

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore how hotel managers in Yogyakarta Indonesia, addressed delays and their subsequent impact on customer satisfaction. The study employed a qualitative research methodology, adopting the pragmatic paradigm and a multiple case study design, to gain an in-depth understanding of managerial strategies when dealing with delays affecting customer experiences. Moreover, the study aimed to offer practical insights and recommendations to enhance managerial approaches in handling delays to ultimately improve customer satisfaction within the hotel industry in Yogyakarta focusing on two hotels as chosen case study Roya Ambarukmo hotel and Tjokro style hotel whereby they are presenting five star hotels and three star hotels consecutively. The study involved a diverse group of managers from two hotels, selected to provide a broad perspective on managerial approaches and decision-making processes. The data utilized comprised detailed information from in-depth interviews and observations of the participants in their professional areas. Data collection was conducted through a combination of these in-depth interviews and direct observations, aiming to explore the different strategies managers employ, their decision-making processes, and how these processes impact customer satisfaction. Observations provided additional context and insights into the practical application of these strategies in real-time scenarios. The collected data were analysed using thematic analysis under the help of NVIVO software, a method chosen to identify, analyse, and report patterns (themes) within the data, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of various managerial techniques in meeting customer expectations. The qualitative methodology allowed for the comprehensive exploration of the techniques, effects, and decision-making processes employed by managers when confronted with delays in service delivery that impact customer satisfaction. The findings from this research showed that the service delays happened and really affected customer satisfactions. Causes of delays such as high demand of the service, understaffing, technology problems and others were underlined. The loss of revenues, negative word of mouth, less reputations and increase of operational cost were the effects of the service delay to the hotels that the study underscored. The study as well separately underscored techniques that were used by the hotel managers to handle and solve service delays when happened; namely acknowledging the issue, offering sincere apologies, and providing compensation to rebuild trust and satisfaction, solving a problem to the best point and having the follow up. It also identified the strategies that were being employed before, during and after the service delays happened such as regular staff training, proactive communication, customer feedback analysis, hiring professional staff, pre-preparation before service, teamwork, technology upgrades, transparent communication and empowering the staff. The findings of this study contribute to the existing body of knowledge by shedding light on the nuanced ways managers address delays and their implications for customer satisfaction. Furthermore, it provides actionable recommendations for hotel managers to improve their strategies and techniques in managing delays and enhancing overall customer experiences in the hotel industry.

Keywords: *Delays; customer satisfaction; customer reaction; service recovery*

