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Study of the Warung Kongkow Restaurant Operations at UTC Hotel Semarang during the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The research is to observe the phenomenon as the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the tourism industry, especially the hotel and restaurant industry. This study focuses on Warung Kongkow Restaurant Operations at UTC Hotel Semarang during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The study includes the restaurant operations in a pandemic situation by applying the CHSE protocol and the application of new SOPs in restaurant operations. The implementation of the CHSE protocol is not only for employees and restaurant management but also for guests. The result of this research is that Warung Kongkow Restaurant has implemented the CHSE protocol in its operation and has been verified and certified. The implementation of CHSE protocol is in the form of a restaurant SOP which refers to the restaurant operation guide during a pandemic era implemented by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy

Keywords: Pandemic, Operation, Standard, Restaurant, Hotel.

1. Introduction

The tourism industry in Indonesia is principal in increasing the country's foreign exchange. One source of foreign exchange that exists in the tourism sector is a hotel. "Hotels are buildings that commercially provide lodging facilities to the general public including services such as lodging, luggage, food and beverage, use of furniture and decoration facilities, as well as laundry." (Endar Sri, 1996: 8). Guests have needs and want that are determining by their level of importance and satisfaction. With the increasing variety of outside the home activities, food needs that must be satisfied are also increasing. The hotel seizes this opportunity as one of its primary sources of revenue besides room sales, namely the sales of food and beverage. And hotel restaurant is ready to pamper guests who stay with this service.

In December 2019, the world was shocked by the emergence of the Covid-19 virus. It is an infectious disease discovered in Wuhan, China, and was later declared a pandemic because of its global spread. The Covid-19 pandemic has had devastating impacts on many economic sectors, including the tourism industry. Many companies in the tourism industries have had to close down due to the absence of visitors caused by the lockdown (regional quarantine) policies in some countries and restrictions on social activities.

The policy of temporarily closing the tourism industry sector has affected many hotels. The government has implemented the policy of Large-Scale Social Restrictions (Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar-PSBB), Community Activity Restrictions (Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat-PKM), and lockdowns in several places, making tourism business even more difficult. These obstacles have been continuing since the

Covid-19 pandemic struck Indonesia. Many hotels have temporarily closed their businesses and laid off some of their employees.

Hotel UTC Semarang is a three-star hotel in the western area of Semarang. It has been adapting the operational restrictions which affect the services it provides. This policy has also affected Warung Kongkow restaurant at Hotel UTC Semarang. It is one of the food and beverage service outlets for hotel guests and the public. The restrictions on economic activities have decreased the occupancy rate of rooms that also influences the restaurant operations. Modification and creation of new SOPs are needed to overcome operational obstacles, to control and prevent the spread of the coronavirus from entering the restaurant's operations environment. Health protocols for virus prevention are implemented by making visitor restrictions and social distancing signs and providing handwashing facilities.

This study discusses the health protocols application in the operations of Warung Kongkow Hotel UTC Semarang during the Covid-19 pandemic. The protocol proposed by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy is to recover the tourism industry in Indonesia.

2. Material and Methods

This study uses the descriptive method. Descriptive research, according to Nazir (2014: 43), is a method of researching a group of people, an object, a set of conditions, a system of thoughts, or a flash of events in the present. According to Sugiyono (2010: 29), descriptive is a method used to describe or analyze a research result, but it is not to conclude to wield in broader ones.

In another sense, the descriptive analysis method is a research method to describe existing situations and events. Therefore, the accumulation of data in this study is necessary. In this descriptive study, the research team obtained data from operational observations of the Warung Kongkow restaurant, memos, government circulars, information from the Human Resources Department, and the results of interviews with several employees of the Warung Kongkow Hotel UTC Semarang restaurant.

3. Result and Discussion

Based on an interview with Mrs. Nayla Citra as the Building Manager in charge of the Warung Kongkow Restaurant, UTC Hotel Semarang (Nayla, 11 November 2020 at 16.00 WIB), the Covid-19 outbreak affected the level of sales at restaurant outlets. Many hotels experienced losses, even leading to temporary closures to suppress the transmission of Covid-19. These also happened at the UTC Semarang Hotel, where the management temporarily closed some services and only served walk-in guests and online bookings on a limited basis with some applicable conditions. It has made the hotel occupancy rate decreased drastically. The low occupancy rate has caused direct impacts on the operations of Warung Kongkow restaurant that also relies on income from serving hotel guests.

According to her, several things can cause the restaurant operational problems:

1. The hotel room occupancy rate has decreased to only about 20%.
2. The number of online bookings/online travel agents and walk-in guests who can stay is few due to strict restrictions.

**International Conference Multidisciplinary Studies
July 27 2022**

3. Banquet has been the hotel's largest source of income. Cancellation of events, such as weddings, seminars, meetings, and the like, at banquets, results in no turnover.
4. Income decreases as the occupancy rate decreases.
5. Guests are not allowed to stay more than three days.
6. Guests are afraid to order food.
7. The capacity of seats and tables is limited to 50% of the total capacity of the restaurant.
8. Treatment of cutlery must be extra hygiene.
9. Arrange for guests to wear masks.
10. Constraints happen when guests are taking food with the buffet system, now have to be served by the waiter personally.
11. Many guests switch to ordering food online through online motorcycle taxi services.
12. Guests limit communicating with staff.

According to an interview with Mr. Putra as the restaurant supervisor of Warung Kongkow (15 December 2020 at 15:00 WIB), since the Covid-19 pandemic broke, it has been very detrimental to the hotel sector and various aspects. The community feels disadvantaged because their movements are limited. People are constraint from going out of their homes and visiting public places to prevent disease transmission. The government urges them to work from home. On the other hand, Semarang City is a business city where the primary hotel income, apart from food and beverage, is the number of guests staying during business trips.

According to Mr. Putra, several factors hinder restaurant operations. "The government urges all tourism and hospitality sectors to apply standard operating procedures regarding the outbreak of the Covid-19 infectious disease. Furthermore, the transitional period from normal life to the new normal, where people live side by side and adapt to Covid-19, demands so many conditions that require additional attention. These aspects include using a thermal gun, wearing closed personal protective equipment (PPE) when serving guests, acrylic for insulation, face shields, masks, and others. Operationally, restaurants need time to make adjustments, so proper alertness is needed to take actions in overcoming these problems."

Based on the field observations completed from mid-October to December 2020, the restaurant has practiced new normal operations. However, this has not been able to increase the occupancy rate of the hotel's and restaurant's sales, even though the restrictions imposed by the government have also begun to relax. Restaurant operations are still limited even they have been running by the provisions of the new normal or the application of the CHSE protocol.

Overview of Operational Constraints for employees

Based on an interview with Mrs. Nayla Citra as the Building Manager in charge of Warung Kongkow Restaurant UTC Hotel Semarang (Nayla, 11 November 2020 at 16.00 WIB), operational restrictions with the implementation of health protocols have an impact on employees:

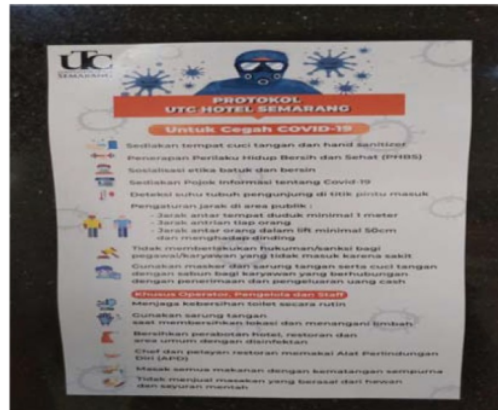
1. There is a policy of cutting wages up to 70 percent, first 50 percent at the beginning of the pandemic, and then 20 percent during the implementation of the new normal.
2. Employees are required to take time off from work in turns without pay.
3. Obligation to do a rapid test/antigen swab as evidence that they are not infected with Covid-19 and are in good health.
4. The reduced number of public transportation causes constraints to employees' access to reach the hotel.
5. It is not allowed to travel far out of town / return home for anyone who is outside the city of Semarang. If you still travel, you are required to self-isolate for 14 days right after your return.
6. Use personal protective equipment (PPE) as needed.
7. Bring your food utensils. The hotel does not provide tableware for employees.
8. Reduced working hours automatically reduces employees' income.
9. The restaurant has problems arranging food for guests because it is organized based on the New Normal health protocol, so SOPs and special training are needed.

4. Acknowledgement

Based on the observations and interviews, Warung Kongkow restaurant has implemented health protocols in its operational activities by making Standard Operating Procedures for restaurant services, banquets, room service, and meeting room setups. The SOPs are prepared based on the General Guidelines of Governance Management includes the following matters:

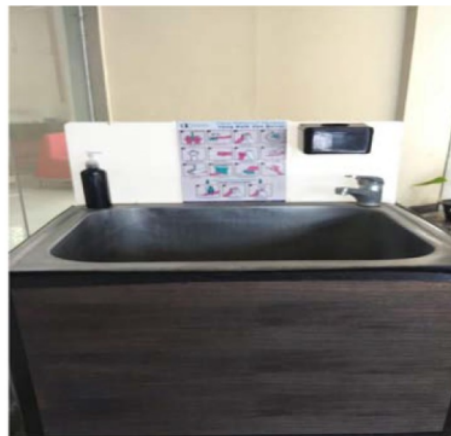
1. Update the appeals and provisions from the central government and local governments regarding the handling of Covid-19 at all times.
2. Have implemented and communicated the Standard Operational Procedure (SOP) for cleanliness, health, safety, and environmental sustainability of employees, guests, and other parties who are in the restaurant through training and socialization either directly or by making signboards.
3. Provide training for employees on the preparation and implementation of the standard operating procedures for cleanliness, health, safety, and environmental sustainability in restaurants/restaurants.
4. Provide and post written notices (Figure 3.1):
 - a. Avoid shaking hands;
 - b. Avoid touching the face, including the eyes, nose, and mouth;
 - c. Follow the provisions of maintaining a minimum distance of 1 (one) meter;
 - d. Apply handwashing with soap (CTPS) or use hand sanitizer;
 - e. Must wear a mask;
 - f. Implementation of sneezing and coughing etiquette;
 - g. Promote the consumption of vitamins and healthy foods.

Figure 3.1 Written Appeal for the Covid-19 Prevention Protocol
[Source: HRD Hotel UTC Semarang, 2020]



5. Provide hygiene and health equipment and supplies, including a place for handwashing with soap (CTPS) as shown in Figure 3.2 below, masks, hand gloves, thermometers, first aid kits, markers for sitting and standing positions according to the minimum safe distance of 1 (one) meter, as well as the provision of a trash can.

Figure 3.2 Handwashing Facilities with Soap (CTPS)
[Source: HRD Hotel UTC Semarang, 2020]



6. Check body temperature at the entrance (Figure 3.3). If an employee's or guest's temperature is more than 37.3°C (2 times inspection at 5-minute intervals) and symptoms such as fever, runny nose, cough, sore throat, and shortness of breath, they are not allowed to enter. Recording of temperature check data and health statements has not been carried out, especially for employees.

Figure 3.3 Body Temperature Check

[Source: HRD Hotel UTC Semarang, 2020]



7. Safety and security equipment has been provided, including:
 - a. A first-aid kit that complies with the provisions for first aid;
 - b. APAR (fire extinguisher) equipped with instructions for use;
 - c. Manual on standard procedures for escape from natural disasters and fires;
 - d. Maps of evacuation routes and gathering point locations;
 - e. Urgent telephone numbers: fire department number, nearest police station number, nearest health facility, and sub-district office;
 - f. Provision of communication tools that function well.The equipment has been provided as one of the supports for daily hotel operations outside the pandemic period and is a mandatory requirement for hotel and restaurant business standards.
8. Food and drinks at Warung Kongkow restaurant are all served a la carte or family-style. When applying a limited buffet system (Figure 3.4), the SOPs are as follows:
 - a. The waiter/waitress is positioned at the stall and wearing a mask and gloves;
 - b. The process of making and serving food is carried out by the waiter/waitress while maintaining a minimum distance of 1 (one) meter or by making technical arrangements by installing a separator between guests and staff, to avoid splashing onto food;
 - c. Tableware must be cleaned and disinfected according to procedures before using;
 - d. Replace, wash, and sanitize equipment as often as possible;
 - e. Mandatory handwashing with soap and running water for employees on duty;
 - f. Change gloves after touching other objects other than eating and drinking utensils.
 - g. Supervision is needed to avoid crowding activities that take place in and around restaurants.

Figure 3.4 Implementation of the buffet system with new SOPs

Source: HRD Hotel UTC Semarang, 2020



9. Implement social distancing provisions in ways such as: setting a minimum distance of 1 (one) meter at the restaurant entry queue, ordering and paying at the cashier by giving a signal on the floor.
10. Maximize food and beverage online ordering services and food and beverage delivery services.
11. Ensure the restaurant environment is clean and sanitized at all times by implementing periodic cleaning and disinfection at least 2 (two) times a day (before opening and closing) using safe and appropriate cleaning fluid.
12. Maintain air quality at the place of business or work by optimizing air circulation and incoming sunlight and cleaning the AC filter regularly.
13. Increase the frequency of safe and appropriate cleaning and disinfection at least 3 (three) times a day (Figure 3.5), especially on surfaces of equipment and utensils that are frequently touched/passed by people such as tables and chairs in the dining room, door handles, sockets, switches, water faucets, toilet flush levers, toilets, cash registers, cash registers, dining room floors, and others.

Figure 3.5 Periodic Cleaning

Source: HRD Hotel UTC Semarang, 2020



**International Conference Multidisciplinary Studies
July 27 2022**

14. Provide reservation services via telephone, social media, and other online media.
15. Always coordinate intensively with the Covid-19 Task Force, Health Service, Regional Disaster Management Agency, Fire Service, and local police for handling emergency conditions.
16. Ensure optimal use of equipment and materials that are environmentally friendly so that they can be recycled, reduced, reused, and replaced.
17. Ensure efficient and healthy use of water and energy sources, such as electricity and gas, in keeping the balance and sustainability of the ecosystem.
18. Ensure that the processing of waste and liquid waste of restaurants is carried out in a complete, healthy, and environmentally-friendly manner so that it saves the environment and does not cause a new source of the spread of Covid-19.
19. Ensure the beautiful and comfortable conditions in the physical environment around the building/room naturally and using technical engineering.
20. Monitor and evaluate the implementation of guidelines and SOPs to implement cleanliness, health, safety, and environmental sustainability in restaurants.

In addition to the General Guidelines, Special Guidelines are carried out following the Restaurant Service Flow that regulates the movement of guests in the existing facilities in the hotel, especially the Warung Kongkow restaurant area. Guidelines for entrepreneurs and managers as well as facilities, guests, and employees that must be facilitated and carried out including:

1. The management works on regulating the flow of traffic from arrival to arrangements in the parking area.
2. Provision of a specific waiting room for drivers according to health protocols.
3. There is regular cleaning.
4. Provision of equipment and specific areas for health checks for guests and employees.
5. Implementation of SOP according to the CHSE protocol and strict implementation of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS).
6. Guidelines for the guests, to follow the instructions and rules set by hotel and restaurant managers.
7. Guests are also required to follow the CHSE protocol procedures carried out following the existing directions.

Figure 3.6 Certified Sign

Source: HRD Hotel UTC Semarang, 2020



In general, Warung Kongkow Restaurant has implemented the New Normal procedures or the SOPs based on the CHSE protocol. In addition, the UTC Semarang

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July 27 2022**

Hotel has verified and certified the implementation of the CHSE standard of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of Indonesia (Figure 3.6 and Figure 3.7) that includes an assessment of the four elements of CHSE: Cleanliness, Health, Safety, and Environmental Sustainability or Hygiene, Health, Safety, and Environmental Sustainability.

Figure 3.7 CHSE Certificate

Source: HRD Hotel UTC Semarang, 2020



Aspects that are verified are as follows:

1. Hygiene aspects include the availability of handwashing facilities, procedures for cleaning spaces and public goods, free of vectors and carriers of disease, toilets are clean and supplied with soaps. Clean trash cans are available. All elements meet the criteria.
2. Health aspects include checking the application of social distancing procedures, preventing crowds with room arrangements, the reminders for not touching the eyes, nose, and face if you haven't washed your hands, and the application of body temperature checks. In addition, the use and readiness of PPE when needed, the availability of medical equipment and supplies, the existence of public spaces and workspaces that meet the requirements, and the existence of SOPs in handling visitors with health problems. All of these elements meet the criteria.
3. Safety aspects include the availability of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) procedures, first aid kits, fire extinguishers, the readiness of evacuation routes and assembly points, training on emergencies, and media and emergency mechanisms understood by all employees. All these elements are also well fulfilled.

Aspects of Environmental Sustainability include efficient use of environmentally-friendly equipment and supplies, efficient use of water and energy resources as indicated

by the design of buildings and rooms that do not depend too much on lighting during the day. Furthermore, the existence of a wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) and integrated waste disposal, the application of beautiful and comfortable principles for the surrounding environment, and periodic monitoring of the implementation of SOPs to monitor any deficiencies.

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