amenities (Bik, Poreda, & Matczak, 2020) and sustainable approach (Oxenswärdh, 2020) increase attractiveness of a hotel's offer from the perspective of potential guests and, in consequence, make competitive advantage achievable.

Ubud is a region famous for its natural views. All guests who come to the Ubud area are looking forward to getting a hotel with views associated with the green nature. Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali is one of the hotels located in Lodtunduh Village, Banjar Mawang Kelod Ubud district of Gianyar, Bali. Competition between hotels is very felt at present most of the hotel accommodation that appears in the area of Ubud. Then, Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali needs a new step of innovation to win the market. One of the innovations was to change the view of a room that was originally just a wall into a vertical garden. To give the green impression seen from inside the room. The background of this innovation is due to the frequency of guests complaining about the view of rooms that are tall walls. This complaint quite often appears from guests especially guests who book rooms with category deluxe room with balcony. This is the lowest category of rooms and the most preferred by guests. So problems of room view are the most frequent things that



appear from guest reviews and greatly affect the satisfaction of guests during their stay in Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali. Few comments related to the dissatisfaction of the room view are captured as below (Figure 1).



#### **A mixed review**

We stayed at Sthala for 4 nights and we had mixed feelings about our stay...

Firstly, throughout our stay the staff were EXTREMELY polite and helpful.

Our room however felt like a dungeon! We didn't book a room with a view as we assumed it would at least have a decent amount of daylight. But directly outside our room window there was a gigantic wall! Infact it didn't even make sense to have a window there as there's nothing to see. Very frustating as this should really be mentioned on the website, in the end we gave in and paid to be upgraded to a pool view.



#### **great in all respects**

You just need to make sure you get the best possible room, as I could see some basic rooms directly face a wall! The property is great, clean, elegant, the staff is amazingly friendly, the food is fresh and tasty. The breakfast never gets boring. The property is located next to a picturesque river. We attended some of the "events" offered by the hotel, such as the village walk (very informative) and the civet coffee shop visit. They have a free shuttle that runs to Ubud very hour. Altogether, I can say that this is one of the best vacation hotels I have stayed at in my life, and I travel a lot.



#### **Amazing hotel with hard working staff**

I am a bit late in writing my review but I knew this hotel deserved a 5\* rating as they really do go above and beyond to make your stay comfortable.

Rooms- The rooms are really fantastic and decorated so tasteful and elegantly, they have a real homely feel to them. The beds are very large with soft sheets, very nice and soft I had a great sleep each night. The lighting in the room gives a cosy feel and furnishings are plenty. There is lots of space to store clothes and a hanging area, lots of drawers which we loved as we always unpack fully. The bathroom is large and the shower is powerful and piping hot, There is room to put your toiletries and they really did design this room thinking of everything. Just be aware of what room you book as they do have lower level rooms which face onto a wall and I could not stay in a room with no natural light myself.



### Relaxing stay at Sthala

A wonderful and comfortable stay at Sthala. The staff is wonderfully friendly and welcoming. You can tell they sincerely care about your stay and everyone says hello to you when they cross you at the resort. You really feel like you're home.

We had an issue upon check-in regarding the view from our room (a wall). Due to the fact that we booked via Booking.com, we were given this room. We asked to see other rooms with better views as we were extremely unsatisfied and with the help of the supervisor, we were able to choose a room with a view to our liking over the pool and bar. Thank you!

Figure. 1 Guest Reviews

Guest comments in Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali are captured in the Guest Voice system. The guest will receive an email survey that expected to be filled and share experience during their stay in the hotel. In the Table 1. as per below is the summary number of guest comment that received by Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali starting January 2023 until June 2023

Table 1. Guest Comments January – June 2023

#### **Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali**

<b>Guest Comment Jan - June 2023</b>	<b>January</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>
<b>Number of Comment</b>	40	38	61	61	74	75
<b>Wall View Comment</b>	1	1	3	0	1	5
<b>% Wall View Comment</b>	3%	3%	5%	0%	1%	7%

Referring to the guest comments in the first semester of 2023, there were a number of comments that provided reviews related to the view from the room. During six months, there were 349 guest reviews in the Guest Voice system. In January, there were 40 reviews with 1 negative comment regarding room view.

Name	Response Date	Intent to Recommend (Property)	Overall Comment	Elite Appreciation	Cleanliness	Staff Service	Food and Beverage	Maintenance and Upkeep
KAROKARO, ITA EKA SUWA	16/01/2023 07:01	5	<p>Booked 2 rooms and requested for rooms nearby to each other since the response before Aug 2022, whilst stay was in December. Called the hotel a day before the check in, unsatisfactorily the staff was only giving the standard answer, "we will try but it will be based on availability". The whole point of booking ahead of time is that to reserve the best possible rooms, right - apparently this is ignored by the staff. Probably the whole hotel system. Or your staff are not trained well?</p> <p>On the day of check in, apparently we got 2 separated rooms so far from each other (note we are travelling with kids) despite of the early booking, payment (via points), the call before the check in that I had done. The rooms were placed were on the third floor - the floor without view except walls, damp and I could see leakages on the wall. Soap stained on the bathroom glass and mirror. It was a stressful evening. And by the way it was supposed to be a holiday, a paid one from our own pocket.</p> <p>I was promised nearby rooms for the next day. Comes the day, I checked on the rooms (located on the first floor) and again I was very disappointed. Lowest floor, no view - even more damp and mouldy versus the rooms on the third floor. Why the treatment? I was really really disappointed. Is it because I am not a foreigner that - I was treated with no priority at all? I was looking around the hotel and the nice view and better rooms were given to the foreigners. Honestly I had to raise the concern and so did. I mean you guys could have thought about these arrangement request earlier. Planned your bookings and room arrangements ahead of time. The case is clear, you were not prepared and I had to pay for your zero preparation and you gave the classic answer - sorry the rooms were not available. You could have moved things around - organise right? Why didn't you do that? We did not come to your hotel by courtesy or anything alias. So we should have been treated equally just like other guests. Indonesian, American, whatever nationalities - we are all paying customers - even I am sorry to say - we Indonesians probably pay higher bills.</p>		6	6	7	6

Figure. 2 Guest Comment - January 2023

In February, the hotel received 38 reviews with 1 negative comment related to room views.

Name	Response Date	Intent to Recommend (Property)	Overall Comment	Elite Appreciation	Cleanliness	Staff Service	Food and Beverage	Maintenance and Upkeep
LEFEVRE, LAURE	22/02/2023 21:55	8	<p>Très bel hôtel que je recommanderai. En ce qui concerne notre séjour, nous avons été très déçu d'avoir une chambre avec un mur comme vue !!!(chambre 227) Very nice hotel that I will recommend. Regarding our stay, we were very disappointed to have a room with a wall as a view!!!(room 227)</p>		10	10	9	8

Figure. 3 Guest Comment - February 2023

Number of feedback regarding room view in March was raised, there were 3 negative comments regarding room view out of 61 guest comments.

Name	Response Date	Intent to Recommend (Property)	Overall Comment	Elite Appreciation	Cleanliness	Staff Service	Food and Beverage	Maintenance and Upkeep
ALEKNIENE, ASTA	25/03/2023 00:57	7	<p>We were very disappointed with the room with view to the WALL. At the reception we were assured that all their Standard rooms are with the same view to the WALL. We were not informed about that at the travel agency as well there was no info about it on the hotel's hotel web page. Thus, after 23 hours of travel our vacations has started with some negative emotions.</p>		9	7	9	9

Figure. 4 Guest Comment - March 2023

With the same number of Guest Comment, in April were devoid of negative reviews about the room view. Continued by May, 1 negative comment about room view was showed out of 74 guest comments.

Name	Response Date	Intent to Recommend (Property)	Overall Comment	Elite Appreciat	Cleanlin	Staff Serv	Food and Bever	Maintenance and Upke
UDE, CORDULA	27/05/2023 22:54	6	<p>Die Anlage ist schön, keine Frage. Das Frühstück war auch gut. Allerdings lag mein Zimmer zur stark befahrenen Straße und war deshalb auch nachts recht laut. Und vom Balkon aus habe ich auf eine Wand geschaut. Ich hatte in meinem Urlaub 4* Hotels mit besseren Zimmern für weniger Geld. Deshalb lieber ein gutes Zimmer in einem 4* Hotel als ein schlechtes in einem 5* Hotel. Und die Seafood Linguine im Restaurant war auch eher eine Vorspeisenportion (mit 6 abgezählten Meeresfrüchten) als ein Hauptgericht. Das habe ich in anderen Restaurants auch besser erlebt.</p> <p>The facility is beautiful, no question. The breakfast was also good. However, my room faced a busy road and was therefore quite noisy at night. And I was looking at a wall from the balcony. I had 4* hotels with better rooms for less money on my vacation. So I'd rather have a good room in a 4* hotel than a bad one in a 5* hotel. And the seafood linguine in the restaurant was more of an appetizer portion (with 6 counted seafood) than a main course. I have had better experiences in other restaurants.</p>					

Figure. 5 Guest Comment – May 2023

Then the last month in first semester was closed by 75 guest comments received with 5 negative comments contain room view.

Name	Response Date	Intent to Recommend (Property)	Overall Comment	Elite Appreciat	Cleanlin	Staff Serv	Food and Bever	Maintenance and Upke
CADET, DOROTHY	21/06/2023 19:27	9	All was beautiful. The only drawback was the rooms need a little repair (paint, wall paper adhesive, etc)	10	9	10	10	8
KHORAKIWALA, NASIM NOMAN	20/06/2023 11:22	9	It was challenging to change room 228 to 230, since we were staying four nights. deluxe room with blank wall view not acceptable		10	10	9	9
SUN, BINJAMIN	14/06/2023 19:21	8	The hotel is generally pretty nice. Staff are friendly and helpful. Just a few minor things for others to reference: there is really no view if you stay at 5th floor or below and you will be staring at a wall. It is how the place is designed. The welcome gift is really nice. Hotel also doesn't allow Grab drivers to come inside the property to pick up yet it's ok for Grab to drop off. Seems that the hotel made a bargain with Ubud community to keep out Grab so they can get the car services all by themselves. Really a great inconvenience. Hotel staff was not apologetic either by simply say they can't do anything.	4	7	7	6	8
SIMONETTO, SANDRO	10/06/2023 20:42	8	Purtroppo abbiamo soggiornato solamente una notte e ovviamente la camera non era una delle migliori, anche se la qualità dell'arredamento la pulizia e la comodità del letto hanno in parte mitigato la "vista muro" e l'uscita in strada. Unfortunately, we only stayed one night and obviously the room was not one of the best, although the quality of the furnishings the cleanliness and the comfort of the bed somewhat mitigated the "wall view" and the exit to the street.		10	9	9	10
GUO, LIHONG	07/06/2023 20:01	5	酒店有很好的早餐服务和景色，但房间非常糟糕。阳台正对着一面墙没有任何景色和采光，出房房门正对就是嘈杂的马路，并且房门没有任何隔音功能，房间内24小时充斥着噪音，很难想象这一家五星酒店的设计。 The hotel has a very good breakfast service and view! But the room is very bad, the balcony is facing a wall without any view or light, the door of the room is facing the noisy road, and the door of the room does not have any soundproofing, the room can be filled with noise 24 hours a day, it's hard to imagine that the design of a five-star hotel!	8	10	9	9	8

Figure. 6 Guest Comment – June 2023

In addition, Guest comments about the room view also came from groups which ultimately impacted the number of confirmed groups. This also refers to the number of group inquiries that have lost more than 40% when compared to the total number of entries.

Table 2. Group Inquiry January – June 2023

**Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali**

No	Month	Incoming Leads	Definite	Lost	Total group lead	Definite	Lost
1	January	32	19	13	141	59%	41%
2	February	64	29	35		45%	55%
3	March	45	25	20		56%	44%
4	April	62	20	42	251	32%	68%
5	May	99	50	49		51%	49%
6	June	90	55	35		61%	39%

Seeing as stated in the table data shows that in January there were 32 group inquiries and 13 (41%) groups canceled. For February, 35 (55%) groups canceled out of a total of 64 group inquiries. Furthermore, in March as many as 20 (44%) groups canceled from a total of 45 incoming group inquiries. Continuing in April there were 42 (68%) missing group inquiries from a total of 62 incoming groups. In the following month there were 49 (49%) missing group inquiries from a total of 99 groups and in June there were 90 group inquiries received by the sales team but 35 (39%) were lost.

Name	Response Date	Intent to Recommend (Property)	Overall Comment	Elite Appreciation	Cleanliness	Staff Service	Food and Beverage	Maintenance and Upkeep
REINEKER, KATJA RENATE	10/05/2023 23:54	3	Beautiful room and general Hotel area, very clean. But slow service. Arrived after 3 pm but rooms for half of the group not ready. Dinner table for group reserved for 7:30 pm, but main course not served until after 9 pm, then not even simultaneously for group members. Food was good and also very pretty to look at, but not outstanding.  With improved service Hotel has a lot of potential to be outstanding, although would prefer Hotel with larger Garden area. Rooms on ground floor partially without views, just looking against wall, would be depressing for longer than a single night.		10	3	7	10
TSINTSILONI, ORTHODOXIA	07/06/2023 19:32	5	Unfortunately we didn't have good rooms. The reception checked us on arrival although our reservation was a month earlier. Our rooms were very noisy because of constructions nearby. The hotel was full booked and we didn't have the chance to change rooms.  I am a group leader and my group had 16 people.		10	10	8	10

Figure. 7 Guest Group Comment

Referring to this review result, the management of Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali tried to find a way out to reduce the negative reviews regarding the room view. Innovations must be made based on naturalness and sustainability in accordance with current trends in the market. Therefore, Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali does not want to be left behind to be able to compete

with competitors in order to get a portion of the tourism cake around Ubud. Innovation is done by transforming part of the building, which was originally only a concrete wall into a vertical garden that gives a beautiful and green impression. This project also aims to reduce the complaints of guests who stay overnight, especially those related to the view from their bedrooms. Guest reviews and comments about the view of the rooms are very visible in some of the comments on social media. So, the hotel is trying its best to reduce the appearance of other comments by doing a vertical garden project in 3 months in 2023. The work target is quite short, starting in July 2023 and aiming to be able to pursue completion in September 2023. This is because the end of the year is the phase where the occupancy rate will start to be high, especially for many guests who celebrate Christmas and the New Year.

This project certainly involves several external parties, in order to achieve timely completion. In addition, the hotel can reduce in receipt of negative guest comments related to the room view.

## **1.2. Formulation of Problems**

By answering the following questions, this project will identify and define the problem related to the room view at Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali:

- a. How to develop a vertical garden as a sustainable program to maintain guest satisfaction with the room during their stay at Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali?
- b. What is the model for developing a vertical garden to maintain guest satisfaction during their stay at Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali?

### **1.3. Objective of The Study**

This project aims to have several objectives. First, to develop a sustainable vertical garden at the area that become a concern of the guests during their stay at Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali. Second, the purpose of the project is to provide a better view instead of the concrete wall from the guest room. The last is to maintain the guest satisfaction with the hotel room and reducing the guest complaint related to room view during their stay at Sthala, a tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali.

### **1.4. Significances of The Study**

This project will be beneficial for the company in maintaining and increasing the satisfaction of guests during their stay in Sthala, a tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali. This will affect the subscription of the hotel business itself, which is directly related to the increase in revenue. If the revenue increases, it will affect the employee. In addition to having a positive experience experienced, it will also encourage guests to give and share their experiences with their colleagues through review platforms on social media.

As for the academic benefits, this research will help other researchers explore and applied in sectors similar to the environment in order to maintain guest satisfaction. Also, it can be used as a reference for other students when they will do the same thing but with different objects.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **CLOSING**

#### **6.1 Conclusion**

Vertical gardens are an alternative in utilizing space to create green areas in narrow and limited land. It can create a more beautiful and natural environment or scenery that guests can see from inside their rooms during their stay at Sthala, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel, Ubud Bali. The maintenance of this garden is also not too difficult and the irrigation done is also very effective to the plants thus minimizing waste. It also reduces heat and increases coolness.

The vertical garden has had quite a positive impact on the hotel, namely enhance the green view from the guest room, reduction in negative comments from guests regarding the view from their rooms, which was initially very much found in comments on the view of the room in the form of a wall. In addition, the number of groups that cancel is decreasing, giving the team, especially the sales team, confidence in promoting to all travel agents, banking companies and government offices. As a final result, the hotel occupancy rate will certainly increase and the impact on the level of income from the hotel will certainly increase as well. The room's view as the Tangible factor in SERVQUAL, which gets greener due to the vertical garden, also serves as the hotel's new brand image.

#### **6.2 Recommendations**

In the process of providing accommodation services for guests who come to a tourist spot, all providers must pay attention to elements that are in harmony with nature and the surrounding environment. In addition, it is obligatory to take



note to aspects of sustainability assisted by maintaining and paying attention to the impact of the existence of tourism itself.

One of the things that can be done, especially for accommodation providers who have limited land for green space, is to utilize and create a vertical garden. Which is very useful in beautifying and giving a green impression to the accommodation itself. Surely this will have an impact on the surrounding environment, especially creating oxygen space which is very useful for everyone and gives a green impression to guests staying at the location. With the ultimate goal of creating the vertical garden is to provide satisfaction for guests and reduce negative comments related to the surrounding scenery.

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