
Optimizing Guest Satisfaction Through Room Attendant Service Excellence: Evidence from FOX Hotel Pekanbaru

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Abstract: This study aims to examine the role of room attendants in ensuring the cleanliness of guest rooms at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru and to assess guest satisfaction with the hotel's room hygiene standards. Data was collected from 105 respondents (8 room attendants and 97 guests), with sample calculations using the Lemeshow formula. Observation and questionnaires were used as data collection techniques. Data were analyzed using a descriptive quantitative approach supplemented by qualitative insights to evaluate the implementation of SERVQUAL dimensions across the housekeeping department. Guest satisfaction was measured using a 5-point Likert scale (scores 1–5) and systematically grouped based on class interval ranges. Daily tasks include preparing trolleys with the necessary equipment, cleaning rooms in accordance with SOPs, and handling rooms with late check-outs. In terms of communication, Room Attendants receive instructions from supervisors, conduct shift handover procedures, report room status, and notify guests of any items left behind. Meanwhile, in terms of supervision, they ensure that guest amenities and cleaning supplies are used efficiently and in accordance with established standards. From the questionnaire distributed to 97 guest respondents, an average score of 4.77 was obtained, which falls into the “very satisfied” category according to the five-point Likert scale. This finding indicates that the role and performance of Room Attendants directly contribute to creating a comfortable stay experience and are an important factor in maintaining service standards at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru

Keywords: FOX Hotel Pekanbaru, Guest Satisfaction, Room Attendant, Service Excellence

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INTRODUCTION

The global hospitality industry is currently undergoing profound transformation, driven largely by escalating consumer expectations for superior service quality. In an increasingly competitive international marketplace, service excellence has emerged as a pivotal differentiator and a fundamental mechanism for cultivating sustained customer loyalty. Among the various dimensions of hotel service delivery, the contribution of room attendants has frequently been underestimated, despite its demonstrably significant impact on overall guest experience. At Fox Hotel Pekanbaru, a property operating within the upper-midscale hospitality segment, the professionalism and operational competence of room attendants constitute a strategic asset in preserving the hotel's brand integrity and service quality.

Room attendants carry responsibilities that extend well beyond basic sanitation tasks; they play an instrumental role in ensuring the comfort and sustained satisfaction of guests throughout their stay. As demonstrated by Saragi, Eky, and Mantolas (2022), room attendants are positioned to shape the initial and most enduring impressions that guests form regarding the broader quality of hotel services. Accordingly, their function transcends routine operational duties and encompasses a meaningful contribution to the formation of guest perceptions regarding institutional professionalism and overall service caliber.

In alignment with the rapid growth of the tourism sector in Riau Province, the hospitality industry in Pekanbaru has experienced highly competitive dynamics. As a strategic provincial capital attracting significant corporate and business travelers, the market demands stringent room hygiene standards. Despite rigorous management efforts, fluctuations in guest complaints regarding room cleanliness and bathroom maintenance remain a persistent local challenge (Harwina, 2021). Preliminary observations and regional hospitality reports indicate that unexpected housekeeping oversights constitute a primary driver of negative feedback among four-star hotel guests in urban areas (Kurniawan & Saputra, 2024). This situation highlights a critical operational gap between established Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and real-world execution, which poses a substantial risk to a hotel's digital reputation if left unaddressed (Susilo & Handayani, 2025).

At Fox Hotel Pekanbaru, guest satisfaction functions as the primary benchmark of service effectiveness. Notably, the most frequent direct contact that guests experience during their stay is not with management personnel or front desk staff, but with room attendants themselves. Wendri and Putri (2021) contend that the interactions guests have with room attendant output account for approximately 60% of the total in-stay experience, underscoring the centrality of this role within the hospitality service chain.

From a theoretical standpoint, service quality may be systematically assessed through the SERVQUAL model, which comprises five foundational dimensions: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Room attendants exercise particular influence over the first two dimensions. The physical condition of a well-maintained and orderly guest room constitutes a direct manifestation of tangibility, while the capacity to deliver consistently high standards across all service interactions reflects reliability. Kensbock et al. (2019) caution that despite their operational centrality, room attendants are frequently undervalued within hotel hierarchies; their engagement in experience-centered training programs has nonetheless been shown to enhance overall service quality and reduce guest complaints by up to 30%.

Data reported in the Hotel Management Asia Annual Report (2021) indicate that one of the foremost challenges within housekeeping operations is the disproportionate workload relative to the level of institutional recognition afforded to room attendants. On average, an individual room attendant is responsible for servicing between 15 and 20 rooms per working day. Despite the critical nature of their function, room attendants are seldom incorporated into service strategy discussions, a circumstance that adversely affects both work motivation and the consistency of service output. Nickson, Knox, and Warhurst (2015) similarly observe that room attendants' subjective perceptions of their own occupational quality exert a substantive influence on their motivational levels and the uniformity of their service performance.

Ali et al. (2021) further assert that the quality of in-room service delivery exerts a greater influence on guests' perceived overall value of a hotel than factors such as pricing or geographic location. This finding reinforces the imperative to enhance the competencies of room attendants as a strategic measure for maintaining competitiveness in an increasingly saturated market. The period of the COVID-19 pandemic brought additional significance to this role, as guest expectations regarding sanitation and hygiene standards intensified considerably. Chen et al. (2015) established that guest perceptions of room safety and cleanliness emerged as primary determinants in hotel selection and evaluation, thereby elevating the strategic importance of room attendants who are now required not only to ensure physical cleanliness but also to effectively communicate health safety assurances to guests.

The accelerating digitalization of the hospitality sector introduces yet another dimension of complexity. Analysis of online review platforms such as TripAdvisor and Google Reviews reveals that even minor lapses in in-room service quality can generate disproportionately negative consequences for a hotel's digital reputation. Padma and Ahn (2020) found that guest complaints pertaining to room cleanliness and facility conditions constitute the most influential determinants of negative online reviews and reduced satisfaction ratings. This dynamic positions room attendants as critical custodians of a hotel's digital brand equity.

The present investigation is particularly salient within the context of Fox Hotel Pekanbaru, which operates amid the ongoing expansion of the domestic tourism sector. As a four-star establishment targeting both business travelers and domestic leisure guests, the hotel must maintain rigorous service standards across all operational domains, including housekeeping. However, the relative scarcity of empirical research specifically examining the contribution of room attendants to guest satisfaction at this property represents a significant gap in the existing knowledge base, one that the current study seeks to address. It is anticipated that the findings will yield meaningful contributions to both theoretical discourse and practical hotel management.

Accordingly, given that Fox Hotel Pekanbaru has demonstrated satisfactory operational performance based on preliminary observations, it is essential to conduct a more rigorous examination of the extent to which room attendant performance contributes to room cleanliness standards and, consequently, to overall guest satisfaction. This study is positioned to provide a comprehensive account of housekeeping service quality and to serve as a foundation for the evaluation and long-term advancement of the hotel's standard operating procedures.

METHODS

This study was conducted at FOX Hotel Pekanbaru from August 2023 to January 2024, employing a descriptive quantitative research design supplemented by qualitative insights. To address the methodological distinction, the quantitative approach strictly utilized structured, closed-ended questionnaires configured on a 5-point Likert scale to measure numerical satisfaction levels across 97 in-house guests. Conversely, the qualitative component utilized semi-structured open-ended interviews and direct field observations involving 8 room attendants. This dual-approach ensured that while guest perceptions were captured through rigid statistical categories, the operational constraints and physical workflows of the staff were contextualized through open, descriptive qualitative narrative. Sample size estimation for the guest respondents was strictly carried out in accordance with the Lemeshow formula for unknown populations, as outlined by Riyanto and Hermawan (2020). The composition of interview respondents is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Research Sample

No	Description	Number of Participants
1	Room Attendants (RA)	8
2	Hotel Guests	97
Total		105

Source: Processed Research Data, 2024

Data collection was facilitated through observational checklists and structured questionnaires. The analytical approach adopted in this study was descriptive quantitative analysis, which was further contextualized and enriched through descriptive qualitative interpretation. Data obtained through questionnaire administration, documentary review, and direct observation were systematically compiled, calculated, and presented in tabular and graphical formats. The guest satisfaction variable was assessed using a Likert scale instrument designed to measure the opinions, attitudes, and perceptions of individual respondents or groups, with each response option assigned a corresponding numerical score.

Table 2. Likert Scale

Scale	Description
5	Very Satisfied
4	Satisfied
3	Moderately Satisfied
2	Dissatisfied
1	Very Dissatisfied

Source: Hardani *et al.*, 2020

The categorization of mean scores obtained from each respondent was performed using a class interval approach. With five designated categories, the interval value was calculated according to the following formula:

$$\text{Interval} = \frac{\text{Highest value} - \text{Lowest value}}{\text{Number of classes}}$$

The resulting continuum scale, which served as a reference framework for interpreting ratings across the variables under investigation, is presented in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Research Variable Continuum Scale

Source: Sugiyono, 2017

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Role of Room Attendants in Enhancing Guests Satisfaction at FOX Hotel Pekanbaru

To obtain a comprehensive profile of room attendant performance at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru, respondent characteristics were examined based on the number of personnel, age distribution, and educational background, as elaborated in the following sections.

Tabel 3. Distribution of Room Attendant Respondents by Gender

No	Age Range	Number of Respondents (Person)	Percentage (%)
1	Male	8	100
2	Female	0	0
Total		8	100

Source: Processed Research Data, 2024

As presented in Table 3, all eight room attendant respondents at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru were male, representing 100% of the total workforce in this position. This composition indicates that the room attendant role at this establishment is exclusively occupied by male employees. The primary rationale for this pattern is that room attendant duties involve substantial physical demands, including the handling of heavy linen, the cleaning of a large volume of rooms within compressed time frames, and sustained performance under high operational pressure. Consequently, the hotel management has tended to recruit male employees who are perceived as better suited to meet these physical requirements.

This finding is consistent with the conclusions of Kensbock et al. (2019), who noted that room attendant positions tend to be male-dominated in settings that require high work speed and physical endurance. Those researchers acknowledged that, while women occupy this role extensively in many global contexts, hotels operating under more physically demanding work systems frequently favor male candidates based on their perceived capacity to fulfill cleaning targets within strict time constraints.

Table 4. Age Distribution of Respondents

No	Age Range	Number of Respondents (Person)	Percentage (%)
1	23-25	1	12.5
2	25-28	2	25.0
3	29-31	1	12.5
4	31-34	4	50.0
Total		8	100

Source: Processed Research Data, 2024

Table 4 reveals that all room attendant respondents at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru fall within a productive working age range of 23 to 34 years. The most represented age group is 32 to 34 years, comprising four individuals or 50% of the total respondents, making it the predominant cohort within this role. The concentration of room attendants in the 32 to 34 age bracket may be attributed to the greater professional maturity that workers in this age range typically possess, including more refined technical skills and an enhanced capacity to adapt to the fast-paced operational rhythm characteristic of the hospitality sector. Workers in this age group are also generally regarded as exhibiting greater occupational commitment and maintaining an optimal level of physical endurance, rendering them well suited to the precision and effort required by housekeeping duties.

This finding aligns with the research of Nisa and Kusuma (2021), who observed that workers in their early thirties tend to demonstrate more stable and efficient performance in service-oriented roles, given that they have completed initial learning phases and possess the emotional maturity required to manage occupational pressures effectively. That study further identified the 30 to 35 age range as the peak productive period in the service industry, particularly in hospitality positions requiring a balance between physical capability and accumulated work experience.

Tabel 5. Distribution of Room Attendant Respondents By Educational Background

No	Educatioanl Level	Number of Respondents (Person)	Percentage (%)
1	Junior High School	1	12.5
2	Senior High School	1	12.5
3	Vacational High School	6	75.0
Total		8	100

Source: Processed Research Data, 2024

As shown in Table 5, the majority of room attendant respondents are graduates of Vocational High School (Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan, SMK), accounting for six individuals or 75% of the total

sample. Graduates of Senior High School and Junior High School each account for only one respondent, representing 12.5% respectively.

The predominance of vocational graduates in this role reflects the practical orientation of the SMK curriculum, which places particular emphasis on applied competencies in fields such as hospitality and tourism services. SMK graduates typically complete direct industry training as part of their academic program, including practical placements at hotel establishments, which renders them better prepared for immediate employment compared to graduates of general secondary schools.

This finding is corroborated by Haryono and Marwanti (2018), who demonstrated that vocational school graduates are more readily absorbed into the hotel industry due to their possession of technical competencies that directly correspond to industry requirements.

Operational Roles of Room Attendants at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru

Based on interview and observational data, several core responsibilities performed by room attendants at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru were identified. These responsibilities are organized according to shift assignments and are oriented toward ensuring that guest rooms remain clean, orderly,

comfortable, and adequately equipped throughout the duration of each guest's stay. The specific duties are as follows:

1. Receiving task assignments and operational directives from the section supervisor.
2. Conducting shift handover procedures between morning, afternoon, and evening room attendant assignments.
3. Preparing work trolleys with the necessary tools, guest amenities, cleaning agents, and linen supplies for each designated floor section, a task performed by the night shift room attendant.
4. Inspecting the physical condition of guest rooms and reporting room status to the front office in accordance with inspection findings.
5. Notifying the section supervisor of any discrepancies identified in room status.
6. Executing room cleaning procedures in full compliance with the applicable Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
7. Cleaning rooms with delayed check-outs and assisting in the delivery of processed laundry, a responsibility assigned to the afternoon shift room attendant.
8. Completing room attendant reports and returning room keys at the conclusion of each assignment.
9. Reporting to the section supervisor or order taker any guest belongings found left behind in guest rooms.
10. Monitoring and regulating the consumption and expenditure of guest supplies and cleaning materials.

Operational Constraints Faced by Room Attendants

Interview and observational data further revealed a number of operational challenges encountered by room attendants in their efforts to maintain and improve guest satisfaction, as described below.

First, certain work equipment was found to be damaged or no longer fit for use. Several cleaning tools, including lobby dusters, brooms, and vacuum cleaners, were reported to be in a deteriorated or suboptimal condition. This situation impedes the operational effectiveness of room attendants in executing their cleaning duties to the required standard.

Second, an insufficient supply of liquid cleaning agents was identified as a recurring constraint. Essential cleaning products such as surface disinfectants, general cleaning solutions, and toilet cleaners were frequently found to be inadequate in quantity. This shortage prevents cleaning

procedures from meeting established hygiene standards, particularly in high-sanitation areas such as guest bathrooms.

Third, a scarcity of supplementary cleaning equipment was also noted. Inadequate availability of items such as microfiber cloths, sponges, brushes, and protective gloves contributed to reduced operational efficiency and posed potential risks to the occupational safety and physical comfort of cleaning personnel during task execution.

Guest Satisfaction with Room Cleanliness at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru **Expectation Conformity**

The degree to which guest expectations regarding room cleanliness were fulfilled is reflected in Table 6, which recorded a mean score of 4.87. According to the Likert scale applied in this study, this value falls within the "Very Satisfied" category. This result demonstrates that the room cleaning standards maintained by room attendants at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru have not only met but exceeded guest expectations. Respondents reported satisfaction upon first entering their rooms and expressed positive impressions of observing room attendants performing their duties consistently across all room types in accordance with established SOPs.

These findings are reinforced by Yuliana and Sundawa (2022), who emphasized that room attendants serve as the foremost agents of guest comfort, with cleanliness identified as the principal factor in shaping guest satisfaction and return visit intentions. This position is further substantiated by Li et al. (2020), who affirmed that cleanliness constitutes the most dominant element in determining guest ratings and customer loyalty toward a hotel property.

Table 6. Guest Expectation Conformity Regarding Room Attendant Performance at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru

No	Question	VS	S	MS	D	VD	Total
1	How was your initial impression upon entering your room at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru in relation to your expectations?	80	17	-	-	-	97
2	Did the room attendant's cleaning performance meet your expectations?	85	12	-	-	-	97
3	Were the facilities provided consistent with your expectations?	87	10	-	-	-	97
Total		252	39	-	-	-	291
Score		1,260	156	-	-	-	1,416
Mean							4.87

Source: Processed Research Data, 2024

Note: VS = Very Satisfied, S = Satisfied, MS = Moderately Satisfied, D = Dissatisfied, VD = Very Dissatisfied

Revisit Intention

Revisit intention serves as an indicator that the quality of services rendered has aligned with or exceeded the expectations held by guests prior to their stay. As shown in Table 7, the mean score for guest revisit intention at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru was 4.67, which falls within the "Very Satisfied" category on the Likert scale. This outcome suggests that the overall quality of service, comfort, and available facilities has generated a sufficiently positive impression to motivate guests to consider returning in the future.

Anugrah et al. (2021) similarly found that well-executed room attendant training and performance improvements contribute meaningfully to overall service quality, and that satisfying guest experiences have a direct bearing on customer loyalty and revisit intention, particularly with respect to room cleanliness and staff hospitality. This perspective is further supported by Maarif and Arismayanti (2019), whose research confirmed that human resource management strategies centered on service quality and consistency exert a significant influence on guest satisfaction and the long-

term viability of hotel operations. Within the framework of the SERVQUAL dimensions, the role of room attendants is clearly reflected across multiple service dimensions: room cleanliness represents tangibility; consistency and punctuality in service delivery reflect reliability; prompt response to guest needs embodies responsiveness; professional conduct demonstrates assurance; and personalized attention toward guests manifests as empathy.

Table 7. Guest Revisit Intention at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru

No	Question	VS	S	MS	D	VD	Total
1	I wish to return because the service provided was highly satisfying.	70	27	-	-	-	97
2	The comfort of my stay and its alignment with my expectations made the experience enjoyable, motivating me to visit again.	75	22	-	-	-	97
3	The available facilities were comprehensive and met operational standards, encouraging me to consider a future visit.	60	37	-	-	-	97
Total		205	86	-	-	-	291
Score		1,025	334	-	-	-	1,359
Mean							4.67

Source: Processed Research Data, 2024

Willingness to Recommend

Willingness to recommend reflects the extent to which guests, having derived satisfaction from their experience, are inclined to share positive accounts of the hotel's services with others. As indicated in Table 8, the mean score for guest willingness to recommend Fox Hotel Pekanbaru was 4.75, placing this dimension within the "Very Satisfied" category. This result indicates that the services rendered by room attendants, encompassing cleanliness, orderliness, and staff hospitality, have collectively produced a positive guest experience of sufficient quality to inspire voluntary advocacy among guests toward their social networks and the general public.

Comparable findings are reported by Pratama and Ramadhan (2022), who confirmed that room cleanliness and comfort are dominant factors in cultivating customer loyalty and, subsequently, in generating recommendation intent. This view is echoed by Dewi (2019), who concluded that human resource management practices within the housekeeping department are highly determinative of the service quality perceived by guests. Both studies underscore that willingness to recommend does not merely reflect satisfaction but is a tangible outcome of high-quality service experiences, particularly those facilitated by room attendants as frontline service personnel.

Table 8. Guest Willing to Recommend Fox Hotel Pekanbaru

No	Question	VS	S	MS	D	VD	Total
1	I am willing to recommend Fox Hotel Pekanbaru to friends, family, and others based on the satisfying service I received.	65	32	-	-	-	97
2	I am willing to recommend the guest rooms at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru to friends, family, and others.	74	23	-	-	-	97
3	I am willing to recommend the adequate facilities at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru to friends, family, and others.	84	13	-	-	-	97
Total		222	68	-	-	-	291
Score		1,110	272	-	-	-	1,382
Mean							4.75

Source: Processed Research Data, 2024

Table 9. Recapitulation of Guest Satisfaction Levels Regarding Room Cleanliness at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru

No	Question	VS	S	MS	D	VD	Total
1	How was your initial impression upon entering your room at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru in relation to your expectations?	80	17	-	-	-	97
2	Did the room attendant's cleaning performance meet your expectations?	85	12	-	-	-	97
3	Were the facilities provided consistent with your expectations?	87	10	-	-	-	97
4	I wish to return because the service provided was highly satisfying.	70	27	-	-	-	97
5	I intend to return due to the comfort of my stay and its alignment with my expectations.	75	22	-	-	-	97
6	I intend to return because the facilities I received were adequate and consistent with the applied SOPs.	60	37	-	-	-	97
7	I am willing to recommend Fox Hotel Pekanbaru to friends, family, and others based on the satisfying service I received.	65	32	-	-	-	97
8	I am willing to recommend the guest rooms at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru to friends, family, and others.	74	23	-	-	-	97
9	I am willing to recommend the adequate facilities at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru to friends, family, and others.	84	13	-	-	-	97
Total		679	193	-	-	-	873
Score		3,395	772	-	-	-	4,167
Mean							4.77

Source: Processed Research Data, 2024

As reflected in Table 9, the overall mean guest satisfaction score with respect to room cleanliness at Fox Hotel Pekanbaru stands at 4.77, placing it within the "Very Satisfied" category in accordance

with the Likert scale range of 4.20 to 5.00. The position of this value along the satisfaction continuum is illustrated in Figure 2 below.

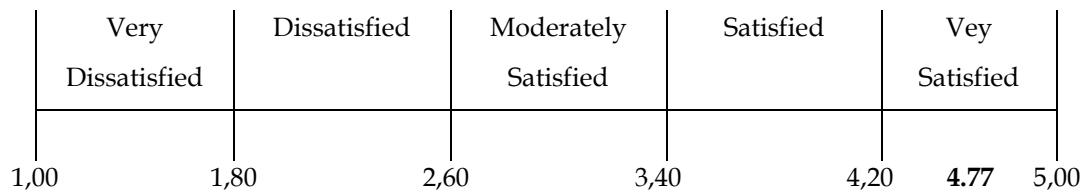


Figure 2. Guest Satisfaction Continuum

Source: Research Data, 2024

CONCLUSION

This study offers clear empirical and structural contributions across three distinct areas. For theoretical advancement in hospitality science, the findings reinforce the application of the SERVQUAL framework within housekeeping departments by demonstrating that the dimensions of tangibility and reliability remain paramount in midscale properties. For the research object at FOX Hotel Pekanbaru, the identification of critical operational constraints, such as depleted chemical cleaning supplies and deteriorating equipment, provides immediate, actionable data for management to optimize logistics, invest in asset replacement, and refine training programs to maintain premium service consistency. Lastly, for future researchers, this study establishes an empirical baseline for regional hotel performance in Sumatra and suggests expanding the analytical scope to incorporate inferential statistics, thereby exploring how workload or employee compensation moderate room attendant productivity and subsequent customer loyalty.

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