

Women and Their Job Opportunity in Hotel Industry in Bali

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Abstract— This study aimed to find out the opportunities of women graduating from vocational high schools and collage to work in hotels. The respondents of the study were hotel human resources department staff whose duty was recruiting workers. The data collection was conducted by distributing questionnaires by using probability sampling approach, while the data triangulation process was carried out through in-depth interviews by using Tremblay approach. The data were analyzed by using descriptive qualitative method supported by practice theory, feminist theory and other supporting theories. The study found that women's employment opportunities in hotels were between 20% - 40%. Interestingly, they were trusted to work in the front liner and manage the hotel revenue. The study also found that in order to compete, the minimum educational requirement for women was Diploma 1 and they were required to possess a certificate of competence. In fact, women who had higher education and various training experience would have a better chance of being accepted as hotel staff.

Keywords— Women; Opportunity; Hotel; Bali

I. INTRODUCTION

Women graduating from hospitality program both at the level of Vocational High School (Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan/SMK) and Diploma or Undergraduate program certainly expect to be accepted to work as hotel employees in accordance with the graduate profile that becomes the output of the educational institution. The graduate profiles are the role that graduates can play in the field of expertise after completing an education in certain study program [1]. As stated in the curriculum in every educational institution, a graduate profile is a description of the knowledge, attitudes and skills possessed by a graduate who has gone through various processes of learning activities at a school or campus. This is in line with Spronken-Smith et al. [2] who put forward that the graduate profiles are someone's skills, knowledge, attitudes and values, which show that he can work in certain field. In this case, Hill et al. [3] state that through the existance of graduate profiles, educational institutions especially universities want their graduates to be able to develop themselves as a result of completing their education successfully.

There are ample of hospitality educational intritutions in Bali. There are eighty-five vocational high schools with hospitality expertise programs, five state universities that have hospitality study program, as well as dozens of job training institutions that offer hospitality study program. Moreover, there are also various study programs offered by the private educational institutions. This condition leads to the big number of hospitality graduates in Bali. Although the number of hotels in Bali is always increasing from year to year with various star levels, the big number of graduates has implications on the high competition in getting the job. Dickinson and Ineson [4], Carroll, et al. [5] and Fok et al. [6] put forward that the industry including hotels has a way of selecting prospective employees. Fok et al. [6] even emphasize the need for practitioners to play a good role in developing and growing employees' work attitudes in the current generation. Thus, although the number of hotels continues to increase, the employee selection is tougher due to the big number of graduates, including the female graduates. The selection method should be updated due to the change of work attitude of the prospective employees.

In practice, hotel selection of prospective employees requires certain graduate qualifications. Based on the observation at hotels, it was found that most hotels require the prospective workers to have a minimum educational qualification of a Diploma. This applies equally to male and female job seekers. In fact, there are several five-star hotels that require a minimum of Diploma III. It is assumed that they already have competencies that are appropriate to the field, are more emotionally mature, and have more experience, especially through apprenticeship programs. This is interesting to note considering that there are still many graduates of hospitality, especially women who have vocational high school and Diploma 1 qualifications. In addition to investigating the importance of education for prospective employees, especially women, this article examines how the job opportunities are available at hotels for women and the importance of competency certificate as self legality in applying for work.

II. METHOD

The research data was collected by distributing questionnaires by using Google form to the hotels, especially

to Human Resource Department. From the data collection, 79 data were considered valid and could be further analyzed. To support the findings of the questionnaire, there were five hotels used to conduct the in-depth interviews. In selecting the informants, Tremblay approach [7] was used. The subsequent findings were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively with a critical approach and presented informally in a descriptive-narrative form.

III. DISCUSSION

A. Minimum Education Level for Women to Work in Hotels

A research on women's study interests in tourism conducted by Widiastini et al. [8] explained that women, in their development, have an awareness to improve their quality to be able to face work competition presented by the nature of openness, namely globalization and the Asian economic community or MEA. The needs of the tourism industry especially hotels, for a big number of human resources who are able to provide direct services in a professional manner and the increasing number of tourism service provision are the reason for women to continue their studies in tourism. As the consideration before choosing tourism study programs, the students usually ask for information from their seniors who have graduated from the same school (alumni), teachers, parents and look for information in various media. Based on the survey, women prefer to look for information related to the study they will choose through the media, especially social media. In this case, social media which presents various information about opportunities to study about tourism at various levels leads the audience, especially women who graduated from high school/vocational school to find information about further studies.

To convince the users to choose the best applicant, the applicants' education qualification and the institution where they have graduated from are the important things to be considered. It is in line with Chi and Gursoy [9] who explains that the reputation of the program and the quality of the curriculum provided in an educational institution has implications on graduate careers. In this case, based on the findings, compared to vocational high school graduates, hotels prefer diploma graduates, even though it is Diploma 1 graduates. In this context, diploma graduates are considered to have better competency since they join apprenticeship program that strengthens their competency [10]. In addition, the curricula of diploma program are considered in line with industry demands [9]. Thus, even though vocational high school graduates are also accepted by hotels, but when they are given the opportunity to choose, Diploma 1 graduates get more priority, as can be seen in Figure 1 below.

Through questionnaires distributed to users with probability sampling method giving each subject the same opportunity as a respondent, 51% of 79 respondents stated that women who graduated from Diploma 1 had the biggest chance to be accepted as hotel staff. In this context, although hotels recognize that graduates with higher levels are better, hotels consider more special skills possessed by graduates, for the operational work [11]. Diploma 1 graduates are believed to

have special competencies in one area of work. They are indeed set to be graduates who are ready to work in one specific area of expertise. For this reason, they have a high chance of becoming hotel staff. Connolly and McGing [12] show that this industry has a strong preference for hiring people with practical skills. Thus, the practical skills possessed by women graduating from Diploma 1 will be the key to their success to be accepted to work in hotels.

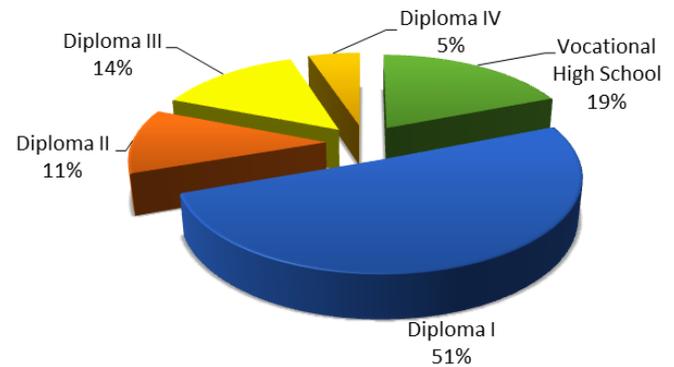


Figure 1. Women's Minimum Education Requirements to Compete in Getting Jobs in Hotels

An interesting point which was also observed in Figure 1 is that female vocational high school graduates get more opportunities compared to Diploma II, III and IV graduates. Female Diploma IV graduates even have a small portion to be accepted to work in hotels. Based on the interviews with the hotel staff conducted by using Tremblay approach [7], it was found that hotels, especially in the operational field, preferred graduates who had practical skills and ego in working. The importance of attitudes in providing services in hotels Nickson et al. [13], in practice, does not necessarily lead the hotels to choose graduates with higher education, who are recognized to have better ways of working. However, practically, hotels prefer individuals who want to be directed to follow the applicable work rules that are suitable for vocational high school graduates. It is due to the reason that women who graduate from vocational high school are considered more willing to follow orders and more willing to be directed than those who have a higher degree.

B. How is The Job Opportunity for Women in Hotels?

Women are considered to have unique work abilities since they are often considered capable of completing many jobs at the same time. This gives them quite easy access to work, including in hotels. In addition, women who are considered to have better ability to control their emotions compared to men, convince the hotel to provide work positions in the front liner. Related to body and emotional resources, Plummer [14] states that someone's ability to control himself and his emotions enables them to be received well in socializing and communicating. In this

case, women who can manage their emotions are needed to carry out operational work in the front liner in the hotels, which is at the front office and food beverage service. As service providers, Supomo [15] and Darsono [16] put forward the reasons why women are considered more capable of running hotel activities. It is because a front office agent is required to have good looks, attitudes and behaviors that have implications on consumer satisfaction with the services provided.

Based on a survey conducted at hotels in Bali, especially at two to five-star hotels, it was found that women's work positions are more likely to be direct service providers (front liners). As shown in Figure 2, work positions as front office are the highest employment opportunities for women. Through interviews conducted directly with the hotels in the purpose of supporting the result of the questionnaire survey, someone working in front office position has work demands that are quite complicated and detailed. The front office is a room that has a very important role in hotels, where effective communication with guests, employees, and other hotel departments is very important in showing the good image of the hotel [17], [18]. In this context, front office duties in answering guest questions about hotel and other guest services, dealing with marketing and sales department requests for information on guest room availability, and answering household department questions regarding guest bookings are some of the routine tasks performed constantly by the front office staffs in their role as a center of communication.

starred hotels in Bali, women are valued as individuals who can provide benefits for the hotels. It is because a vital position becomes an opportunity for women in the hotel sector. Women's involvement in increasing household income is influenced by many factors [19], [20]. Female workers do not only give economic contribution to their household income, but also give contribution to the economic growth and social development of the industry where they work. This phenomenon can also be seen in the activities of women in hotels, which have been shown to have a role in increasing and managing hotel revenues.

Female graduates of vocational high school and hospitality study programs in university are fewer in number than men. It is based on the result of the surveys finding out that average percentage of the female graduate ranges from 30% - 40% of the number of graduates. Despite its lower number, female graduates are absorbed in hotels. Based on Talcot Parson Theory [21], hotels are stated as business that should meet its needs to be able to survive and even exist from the market competition. In the process, the hotel will utilize and manage all its resources in order to show its best quality to its competitors, so that it can become a choice for the market or tourists. This is supported by the idea of Plummer [14] about resources which is related to employee recruitment. It is stated that hotels will choose resources that can support its operations. Women who can manage their emotions well and look attractive are chosen by the hotels to be accepted as employees.

C. Is the Certificate of Competence Important for Women?

The development of the world of work today is getting tougher and has various rules without considering the individuals who are looking for work. In practice, in the hospitality industry, no matter how smart the individual is, without having the legality in the form of a certificate of competence, it will be difficult to be accepted at work. In this case, the hotels as an industry that employs people are required to show the legality of all individuals who work in it. Bagiastuti [22] explains that the importance of competency certification for workers involved in the tourism industry has been regulated in the Indonesian Tourism Act, Law No. 10 of 2009. This regulation states that competency certification is the process of granting certificates to tourism businesses and workers to support the improvement of the quality of tourism products, services, and tourism management, through which the certificates are believed and legalized the knowledge, skills and behavior of someone who works, including as hotel staff. Plummer's theory [14] of symbolic resources mentions that the access owned by a person gives him recognition as well as legitimacy that he is fit to work in certain formal sectors. As a legal entity, hotels are also required to show their quality, including having qualified employees at certain levels of education. In this context, the hotels need employees who already have legitimacy for their education, even though in its development; the hotels do not only demand their employees to have certain educational and work experience certificates, but also certificates of competence.

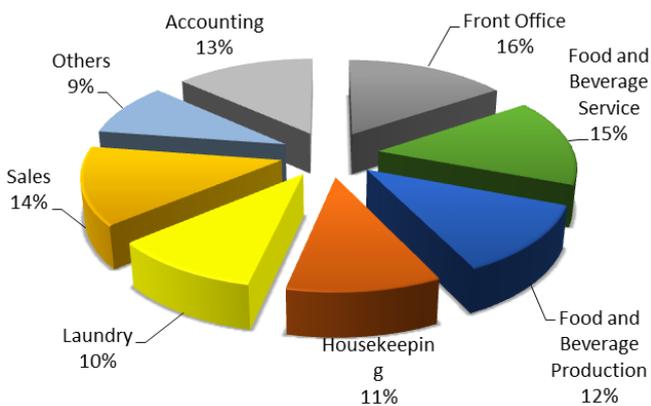


Figure 2. Types of Occupations that Become Opportunities for Women in Hotels

The type of work fields that gives big opportunities for women in hotels in addition to front liner as shown in Figure 2 is the one which is related to hotel finance management, which is accounting. Figure 2 shows that besides being individuals who are trusted to provide good services to consumers (front office 16%, food and beverage service 15%), women who have good communication skills are also very likely to work as sales of 14%, and manage hotel finance or accounting for 13%). In this condition, through a survey conducted by distributing questionnaires to

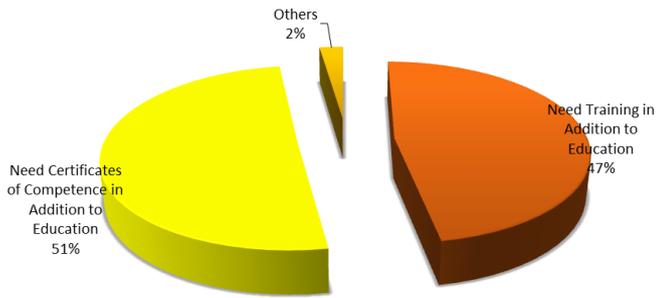


Figure 3 What is needed by Women to be able to have a Good Career in Hotels

The Government Regulation of Republic of Indonesia Number 52 Year 2012 Concerning Competency Certification and Business Certification in Tourism, Article 2 states that through a competency certificate, each worker will obtain legality as an individual working in an area in a hotel, which shows that he is competent and has certain quality according to the certificate. In other words, the competency certificate can show the knowledge and skills possessed by someone, which has implications for convincing the users to ensure the ability of prospective employees to be placed in certain positions [22]–[24]. In its development, as shown in Figure 3, 51% of respondents put forward the importance of competency certificates. Every graduate, including woman, is required to have a certificate in accordance with the field of work they wish to target as their work.

In addition, based on a survey, 47% of respondents suggested that women graduating from hospitality study programs should increase their knowledge and improve their skills, so they can compete in the tough competition. In line with this, Kennedy and White [25] and Gazija [26] explain the importance of training for anyone who works in hotels not only the applicants accepted, but also those who have become hotel workers. The training program is in the purpose of improving their quality and professionalism in working. Likewise, a woman who has just graduated should improve her quality through training as evidenced by having a training certificate, so that in the end she has a better chance than other job seekers.

IV. CONCLUSION

Women graduating from hospitality study program in Bali have good job opportunities in hotels, both in operational and management positions. This study which aimed to investigate the employment opportunities for women in hotels in Bali found that in recruiting employees, hotels do not make a distinction based on gender, but rather look at the experience and ability to work of the job applicants. In practice, the level of education is also the basic consideration for the hotels in choosing the applicants to be accepted. In this study, it was found that hotels prefer women

with a minimum educational qualification of Diploma 1, since women with this qualification is assumed to have competencies according to the field of work they wish to seek. Diploma 1 is considered as the minimum educational level in producing competent graduates. Graduating from Diploma 1 level, women's employment opportunities are not only in operational position but also in management position. However, interestingly, the positions where the women working in hotels are placed are in the front liner and in managing finances, namely the front office, sales and accounting. Female graduates with a minimum of Diploma 1 background also have a competency certificate, although at the vocational level, the graduates are also equipped with a competency certificate as a condition for applying for a job. However, in its development, in addition to the competency certificates, women who have additional work training experience as evidenced by certain training certificates, have better job opportunities. This is because hotels that have a very large supply of workers have high bargaining power, so they can select in a tough way. Thus, the more evidence of legitimacy owned by women job applicants, the greater the opportunity to work in hotels.

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