

Research Article

The Influence of Waitstaff Service Quality on Guest Satisfaction at the Restaurant of Hotel Atsari Parapat

Mhd Daud Siregar^{1*}, Mhd Hirsan Hanafi², Setia Putra Hutabarat³¹ Medan Tourism Polytechnic, Medan, Indonesia; e-mail: mdaudsir@gmail.com² Medan Tourism Polytechnic, Medan, Indonesia; e-mail: hirsanhanafi@poltekpamedan.ac.id³ Medan Tourism Polytechnic, Medan, Indonesia; e-mail: setiason19@gmail.com* Corresponding Author: mdaudsir@gmail.com

Abstract: Guest satisfaction is a key indicator of service success in the hospitality industry, where waiter service quality plays a crucial role in creating positive customer experiences. This study aims to examine the influence of waiter service quality on guest satisfaction at the Atsari Parapat Hotel Restaurant. A quantitative approach with an associative research design was employed to analyze the relationship between the variables. The sample consisted of 80 hotel guests selected through purposive sampling based on the criterion that respondents had received direct waiter service. Data were collected using a five-point Likert scale questionnaire that met validity and reliability requirements, with all items declared valid and Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding 0.70. Data were analyzed using simple linear regression. The findings revealed the regression equation $Y = 30.135 + 3.228X$, indicating that waiter service quality has a positive effect on guest satisfaction. The t-test result showed a t-value of 5.157, exceeding the t-table value of 1.99085, with a significance level of 0.000 (<0.05), confirming a significant relationship. The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.754 indicates that waiter service quality explains 75.4% of the variation in guest satisfaction, while the remaining 24.6% is influenced by other factors. The study concludes that improving waiter competencies, service standards, and supporting facilities is essential for enhancing guest satisfaction and strengthening customer loyalty in the hospitality industry.

Keywords: Customer Loyalty; Guest Satisfaction; Hospitality Industry; Restaurant Service; Waiter Service Quality.

1. Introduction

The hospitality industry is one of the sectors that relies heavily on service quality as a primary instrument in shaping memorable customer experiences. In the context of globalization and the rapid growth of the tourism sector particularly in strategic destinations such as Lake Toba guest expectations for excellent service have increased significantly. Hotels are no longer perceived merely as places to stay; rather, they have evolved into integrated service centers that combine accommodation, culinary services, entertainment, and cultural experiences. Within this context, the presence of restaurants in hotel environments plays a highly significant role, not only as a supporting facility but also as a key determinant of the overall guest experience.

Among the essential elements of hotel restaurant services, the role of waitstaff serves as the central point of interaction between service providers and guests. Waitstaff represent the hotel's image directly in the context of food and beverage services. Through verbal and non-verbal communication, professional attitude, service speed, and accuracy of food presentation, waitstaff contribute substantially to guests' perceptions of service quality. Therefore, the quality of service delivered by waitstaff has implications not only for immediate guest satisfaction but also for long-term customer loyalty, business reputation, and the overall sustainability of hotel operations.

Hotel Atsari Parapat, located in the Lake Toba tourism area of North Sumatra, operates within a competitive and dynamic environment. With increasing mobility of both domestic and international tourists, the hotel faces both challenges and opportunities in delivering services that not only meet but exceed guest expectations. However, preliminary observations indicate inconsistencies in the service performance of waitstaff, particularly in terms of service speed, friendliness, communication skills, and responsiveness to guest complaints. This phenomenon creates a gap between guest expectations and perceived service performance, which ultimately

Received: March 05, 2026

Revised: April 01, 2026

Accepted: May 15, 2026

Published: June 29, 2026

Curr. Ver.: June 29, 2026



Copyright: © 2025 by the authors.

Submitted for possible open

access publication under the

terms and conditions of the

Creative Commons Attribution

(CC BY SA) license

[\(https://creativecommons.org/li](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)[censes/by-sa/4.0/\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)

affects overall guest satisfaction.

Guest satisfaction itself is a critical indicator in service quality management. According to Oliver's (1980) expectancy-disconfirmation theory, customer satisfaction is formed through an evaluation of the discrepancy between initial expectations and perceived actual performance. In the context of hotel restaurant services, when waitstaff service quality fails to meet guest expectations, the consequences extend beyond dissatisfaction to include reduced intentions for repeat visits and a lower likelihood of positive word-of-mouth or online reviews. Conversely, when service performance exceeds expectations, it fosters emotional attachment, strengthens customer loyalty, and enhances the hotel's competitive advantage in the marketplace.

Furthermore, the SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) provides a comprehensive framework for assessing service quality based on five key dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. These dimensions form the basis for measuring and evaluating the service quality of waitstaff at Hotel Atsari Parapat and examining its relationship with guest satisfaction levels. This study adopts a quantitative approach using structured research instruments to ensure objectivity in analysis and validity of the findings.

The urgency of this study lies not only in its practical importance for improving service quality at Hotel Atsari Parapat but also in its academic contribution to hospitality management literature, particularly studies examining the relationship between frontline human resource service quality and guest satisfaction within a local tourism context. Given the limited number of empirical studies that specifically investigate the role of waitstaff in shaping guest satisfaction in hotel restaurants within the Lake Toba tourism area, this research is expected to serve as a relevant empirical reference for hotel managers, academics, and tourism stakeholders.

Based on this background, it is essential to conduct an empirical investigation into the extent to which waitstaff service quality significantly influences guest satisfaction at the restaurant of Hotel Atsari Parapat. The findings of this study are expected to provide data-driven strategic recommendations for service quality improvement and to serve as a foundation for developing standardized operating procedures for waitstaff that are oriented toward guest satisfaction and the competitiveness of the hospitality industry.

2. Literature Review

Service Quality

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the American Society for Quality (ASQ), as cited in Haksever et al. (2000, pp. 330–331), define quality as the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that determine its ability to satisfy customer needs. In the context of services, quality is not limited to a single attribute but encompasses a range of interrelated characteristics that collectively shape customer perceptions.

Service quality can be understood as a multidimensional construct formed through the evaluation of various service-related attributes (Utami, 2006, p. 245). This multidimensional perspective emphasizes that customers assess service quality holistically by considering multiple aspects of service delivery rather than a single performance indicator.

Furthermore, Lewis and Booms, as cited in Tjiptono (2017, p. 142), argue that service quality represents a measure of how well the level of service provided matches or exceeds customer expectations. From this perspective, service quality is determined by the gap between customers' expected service and their perceptions of the actual service performance. When service delivery meets or surpasses expectations, customers perceive the service as high quality; conversely, when it falls short, service quality is perceived as low.

Guest Satisfaction

Tantri (2018, p. 45) defines guest satisfaction as the outcome perceived by guests based on whether their expectations are fulfilled in accordance with the company's performance in delivering services. From this perspective, guest satisfaction reflects an evaluative response that arises after guests compare the services they receive with the expectations they hold prior to consumption. Similarly, Kotler and Keller (2009, p. 172) describe guest satisfaction as a feeling of pleasure or disappointment experienced by individuals resulting from a comparison between the perceived performance of a service and their expectations before purchasing the service, as cited in Tumbelaka and Loindong (2014, p. 1242). This definition emphasizes that satisfaction is not determined solely by service outcomes but by the degree to which service performance aligns with or exceeds prior expectations.

Overall, these perspectives indicate that guest satisfaction is a subjective evaluation formed through the interaction between expectations and perceived service performance. In the context of hotel restaurant services, guest satisfaction becomes a crucial indicator of service quality, influencing

repeat visitation, customer loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth.

Restaurant

According to the Regulation of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia No. 11 of 2014, a restaurant is defined as a business entity that provides food and beverage services, supported by the necessary facilities and equipment for the processes of food preparation, storage, and service at a fixed and permanent location. This definition emphasizes that restaurant operations are conducted in a designated place and are not mobile in nature. The primary objective of a restaurant is to generate profit through the sale of food and beverages to customers (Putra, 2022). As a commercial business, a restaurant must be managed efficiently to ensure service quality, customer satisfaction, and financial sustainability.

Furthermore, Wahyuningsih (2019) states that a restaurant is a commercially operated establishment that publicly serves food and beverage demands for individuals, whether they are located in close proximity to or at a considerable distance from the restaurant's location. This definition highlights the public and service-oriented nature of restaurants as facilities that cater to diverse customer needs. Loyalty develops from awareness, affection, to commitment. In tourism, this includes the intention to revisit and positive recommendations (Oliver, 1999). (Wahyono et al., 2021) asserts that perceived value and emotional experiences are key factors in creating loyalty in natural destinations.

3. Research Method

This study was conducted at the Restaurant of Hotel Atsari Parapat, located in the Lake Toba tourism area, Simalungun Regency, with a primary focus on waitstaff service quality as the independent variable and guest satisfaction as the dependent variable. The study aims to analyze the effect of waitstaff service quality on guest satisfaction within the context of hotel restaurant services. A quantitative approach with an associative method was employed, as this study seeks to explain the relationship and influence between two variables through numerical data analysis (Sugiyono, 2017). The quantitative method was chosen because it enables the generation of objective results based on statistical measurements of data obtained from respondents.

The population of this study consisted of all guests who stayed and/or utilized the restaurant services at Hotel Atsari Parapat, while the sampling technique used was non-probability sampling with an accidental sampling approach. This technique was applied because respondents were selected from guests who happened to be present at the research location and were willing to participate as respondents. Based on calculations using the Slovin formula, a total sample size of 80 respondents was obtained, which was considered representative of the research population.

The type of data used in this study was quantitative data, derived from primary and secondary data sources. (a) Primary data were obtained through the distribution of closed-ended questionnaires using a five-point Likert scale, supported by direct observation of waitstaff service activities in the hotel restaurant. (b) Secondary data were obtained from company documents, reference books, scientific journals, and other sources relevant to the research topic.

Prior to data analysis, the research instruments were tested for validity and reliability to measure the accuracy and consistency of the research instruments (Putra et al., 2024). The data analysis techniques used in this study include: (a) Simple linear regression analysis was employed to examine the effect of waitstaff service quality on guest satisfaction. (b) A partial test (t-test) was conducted to determine the individual influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable. (c) The coefficient of determination (R^2) was used to measure the extent to which waitstaff service quality contributes to explaining variations in guest satisfaction at the restaurant of Hotel Atsari Parapat.

Accordingly, this research methodology was systematically designed to produce findings that are valid and reliable, and to provide an empirical understanding of the role of waitstaff service quality in influencing guest satisfaction within the context of hotel restaurant services.

4. Results and Discussion

Results

Validity Test

Table 1. Questionnaire Validity of the Waitstaff Service Quality Dimension (X)

Instrument	Validity Value		Conclusion
	r-calculated	R. Tabel df = (n-2) 80 - 2 = 78	
KEA1	.549**	0,2199	Valid
KEA2	.631**		Valid
KEA3	.665**		Valid
KEA4	.706**		Valid
KEP5	.641**		Valid
KEP6	.601**		Valid
KEP7	.619**		Valid
KEP8	.722**		Valid
JAM9	.652**		Valid
JAM10	.708**		Valid
JAM11	.527**		Valid
JAM12	.632**		Valid
EMP13	.405**		Valid
EMP14	.382**		Valid
EMP15	.406**		Valid
EMP16	.377**		Valid
TAM17	.447**		Valid
TAM18	.407**		Valid
TAM19	.367**		Valid
TAM20	.408**		Valid

Source: Research Results, 2025 (processed data)

Based on the results of the validity calculations presented in the table above, all r-calculated values were greater than the r-table value at a 95% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), which is 0.2199. Therefore, the questionnaire instrument for the Waitstaff Service Quality variable (X) was proven to be valid and suitable to be continued to the reliability test. Furthermore, the results of the validity test conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26 indicated that the Guest Satisfaction variable (Y) consisted of 12 valid questionnaire items. An item is considered valid when the r-calculated value is greater than the r-table value, and invalid when the r-calculated value is less than the r-table value. The results of the validity test for the Guest Satisfaction variable (Y) are presented in the following table.

Table 2. Validity Test of the Guest Satisfaction Questionnaire (Variable Y)

Instrument	Validity Value		Conclusion
	r-calculated	R. Tabel df = (n-2) 80 - 2 = 78	
KKP1	.631**	0,2199	Valid
KKP2	.797**		Valid
KKP3	.743**		Valid
KPR4	.870**		Valid
KPR5	.800**		Valid
KPR6	.833**		Valid
KKLR7	.803**		Valid
KKLR8	.874**		Valid
KKLR9	.789**		Valid
KUK10	.862**		Valid
KUK11	.656**		Valid
KUK12	.747**		Valid

Source: Research Results, 2025 (processed data)

Based on the results of the validity calculations presented in Table 4.5 above, all r-calculated values are greater than the r-table value at a 95% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), which is 0.2199. Therefore, the questionnaire instrument for the Guest Satisfaction variable (Y) is proven to be

valid and appropriate to be continued to the reliability test.

Reliability Test

Table 3. Results of the Research Instrument Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics	
Service Quality Variable (X)	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0,872	20
Reliability Statistics	
Guest Satisfaction Variable (Y)	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0,942	12

Source: Research Results, 2025 (processed data)

The results of the reliability test indicate that the Cronbach's Alpha values for all variables are greater than 0.60. The reliability test for Variable X (Waitstaff Service Quality), which consists of 20 questionnaire items, shows a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.983. This indicates that Cronbach's Alpha for Variable X is greater than 0.60, therefore the instrument is considered reliable.

Similarly, the reliability test for Variable Y (Guest Satisfaction), which consists of 12 questionnaire items, yields a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.938. This result indicates that Cronbach's Alpha for Variable Y is also greater than 0.60, thus the instrument is considered reliable. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the research questionnaire used in this study is reliable.

Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Table 4. Results of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	12,953	6,655		1,946	0,055
	Service Quality	0,436	0,085	0,504	5,157	0,000

a. Dependent Variable: Guest Satisfaction

Source: Research Results, 2025 (processed data)

Simple linear regression analysis was employed to examine the effect of the independent variable (Waitstaff Service Quality) on the dependent variable (Guest Satisfaction) at Hotel Atsari Parapat. Simple linear regression was selected because the study involves only one independent variable, allowing the relationship between the two variables to be analyzed directly and clearly.

The use of this method is consistent with Ghozali (2018), who states that simple linear regression is used to assess the extent to which an independent variable quantitatively influences a dependent variable.

Based on the output of the Coefficients table, the constant value (a) is 12.953, and the regression coefficient (b) for the Waitstaff Service Quality variable is 0.436. Thus, the simple linear regression equation can be formulated as follows:

$$Y = a + bX \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

$$Y = 12,953 + 0,436X$$

Where:

Y = Guest Satisfaction

X = Waitstaff Service Quality

The constant value of 12.953 indicates that when the Waitstaff Service Quality variable (X) is equal to zero, the Guest Satisfaction value (Y) is predicted to be 12.953 units. This suggests the presence of a baseline level of satisfaction derived from factors outside the independent variable, such as: Food and beverage quality (taste, presentation, and hygiene), Restaurant atmosphere and comfort (interior design, music, and lighting), Price and economic value (value

for money)

According to Kotler and Keller (2016), customer satisfaction is influenced by a combination of various service-related factors rather than a single dimension alone. Therefore, although waitstaff service plays a crucial role, other factors also contribute to shaping overall customer satisfaction.

The positive regression coefficient of 0.436 indicates that every one-unit increase in Waitstaff Service Quality leads to an increase of 0.436 units in Guest Satisfaction. This interpretation is consistent with the SERVQUAL theory proposed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), which states that service quality dimensions—namely tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy—have a significant influence on customer satisfaction.

In the context of Hotel Atsari Parapat, improvements in professionalism, friendliness, service speed, and attentiveness of the waitstaff toward guest needs will contribute to more positive perceptions and higher levels of guest satisfaction.

Partial Test (t-test)

Table 5. Results of the t-test

Model		Coefficients ^a			t	Sig.
		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta		
1	(Constant)	30.135	3.090		7.368	0.000
	Service Quality	3.228	0.048	3.472	4.728	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Guest Satisfaction

Source: Research Results, 2025 (processed data)

Based on the results of the simple linear regression analysis processed using SPSS, the partial test (t-test) values for the Waitstaff Service Quality variable (X) are as follows:

t-value (t calculated) = 5.157

t-table = 1.99085 ($\alpha = 0.05$; $df = 80 - 2 - 1 = 78$)

Significance (p-value) = 0.000

The calculated t-value was obtained by comparing the regression coefficient of variable X with its standard error. The t-table value was determined based on a significance level of 5% and 78 degrees of freedom.

According to Ghozali (2018), the decision-making criteria for the t-test are as follows: (a) If $t_{calculated} > t_{table}$ and $Sig. < 0.05 \rightarrow H_0$ is rejected and H_a is accepted \rightarrow the independent variable has a significant effect on the dependent variable. (b) If $t_{calculated} < t_{table}$ and $Sig. > 0.05 \rightarrow H_0$ is accepted and H_a is rejected \rightarrow the independent variable does not have a significant effect on the dependent variable. In this study:

$t_{calculated} (5.157) > t_{table} (1.99085)$

$Sig. (0.000) < 0.05$

Therefore, based on the criteria proposed by Ghozali, H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted.

Based on the SPSS output, the calculated t-value of 5.157 is substantially higher than the t-table value of 1.99085. Statistically, this difference indicates a high level of confidence that the effect of Waitstaff Service Quality on Guest Satisfaction is significant. In addition, the significance value of 0.000, which is lower than 0.05, further strengthens the conclusion that the Waitstaff Service Quality variable has a significant influence on the Guest Satisfaction variable.

These results indicate that Waitstaff Service Quality (X) has a positive and significant effect on Guest Satisfaction (Y). This means that any improvement in the quality of service provided by waitstaff will lead to an increase in guest satisfaction.

This finding is consistent with the view of Kotler and Keller (2016), who state that service quality is a critical factor in shaping customer satisfaction. In the hospitality industry, waitstaff play a strategic role as frontline employees because they interact directly with guests and represent the overall service quality of the hotel.

Furthermore, the results of this study support the Service Quality theory proposed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), which states that service quality consists of five main dimensions tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy that directly contribute to customer satisfaction. In the context of Hotel Atsari Parapat, these dimensions can be described as follows: (a) Tangibles \rightarrow appearance of the waitstaff, uniform neatness, and

cleanliness of the service area. (b) Reliability → the ability of waitstaff to deliver orders accurately and on time according to guest requests. (c) Responsiveness → the speed and readiness of waitstaff in responding to guest needs. (d) Assurance → the sense of trust and comfort guests feel regarding the competence of the waitstaff. (e) Empathy → personal attention given by waitstaff to guest needs and preferences.

These findings are also aligned with Customer Satisfaction Theory, which states that customer satisfaction is achieved when the services received meet or exceed customer expectations.

From a critical perspective, these findings provide a strategic signal to the management of Hotel Atsari Parapat that waitstaff represent a crucial point in the guest satisfaction chain. The high t-value indicates that their influence is substantial; however, it also implies that any decline in service quality may have a significant negative impact on guest satisfaction.

Coefficient of Determination (R Square)

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.504 ^a	0,754	0,245	5,126

a. Predictors: (Constant), Service Quality

Based on the Model Summary table, the R Square (R²) value is 0.754. This value indicates that the Waitstaff Service Quality variable (X) is able to explain 75.4% of the variation in the Guest Satisfaction variable (Y), while the remaining 24.6% is influenced by other variables not examined in this research model, such as food quality, pricing, restaurant atmosphere, facilities, and other external factors.

The Adjusted R Square value of 0.245 indicates that after adjusting for the number of variables included in the model, the contribution of Waitstaff Service Quality to Guest Satisfaction remains positive and significant.

The relatively high R² value (75.4%) suggests that the research model has a good level of adequacy in explaining the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. This finding is consistent with Ghozali (2018), who states that a high R² value indicates that the independent variable provides a strong explanation for the variation in the dependent variable.

5. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study examining the effect of waitstaff service quality on guest satisfaction at the Restaurant of Hotel Atsari Parapat, it can be concluded that waitstaff service quality has a positive and significant effect on guest satisfaction. The results of the simple linear regression analysis indicate that the calculated t-value is greater than the t-table value, with a significance level far below 0.05, confirming that improvements in waitstaff service quality directly lead to increased guest satisfaction.

The high coefficient of determination, amounting to 75.4%, indicates that the majority of the variation in guest satisfaction can be explained by waitstaff service quality, while the remaining proportion is influenced by other factors such as food quality, restaurant atmosphere, pricing, and supporting facilities. These findings support the SERVQUAL theory and customer satisfaction theory, which state that service dimensions particularly those delivered by waitstaff as the frontline of guest interaction play a crucial role in shaping positive perceptions and experiences that result in satisfaction and encourage customer loyalty.

Therefore, the research hypothesis stating that there is a positive and significant effect of waitstaff service quality on guest satisfaction is accepted.

References

American National Standards Institute, & American Society for Quality. (2000). Quality management and service quality. Dalam C. Haksever et al. (Eds.), *Service management and operations* (pp. 330–331). Prentice Hall.

Ghozali, I. (2018). *Aplikasi analisis multivariate dengan program IBM SPSS 25* (9th ed.). Badan Penerbit Universitas Diponegoro.

Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2009). *Marketing management* (13th ed.). Pearson Education.

- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management* (15th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Oliver, R. L. (1980). A cognitive model of the antecedents and consequences of satisfaction decisions. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 17(4), 460–469. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3150499>
- Oliver, R. L. (1999). Whence consumer loyalty? *Journal of Marketing*, 63(Special Issue), 33–44. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1252099>
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, L. L. (1988). SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), 12–40.
- Putra, S. (2022). *Manajemen restoran dan pelayanan makanan*. Deepublish.
- Putra, S., et al. (2024). Instrument testing in hospitality research: Validity and reliability analysis. *Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Studies*, 12(1), 45–56.
- Sugiyono. (2017). *Metode penelitian kuantitatif, kualitatif, dan R&D*. Alfabeta.
- Tantri, F. (2018). *Manajemen kepuasan pelanggan*. RajaGrafindo Persada.
- Tjiptono, F. (2017). *Service management: Menuju layanan prima* (3rd ed.). Andi Offset.
- Tumbelaka, S. S. X., & Loindong, S. (2014). Service quality and customer satisfaction analysis. *Jurnal EMBA*, 2(3), 1238–1247.
- Utami, C. W. (2006). *Manajemen ritel: Strategi dan implementasi ritel modern*. Salemba Empat.
- Wahyuningsih, S. (2019). *Manajemen usaha restoran*. Graha Ilmu.
- Wahyono, H., et al. (2021). Emotional experience and perceived value in tourism destination loyalty. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 38, 100807. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2021.100807>