

The Efforts of A Linen Attendant in Handling Guest Complaints at Chanti Hotel, Semarang

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Abstract. *This study aims to identify and explain the efforts that can be made by linen attendants in handling guest complaints in accordance with the standard operational procedures at the Chanti Semarang Hotel. The data collection methods used in this study are observation, interviews, and documentation so that the data obtained about handling guest complaints will be accurate. The research findings are problems found related to linen that has spots or stains, linen that is damaged or torn, linen that is yellowing. Room attendants are parties who are also responsible and can help maintain linen cleanliness. Efforts that a linen attendant can make to handle guest complaints, whether in terms of efforts to improve deficiencies or efforts to prevent and minimize the occurrence of complaints from guests, so that linens with stain and damage problems can be resolved optimally and can be reused for operations. The conclusion that can be drawn is that if all work is carried out according to standard operational procedures, it will guarantee the smooth operation of the hotel. If problematic linen is optimally resolved, it will have a big impact on the satisfaction of the guests staying, thus reducing the possibility of complaints.*

Keywords: Housekeeping, Linen Attendant, Effort, Hotel

INTRODUCTION

The city of Semarang is the capital of Central Java province, which is also the center of government and economy in Central Java. According to Septemuryantoro et al. (2022), Semarang is a destination that has many tourist attractions, including natural tourism, cultural heritage tourism, and historical tourism. On the other hand, Semarang is also a business city that is arguably quite large, indicating that buildings with large halls are much needed for business activities. Therefore, the establishment of a service business, such as a hotel, will certainly affect the economy level in this city. According to the Indonesian Language Dictionary (2020), a hotel is defined as a building with many rooms rented out as a place to stay and eat for people who are traveling. It is a commercially managed accommodation, available to everyone seeking services of lodging and restaurants.

This is also discussed based on the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy Number PM.53/HM.001/MPEK/2013 discussing hotel business standards. A hotel is a business providing accommodation in the form of rooms in a building equipped with various services such as food and drink services, entertainment, and other facilities that operate daily with the aim of making a profit. Meanwhile, according to Moha and Loindong (2016), a hotel is a company managed by its owner by providing food, beverage, and room facilities for people who are traveling and are able to pay a reasonable amount according to the services received without any special agreement. In today's world, the business continues to grow rapidly, as does the hotel industry. The emergence of new hotels makes business competition in meeting targets or gaining consumers more competitive. Therefore, each hotel competes to showcase their skills, services, and uniqueness to attract consumers, with the aim that consumers are satisfied with the services offered by the hotel.

There are 27 four-star hotels scattered throughout Semarang offering a variety of diverse staying experiences, one of which is the Chanti Semarang Hotel, which offers a comfortable sensation with the unique theme of the hotel that lifts Javanese cultural values, creating its own attraction for tourists who are going to travel or do business. According to Septemuryantoro (2020), culture can influence tourist attraction. This 4-star hotel with an average occupancy of 90% per month often becomes a destination for corporates in events, meetings or other events. According to Limbang and Juniwati (2018), the facilities that support meeting the standards of a 4-star convention hotel are meeting rooms, swimming pools, fitness centers, restaurants, and cafes. Every hotel prepares rooms for its guests by paying attention to the details and cleanliness of each room. The department in the hotel in charge of maintaining cleanliness, neatness, and beauty is the housekeeping department. The housekeeping department has several sections, namely the public area section, room section, and linen section, each of which has duties and responsibilities per section. One of the requirements for preparing a room for guests is to have clean linen, in good and neat condition.

The section responsible for cleanliness and ensuring linen is in good condition is the linen section. Linen management by this linen attendant is important, but the linen management that occurs at the Chanti Semarang Hotel seems to be less carefully run, there are still many handling methods that are not in accordance with the existing provisions, this is proven by the frequent comments or complaints from guests who stay at this hotel regarding dirty linen or linen that already looks old. As per its standard, the linen used at the hotel should look clean at a glance, creating a luxurious impression in the room.

Guests should judge the first impression as staff hospitality, room neatness, room cleanliness, and the comfort guests feel during their stay. Generally, guests who come to the room will look at the bed first when entering the room because the most prominent thing is the bed. The importance of choosing clean linen and also neat arrangement often becomes an easy target that becomes the first impression of the guest. Many things can influence the linen to look unattractive, one of them is due to repeated use so that the color of the linen continues to fade or yellow, besides that the use by guests themselves can also affect, for example, if the guest leaves a stain on the used linen.

There are many types of stains that can arise because of guests, the most common are blood stains on linen, food stains, dye stains from other fabric fibers or guest clothes that fade, from guest hair dye, misuse of linen that is not according to its function also affects the cleanliness of linen. Stains can also be caused by the attendant, for example when the attendant puts the linen in the wrong place, the linen accidentally stepped on will cause shoe print stains on the linen, the use of cloudy water without filtration to wash linen can cause the linen to yellow. Things that can cause linen damage are when linen gets caught, forced pulling during stripping will cause the linen to tear, the use of excessive or too frequent chemical substances or bleach in washing. This usually can affect the guest's assessment of the hotel.

Guest comments and also guest complaints are two things that are very important for the service industry like hotels, because they can affect the image of the hotel. Many things should be done to avoid or handle these mistakes. Especially for 4-star hotels, therefore the handling efforts from the hotel's internal towards these complaints must be well structured both in terms of prevention and handling.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Kumaat (2019), stains are one of the things that must be considered in linen cleanliness that will be used by guests in the future. Upon careful observation by the researcher, these stains are typically from food that may have fallen onto the linen, blood spots, or stains from other coloring materials such as pens, clothing dye, and hair. Hasibuan and Zahara (2023) explain that these stains from guests can be caused by guests accidentally entering the room and spilling drinks or food, guests bringing babies, urinating while asleep, and blood stains on women who are menstruating, all of which result in charges or fees being applied.

If the linen is stained by the guest, the guest will be fined IDR 100,000. If guests damage the linen, for example, if the linen is hit by sparks or cigarettes, then guests have to pay a fine of IDR 1,000,000. If guests are found smoking in a non-smoking room and bringing durian fruit, then guests will be fined IDR 1,000,000. The linen attendant carries out soiling, also known as the activity of taking dirty linen from the room attendant's trolley and the place to put dirty linen (landing), to be combined on the linen attendant's trolley. The linen attendant is responsible for separating the towels according to their types and linen according to their types. The types of linen used at Chanti Hotel are pillow cases, single sheets, double sheets, Hollywood sheets, single duvets, double duvets, Hollywood duvets, and then separating linens that have stains and tears.

According to Sukriadi et al (2021), linen separation can be done by sorting or grouping linen to be washed based on type, color, and level of stain so it can be separated when washed, and also separating linen with the category of unfit for use or damaged. After running for half a day, usually at 13.00, the vendor will come and bring the dirty towel that has been collected and counted by the vendor, witnessed by the hotel or linen attendant, followed by the creation of the afternoon bill and signed by both parties. Chanti Hotel is a hotel that does not have its own laundry but uses a vendor to wash linen. The vendor used is Tentrem Laundry, located at Jalan Gajahmada no. 97, Miroto, Semarang Tengah District, Semarang City, Central Java. The types of housekeeping linen washed are pillow cases, single sheets, double sheets, Hollywood sheets, single duvets, double duvets, Hollywood duvets, towels like hand towels, bath towels, bath mats. While for linen from food and beverage are table cloths, moltowns, and napkins. This activity is carried out continuously until all rooms with a dirty status are finished and the room attendants have finished working.

Once all the dirty linen has been successfully collected and sorted, the linen attendant counts the linen by type and then records it in a logbook meticulously, as it will become the benchmark for overhanding to the next shift's linen attendant. Sukriadi et al. (2021) said, the process of sorting linen by the linen attendant should be done with recording and should be done carefully. In the next shift, the dirty linen will be picked up by the laundry service, this process occurs around 20:00 to 21:00, depending on the vendor.

At this time, the vendor will bring the clean towel shipment that was sent earlier in the day along with its bill, and a count and check will be done together by both parties. The vendor will re-count the dirty linen that will be picked up that night according to its type, then matched with the morning shift linen attendant's count, after the results obtained match, the night bill is made and signed by both parties. The linen washed at night will then be delivered the next day.

RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, the author uses a qualitative descriptive research method, employing three data analysis techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation. According to Widoyoko (2014), observation is a systematic recording activity by factors that become symptoms of the matter being researched. Meanwhile, Miharjo (2020) mentions that observation is a complex process where the process runs both biologically and psychologically in a structured manner. The observations made are during the interview with the informant and also the interactions that occur between the subject-researcher, and possibly other relevant things as additional data that can be used as research material. According to Syafriansyah (2015), interviews are used as a data collection technique when researchers want to conduct a preliminary study analysis so that problems can be more prominent to be researched, and when researchers want to know things from respondents in more depth and the number of respondents tends to be small. According to Suyono and Hariyono (2015), an interview is a data collection technique by asking questions that will be answered while face-to-face using a tool called an Interview Guide. According to Sudarsono (2017), documentation is a series of steps or actions to obtain knowledge, evidence, information in the form of data/documents/images/photos used as evidence of the implementation of activities.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research focuses on the activities of a linen attendant responsible for managing linen following the Standard Operational Procedures at Chanti Hotel. Based on observations, the Chanti Hotel employs 2 linen attendants, divided into 2 shifts, namely the morning shift with operational hours starting from 07.00 - 15.00 WIB and the afternoon shift with operational hours starting from 15.00-23.00 WIB. With this statement, it can be said that the small number of employees affects operational performance, where if there are fewer employees, the work will not run optimally.

According to Ferawaty and Wardani (2022), the small number of employees in the hotel's linen section affects the effectiveness of time and work given, if the assigned work is heavy, such as collecting linen on each floor done by only 1 person in 1 shift, then the employee will not have enough time to control other jobs optimally, for example, arranging linen storage, linen care, and other tasks. If one of the linen attendants cannot attend due to illness or other reasons, there must be a substitute for the linen attendant. The activity of a linen attendant when first doing his job is to receive all clean linen or laundry from the vendor (laundry) to count and adjust the amount according to the information or note on the laundry bill. After signing the bill and adjusting the number, the linen attendant will distribute the delivered linen to the room attendant for operations, the rest will be stored by the linen attendant in the linen pantry. According to Kuswiyata and Wigati (2022), every linen attendant must understand how to store linen properly because proper linen storage will greatly impact the smoothness of the linen attendant's tasks. Towel delivery from the vendor is done in the evening or the night before. Every day the linen attendant will start his work around 09.00.

When the room attendant has started his activities, namely cleaning the guest room that stays and the guest room that has checked out. The linen attendant begins the first round to all floors to strip or commonly known as the activity of taking linen in the checked-out room, it is at this time that the linen attendant often finds stains or spots on the room linen caused by guests.

Application of Standard Operational Procedure at Hotel Chanti Semarang in Linen Management

Based on the results of observation and interviews with employees, the procedure used at Hotel Chanti in managing linen is by determining the number or parstock linen with its standard operational procedure is when the hotel feels that the linen used is sufficient for operations. According to Komar (2014), he explained that stains on linen are one of the points that should be noticed by the linen attendant and room attendant, if stained linen is found, it should be immediately replaced with clean and stain-free linen. According to Winata (2016), the Standard Operational Procedure (SOP) that should be considered by the linen attendant to improve work quality and guest comfort is the ability to maintain housekeeping linen. Mubarak said, "because every hotel has different linen operational standards, and as long as the linen used for operations is considered sufficient and the operations can run well, that's enough."

According to Octavia (2012), checking for stains or damage on linen is one of the SOPs for room cleaning. The washing of linen is fully sent to the vendor. Astuti said, "we send all our washing to the laundry", repairing the linen found damaged. Huda said, "Here all the torn linens are manually sewn because there is no sewing machine", if the damage is not possible, then the linen will be stored and not circulated again in operations, doing treatment every day by sending stained or dull linen to the laundry for spot treatment, new linen may only be used if old linen does not meet operational needs, taking training staff if there is a lack of workforce.

Constraints on the Application of Parstock Linen and Linen Care at Hotel Chanti Semarang

Regarding the application and also the maintenance of linen at Hotel Chanti, according to the results of the observation conducted, several obstacles were found that could lead to complaints and a shortage of linen. These include the absence of specific or written provisions regarding the standard operational procedures used, both in terms of the quantity of parstock linen, the minimum required workforce, and standardization of linen classification based on usage levels and color. There is also a lack of adequate facilities in terms of tools and cleaning chemicals or stain removers. Because there is only one linen attendant working on the morning shift, it does not match the number of rooms that check out on that day. There are often misses in the linen check in the checkout rooms. Therefore, there are many cases of stained linen being found that got through. The discovery of linen with stains every day and linen with stains from guest usage is found every day, we send this linen to the laundry for spot treatment (Singh, *et al*, 2009). Operations are slightly disrupted due to the frequent discovery of stains when the room attendant is about to install linen and usually often find it when the room boys are about to spread the linen. The linen delivery time by the vendor is unpredictable (Yasa, 2022)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the research conducted using observation, interviews, and documentation techniques conducted at the Chanti Hotel in Semarang regarding the efforts of linen attendants in handling guest complaints, the following conclusions can be made:

1. The laundry or linen at the Chanti hotel does not yet have a definite SOP (Standard Operational Procedure) regarding the number of parstock linen. The standard application of the amount of linen stock at the Chanti hotel does not yet conform to other hotel standards, where most use 3 pars of linen with the method: 1 par installed in the room, 1 par is dirty, and another par is at the Housekeeping Store distributed on each floor. What is currently happening at the Chanti hotel is that the exact number of linens is not yet known because each informant answered differently. Linen with spots is borne by third parties where the effort of the linen attendant to minimize guest complaints is to send stained linen to the laundry for spot treatment or rewash. However, for some types of easy-to-remove stains, spotting will be done by the hotel itself, because they do not have special chemicals, while damaged linen will be sewn manually due to the absence of a sewing machine. From these statements, it can be concluded that the problems that occur come from 3 sources, namely guests, attendants, and laundry.
2. The efforts made by the hotel and the linen attendant include efforts to prevent and minimize the occurrence of guest complaints, by paying attention to the linens that will circulate in operations. Doing independent spotting is also the first step taken when a new stain is found. Another effort made by the Chanti party is by conducting evaluations from both the officer or linen attendant and from the laundry side. Conclusion is stated briefly, with the ability to address research aims or issues by demonstrating research findings or testing research hypotheses, without repeating the discussion. Critically, rationally, and truthfully, based on the facts of the current study results, and with caution if there are efforts at generalization, conclusions are written. The findings and recommendation section is written in paragraph format, with no numbering or bullet points. In this section, it is also acceptable for the author to provide practical comments or recommendations based on the findings of the research. Similarly, the authors are highly encouraged to share reviews of the study's limitations and suggestions for further research.

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