

The Role of the Hospitality Sector in Labor Absorption in Mamuju Regency

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ABSTRACT

The hospitality sector has an important role in the economy of a region and also in the tourism industry. Hotels open up jobs for many people, both directly (such as hotel staff) and indirectly (such as local suppliers). This can increase the income of residents and encourage economic growth. Hotels provide a place to stay for tourists, which is an important aspect of the tourism industry. The existence of good hospitality infrastructure, tourism can develop well, attract more tourists, and increase income from the hospitality tourism sector often triggers the development of other infrastructure, such as roads, transportation, and other public facilities, which are beneficial to the public. Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju has a role in the absorption of manpower, either directly or indirectly providing many types of direct jobs, such as receptionists, janitors, housekeeping, chefs, waiters, building maintenance technicians, security, and management. Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju provides a wide range of employment opportunities for a wide range of hospitality backgrounds as well as playing a role in providing opportunities for career development. The data analysis method used in this study is data analysis carried out continuously from the beginning to the end of the research, both in the field and outside the field by using techniques as proposed by Miles and Huberman, namely data reduction, data presentation and data verification. The results show that Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju contributes to improving the quality of the workforce through training and skill development programs. Many hotels offer specialized skills training, such as customer service, foreign language proficiency, time management, and knowledge of occupational safety and security. This helps Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju employees in improving their competence, which in turn increases the competitiveness and productivity of the workforce, in addition to helping to reduce seasonal unemployment in the area, while providing opportunities for job seekers, especially young people, to gain work experience. Hospitality has a big role in the absorption of labor.

INTRODUCTION

The hospitality sector has an important role in the economy of a region and in the tourism industry. Hotels open up jobs for many people, both directly (such as *hotel staff*) and indirectly (such as local suppliers). This can increase the income of residents and encourage economic growth. Hotels provide a place to stay for tourists, which is an important aspect of the tourism industry. The existence of good hospitality infrastructure, tourism can develop well, attract more tourists, and increase income from the hospitality tourism sector often triggers the development of other infrastructure, such as roads, transportation, and other public facilities, which are beneficial to the public. The hospitality sector also has a responsibility to maintain the environment around hotels in promoting tourist destinations through holiday packages, recommendations of local tourist attractions, and cooperation with tour providers and other activities. Hotels are especially important in organizing conferences, business meetings, and corporate events providing a place for companies and organizations to interact and collaborate. The hospitality sector not only plays a role in providing accommodation for tourists but also contributes to the local economy through the absorption of labor. The hospitality sector employs a wide variety of employees, including receptionists, *housekeeping*, chefs, restaurant waiters, technicians, security, and managers. Large hotels can even absorb dozens of workers of various levels and specialties. Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju can create employment opportunities for workers every year.

Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju provides extensive employment opportunities for a wide range of hospitality backgrounds as well as providing opportunities for career development. Employees have the opportunity to move up the ranks, expand their skills, and reach high management positions in the industry. Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju supports the economic growth of Mamuju Regency by creating jobs and attracting additional investment to the region. This has not only impacted the hospitality sector. Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju creates a wide variety of jobs, from managerial positions to customer service, housekeeping, and kitchen. This provides opportunities for many people, including those who are new to the hospitality workforce often providing training and skill development for employees. Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju offers a variety of positions, ranging from management, guest service, housekeeping, to culinary. This opens up opportunities for a wide range of educational backgrounds and the skills of the hotel to provide training for employees. Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju helps job seekers develop new skills and increase job opportunities, making Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju the first choice for young people who have just graduated from school or university, as well as for those looking for work after a period of unemployment.

Table 1. Grand Maleo Hotel & Labor Absorption Data Mamuju Convention in the last three years 2021 – 2023

No	Year	Absorption of Labor (People)	Persentase (%)
1	2021	100	-
2	2022	150	50
3	2023	165	10
Total		415	

Source: Grand Maleo Hotel

Based on table 1 showing the labor absorption figures at Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju, in 2021 the workforce was absorbed in the hospitality sector of Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju by 100 people, there was an increase in labor absorption in 2022 by 50 people so that the number of workers became 150 people, and in 2023 the number of workers increased by 15 people, So that the number of employees in 2023 is 165 people, the total number of employees in the last three years at Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju is 415 people

The hospitality sector is one of the important pillars in the regional economy, especially in relation to the tourism industry. According to Jones and Lockwood (2004), this sector has a dual impact on the local economy, not only through the provision of accommodation, but also as an economic driver through the absorption of labor and the development of supporting infrastructure. The absorption of labor in the hospitality sector includes various positions, ranging from operational to managerial, which directly contributes to reducing unemployment and improving people's welfare (Baum, 2006). Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju, as one of the largest hotels in Mamuju Regency, plays a significant role in creating jobs in this area. In line with the views of Dwyer and Forsyth (1997), the hotel also has an indirect impact by involving local suppliers and other business actors, thereby expanding its economic impact. In addition, the training program provided by hotels for employees shows efforts to increase the competitiveness of the local workforce, as revealed by Baum (2018), that training and development are important elements in strengthening the contribution of the hospitality sector to the workforce. However, behind the positive role of this sector, there are various challenges such as fluctuations in demand due to the tourist season, the need for special skills, and competition in the labor market (Baum et al., 2020). This study aims to analyze the role of the hospitality sector, especially Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju, in the absorption of labor in Mamuju Regency and identify existing opportunities and challenges. Thus, the

results of the study are expected to be a reference for the development of more effective policies in supporting the role of the hotel sector as one of the main drivers of the regional economy

The hospitality sector is an integral component in the tourism industry that has a significant economic impact, both directly and indirectly. Directly, the sector provides a wide range of jobs, from operational to managerial staff, which contributes to reducing the unemployment rate and improving the welfare of the local community. Indirectly, the hospitality sector encourages economic growth through increased demand for local products and services, such as suppliers of food, beverages, handicrafts, and other transportation and tourism services. This creates a multiplier effect that strengthens the regional economic structure. The contribution of the hospitality sector to regional economic growth cannot be ignored. The existence of hotels encourages an increase in tourist visits, which in turn increases regional revenue through taxes and levies. In addition, the sector also plays a role in infrastructure development and improving the quality of human resources through training and the creation of high service standards. Thus, the hotel sector is one of the main pillars in regional economic development. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the hotel industry in Indonesia shows consistent growth. The publication "Statistics of Hotels and Other Accommodations in Indonesia 2022" recorded an increase in the number of accommodation, room, and bed businesses throughout Indonesia. In West Sulawesi Province, especially Mamuju Regency, the development of the hospitality sector also shows a positive trend. According to the "West Sulawesi Province Hospitality Statistics 2022", the Room Occupancy Rate (TPK) of star classification hotels in December 2020 reached 49.54%, an increase of 6.46 points compared to November 2020. This data indicates an increase in hospitality activities that has the potential to increase labor absorption and economic contribution in the area. Overall, the hospitality sector plays a crucial role in encouraging economic growth and labor absorption, both at the national and regional levels, including in Mamuju Regency. Therefore, the development of this sector must be a priority in regional economic development planning.

The hospitality sector in Mamuju Regency, West Sulawesi, has experienced significant development in recent years. The increase in the number of hotels and accommodation facilities reflects the growth of the tourism industry in this area. According to the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of Mamuju Regency, the latest data shows an increase in the number of accommodation, room, and bed businesses in the region. The Room Occupancy Rate (TPK) of star hotels in West Sulawesi also shows a positive trend. In March 2020, the TPK reached 38.62%, which indicates an increase in tourism activities and accommodation demand in the region. Although specific data for Mamuju Regency is not available, this trend reflects the general condition of the hospitality sector in the area. One of the significant contributions to the hospitality sector in Mamuju is the presence of Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju. This four-star hotel not only provides quality accommodation for tourists and business people, but also plays an active role in boosting the local economy. Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju prioritizes the use of local ingredients for its operations, including groceries sourced from local traditional markets. In addition, the hotel nurtures local Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to supply their products, thus strengthening the economy of the surrounding community. Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju also hosts a variety of important events involving local and international stakeholders. For example, in October 2024, this hotel will be the location for the "Linking Locals to Global (LLG) Series West Sulawesi" activity facilitated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. The event brought together local governments, business actors, and academics with Indonesian trade representatives and missions in the Asia Pacific and Africa region, opening up opportunities for local businesses to expand their markets. Overall, the development of the hospitality sector in Mamuju Regency, supported by the presence of Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju, has contributed positively to the growth of the local economy. By providing jobs, supporting MSMEs, and

being a center of economic and social activities, the hospitality sector plays an important role in regional development.

The hospitality sector has significant potential in increasing employment through various strategic initiatives. One of the main approaches is the implementation of training and human resource development (HR) programs. Structured training can improve employees' skills in customer service, management, and hospitality technology, thereby improving the quality of service and operational efficiency of hotels. In addition, HR development also includes improving managerial and leadership skills, which are essential for strategic positions in the hospitality industry. Empowering local communities is also a crucial aspect in maximizing the potential of the hospitality sector. By involving local communities in hotel operations, such as providing local products for hotel needs or recruiting workers from surrounding communities, hotels can contribute directly to improving the local economy and creating new jobs. This approach also strengthens the relationship between the hotel and the community and provides an authentic experience for guests. However, the hospitality sector faces challenges in absorbing labor. One of the main challenges is the fluctuation of labor demand which is influenced by the tourist season and tourism trends. During the peak period of tourist visits, the demand for labor increases, while in the low season, the demand decreases. This instability can affect the well-being of employees and hotel operations. The quality of local human resources is also a challenge. The lack of skills and knowledge in accordance with the standards of the hospitality industry can hinder hotel operations and affect the quality of services provided. Therefore, investment in education and training is crucial to improve the quality of the local workforce.

Changes in the tourism market, such as shifting consumer preferences and technological developments, are also affecting the hospitality sector. Hotels must be able to adapt quickly to these changes to remain competitive. For example, the increasing demand for digital services and personalized experiences demands hotels to adopt new technologies and tailor their services according to guest needs. By identifying and maximizing the potential that exists, as well as addressing the challenges faced, the hospitality sector can play a significant role in increasing employment and driving local economic growth.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method to describe the phenomenon in depth based on information from informants related to the role of the hotel sector in the absorption of labor at Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju. Primary data is obtained through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, while secondary data is collected from various related documents, such as hotel history, number of employees, and division of tasks in hotel operations. Data analysis was carried out using the Miles and Huberman model, which included three stages: data reduction to filter and summarize important information; presentation of data in the form of narratives, tables, and relationships between categories to facilitate interpretation; and drawing conclusions to get a comprehensive picture of the contribution of the hospitality sector to employment. To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses the technique of triangulation of sources, techniques, and time, by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documents on various occasions. This systematic analysis process is expected to provide comprehensive and credible findings on the contribution of the hospitality sector in supporting local economic growth and creating jobs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju plays an important role in creating jobs and supporting the development of the local economy, especially in Mamuju Regency which has high tourism potential. This hotel provides various job opportunities, ranging from management, room service, restaurant, security, to administrative department. The wide range of positions available allows people with a wide

range of educational backgrounds and skills to get involved, helping to reduce local unemployment rates. In addition, Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju is committed to the development of a skilled workforce through training and certification programs. The program aims to improve employee skills, such as customer service, time management, and the use of hotel technology, which not only improves service quality but also strengthens the competitiveness of the workforce in the job market. The hotel also actively empowers the local community through the use of products and services from local providers, such as fresh groceries from local farmers and local handicraft products. This step not only creates indirect job opportunities but also has a positive impact on the economy of the surrounding community. By prioritizing adaptation to tourism market challenges, such as fluctuations in labor needs and changing tourist preferences, Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju is able to remain relevant. The application of technology in hotel operations and diversification of services, such as the provision of convention facilities, is a key strategy to deal with industry dynamics. The role of Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju not only has an impact on the hospitality sector but also contributes significantly to the growth of the local economy and the sustainable development of human resources in Mamuju Regency.

Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju not only serves as an accommodation and conference service provider, but also as a driving force for local economic development through various community empowerment and development initiatives. The hotel runs a social responsibility program that focuses on empowering the local community by engaging them as suppliers of goods and services. Examples are the use of fresh ingredients from local farmers and handicraft products from local artisans, which provide additional income and improve the living standards of the surrounding community. In addition, Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju also makes a significant contribution to the absorption of seasonal workers, especially during the peak period of tourist visits. By employing a seasonal workforce, the hotel helps address the temporary unemployment problem in Mamuju Regency, while ensuring that its operations continue to run optimally during peak periods. The existence of Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju also plays a role in improving the quality of human resources in the region. By attracting skilled and professional workers from other regions, the hotel becomes a catalyst in the process of transferring knowledge and skills to the local workforce. This allows the local workforce to increase their capacity and competence, thus not only meeting the needs of the hospitality sector but also making a positive contribution to other sectors in the local economy. The hotel creates an environment that encourages skill development, provides training opportunities, and opens access to more qualified jobs. Through these approaches, Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju not only strengthens the hospitality sector in Mamuju Regency but also plays an important role in creating a more independent and highly competitive society.

The presence of Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju often attracts skilled and professional workers from other areas. This stimulates the improvement of the quality of local human resources through the transfer of knowledge and skills. Where the hospitality sector not only helps meet the demand for labor but also plays a role in improving the capacity and skills of the existing workforce, which has a positive impact on the local economy. The average time it takes from job announcement to employee intake varies depending on the industry, position, and recruitment process in the company. For entry-level or junior positions, the process usually lasts between 3 to 4 months in a year. The recruitment stages include job announcements, initial selection, interviews, and admissions. For those with medium responsibilities or need experience, the process can take 6 months. In addition to the initial selection, it usually involves several stages of interviews or additional tests to ensure a fit for qualifications and work culture. managerial or executive positions, the recruitment time can reach 3 months or longer. This is because the selection stage is often more complex and involves multiple interviews with senior management, competency tests, or even assessments by third parties. Certain sectors that require specific skills or certifications, such as hospitality in front office or restaurant management, recruitment times can take longer to ensure that candidates have the specific skills needed. Accepting employees according to the

company's needs is an important step in the recruitment process. Here are some ways to ensure the criteria set truly reflect the needs and can produce the right employees.

The steps taken by Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju conducted a thorough analysis of the work. It involves an in-depth understanding of the duties, responsibilities, and skills required for the position. This analysis can be done through interviews with relevant managers, direct observation, or gathering information from employees who are currently occupying positions. Analyze the work and discussion, make a list of the core competencies needed to succeed in the role. These core competencies can be in the form of technical skills (hard skills) or interpersonal skills (soft skills) such as communication skills, time management, and problem-solving. These competencies must be tailored to the company's goals and culture. Use competency tests, such as psychological tests or skills tests, to measure technical criteria or soft skills. With this test, companies can ensure that prospective candidates actually have the required abilities, not just be administratively qualified. Employees joining and working at Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju are expected to meet expectations in their roles at Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju

The absorption of labor at Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju is inseparable from the increase in investment in the growing hotel business sector in Mamuju Regency. Investments into this sector create new economic opportunities, which in turn require more manpower to effectively manage hotel operations. With the increased investment, Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju is able to expand its services and facilities, such as restaurants, convention halls, and high-end accommodations, all of which require skilled labor. This investment also encourages the development of local infrastructure, both directly through the physical development of the hotel and indirectly through increasing economic activity around the hotel area. The impact of this increased investment is the opening of more job opportunities for local communities, both in management and operational positions, thereby helping to reduce the unemployment rate and encourage inclusive economic growth in Mamuju Regency. Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju is a clear proof that investment in the hospitality sector not only provides benefits for the company but also has a positive impact on improving the welfare of the surrounding community.

Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju places education and skills training as an essential element in ensuring the readiness of the workforce to meet the needs of the dynamic job market. The hotel understands that a skilled and qualified workforce is the main asset in providing superior service. Therefore, Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju supports training programs designed to improve employees' technical skills and soft skills, such as time management, customer service, and mastery of hospitality technology. These training programs, whether facilitated by hotels, governments, or educational institutions, provide opportunities for local workers to increase their capacity. With targeted training, workers are not only prepared to enter the hospitality sector but also have the relevant competencies to compete in other sectors if needed. This step not only increases the productivity and quality of hotel services but also has a positive impact on regional economic development by creating a more competent and adaptive workforce to the needs of the job market.

Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju also contributes to supporting the increasing competitiveness of the rapidly growing creative industries, such as information technology, e-commerce, and creative content. This creative industry not only creates new job opportunities but also requires a workforce with special skills that are relevant to the needs of the times. To support the growth of the sector, Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju provides infrastructure that supports creative activities, such as high-tech conference rooms and adequate facilities for creative and digital events. In addition, the hotel also provides incentives and training for the workforce to improve their skills, so that they can meet the specific needs of the creative industry. These efforts help create a competent and adaptive workforce, not only to support hotel operations but also to contribute to the development of the creative sector in Mamuju Regency. With these steps, Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju is one of the main drivers

in strengthening the competitiveness of the creative industry while opening up job opportunities for the local community.

Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju utilizes digital technology to improve efficiency in the labor absorption process. By implementing digitalization and automation in the recruitment system, such as the use of online platforms and job search applications, the hotel is able to speed up the process of finding and selecting candidates. This technology not only makes it easier for companies to find a workforce that suits their needs but also provides wider access for prospective applicants to find out available job opportunities. This technology-based approach allows for more transparent, accurate, and efficient recruitment, allowing hotels to reach more potential talents, both local and from other regions. In this way, Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju not only improves the effectiveness of the recruitment process but also supports digital transformation in the hospitality sector and the workforce in general. This move demonstrates the hotel's commitment to integrating technology to support the growth and development of a workforce that is adaptive to the needs of modern industries. Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju is committed to empowering the local workforce as part of its efforts to support economic development in Mamuju Regency. By empowering the local community to get involved in a growing project or industry, the hotel opens up opportunities for locals to actively participate in the hospitality sector. Training and upskilling programs are a key component of this initiative, which is designed to ensure that local communities have competencies that match the needs of the hotel's workforce. Effective labor absorption also involves close synergy between the government, the private sector, educational institutions, and the community. By creating mutually supportive relationships, Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju not only reduces the unemployment rate but also ensures that people get jobs that are relevant to their skills. This strategy not only improves people's well-being but also strengthens the relationship between the hospitality sector and local communities, creating a long-term positive impact on the region's economic growth.

The discussion on local workforce empowerment by Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju is a strategic step that supports the development of local human resources (HR) while encouraging economic growth in Mamuju Regency. The absorption of local labor is carried out through a comprehensive approach that includes training, upskilling, and providing access to job opportunities in the hospitality sector. The training program designed by the hotel aims to improve the competence of the local workforce, so that it is able to meet the needs of the job market in the hospitality industry. This step provides added value to the local community, as they not only acquire jobs but also skills that can be used for other opportunities in the future. In addition, the synergy between Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju with the government, the private sector, and educational institutions is an important factor in the success of labor absorption. Through this collaboration, hotels can ensure that the training provided is in accordance with the needs of the industry and applicable professional standards. This synergy also strengthens the relationship between the hospitality sector and the local community, creating an inclusive and sustainable work ecosystem. However, there are several challenges that need to be considered, such as the level of education and initial skills of the local workforce that may not be adequate. To overcome these obstacles, the hotel provides a targeted and continuous training program, which focuses not only on technical skills but also on the development of soft skills, such as communication and customer service. This approach ensures that the local workforce is highly competitive, not only at the local level but also nationally. The absorption of local labor by Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju has a direct and indirect impact on the region's economy. The immediate impact can be seen from the reduction in the unemployment rate and the increase in the income of local communities. Meanwhile, indirect impacts include increasing people's purchasing power and strengthening other economic sectors related to hospitality, such as transportation, food, and local handicrafts. With the right strategy, this empowerment of the local workforce not only benefits the hotel but also makes a great contribution to inclusive and sustainable economic development in Mamuju Regency.

CONCLUSION

This research highlights the significant role of the hospitality sector, particularly the Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju, in contributing to labor absorption and economic growth in Mamuju Regency. The study shows that the hospitality sector not only creates direct employment opportunities in various roles, such as management, housekeeping, and culinary services, but also indirectly boosts the local economy by engaging local suppliers and supporting MSMEs. Training and skill development programs provided by the hotel enhance employee competence, ensuring a competitive and productive workforce. Furthermore, the presence of the hospitality sector drives infrastructure development and increases regional income through tourism-related activities, emphasizing its vital role in the regional economy. The findings demonstrate that Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju acts as a catalyst for local economic development and social transformation. However, the sector also faces challenges, such as fluctuating labor demand due to seasonal tourism trends and a lack of skilled human resources that meet industry standards. To address these issues, targeted training programs focusing on technical and soft skills are essential. Grand Maleo Hotel & Convention Mamuju has shown strategic initiatives to bridge these gaps, such as leveraging local resources and fostering collaboration with stakeholders to ensure workforce readiness. The overall impact of these efforts extends beyond immediate job creation, contributing to a sustainable and inclusive economic ecosystem. By integrating community empowerment and digital transformation, the hospitality sector in Mamuju Regency has the potential to further solidify its role as a cornerstone of regional development.

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