



Housekeeping Strategy and Its Impact on Room Occupancy at Parlezo Hotel Labuan Bajo

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the strategic role of the housekeeping department in increasing room occupancy at Parlezo Hotel, Labuan Bajo. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through interviews, observations, documentation, and internal occupancy reports from 2023–2024. Fieldwork was conducted over a two-month period (November–December 2024) and involved five informants, including one housekeeping supervisor and four housekeeping staff. The findings reveal that personalized services—such as towel art for returning guests, birthday surprises, and extra amenities for long-stay visitors—play a key role in enhancing guest satisfaction and loyalty. Infrastructural limitations, such as the absence of an elevator, are mitigated through empathetic service and real-time room coordination using GuestPro, a cloud-based Property Management System (PMS). Operational efficiency is further supported by structured task delegation, regular briefings, quality assurance routines, and responsive communication. Notably, the occupancy rate increased by 5.82% from 2023 to 2024, with a two-year average of 77.19%, reflecting the effectiveness of targeted housekeeping strategies. The study concludes that a well-trained and strategically coordinated housekeeping team is instrumental in maintaining service excellence and improving hotel performance in a competitive tourism environment.

Keywords: *Guest Satisfaction; Housekeeping; Hotel Strategy; Room Occupancy; Service Innovation.*

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INTRODUCTION

A hotel is generally defined as a commercial establishment that offers lodging, food, and other guest services in exchange for payment, serving both leisure and business travelers (Ahmad & Scott, 2021). Over time, the hospitality industry has experienced increasing diversification—from boutique hotels offering unique experiences to star-rated hotels delivering full-service luxury. This rapid development has also introduced complex challenges, including intensified competition, shifting

guest preferences, rising technological expectations, sustainability demands, and the need for a reliable and adaptive workforce (Özdemir et al., 2021; Lv et al., 2020). The rise of online travel agencies and the economic disruptions caused by COVID-19 have further transformed operational models, requiring hotels to continuously innovate and adapt (Anguera-Torrell et al., 2020).

In such a competitive landscape, guest satisfaction is no longer determined solely by transactional performance, but rather through a multidimensional lens—encompassing emotional responses, perceived fairness, and personalized service quality (Han, Al-Ansi, & Chua, 2021). Service recovery strategies based on employee emotional competence and justice are now seen as essential to rebuild trust following service failures (Ali et al., 2022; Umar & Saleem, 2022). Effective service management further involves nurturing long-term guest relationships, responsive post-service engagement, and proactive handling of complaints—strategies proven to foster guest loyalty and emotional attachment (Saleem et al., 2025; Morgeson et al., 2020).

Within hotel operations, achieving consistent guest satisfaction requires strong coordination across departments, particularly with the housekeeping division. Housekeeping often plays a frontline role in managing guest impressions, where effective interdepartmental collaboration can help ensure timely complaint resolution and reduce dissatisfaction (Kusuma & Semara, 2023). The significance of service quality has also been supported by Nathasya et al. (2023), whose findings confirmed that all five SERVQUAL dimensions—tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy—significantly influence guest satisfaction. Complementary research affirms that high-performing service delivery in terms of cleanliness and responsiveness enhances overall guest experience (Giovanni, Alessandro, & Napolitano, 2022; Alwie et al., 2022).

The scope of housekeeping responsibilities extends beyond cleaning tasks to include organization, sanitation, light maintenance, and aesthetic improvements (Wijoyo, 2023; Azzaki et al., 2024). Housekeeping staff are involved in nearly all areas of the hotel—from rooms to public and back-of-house spaces—ensuring cleanliness and comfort. Importantly, the housekeeping function is closely tied to hotel revenue, as occupancy rate remains a key performance metric (Bujung et al., 2019). Due to its breadth, housekeeping requires structured systems and coordination, which are reflected in tasks such as VIP room preparation and guest list management (Bagyono, 2018).

Parlezo Hotel, a three-star hotel located in Labuan Bajo, applies internal operational standards based on its classification to maintain service consistency. In response to increasing competition, its housekeeping department has implemented targeted strategies to raise room occupancy. Occupancy rate itself is defined as the percentage of rooms sold in relation to the total rooms available within a given period (Arnawa, 2020). Strategic planning plays a pivotal role in aligning the hotel's operational activities with its long-term mission and positioning goals (Mohanty, 2024). In line with this, Acquaah (2021) describes strategy formulation as the process of selecting suitable alternatives to respond to dynamic conditions, ensuring that tactical decisions—such as those taken by the housekeeping unit—contribute to sustained competitive advantage.

Parlezo Hotel has responded by enhancing staff performance, improving guest accessibility to facilities, personalizing services, and fostering guest trust through

proactive information sharing. These initiatives reflect a broader strategic commitment to service excellence and operational distinctiveness. Therefore, this study aims to examine the role of the housekeeping department in supporting room occupancy growth at Parlezo Hotel through service innovation and strategic coordination.

METHODS

The research method used in this study is a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Descriptive research is a type of research that aims to provide an objective description of a particular phenomenon (Purba and Simanjuntak, 2011: 19). This research was conducted at Parlezo Hotel for two months in 2024, specifically from November to December.

Data collection techniques included interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews are one of the most commonly used data collection techniques in both descriptive and qualitative research. They were conducted verbally through individual face-to-face meetings (Sukmadinata, 2016: 216). In this study, the author interviewed five informants, consisting of 1 Housekeeping Supervisor and 4 housekeeping department staff. Observation is a method of collecting data by directly observing ongoing activities (Sugiyono, 2016: 220). The researcher conducted field observations at Parlezo Hotel Labuan Bajo by watching the housekeeping processes firsthand. Documentation was used to gather supporting data in the form of notes, transcripts, books, newspapers, magazines, and meeting minutes (Suharsimi Arikunto, 2002: 206). Both primary data (from interviews and observations) and secondary data (from documents and reports) were collected and used in this research.

To ensure the validity of sources and methods, the researcher employed data triangulation by cross-checking information obtained from interviews, observations, and documents. This validation technique helps to confirm the consistency and credibility of the data collected. Additionally, method triangulation was applied to compare findings across different data collection methods and reduce bias.

The data analysis technique used in this study followed the interactive model by Miles & Huberman, (1994), which involves three main components: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming the raw data obtained from the field. Data display involves organizing the data in the form of matrices, charts, or descriptive text to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusion drawing and verification are carried out continuously throughout the analysis to identify patterns, formulate findings, and ensure the validity of interpretations made.

RESULTS

Company Overview

Parlezo Hotel strategically located in the heart of Labuan Bajo's tourism district, Hotel Parlezo by Kagum Hotels is a 3-star accommodation that offers modern comfort with a touch of friendly service. Located only about 800 meters from Komodo International Airport and about 2.1 km from Pede Beach, this hotel is an ideal choice for both tourists in transit and those on vacation to explore the charm of Komodo National

Park. Parlezo hotel does not yet have vertical mobility support facilities such as elevators, so other service aspects need to be optimized to maintain and improve guest satisfaction. In this context, the performance of the housekeeping department is crucial. Housekeeping is not only responsible for the cleanliness and tidiness of the rooms, but also plays an important role in creating a comfortable and pleasant stay, especially for guests who occupy rooms on the upper floors. Prompt service, personalized service, and consistency in maintaining cleanliness standards can be effective compensations for the limitations of existing physical facilities.



Figure 1: Map of Parlezo Hotel

Source: Parlezo Hotel, 2025

Parlezo Hotel is one of the rapidly growing accommodations in Labuan Bajo, operating under the management of Kagum Hotels Group. Located at St. Alo Tanis, Lingkungan V, Labuan Bajo, Komodo District, West Manggarai, this three-star hotel offers 29 guest rooms across four categories: 17 Signature Twin Bed rooms (29 m²), 8 Signature Single Bed rooms (29 m²), 2 Horizon Twin Bed rooms (31 m²), and 2 Komodo Suites (89 m²). Each room features a private balcony facing the sunrise and the surrounding hills, aligning with the hotel's name – “Parlezo,” which in the Manggarai language means sunrise.

In addition to its lodging facilities, Parlezo Hotel provides a 150-seat meeting room named “Lawe Lujang,” as well as a dining facility called “Nakka Bar & Resto.” The organizational structure of the housekeeping department, as shown in the following figure, illustrates the functional hierarchy supporting daily operations.

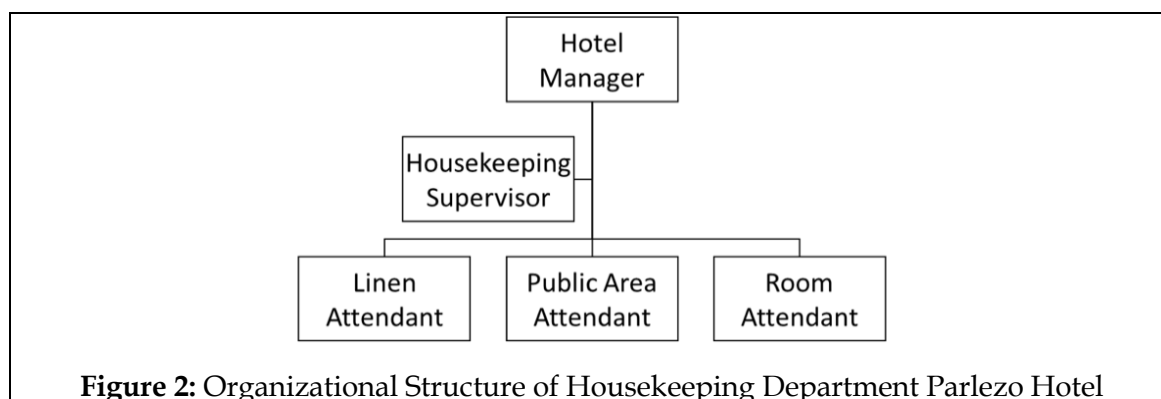


Figure 2: Organizational Structure of Housekeeping Department Parlezo Hotel

Source: Parlezo Hotel, 2025

The Role of Housekeeping in Increasing Room Occupancy

The housekeeping department plays a central role in ensuring guest comfort, which includes clean and tidy rooms, functional amenities, and an overall pleasant environment. Beyond maintaining physical cleanliness, housekeeping is also responsible for preserving aesthetic appeal, executing service routines, and supporting operational maintenance throughout all hotel areas. At Parlezo Hotel, the housekeeping division is structured into several key positions, each with specific roles that contribute to service consistency and guest satisfaction. The summary of duties and responsibilities for each position is presented in the following table.

Table 1. Housekeeping Role Summary Table

Position	Key Responsibilities
Housekeeping Supervisor	Conduct briefings, delegate tasks, monitor room readiness, inspect cleanliness, handle complaints, supervise inventory and interdepartmental coordination.
Linen Attendant	Receive and distribute linen, ensure cleanliness and quality, manage linen inventory and storage, and fulfill special linen requests.
Public Area Attendant	Maintain cleanliness in public areas including lobby, restrooms, meeting rooms, and staff areas; care for indoor plants and furnishings.
Room Attendant	Prepare and clean rooms per SOP, respond to guest requests, ensure equipment functionality, maintain records, and report discrepancies or issues.

The distribution of roles within the housekeeping department reflects an integrated service delivery model that emphasizes both efficiency and guest satisfaction. Each position, from supervisor to room attendant, contributes to a coordinated workflow designed to maintain high cleanliness standards, ensure responsiveness to guest needs, and uphold the hotel's overall service quality.

The housekeeping supervisor serves as the operational coordinator, facilitating communication between departments and overseeing compliance with established protocols. Meanwhile, room attendants are responsible for the direct guest experience, ensuring that rooms are cleaned according to standard operating procedures (SOPs) and that guest requests are fulfilled promptly. Public area attendants extend these efforts to shared spaces, maintaining a consistent standard of cleanliness throughout the property. Linen attendants, though often working behind the scenes, play a critical role in ensuring timely linen circulation and inventory control, which directly impacts room readiness and hygiene standards.

This structured division of labor enhances the department's ability to respond to occupancy fluctuations and guest feedback efficiently. Moreover, the clear delineation of tasks supports accountability and performance monitoring, which are essential for maintaining service excellence in a competitive hospitality environment such as Labuan Bajo.

Table 2 presents the monthly room occupancy rates at Parlezo Hotel for the years 2023 and 2024. The data highlights variations in room sales and occupancy percentages

across different months, offering insights into seasonal demand and operational performance.

Table 2. Room Occupancy of Parlezo Hotel

No	Month	Room Sold 2023	Occupancy % 2023	Room Sold 2024	Occupancy % 2024	Average Occupancy (2 yrs)
1	Jan	163	18.13%	566	62.74%	40.43%
2	Feb	481	59.24%	544	64.68%	62.00%
3	Mar	524	58.29%	557	62.37%	60.12%
4	Apr	623	71.61%	651	74.91%	61.72%
5	May	787	87.54%	827	91.99%	89.77%
6	Jun	711	81.72%	822	85.63%	88.10%
7	Jul	845	94.20%	818	90.99%	92.49%
8	Aug	871	96.89%	878	97.77%	97.27%
9	Sep	783	90.00%	820	94.25%	92.12%
10	Oct	795	88.43%	837	93.10%	90.77%
11	Nov	691	79.43%	547	62.87%	71.15%
12	Dec	744	82.76%	481	53.68%	68.13%
	Total	8,018	72.81%	8,346	78.63%	77.19%

Source: Parlezo Hotel, 2024

As shown in Table 2, Parlezo Hotel experienced a notable increase in room occupancy between 2023 and 2024, with the overall average rising from 72.81% to 78.63%. Peak performance occurred during the mid-year period, particularly in August and September, where occupancy exceeded 94% in both years. The sharp improvement in January—from 18.13% in 2023 to 62.74% in 2024—suggests effective early-year strategy adjustments. However, a significant decline in December 2024 indicates potential for improvement in end-of-year promotional efforts. The two-year average occupancy rate of 77.19% reflects the positive impact of the housekeeping department's strategic contributions to maintaining guest satisfaction and maximizing room utilization.

In carrying out its duties and responsibilities, the housekeeping department implements a shift system where each shift is arranged based on the position of each staff member. The shifts in the Parlezo Hotel housekeeping department are divided into 2 shifts, namely the morning shift 07.00-15.00 and the evening shift 15.00-23.00. For the night shift, the Parlezo Hotel housekeeping department is handled by the front office and security in-charge at night, then in the morning hand over with the housekeeping staff in-charge of the morning shift.

Housekeeping Department Strategy in Increasing Room Occupancy Rate at Parlezo Hotel

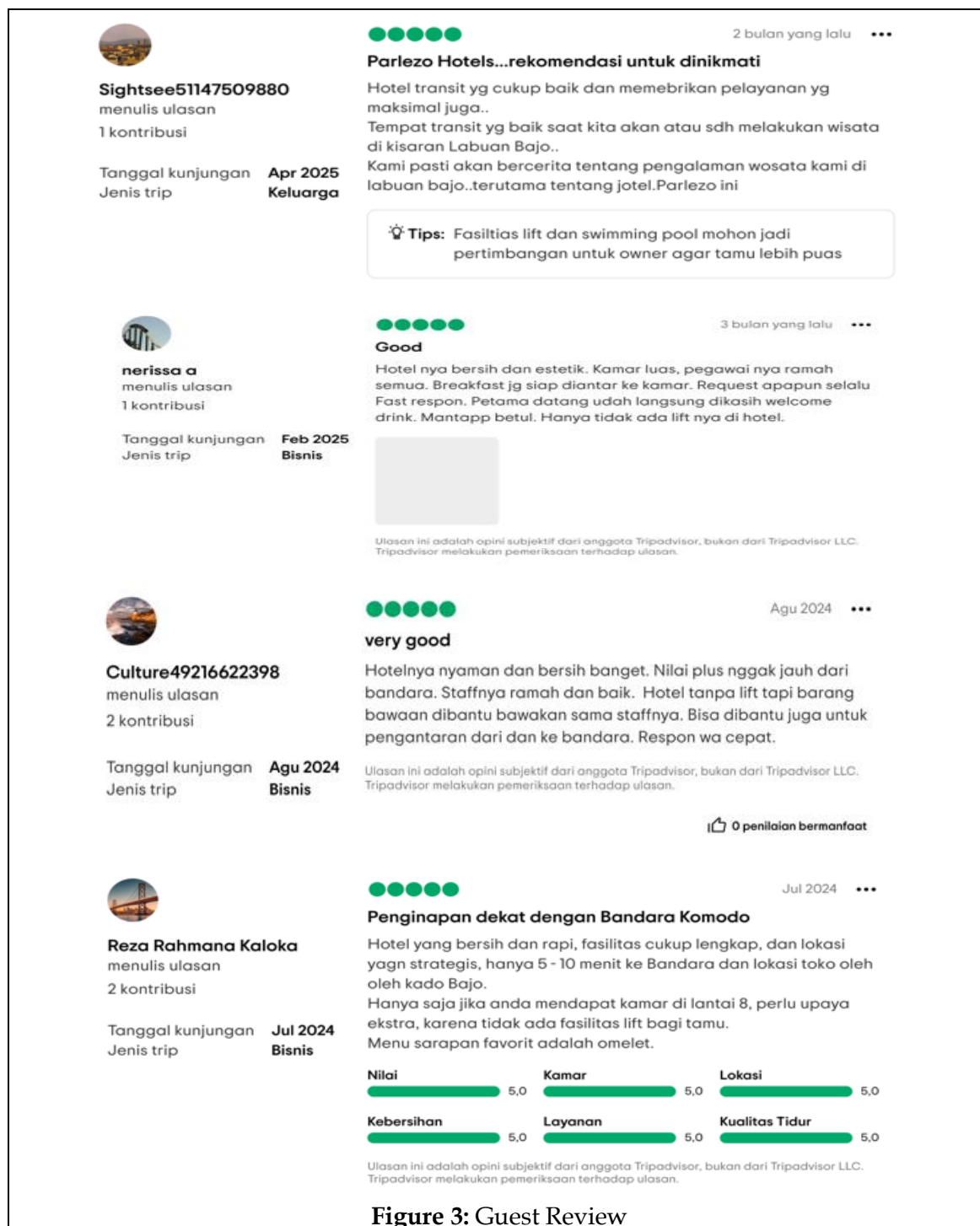


Figure 3: Guest Review

Source: *Tripadvisor.co.id*, 2025

Based on field observations and guest testimonials, the Housekeeping Department at Parlezo Hotel plays a strategic role in shaping service quality perceptions and supporting the increase in room occupancy rates. The strategies implemented go beyond

technical operations, touching on the emotional and psychological dimensions of the guest experience through personalized service initiatives.

One of the department's flagship strategies is the use of simple towel art decoration for regular guests. This approach not only enhances the visual appeal of the room but also conveys a sense of care and attentiveness from the hotel. Gestures such as a neatly folded towel accompanied by a note reading "We Care About Your Stay" offer a distinctive personal touch. These efforts are reflected in guest reviews that praise the hotel for its clean, aesthetic rooms and attentive service. One guest even mentioned receiving a welcome drink upon arrival, highlighting the hotel's prompt and warm hospitality.

Another notable strategy involves providing birthday surprises for guests celebrating during their stay. In coordination with the Front Office, the Housekeeping team decorates rooms with balloons, flowers, and towel art to create memorable moments. This not only enhances guest satisfaction but also contributes to emotional engagement, which is crucial for encouraging guest loyalty and positive word-of-mouth.

Extra attention to long-stay guests is demonstrated through the provision of additional towels and bottled water in the room—an example of proactive service designed to sustain comfort throughout extended visits. Several reviews note the friendly and responsive staff, indicating that such gestures resonate well with guests and positively influence their overall experience.

From a managerial standpoint, the hotel's commitment to quality is also reflected in the implementation of weekly general cleaning in public areas, which involves cross-departmental collaboration. This initiative ensures the hotel's readiness for increased weekend traffic and promotes a culture of teamwork that reinforces consistent service standards across all guest-facing areas.

Operationally, the Housekeeping Department is supported by GuestPro, a cloud-based Property Management System (PMS) that enables real-time room status monitoring. Operational codes such as Vacant Clean Inspected, Service Refused, and Out of Order streamline internal communication and improve efficiency in room turnover management.

Despite these service strengths, guest reviews also highlight a notable physical limitation: the absence of an elevator from the lobby to upper floors, due to the hotel's hillside structure. Although staff are commended for assisting with luggage, the lack of a lift remains a challenge for guests with mobility issues. In this context, the Housekeeping Department is expected to compensate for infrastructural shortcomings through empathetic, swift, and personalized service delivery.

With only 29 rooms available, Parlezo Hotel operates under capacity constraints despite its strategic location near Komodo Airport (just 5-10 minutes on foot). Thus, service differentiation (particularly through the Housekeeping Department) becomes a key driver for sustaining and increasing occupancy levels. The hotel's advantages in location and natural surroundings must be reinforced with excellent service quality to maintain competitiveness, especially in Labuan Bajo's rapidly growing tourism market as a super-premium destination.

In conclusion, the Housekeeping Department's strategies at Parlezo Hotel reflect a long-term service orientation that integrates operational performance with guest

experience. This approach aligns with the demands of modern hospitality, where personalized service and guest satisfaction are increasingly viewed as critical factors in building customer loyalty and optimizing occupancy rates.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study highlight the strategic role of the housekeeping department at Parlezo Hotel Labuan Bajo in increasing room occupancy rates. A notable increase of 5.82% in occupancy with an average annual rate of 77.19% reflects not only the operational competence of the department but also its strategic approach to enhancing the overall guest experience. Recent research underscores that customer satisfaction is strongly influenced by service expectations and the overall experiential quality delivered by the hotel (Bie & Saut, 2022). At Parlezo Hotel, personalized service strategies (such as simple towel decorations for regular guests, birthday surprises, and additional amenities for long-stay guests) serve as effective tools for building customer loyalty and delivering superior service experiences. These practices create emotional value that encourages repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

From an operational perspective, the structured division of roles within the housekeeping team (supervisor, room attendant, linen attendant, and public area attendant), along with a well-implemented shift system, supports efficient service delivery. Morning briefings, spot training, and routine inspections reflect a consistent commitment to quality assurance. This is in line with Razalli's (2020) findings, which emphasize that effective hotel operations are underpinned by standardized procedures and a clearly defined division of responsibilities to maintain consistent service quality.

The use of a cloud-based PMS system (GuestPro) also enhances operational control and responsiveness, particularly in managing room status. Interdepartmental collaboration (especially with front office and engineering departments) further demonstrates that housekeeping cannot operate in isolation but requires cross-functional coordination to ensure smooth and effective service. However, despite the strengths in service delivery and strategic location, physical infrastructure limitations (such as the absence of an elevator) remain a challenge, particularly for elderly guests or those with mobility needs. This underscores the importance of not only service quality but also physical accessibility and comfort in supporting overall guest satisfaction.

Overall, this study reaffirms that the role of housekeeping has evolved beyond mere cleanliness and orderliness, becoming a critical element in shaping the hotel's service value and guest loyalty. This is consistent with Bagyono's (2018) argument that housekeeping plays a strategic role in building the hotel's image and enhancing customer retention.

The findings of this study align with several previous studies which reinforce the critical role of the housekeeping department in influencing guest satisfaction and room occupancy rates. For instance, research by Teddy Rosadi et al. (2021) at Grand Dafam Q Hotel Banjarbaru revealed that failures to consistently follow Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in the housekeeping division led to delays in room readiness and miscommunication, which negatively impacted guest satisfaction and room turnover. The study recommends continuous training and reinforcement of SOP compliance to enhance employee performance and ensure timely and efficient room preparation.

Further evidence is provided by Nathasya et al. (2023), who investigated the impact of service quality on guest satisfaction at Shofa Marwah Hotel Palembang. Their study used the five SERVQUAL dimensions (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy) to measure service quality and found a significant positive influence on customer satisfaction. This highlights that cleanliness, attention to detail, and staff responsiveness are not only operational concerns but also deeply affect the emotional and perceptual experience of guests.

A qualitative study by Kusuma and Semara (2023) at Hotel W Bali Seminyak also emphasized the importance of post-task inspections and regular maintenance of housekeeping standards. Despite good overall performance, deficiencies such as poor room checks, inefficient tools, and unkept staff appearance were noted to occasionally affect service quality. They recommend consistent post-service review, better equipment, and fulfillment of all service quality indicators to ensure guest satisfaction. Meanwhile, Tri Jayanto's (2009) case study at Kusuma Sahid Prince Hotel Surakarta showed that decorative strategies, price reductions, and enhanced communication between departments could effectively increase room occupancy by 10–15%. His findings underscore that the housekeeping department's responsibilities extend beyond cleanliness to include collaboration, strategic thinking, and aesthetic contribution.

Additionally, a field report from Fathhur Rahman Desca Putra (2020) based on practical training at Lotus Desaru Beach Resort & Spa supports the notion that comprehensive housekeeping roles (including room attendants, laundry, linen handling, public area maintenance, and even floristry) are vital to maintaining operational excellence. The report emphasizes the role of housekeeping in addressing guest complaints, ensuring room readiness, and upholding a positive brand image.

These combined insights not only corroborate the present study's conclusion regarding the strategic importance of housekeeping but also extend the discussion by demonstrating how consistent operational execution, interdepartmental coordination, and attentiveness to guest perceptions are essential in a competitive hospitality environment. Housekeeping is increasingly recognized not merely as a support unit, but as a frontline driver of satisfaction, loyalty, and revenue optimization in the hotel industry.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the strategic role of the housekeeping department in enhancing guest satisfaction and increasing room occupancy at Parlezo Hotel, Labuan Bajo. The findings show a significant improvement in the hotel's occupancy rate—from an average of 72.81% in 2023 to 78.63% in 2024—resulting in a combined two-year average of 77.19%. These outcomes suggest that well-implemented housekeeping strategies, including structured delegation of tasks, consistent quality control, and interdepartmental coordination, have directly contributed to improved operational performance.

Each function within the housekeeping unit—from supervisors to room, linen, and public area attendants—plays a critical role in ensuring service consistency, hygiene standards, and guest comfort. This integrated system supports the hotel's ability to

maintain service excellence, even in the face of operational challenges and competitive market pressures.

In conclusion, the effective performance of the housekeeping department is not only essential for sustaining daily service standards but also acts as a key driver for improving room occupancy and achieving long-term customer satisfaction. These insights underscore the need for continuous training, evaluation, and innovation in housekeeping operations to sustain competitiveness in the hospitality industry.

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