



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**FRONTLINE EMPLOYEES' SERVICE RECOVERY  
PERFORMANCE IN MALAYSIAN HOTELS**

**NIK ROZANA BINTI NIK MOHD MASDEK**

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**MASTER OF SCIENCE  
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**FRONTLINE EMPLOYEES' SERVICE RECOVERY PERFORMANCE IN  
MALAYSIAN HOTELS**

**By**

**NIK ROZANA BINTI NIK MOHD MASDEK**

**Thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,  
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science**

**September 2010**



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science

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By

**NIK ROZANA BINTI NIK MOHD MASDEK**

**September 2010**

**Chair: Yuhanis Abdul Aziz, PhD**

**Faculty: Economics and Management**

There are many aspects in which service failures can occur, especially in a high-contact service setting. In any scenario where service failures do occur, frontline employees often play a critical role in addressing customer dissatisfaction, and this underscores the importance of examining employee's Service Recovery Performance (SRP). Majority of past studies chose to test their model in the banking and manufacturing industries. Empirical findings within the hotel industry is seen as scarce. This study investigates a model of service recovery performance of frontline employees in the hotel industry, based on established model by Boshoff and Allen (2000). It investigates the relationship between SRP and selected organizational variables; customer service orientation, rewarding service excellence, empowerment, training, teamwork, role ambiguity and



organizational commitment, as well as the impact that employees' effective SRP may have on two identified outcome variables; job satisfaction and intentions to resign. However, there seems to be a gap in the model whereby it does not consider employee attitude as part of the antecedents. Existing model reflects a modification and refinement of previous model, hence an incorporation of motivation and trait competitiveness as part of the variables as having impact on employees' SRP. Possible predictor variables of SRP were also given attention to. Additionally, unlike the majority of previous studies which focuses mainly from a western point of view, this study was carried out in an eastern setting.

Frontline employees in Malaysian hotels were chosen as the respondents of the study. Questionnaires were distributed through mail survey for those outside of the Klang Valley. A total of 727 frontline hotel employees participated in this study. Data was then statistically analyzed using the SPSS version 16 software. Descriptive statistics gives a general description of the study's respondents. Comparative analysis using Independent Sample T-test and One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is chosen to determine any existence of differences between relevant data. Factor Analysis is conducted as a means to verify the underlying factors or dimensions which would possibly represent the interrelationships of the variables in this study. Pearson Correlation is further used to establish relationship between frontline employees' SRP and the identified antecedents as well as to answer the proposed hypotheses. Standard multiple regression analysis is also employed as the method for prediction purposes.

Evidence was found to support all 11 hypotheses through the correlation results. This indicates that each construct have a significant relationship with SRP. Results from regression analysis determine that empowerment makes the strongest unique contribution in explaining frontline employees' SRP. Motivation was the second highest followed by role ambiguity. Teamwork falls in the fourth place while trait competitiveness made the least contribution towards predicting SRP. The findings from this study provides interesting insights and results for discussion, while also extending previous research in the areas of service recovery, particularly with regard to frontline employee's performance. On the whole, this study contributes to the present knowledge of SRP by integrating several antecedents and outcomes in a single, comprehensive model of SRP. This study also establishes the importance of managing frontline employees in order to achieve the objectives of a competitive service organization.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**PRESTASI PEMULIHAN PERKHIDMATAN PEKERJA BARISAN HADAPAN  
DI DALAM INDUSTRI PERHOTELAN DI MALAYSIA**

Oleh

**NIK ROZANA BINTI NIK MOHD MASDEK**

**September 2010**

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Terdapat banyak aspek dimana kegagalan perkhidmatan (service failure) boleh berlaku terutamanya di dalam perkhidmatan yang melibatkan pertembungan atau sua muka yang tinggi antara pekerja dan pelanggan (high-contact service). Dalam apa jua keadaan dimana kegagalan perkhidmatan berlaku, pekerja barisan hadapan yang banyak memainkan peranan penting dalam menghadapi ketidakpuasan hati pelanggan. Di sini ditekankan betapa pentingnya Prestasi Pemulihan Perkhidmatan (PPP) (Service Recovery Performance) seseorang pekerja barisan hadapan itu dikaji. Kebanyakan penyelidikan sebelum ini memilih untuk menguji model mereka di institusi perbankan dan industri pembuatan. Hasil dapatan kajian daripada industri perhotelan amat jarang ditemui. Kajian ini memberi fokus kepada sebuah model PPP oleh pekerja barisan



hadapan di dalam industri perhotelan, berlandaskan model sedia ada yang telah dibangunkan oleh Boshoff dan Allen (2000). Ia bertujuan mengkaji perhubungan di antara PPP dan pembolehubah organisasi terpilih; orientasi khidmat pelanggan, ganjaran perkhidmatan cemerlang, 'empowerment', latihan, kerjasama, kesamaran peranan, dan komitmen pada organisasi, serta kesannya terhadap dua pembolehubah; kepuasan kerja dan niat untuk berhenti kerja. Walaubagaimanapun, model asal tersebut dilihat mempunyai kekurangan kerana tidak mengambilkira sikap pekerja sebagai sebahagian daripada faktor-faktor yang menyumbang kepada PPP pekerja barisan hadapan. Hal ini mendorong model asal tersebut diubah atau diperbaiki dengan memasukkan pembolehubah motivasi dan persaingan sebagai dua faktor sikap pekerja yang mampu memberi impak terhadap PPP. Pembolehubah peramal terhadap PPP juga turut diberi perhatian. Di samping itu, berbeza dengan kebanyakan penyelidikan sebelum ini yang rata-rata melihat dari sudut Negara Barat, kajian ini pula dijalankan dengan mengambilkira perspektif Negara Asia.

Pekerja barisan hadapan di hotel-hotel di Malaysia telah dipilih sebagai responden di dalam kajian ini. Borang soal-selidik diedarkan melalui pos bagi hotel yang berada di luar kawasan Lembah Klang. Sejumlah 727 pekerja barisan hadapan mengambil bahagian di dalam kajian ini. Data kemudian dianalisis secara statistik menggunakan perisian SPSS Versi 16. Statistik deskriptif memberikan gambaran umum tentang profil responden. Analisis pembezaan menggunakan *Independent sample t-test* dan *ANOVA* dipilih untuk menentukan sekiranya terdapat sebarang perbezaan pada data-data terpilih yang relevan. Analisis Faktor dijalankan sebagai kaedah mengenalpasti faktor-faktor



atau dimensi yang mewakili kesinambungan perhubungan di antara pembolehubah dalam kajian ini. Selain itu, Korelasi Pearson digunakan untuk menentukan perhubungan antara PPP pekerja barisan hadapan dan pembolehubah kajian, di samping menjawab hipotesis yang telah dikemukakan. Regresi Berbilang pula dipilih sebagai kaedah membuat ramalan.

Bukti telah didapati bagi menyokong semua sebelas hipotesis menerusi dapatan korelasi. Ini menunjukkan setiap pembolehubah mempunyai hubungan yang signifikan dengan PPP. Dapatan daripada analisis regresi pula mendapati '*empowerment*' membuat sumbangan terbesar dalam meramal PPP. Motivasi muncul sebagai peramal kedua, diikuti dengan kesamaran kerja. Kerjasama jatuh di tempat keempat manakala persaingan menyumbang sebagai peramal yang paling rendah signifikannya. Dapatan kajian ini memberikan hasil yang menarik untuk dibincangkan sementara meneruskan penyelidikan terdahulu dalam bidang pemulihan perkhidmatan, khususnya melibatkan pekerja barisan hadapan. Secara keseluruhan, kajian ini telah menyumbang kepada pengetahuan sedia ada PPP dengan mengintegrasikan beberapa pembolehubah dalam satu model PPP yang komprehensif. Kajian ini juga menjelaskan pentingnya sesebuah organisasi itu menguruskan pekerja barisan hadapan mereka dengan baik bagi mencapai objektif sebuah organisasi perkhidmatan yang berdaya saing.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 23 September 2010 to conduct the final examination of **Nik Rozana binti Nik Mohd Masdek** on her thesis entitled “**Frontline Employees’ Service Recovery Performance in Malaysian hotels**” in accordance with the Universities and University College Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Master of Science.

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.

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**NIK ROZANA BINTI NIK MOHD MASDEK**

Date: 23 September 2010



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
MAH	Malaysian Association of Hotels
MLR	Multiple Linear Regression
PCR	Principal Component Analysis
PPP	Prestasi Pemulihan Perkhidmatan
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
SRP	Service Recovery Performance
TARP	Technical Assistance Research Program



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