

# Front Office Department Service Quality during the Covid-19 Period

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## Front Office Department Service Quality during the Covid-19 Period

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This study was to determine the service quality of the front office department and the efforts of the front office department in Canggu Dream Village, Bali, Indonesia, to maintain and improve the quality of the services given.

**Research methods:** This study used descriptive statistical analysis techniques with 90 samples of guest reviews selected using purposive sampling method. The source of data is guest reviews for one year from January 2020 to December 2020 on online travel agents.

**Results and discussion:** There were comparisons of positive reviews with a total of 94% while negative reviews are only 6%. Each variable gets a different percentage, the empathy variable gets a percentage of 50% and becomes the most dominant variable in positive reviews.

**Implication:** All the variables have a higher percentage of positive reviews than negative reviews.

**Keywords:** quality of service, guest complaints, front office department.

### INTRODUCTION

Hotel is a type of accommodation that provides lodging, food and drink facilities, and services, as well as other services for the public who stay for a while and are managed commercially (Sulastiyono A. , 2011). Hotel is a company managed by the owner by providing food, beverage, and room facilities for staying to people who travel and are able to pay a reasonable amount in accordance with the services received without any special agreement (Sulastiyono, 2015). The development of hotels in Bali is currently very concerning, as we all know, the world is currently being hit by a deadly virus disaster, namely Covid-19. Almost all countries in the world have been affected by this deadly virus, including Bali.

The Covid-19 pandemic is a challenge for the hotel industry in attracting tourists to come. One of the hotels affected by the Covid-19 pandemic is Canggu Dream Village. Canggu Dream Village is a three-star hotel located on Batan Kangin Street, Tibubeneng, North Kuta District, Badung Regency, Bali. Canggu Dream Village is one of the hotels that always provides full service to guests when guests come and leave the hotel. In order to maintain and improve the quality of its services, Canggu Dream Village always pays attention to service quality by using guest comments.

Front Office Department is one of the departments in Canggu Dream Village that plays an important role in operations, where the front office usually called the host must give a good first impression to guests to achieve goals and maintain the company's image. The front office department deals directly with guests who are responsible for handling check-in and check-out guests, selling rooms, handling guest transactions, handling guest requests & guest complaints and providing information related to operational activities to other departments (Bagyono, 2012). Therefore quality Front office department services are very influential on guest satisfaction staying, guest satisfaction is created when guests feel the services provided by the front office department are in accordance with their expectations (Wachidyah, 2017).

Good service quality will help the success of a hotel, as is done by the Front Office Department of Canggu Dream Village which always tries to provide the best service to guests who come, stay or leave Canggu Dream Village. In one hand, service quality is the level (excellence) expected and control over the advantages to meet customer desires (C. Lovelock., 2007). Service quality is a measure of how well the level of service provided is able to match customer expectations (F. Tjiptono, 2011). According to Parasuraman, Zeitha, and Berry (Tjiptono, 2012), there are five dimensions of service quality, namely: (1). Physical evidence (tangibles), with regard to the attractiveness of the physical facilities, equipment, and materials used by the company, as well as the appearance of employees. (2). Empathy, that the company understands the problems of customers and acts in the interests of customers, and gives personal attention to customers, and has comfortable operating hours. (3). Reliability, related to the company's ability to provide accurate services from the first time without making any mistakes and deliver its services in accordance with the agreed time. (4). Responsiveness relates to the willingness and ability of employees to help customers and respond to their requests, and inform when services will be provided, and provide services quickly. (5). Assurance, the behavior of employees is able to grow customer trust in the company and the company can create a sense of security for its customers. Assurance also means that employees are always courteous and have the knowledge and skills required to deal with any customer questions or concerns.

Those 5 dimensions can help a hotel in pursuing the quality service of their hotel based on the comments from the guest. Guest complaints are feedback from customers addressed to companies that tend to be negative. This feedback can be done in writing or orally (Bell, 2016). Complaints or guest complaints are complaints or submissions of dissatisfaction, discomfort, irritation, and anger over services or products (Daryanto, 2014).

Through the description of the background problems described above, this study will ask two questions: (1) How is the service quality of the front office department in Canggu Dream Village and (2) What are the efforts of the front office department in Canggu Dream Village to maintain and improve the quality of its services which in order to analyze the Front Office Department Service Quality at Canggu Dream Village during the pandemic. Some scholars from Bali such as Aryawiguna (2021), Putra (2021), Putra et al (2021), Puspita et al (2021), and Supeno et al (2021) have studied it along 2020-2021 period, this present study is different as it took part in a different location, that is in Canggu Dream Village, Kuta Utara, Badung.

## 1 RESEARCH METHODS

This research was conducted for four months by taking the object of the service quality of the front office department at Canggu Dream Village. The types and sources of data used are qualitative and quantitative data with primary and secondary data (Sugiyono., 2015). The sampling method used in this research is purposive sampling, which is one of the non-random sampling techniques where sampling is done by setting specific characteristics that are in accordance with the research objectives so that it is expected to be able to answer research problems (Sugiyono, 2016). The sample used in this study is guest reviews for one year from January 2020 to December 2020 on online travel agents, namely Booking.com, Tripadvisor.com, the official website of Canggu Dream Village and also Agoda.com.

Methods of data collection in this study through observation, interviews, literature study, and documentation. The data analysis technique used in this research is a descriptive statistical analysis technique, namely the statistics used to analyze the data by describing or describing the data that has been collected as it is without intention of making conclusions that apply to the public or generalizations which are divided into three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions and verification (Sugiyono, 2016).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Service Quality of Front Office Department

Here, we will explain the service quality of the front office department at Canggu Dream Village from the results of combining the four online travel agent data, namely Booking.com, Traveloka.com, Agoda.com and the Canggu Dream Village website based on 5 variables, namely tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy on online travel agent guest reviews for one year from January 2020 to December 2020.

Table 1. Service quality of front office department at Canggu Dream Village 2020

Variable	Indicator	Percentage	
		Positive	Negative
Tangible	The appearance of the front office staff visually attracts attention	0%	0%
	Complete hotel facilities, clean and neatly maintained	32%	2%
Reliability	Quick and good problem solving	2%	0%
	Implementation of check-in and check-out times is fast and appropriate	1%	0.5%
Responsiveness	The staff is fast and responsive in helping to meet the needs of guests	23%	1%
	Responsiveness of front office staff in providing brief, precise and clear information	0%	0%
Assurance	The front office staff ensures that the services provided to guests are carried out in a professional manner	0.5%	0%
	The ability of staff to provide a sense of security and comfort to guests who stay or visit	3%	0%
Empathy	Front office staff can be easily found	0%	0%
	Front office staff can provide good, polite and friendly service to guests	34%	1%
Total		95.5%	4.5%



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Based on table 1, it can be explained that from the data on the number of guest reviews from the four online travel agents, namely Booking.com, Traveloka.com, Agoda.com, and the Canggu Dream Village website for one year from January 2020 to December 2020 the quality of front service office department gets a comparison of 95.5% positive reviews while only 4.5% negative reviews.

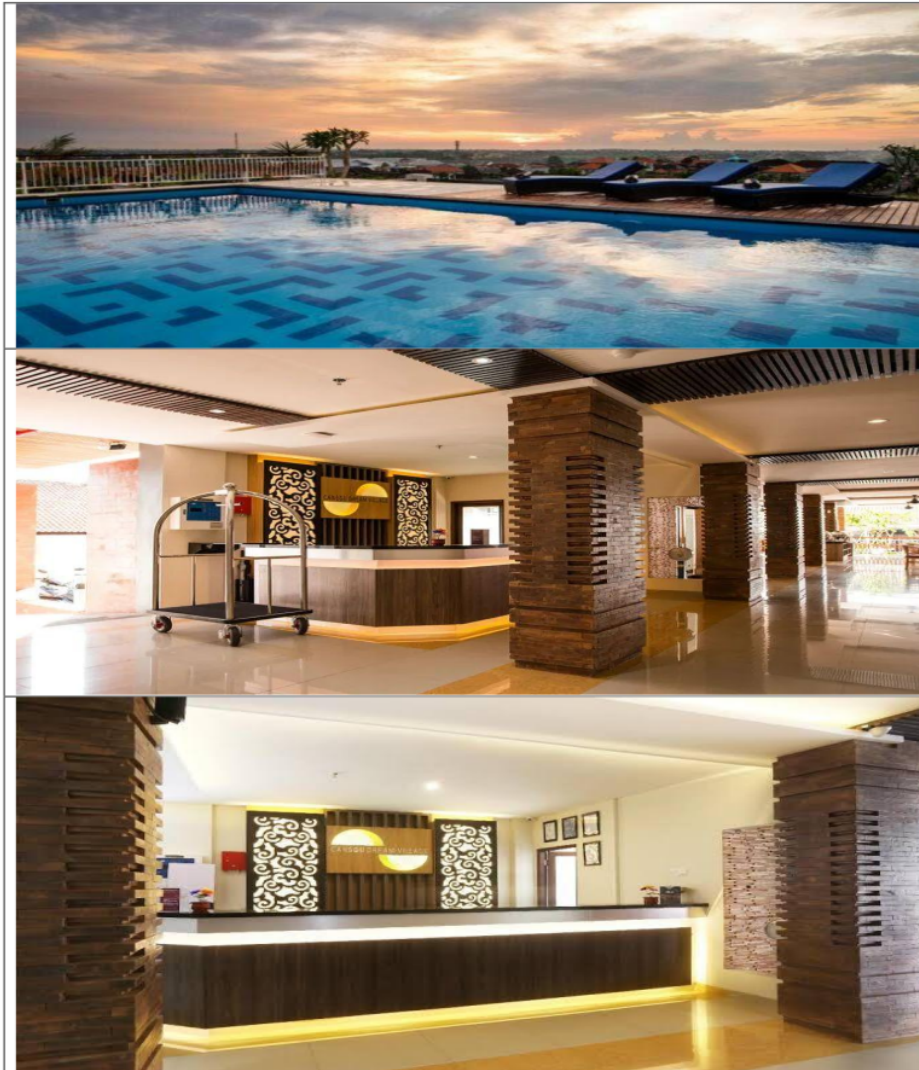


Figure 1. The beauty of Canggu Dream Village  
[Source: Safitri, 2021]

All variables have a <sup>2</sup>percentage of positive reviews that are greater than negative reviews and the empathy variable with indicators that front office staff can provide good, polite and friendly service to guests is the dominant variable

by getting a percentage of 34%. In accordance with observations made by researchers for 4 months, the front office staff has provided satisfactory service for guests in providing good, polite, and friendly service when welcoming guests by always saying "Greeting" and smiling so that guests always feel comfortable while staying or visiting at Canggü Dream Village.

In addition to having the most dominant indicator in positive guest reviews, the empathy variable also gets negative guest reviews, namely the indicator that front office staff can provide good, polite, and friendly service to guests by getting a negative review percentage of 1%. Where in terms of content according to observations made by researchers for 4 months, there was an error made by one of the front office staff when handling guests who wanted to check out when checking goods so that guests felt irritated, this is what causes negative reviews given by guests on the empathy variable.

The second dominant variable is tangible with indicators of complete, clean and well-maintained hotel facilities getting a percentage of 32% positive reviews. In accordance with observations made by researchers for 4 months, the front office staff has provided satisfactory facilities for guests in providing facilities in accordance with health protocols. Hotel facilities are provided by the front office department staff in the form of hand sanitizers, masks, and of course the front office department always maintains cleanliness and is assisted by other departments so that the hotel environment is always clean and tidy in every section.

The third dominant variable in positive guest reviews, namely Assurance, gets 2 positive review indicators, namely the staff's ability to provide a sense of security and comfort to guests who stay or visit get a percentage of 3% and also indicators of front office staff ensuring that the services provided to guests are carried out properly. professional with a percentage of 1% while negative reviews 0%. In accordance with observations made by researchers for 4 months, the front office staff always provides services in accordance with standard hotel procedures by always providing a sense of security and comfort to guests.

The fourth dominant variable in positive guest reviews is responsiveness with indicators of fast and responsive staff in helping <sup>22</sup>meet guest needs getting a percentage of 23%. This means that guests are satisfied with the quality of service provided by the front office department in helping to meet the needs of guests at Canggü Dream Village. In accordance with observations made by researchers for 4 months, the front office staff is always ready to help the needs of guests such as Russian guests who cannot use English in communicating and want to call a taxi, the front office staff helps to call taxis, and there are also some guests who want to do a swab test or rapid test, the front office staff helps to call the nearest hospital that provides swab tests and rapid tests.

In addition to having the most dominant indicator in positive guest reviews, the responsiveness variable also gets negative guest reviews with the same indicator, namely the indicator of fast and responsive staff in meeting guest needs getting a percentage of 1%. According to the observations made by the researcher for 4 months, as for the mistakes experienced by the front office staff, namely forgetting to follow up the complaint, when the guest complained the guest said that the air conditioner in his room was still not functioning properly and was not repaired. This is what makes guests feel irritated so that this causes negative reviews on the responsiveness variable.

The reliability variable gets negative reviews with indicators of fast and appropriate check-in and check-out times getting a percentage of 1%. Where in this

case is in accordance with observations made by researchers for 4 months, at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic there was a reduction in some staff. In each shift, the front office staff will only have 1 staff working, so this makes the work of the front office staff a bit hampered and less alert in serving guests.

### **Maintaining and Improving the Front Office Quality Service**

Based on the results of an interview with Mr. Rahn<sup>17</sup> Arif as Room Division Coordinator at Canggu Dream Village, To maintain and improve the quality of its services, the front office department at Canggu Dream Village has the following efforts. In an effort to maintain the quality of its service regarding good, polite and friendly service to guests which is the dominant indicator in positive reviews on the online travel agent Canggu Dream Village, the front office department makes efforts such as for example always welcoming guests at the front desk warmly, politely and friendly, besides that the front office staff must have a pleasant personality with a professional attitude. They can handle complaints efficiently and have a good customer service approach. So that efforts to maintain courteous and friendly service to guests if it continues to be applied in everyday situations can attract<sup>16</sup> the attention of guests staying or visiting Canggu Dream Village.

In an effort to improve the quality of its services regarding tangible variables on indicators of complete, clean, and maintained hotel facilities and also regarding health protocols during the Covid-19 pandemic at Canggu Dream Village, the front office department invited related parties to provide counseling guided<sup>13</sup> by hotel services during the pandemic. Covid-19, where this guide is a reference for hotels in carrying out health and hygiene service procedures according to the standards set by the government, namely (1) Ensuring the health and cleanliness of hotel staff by checking body temperature, washing hands with soap regularly, and wearing masks in the hotel area, (2) Always provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer in public areas, such as receptionists, elevators and other areas, (3) Perform periodic cleaning throughout the hotel area with disinfectants, (4) Implement the obligation to maintain a distance between staff and other staff or guests, especially in public areas such as the front office, elevator, and others.

In an effort to improve the quality of its services regarding complaints from guests on negative reviews on online travel agents, the front office department at Canggu Dream Village makes efforts, such as holding a briefing. Briefing is held every day at every shift change which is attended by all front office staff. Briefing in its implementation also depends on the<sup>20</sup> problems faced at that time. In this case, the front office department in charge must be able to pay attention to what are the problems and obstacles on that day to avoid bad effects on the hotel's image. Awareness of the front office department is also highly expected to provide guidance to remind staff of knowledge and abilities based on the fact that the front office department is one of the components of the hotel that provides direct service to guests. Efforts to improve service quality through feedback on guest complaints and follow-up with procedures that have been determined by Canggu Dream Village.

In an effort to improve the quality of its services regarding assurance or the ability of staff to convey trust and confidence to guests so as to foster a sense of security, comfort and assurance to guests, the front office department at Canggu Dream Village always holds Refreshment Training 4 times a month so that later information will be provided. to guests is always the latest information and can be trusted by guests. In addition, the front office department also continues to work



according to the applicable standards at Canggu Dream Village and as much as possible works beyond guest expectations so as to foster a sense of security, comfort and security for guests staying or visiting Canggu Dream Village.

In an effort to improve and maintain the quality of its services regarding the speed and responsiveness of the front office department staff in helping to meet the needs of guests during the Covid-19 pandemic, namely, by always running the SOP that apply at Canggu Dream Village and always reviewing staff performance every month and providing directions or training to front office department staff who do not meet the quality.

## CONCLUSION

From guest reviews on the four online travel agents for one year from January 2020 to December 2020, where the service quality of the front office department at Canggu Dream Village gets the total percentage of service quality from the four platforms containing positive and negative reviews. Based on the results of the percentage table of the total positive and negative reviews on Online Travel Agents such as Booking.com, Traveloka, Agoda, and the official website of Canggu Dream Village, the results obtained are 95.5% positive reviews which prove that the quality of front office services is very well implemented so that it can meet the needs and expectations of guests who stay as a whole. On the other hand, negative reviews obtained by 4.5% will be used as development material in improving the performance of front office staff and re-evaluating to be more optimal and fully meet guest needs..

The service quality of the front office department at Canggu Dream Village is based on 5 variables, namely tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. All of them have a higher percentage of positive reviews than negative reviews and the most dominant variable in positive reviews is empathy by getting a percentage of 34%. In addition to having the most dominant indicator in positive guest reviews, the empathy variable also has negative guest reviews, namely indicators that front office staff can provide good, polite and friendly service to guests by getting a percentage of 1%.

In an effort to maintain and improve the quality of its services, the front office department at Canggu Dream Village conducts: (1) Refreshment training and briefings to front office department staff 4 times a month, (2) Implementing and complying with SOPs that apply in Canggu Dream Village and always reviewing performance staff every month and provide direction to staff who lack quality.

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