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Horizontal Communication between Sales and Marketing and Front Office in Supporting Guest Satisfaction at d'primahotel Kualanamu

Muhammad Irwan¹, Dian Purnama Sari²

^{1,2}Department of Marketing Management, Faculty of Management, Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Manajemen Sukma, Medan, Indonesia. Email: mhdirwan2014@gmail.com¹, dianpurnama047@gmail.com²

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine horizontal communication between the Sales and Marketing and Front Office departments in supporting guest satisfaction at d'primahotel Kualanamu. As a transit hotel located near Kualanamu International Airport, the hotel serves guests who require timely, consistent, and reliable services. The study employed a qualitative descriptive approach using in-depth interviews and observations involving a Sales Manager, an Assistant Front Office Manager, Front Desk Agents, and hotel guests. The findings indicate that interdepartmental communication is primarily supported by the Property Management System (PMS), email, and WhatsApp groups. Although these communication channels facilitate information exchange, the findings indicate that the absence of non-verbal cues and differences in departmental Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) may create difficulties in interpreting information and coordinating service delivery. The study also identifies information gaps during the handover of guest requests and operational requirements, which may contribute to service inconsistencies and the need for service recovery by the Front Office. These findings suggest that clearer information-handover procedures and greater alignment of cross-departmental performance indicators are needed to strengthen coordination between Sales and Marketing and Front Office. The study concludes that improving horizontal communication can support more consistent service delivery and contribute to guest satisfaction at d'primahotel Kualanamu.

Keywords: Horizontal Communication, Guest Satisfaction, Sales and Marketing, Front Office, Service Quality.

JEL Code: L83, M31, D12.

I. Introduction

Increasing customer expectations in the digital age require hospitality providers to deliver services that are timely, consistent, and responsive (Buhalis et al., 2023; Hudson & Hudson, 2025; Mercan et al., 2021). Fundamental issues in the hospitality industry often arise from the gap between a company's initial service offerings and the actual delivery of services (Khan, 2020). This gap may be related to weaknesses in cross departmental horizontal communication, particularly when information needs to be transferred between departments operating at the same managerial level. This issue is particularly relevant in airport hotels, where guests often require time of efficient, responsive, and reliable services. d'primahotel Kualanamu is strategically located near Kualanamu International Airport, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra, and serves guests who require timely and reliable services. These guests predominantly include transit air travellers, business people with packed meeting schedules, and cockpit or cabin crew who require time efficiency and swift service

processes. The rapid development of the hospitality sector around Kualanamu International Airport indicates the growing importance of this market segment (Septiant, 2020).

One of the key players serving this market segment is d'primahotel Kualanamu, previously known as Prime Plaza Kualanamu. The hotel is located at Jl. Sultan Serdang No. 88, Tumpatan Nibung, Batang Kuis Sub district, Deli Serdang Regency. Based on digital reviews on various Online Travel Agent (OTA) platforms, such as booking.com ,expedia and include google review, the hotel receives positive evaluations from guests, particularly regarding cleanliness, room size, location, and staff friendliness (Chiang & Huang, 2022). These positive evaluations indicate the importance of maintaining consistent service delivery despite the operational demands associated with an airport hotel environment. The Sales and Marketing Department and the Front Office Department are two departments that have critical points of interaction throughout the guest journey. The Sales and Marketing Department is responsible for promoting hotel products, negotiating partnership contracts with corporate clients (B2B), designing package deals for travel agents, and communicating service arrangements to prospective and existing customers. Meanwhile, the Front Office Department is responsible for implementing many of the services promised to guests, including room allocations, receiving guests, and handling complaints (Özdemir et al., 2019). Therefore, accurate and clear information exchange between these departments is essential to ensure that services delivered by the Front Office correspond with arrangements communicated by Sales and Marketing.

In hotel operations, communication problems may occur when information regarding special facilities, guest requests, or operational requirements is not completely transferred from Sales and Marketing to the Front Office (Sayin & Karaman, 2019). For example, Sales and Marketing staff may agree to provide early check in facilities or other special arrangements for a corporate VIP guest. However, when such information is not properly entered into the Property Management System (PMS), daily logbook, or internal communication channels, the Front Office may not receive the information required to prepare the service. Such information gaps may create inconsistencies between the service expected by guests and the service actually delivered. At d'primahotel Kualanamu, communication between Sales and Marketing and Front Office is supported by several communication channels, including the Property Management System (PMS), email, and WhatsApp groups. Although these channels facilitate information exchange, communication may still be affected by the absence of non verbal cues, differences in departmental Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), varying working hours, and differences in the interpretation of operational messages. Communication effectiveness, therefore, depends not only on whether information is transmitted but also on whether the receiving department understands and implements the information according to its intended meaning. These conditions may become particularly important when guest requests need to be transferred quickly and accurately between departments.

Previous studies have examined organisational and interpersonal communication in the hospitality industry from different perspectives (Luka, 2024). Research on communication between Sales and Marketing and Front Office has identified problems related to the transfer of booking information and coordination between departments (Musadad et al., 2021). Other studies have examined Front Office communication skills and their relationship with customer satisfaction, while research on internal employee communication has investigated communication patterns and their effectiveness in supporting hotel operations (Jawabreh et al., 2022). Studies on horizontal communication have also highlighted the importance of information sharing in handling customer complaints and supporting service delivery (Zhang et al., 2022). However, the existing studies identified above have generally focused on communication conflicts, communication within a particular department, interpersonal communication between employees and guests, or the relationship between communication skills and customer satisfaction. However, these studies provide limited explanation of how horizontal communication operates as an interdepartmental process, particularly how information is transferred, interpreted, and coordinated between Sales and Marketing and Front Office in the daily delivery of hotel services. In particular, there is limited qualitative understanding of how information gaps between these two departments may affect the consistency of service delivery and, consequently, guest satisfaction.

This gap is important because guests at transit airport hotels often have limited tolerance for delays and service inconsistencies due to their travel schedules.

Accordingly, this study focuses on horizontal communication between the Sales and Marketing and Front Office departments at d'primahotel Kualanamu. The study aims to examine how information is communicated between the two departments, identify communication barriers and information gaps that occur during the transfer of guest related information, and explore how these communication processes contribute to service consistency and guest satisfaction. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, this study seeks to provide an in depth understanding of communication practices, information interpretation, and interdepartmental coordination in the delivery of guest services. This study therefore contributes practical insights for hotel management by highlighting the importance of clear information handover procedures and cross departmental coordination. The study also contributes to hospitality communication literature by examining horizontal communication between Sales and Marketing and Front Office in the specific context of a transit airport hotel.

II. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1. Horizontal Communication and Interdepartmental Coordination

Communication is an essential process in organizational operations because it enables employees and departments to exchange information, coordinate activities, and achieve shared organizational objectives (Baker, 2008). In the hospitality industry, communication becomes particularly important because hotel services involve multiple departments that must work together to respond to guest needs. Information concerning reservations, guest preferences, special requests, room availability, arrival times, and service arrangements may pass through several employees and departments before the service is delivered. Therefore, the effectiveness of hotel operations depends not only on communication between employees and guests but also on communication among employees and departments. One important form of organizational communication is horizontal communication (Stevanović & Gmitrović, 2016). Horizontal communication refers to the exchange of information among employees or departments that occupy relatively similar organizational levels. In hotel operations, horizontal communication enables departments to coordinate activities without relying exclusively on formal vertical communication. This form of communication is particularly relevant when several departments are involved in fulfilling the same guest request. Sales and Marketing, for example, may receive information regarding reservations, corporate clients, special arrangements, or guest expectations, while Front Office employees are responsible for receiving guests and implementing relevant service arrangements. The quality and timeliness of information transferred between these departments may therefore influence how consistently guest expectations are addressed.

Previous hospitality research demonstrates the importance of interdepartmental communication in hotel operations. Musadad et al. (2021), through a qualitative study at Mercure Bandung Nexa, examined communication between the Food and Beverage and Sales and Marketing departments. Their findings showed that interdepartmental communication supported service delivery, although sudden events could disrupt the communication process. The study demonstrates that communication should be understood as an operational process involving senders, receivers, messages, communication channels, noise, feedback, and effects rather than simply as an interpersonal activity. Similarly, Fakhri and Marini (2019) found that downward, upward, and horizontal communication within a hotel Front Office department remained relatively weak, indicating that communication problems can emerge even within departments that are directly involved in guest services. More recent hospitality research also emphasizes the organizational importance of internal communication. Duarte & Silva (2023), for example, found that satisfaction with internal communication was associated with employees' organizational support and job satisfaction in the hospitality sector. Their findings suggest that internal communication contributes to the quality of employee organization relationships and

should therefore be considered part of organizational management rather than merely an administrative activity. Liu-Lastres et al. (2024), further demonstrated that the quality and transparency of internal communication are important in tourism organizations, particularly when employees need timely and reliable information. These findings reinforce the argument that effective communication requires not only the transmission of information but also clarity, transparency, timeliness, and appropriate interpretation. In the context of hotel operations, horizontal communication can consequently be understood as a mechanism for interdepartmental coordination. When departments exchange accurate and timely information, employees are better positioned to coordinate their tasks and respond to guest requirements. Conversely, when information is incomplete, delayed, misunderstood, or communicated through inappropriate channels, coordination may become difficult. Thus, examining horizontal communication provides an important starting point for understanding how internal communication processes may influence service delivery.

2.2. Communication Breakdown and Service Delivery

Communication breakdown occurs when information is not transmitted, received, interpreted, or responded to as intended (Verma, 2013). In organizational settings, breakdown may result from incomplete information, unclear messages, delays, differences in interpretation, inappropriate communication channels, or the absence of feedback. In hotel operations, these problems can have immediate operational consequences because employees often need to respond to guest requests within a limited period. The relationship between communication and hotel service delivery is particularly important because hospitality services are produced and consumed through a sequence of interactions involving different employees and departments (Best & Serves, 2011). A guest may communicate a request to the Sales and Marketing department before arrival, while the Front Office is expected to recognize and implement the request when the guest arrives. If the information is not transferred accurately, the Front Office employee may not be prepared to provide the expected service. The problem is therefore not necessarily caused by a lack of willingness to serve the guest but may arise from a breakdown in the internal communication process.

Musadad et al., (2021) illustrate this issue by identifying sudden events as an important source of disruption in interdepartmental communication. Their findings indicate that even when communication generally operates effectively, unexpected operational circumstances can interfere with information exchange between departments. This finding is relevant to hotels because service operations are dynamic and often require employees to adjust rapidly to changes in guest requests and operational conditions. Communication problems can also occur when the information provided by one department is interpreted differently by another department. The sender may assume that the receiver understands the message, while the receiver may interpret the message according to different operational assumptions. Without clarification and feedback, such differences can create information gaps. In a hotel, an information gap may concern the timing of a guest's arrival, room requirements, special requests, payment arrangements, or other service expectations. If these gaps are not identified and resolved, they may influence the consistency of service delivery.

Front Office operations are especially dependent on effective internal communication because the department functions as one of the main points of contact between the hotel and its guests. Fakhri and Marini (2019) emphasize that Front Office employees need effective communication not only with guests but also with colleagues and other departments in order to handle guest requests quickly and appropriately. This suggests that communication competence at the individual level must be supported by organizational communication practices that facilitate the transfer of information across departments. Therefore, communication breakdown should not be viewed only as an interpersonal problem. It can also be understood as an organizational process involving information flow, communication channels, interpretation, feedback, and coordination. This perspective is important for the present study because the research focuses on how information moves between Sales and Marketing and Front Office and how communication barriers may influence the consistency of services provided to guests.

2.3. Communication, Service Quality, and Guest Satisfaction

Guest satisfaction is closely associated with guests perceptions of the service they receive. In hospitality, satisfaction can be influenced by the extent to which hotel services meet or exceed guest expectations (Lu et al., 2015; Saut & Bie, 2024). Communication contributes to this process because guests form expectations through information provided by hotel employees, while employees use communication to understand and respond to guest needs. Communication between hotel employees and guests has been examined in several recent studies. Wulanda et al. (2024), for example, found that interpersonal communication performed by Front Office employees contributed to improving the guest experience at Asialink Hotel by Prasantry Batam. Effective communication was associated with the employees' ability to interact with guests in a friendly and appropriate manner and to support a positive guest experience. Similarly, Suesilowati et al. (2025), found a significant positive relationship between personal communication by room attendants and guest satisfaction at Manhattan Hotel Jakarta. These findings indicate that communication at the employee guest level is an important component of hospitality service.

However, guest satisfaction is not produced solely through direct interaction between employees and guests. The quality of that interaction may depend on information and coordination occurring behind the service encounter. A Front Office employee may communicate professionally with a guest, but the employee's ability to respond accurately can be constrained when relevant information from another department is incomplete or delayed. Consequently, internal communication may function as an underlying organizational process that supports the consistency of guest-facing service. The importance of information provision is also supported by research in tourism. Nguyen & Chang (2024), examined the role of information provision in travellers' satisfaction and demonstrated that information provided to travellers can influence their satisfaction. Although their study focuses on information provided to travellers rather than specifically on internal hotel communication, the findings reinforce the importance of accurate and relevant information in shaping service experiences. The connection between internal communication and service outcomes can therefore be conceptualized as a process rather than as a simple direct relationship. Effective horizontal communication facilitates accurate information transfer between departments. Accurate information supports interdepartmental coordination, while effective coordination enables employees to deliver services more consistently. Consistent service delivery can then contribute to a more positive guest experience and higher guest satisfaction. In contrast, communication breakdowns may produce inconsistent service, unmet expectations, or delays, which may negatively influence guest perceptions. Based on this perspective, the relationship can be represented analytically as follows:

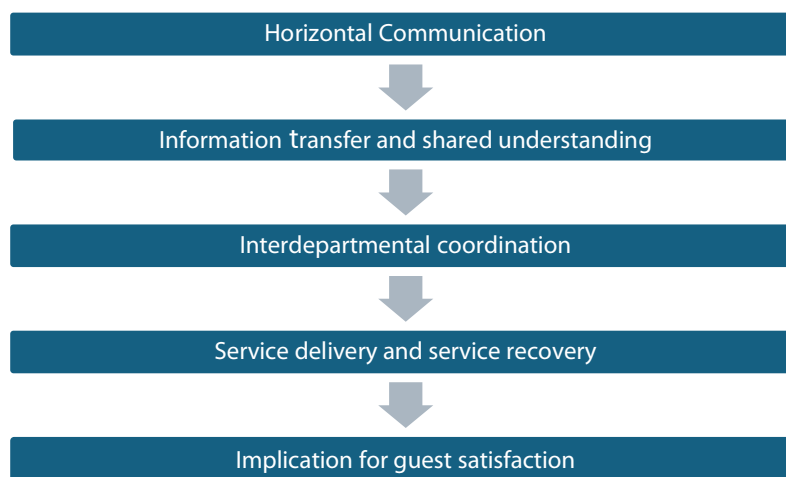


Figure1. Conceptual Framework

This framework is not intended to represent a statistical causal model. Rather, it provides an analytical perspective for interpreting the qualitative findings of the present study. It enables the researchers to examine how employees communicate, how information is transferred and interpreted, what barriers emerge, and how these processes are connected to service delivery and guest satisfaction.

2.4. Theoretical Perspective on Organizational Communication

The present study is grounded in the perspective that organizational communication is a process through which information is exchanged, interpreted, and coordinated among organizational members (Papa et al., 2008). Within a hotel, communication is not limited to formal messages from management to employees. It also includes upward, downward, and horizontal communication that enables employees to coordinate operational activities. Horizontal communication is particularly relevant to the present study because Sales and Marketing and Front Office perform different but interconnected functions. Sales and Marketing is commonly involved in communicating with clients, managing reservations or business arrangements, and identifying guest related expectations, whereas Front Office is directly involved in receiving and serving guests during their stay. Because these responsibilities are interconnected, information received by one department may need to be transferred to another department before a service can be delivered.

From an organizational communication perspective, the quality of communication depends on several interconnected elements, including the sender, message, communication channel, receiver, potential noise or barriers, feedback, and resulting effect. Musadad et al. (2021) applied these elements in examining interdepartmental communication in a hotel context and demonstrated their relevance to understanding how communication supports service delivery. The theoretical perspective is also supported by contemporary research on internal communication in hospitality. Duarte and Silva (2023) demonstrate that internal communication is related to important organizational outcomes among hospitality employees, while Liu-Lastres et al. (2024) emphasize the importance of timely and transparent communication in tourism organizations. Together, these studies indicate that communication quality involves more than the frequency of information exchange. Employees must receive information that is sufficiently clear, timely, transparent, and relevant to their operational responsibilities. Accordingly, the present study views communication as an organizational coordination process. This perspective supports the investigation of how Sales and Marketing and Front Office exchange guest related information, how employees interpret that information, how communication barriers arise, and how the resulting coordination affects the consistency of guest service.

2.5. Research Gap and Conceptual Position

The literature reviewed above indicates that communication has been examined from several perspectives in hospitality research. Existing studies have discussed internal communication within hotel departments, interdepartmental communication, communication between employees and guests, and the relationship between communication and guest satisfaction. Musadad et al. (2021), for example, examined communication between Food and Beverage and Sales and Marketing, while Fakhri and Marini (2019) focused on internal communication within a Front Office department. More recent studies have examined internal communication and employee outcomes (Duarte & Silva, 2023), internal communication in tourism organizations (Liu-Lastres et al., 2024), Front Office interpersonal communication and guest experience (Wulanda et al., 2024), and employee guest communication and guest satisfaction (Suesilowati et al., 2025). Although these studies provide important evidence, the existing literature has generally focused on communication within a particular department, communication between employees and guests, broader internal communication, or measurable relationships between communication and hospitality outcomes. Limited attention has been given to how horizontal communication between Sales and Marketing and Front Office is carried out, interpreted, and managed in the daily operation of a transit airport hotel. In particular,

there is limited qualitative understanding of how information gaps between these two departments may affect the consistency of service delivery and, consequently, guest satisfaction. This gap is important because guests at transit airport hotels often have limited tolerance for delays and service inconsistencies due to their travel schedules.

This gap is theoretically significant because it shifts attention from communication as an individual interpersonal skill to communication as an interdepartmental organizational process. By examining how information is transmitted, interpreted, and coordinated between Sales and Marketing and Front Office, the present study extends the understanding of how internal communication processes may shape the consistency of service delivery and the guest experience. Empirically, the study provides context-specific evidence from a transit airport hotel, where operational coordination and timely information exchange are particularly important. Accordingly, this study focuses on horizontal communication between the Sales and Marketing and Front Office departments at d'primahotel Kualanamu for guests satisfaction index. The study aims to examine how information is communicated between the two departments, identify communication barriers and information gaps that occur during the transfer of guest related information, and explore how these communication processes contribute to service consistency and guest satisfaction. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, this study seeks to provide an in depth understanding of communication practices, information interpretation, and interdepartmental coordination in the delivery of guest services. The literature reviewed above provides the basis for identifying the empirical and theoretical position of the present study. Rather than testing a statistical relationship between communication and guest satisfaction, this study seeks to understand the communication process through which guest related information is exchanged and coordinated between departments. The conceptual position of the study can therefore be summarized as follows: effective horizontal communication facilitates accurate information transfer; accurate information transfer supports interdepartmental coordination effective coordination contributes to consistent service delivery and consistent service delivery may support positive guest experiences and guest satisfaction.

III. Research Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to obtain an in depth understanding of horizontal communication between the Sales and Marketing and Front Office departments and its implications for service delivery and guest satisfaction at d'primahotel Kualanamu (Hollstein, 2011). A qualitative descriptive design was selected because the study focuses on describing communication practices, experiences, perceptions, information exchanges, and operational interactions as they occur in their natural organizational context. Rather than measuring a statistical relationship between communication and guest satisfaction, the study seeks to understand how guest-related information is communicated, interpreted, coordinated, and implemented across departments. The study was guided by the following research questions: (1) How is horizontal communication between the Sales and Marketing and Front Office departments carried out in the daily operations of d'primahotel Kualanamu? (2) What communication barriers and information gaps occur during the transfer of guest-related information between the two departments? and (3) How do these communication processes contribute to service consistency and guest satisfaction?

The research data consisted of primary and secondary data (Almusaed et al., 2025). Primary data were obtained through in depth interviews and passive participant observations of hotel operational activities. Interview data consisted of participants' accounts of communication practices, information transfer, communication barriers, coordination processes, and experiences in handling guest-related requests. Observation data consisted of field notes concerning communication activities, information handovers, coordination between departments, and service-related interactions. Secondary data were obtained from relevant company documents, including Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), internal communication records, and customer reviews on online travel agency platforms like a booking.com, expedia and google review relating to the hotel's services. These sources were used to complement and cross check information obtained from interviews and observations. The research informants were selected using purposive sampling

(Ahmad & Wilkins, 2025). The selection criteria included direct involvement in the communication process between Sales and Marketing and Front Office, sufficient work experience to provide relevant information, and knowledge of guest related operational procedures. The informants comprised one Assistant Front Office Manager, one Sales and Marketing staff member, two Front Office staff members, and one hotel guests from corporate client and one hotel guest from online travel agent. The hotel guests were included primarily as supporting informants to provide an external perspective on the consistency of service experienced by guests. Data adequacy was considered when the information obtained from different informants began to show recurring patterns and no substantially new themes emerged. Additional information was sought when necessary to clarify or confirm emerging findings.

The researcher served as the primary instrument or human instrument in the study. Supporting instruments included semi structured interview guidelines, observation sheets, a voice recorder, field notes, and documentation. The interview guidelines were developed according to the research questions and the analytical dimensions of horizontal communication. The observation sheet was used to record relevant communication and coordination activities during hotel operations, while field notes were used to document contextual information and the researcher's observations. Interviews were conducted in a semi structured format, allowing the researcher to ask predetermined questions while also developing follow up questions when participants provided information requiring clarification or elaboration. With participants permission, interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed for analysis. Data collection was conducted through three complementary methods: in depth interviews, passive participant observation, and documentary analysis (Rahardjo, 2011). During the interviews, the researcher explored how information was exchanged between Sales and Marketing and Front Office, how employees interpreted operational messages, what communication barriers occurred, and how employees responded when information was incomplete or unclear. Passive participant observation was conducted without directly participating in hotel operations. The researcher observed communication and coordination activities related to guest services and recorded relevant events in field notes. Documentary analysis was conducted by examining relevant SOPs, internal communication records, and available customer reviews. The use of these three methods enabled the researcher to compare information obtained through different sources and methods.

The analysis was guided by an organizational communication perspective, particularly horizontal communication. Horizontal communication was examined as an interdepartmental process involving the exchange, interpretation, and coordination of information between employees or departments operating at a relatively similar organizational level. Four analytical dimensions were used to organize the qualitative data: information transparency, work coordination, accuracy of message delivery, and resolution of operational issues. These dimensions were used as analytical categories rather than statistical measures. The findings were subsequently examined in relation to service consistency and guest satisfaction by identifying how communication practices facilitated or hindered the delivery of services to hotel guests. Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Miles et al., 1996). First, interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary data were reviewed and reduced by identifying information relevant to the research questions. The relevant data were coded and grouped into recurring categories, including information transparency, work coordination, message delivery accuracy, communication barriers, information gaps, operational problem resolution, service consistency, and guest satisfaction. Second, the coded data were displayed in descriptive narratives and organized according to the emerging themes to facilitate comparison across informants and data sources. Third, conclusions were drawn continuously by identifying recurring patterns, comparing them with the research questions and theoretical framework, and verifying interpretations against the available evidence. The credibility of the findings was maintained through source triangulation and methodological triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from the Assistant Front Office Manager, Sales and Marketing staff, Front Office staff, and hotel guests. Methodological triangulation was conducted by comparing findings from interviews, observations, and documentary analysis. When discrepancies were identified, the researcher reviewed the relevant field notes,

interview statements, and documentary evidence to clarify the interpretation before drawing conclusions. This process was used to strengthen the credibility and consistency of the qualitative findings.

IV. Result and Discussion

4.1. Information Transfer between Sales and Marketing and Front Office

The findings indicate that communication between the Sales and Marketing and Front Office departments is mainly conducted through the Property Management System (PMS), email, and WhatsApp groups. These communication channels facilitate the transfer of information concerning reservations, guest requests, special arrangements, and operational requirements. However, the findings also indicate that the availability of communication channels does not always guarantee that information is received and interpreted consistently by both departments. This finding is consistent with Rara and Novitasari (2021), who found that internal communication between Sales and Marketing and Front Office may become problematic when information related to reservations, guest requests, or operational instructions is not transferred clearly. Their study emphasized the importance of effective internal communication in reducing organizational conflict between the two departments. Similarly, the present study identifies information transfer as an important part of daily coordination between Sales and Marketing and Front Office. However, this study extends the previous findings by focusing not only on the occurrence of communication problems but also on how information is interpreted and followed up during the delivery of guest services in a transit airport hotel. The findings further suggest that communication problems may occur when information is incomplete, delivered without sufficient context, or not updated through the appropriate communication channel. For example, information regarding special guest requests or specific arrangements may require further clarification by Front Office staff before the service can be provided. In this situation, the communication process involves more than simply transmitting information; it also requires shared understanding between the departments. Therefore, effective horizontal communication depends on both the availability of communication media and the accuracy and completeness of the information exchanged.

4.2. Differences in Message Interpretation and Communication Barriers

Another important finding concerns differences in the interpretation of information exchanged between departments. Although PMS, email, and WhatsApp provide convenient and relatively fast communication, written messages do not always contain non verbal cues such as tone, facial expression, or immediate clarification. Consequently, messages concerning urgency, responsibility, or specific guest requirements may sometimes be interpreted differently by the receiving department. This finding is in line with Fitri and Afni (2024), who identified semantic difficulties and differences in the interpretation of internal communication in hotel operations. However, the present study provides a different emphasis because the communication examined involves two departments with different operational responsibilities. Sales and Marketing is primarily concerned with reservations, promotions, guest arrangements, and revenue-related objectives, whereas Front Office is directly responsible for handling guests and implementing service arrangements at the operational level. Differences in departmental priorities may therefore influence how information is understood and acted upon. The findings also indicate that differences in Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) may contribute to different departmental priorities. When departments evaluate performance using different operational targets, employees may give attention to different aspects of the same guest request. This condition does not necessarily indicate a failure of communication itself, but it may create additional coordination requirements. Information that is considered complete from the perspective of one department may require additional clarification from another department before it can be implemented. Thus, horizontal communication should be understood as a coordination process in which information must be mutually understood and translated into appropriate operational action.

4.3. Communication, Service Delivery, and Guest Satisfaction

The findings suggest that the quality of interdepartmental communication has implications for service delivery. When guest related information is transferred accurately and understood by Front Office staff, the department can prepare the required service more effectively. Conversely, information gaps may require Front Office employees to clarify the request, confirm details, or make adjustments during service delivery. These additional processes may influence the consistency and efficiency of service provided to guests. This finding supports previous research emphasizing the importance of communication in hospitality service. Pradana et al. (2023) found that Front Office communication skills were related to guest satisfaction, while Yulius (2024) highlighted the importance of Front Office staff communication in supporting guest satisfaction and guests' intention to return. These studies primarily examine communication from the perspective of employees who interact directly with guests. The present study complements this perspective by showing that guest facing communication may also be influenced by communication that occurs before or behind the service interaction, particularly between Sales and Marketing department and Front Office department. The present findings therefore extend the existing discussion of hospitality communication by connecting internal horizontal communication with the consistency of guest service. Rather than viewing guest satisfaction only as an outcome of direct interaction between employees and guests, the findings suggest that the internal coordination process can also form part of the service-delivery process. Accurate information transfer can help Front Office employees respond to guest needs, whereas incomplete information may require additional coordination before the requested service can be provided.

4.4. Communication and Service Recovery

The findings also indicate that Front Office employees may become involved in service recovery when information received from Sales and Marketing does not fully correspond to the guest's expectations or operational conditions. In such situations, Front Office staff may need to clarify information, communicate with other departments, and provide an appropriate response to the guest. This finding is related to Novia (2021), who examined horizontal communication in handling customer complaints through Online Travel Agents. Novia's study demonstrates the importance of communication across organizational levels and functions when responding to customer-related problems. The present study differs in that it places greater emphasis on the preventive role of horizontal communication. Effective information transfer between Sales and Marketing and Front Office may help reduce the possibility of misunderstanding before the guest directly experiences a service problem. The findings are also relevant to Yulius (2024) and Stephanie Tanto and Tiffany (2025), who emphasize the importance of communication skills in Front Office operations and employee performance. However, the present study suggests that effective service recovery cannot rely solely on the communication skills of Front Office employees. The quality of information provided by other departments is also relevant because Front Office staff depend on accurate information when responding to guest requests. Therefore, service recovery should be considered not only an individual frontline responsibility but also a result of interdepartmental coordination.

V. Conclusion

Based on the results of the qualitative analysis and discussion, horizontal communication between the Sales and Marketing and Front Office departments at d'primahotel Kualanamu faces challenges related to ineffective information transfer, structural barriers, and departmental silo mentality. The reliance on the Property Management System (PMS), email, and WhatsApp groups often results in the loss of contextual meaning, including urgency and nonverbal communication, while differences in departmental Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) contribute to incomplete information delivery and insufficient coordination. These communication breakdowns can lead to booking errors, room inventory discrepancies, and service

failures that negatively affect guest satisfaction, particularly among transit travellers who require efficient and reliable hotel services. Front Office staff consequently rely on empathetic communication and service recovery strategies to manage guest complaints and maintain service quality and the hotel's corporate reputation.

Based on these findings, the study recommends that executive management strengthen cross-departmental coordination by reviewing and aligning handover Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), conducting regular interdepartmental briefings, and integrating operational KPIs to reduce silo mentality. The Sales and Marketing department should improve the accuracy of booking remarks and special requests in the PMS and confirm urgent instructions directly with Front Office staff, while the Front Office department should maintain discipline in reviewing operational communications, updating daily logs, and applying effective service recovery practices. Future researchers are encouraged to develop quantitative studies examining the financial implications of internal communication failures, particularly revenue leakage and compensation costs associated with guest complaints.

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