

The Impact of Hotel and Online Travel Agent Collaboration on Summit Siliwangi Hotel's Profit Margin

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— *Review of* —
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ABSTRACT

In this new era of business, a shift to digitalization is a must for all industry sectors, including the hospitality sector. Nowadays, collaboration with online travel agents is needed to develop and increase the value of small- and non-franchise properties. Hotels without a strong branding system are considered to have a smaller value for potential customers who are unfamiliar with the properties. The purpose of this research is to evaluate the effect of collaborating with an online travel agent. To complete this research, The Summit Siliwangi Hotel was chosen to be the subject of the study. Rated with three stars and categorized as a business hotel, the subject of this research is considered as a match to collaborate with a B2B online travel agent who not only marketed the property digitally but also put their branding with the property in an attempt to add a higher branding value and increase the standardized services and amenities exposure for the property's potential customers. An in-depth interview analyzed with qualitative method is used together with secondary data from the hotel's financial reports. As a result, the online travel agent's brand image, promotion, and amenities are considered to significantly deliver a higher value to the property in terms of room occupancy and net profits. Brand image triggers the buying intention because of the excellent quality provided in other properties. Promotions such as discounts and cash backs are a primary competitive advantage in price competition with other hotels in the same classification. Amenities in a standardized system brought a secure feeling for potential customers. These factors are acknowledged by all respondents from three categories – Expert Customers, Hotel Managers, and Online Travel Agent Managements. The most prominent effects are on the hotel's room occupancy and profit margin. The occupancy rate, which is the primary source of incomes, increases

after the collaboration with an online travel agent. The rise in occupancy rate increases the net profit by increasing the quantity sold while the profit margin decreases.

Keywords: Hotel; online travel agent; occupancy rate, profit margin.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research Background

In tourism industry, technology can be reflected from the existence of online travel agents. Online travel agents are similar to ordinary travel agents, but in terms of bookings and transactions can be done digitally (Monaghan, 2006). Online travel agents commonly provide several facilities for customers, such as aeroplane tickets, aeroplane tickets, and hotel reservations. In terms of room occupancy, the online travel agents have a positive impact, align with the hotel's revenue. The Summit Siliwangi Hotel is a hotel with three-star facilities located at Seram street number 5, which is somewhat strategic for travellers who come to Bandung since it has located near the city well-known public places. The Summit Siliwangi until now already had collaboration with some online travel agents: OYO and RedDoorz. However, The Summit Siliwangi Hotel still tries to expand their knowledge about the impact of online travel agents to its profit margin and the significance on its room occupancy. □

1.2. Research Objective

This research aims to discover the impact on collaborating with online travel agents to the hotel's profit margin and the significant change on room occupancy. □

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Online Travel Agent

Internet makes everything seems borderless and continuously influencing the tourism market, one of the valid examples is the emerging of online information and booking services for the consumer, which shifts their behaviour in making reservation for hotel (Lohmann & Schmucker, 2009). Online travel agent provides a wide range of services other than hotel reservation. They generally go with the whole travel portal development with various services such as flight and hotel reservations, vacation packages, transfers, fancy bookings car rentals, mobile recharge, insurance, DTH recharge, bill payments, social selling, mobile app version and many more (Malla, 2016). To sum up, here is the list of the benefits of the existence of an online travel agent for consumer: □

1. Provides many hotel choices depending on the consumer's preferences such as, facility, price, location, discount, and many more.
2. More efficient to make a hotel reservation since everything can be done online. Moreover, consumer has the chance to compare some hotels at one time and chose the most preferred one right after.
3. Sufficient information provided regarding the hotel that helps consumer to decide which hotel that most suitable for them. The information mentioned can be formed as the hotel's review from previous guests or the hotel's itself.

4. Secure and authorized payment method also became one of the consumer considerations, besides its convenience. Nowadays, consumers can pay by bank transfers or other payment channels such as minimarkets, and it exponentially becomes widespread in Indonesia (Raharja et al., 2020). □
5. Online travel agent offers promos and discounts to intrigue consumer.

2.1.1 Occupancy Room

The occupancy room rate can be presented on a percentage, by dividing the number of rooms occupied with the total number of rooms offered (available room) then multiplied by one hundred per cent (Shite, 2004). This condition is a common thing that the hotel management utilize the occupancy room rate to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of online travel agent on its business, regardless the results are. There are two most possible ways for a hotel management to improve their occupancy room, the first one is when the demand is high hotel management should be able to prioritize which rooms should be sold to consumers, for example, starting from rooms with the highest class so that the benefits gained by the hotel will be high because consumers will be willing to pay more to get the room because of the needs from the consumers themselves. The next one is when the demand is low hotel management must adapt quickly, such as providing promotions such as discounts offered to consumers so that consumers are interested in staying at the hotel.

Furthermore, to win the business game over its competitors, several factors should be considered by the hotel management, such as:

1. Brand Image
According to Lakso (2003), the brand image reflects the added value that the customer is willing to pay more than usual. At the same time, Aaker (1991) stated that it is the whole associations that built and may not represent the objective truth.
2. Promotion
Promotion is an action-focused in the marketing field aims to gain its direct impact on customer's behaviour (Blattberg and Neslin, 1990). Nowadays, sales promotion could be classified as online sales promotion through the internet and offline sales promotion.
3. Amenities
Amenities is one of the desirable utilities while renting a room in a hotel; this may differ in each hotel. Commonly, online travel agent provides additional amenities for the guest such as snack bite sets, door hangers, bottle holders, welcome signs, bag sets, breakfast, pillowcases, square lunch boxes, pillowcases, pillow squares, and single beds/double runners.
4. Easiness to Pay
Usually, to ease the payment online travel agent utilized the online payment, which involves computer networks. Moreover, this enables consumers to choose which one is the more preferred and more straightforward for them to pay for their goods they are going to pay.

2.1.2 Profit Margin

Profit margin reflects the ratio between a company's profit (could be gross profit, net profit, or operating profit) and its revenue, by evaluating profit margin uncover the degree of how the company handling its financial strategy overall. On this research, operating profit margin is used because it shows the

effectiveness of the company's operating costs; cost of goods sold, costs associated with selling and administration, and overhead. This result also in line with the study performed by Prawirodipoero et al. (2019), which suggested that profitability plays a significant part in maximizing the financial performance of a company. □

2.2 Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis

Conceptual framework demonstrates the information regarding how the research is going to be embarked (Rahmawati, 2018). This research will discover the collaboration impact with online travel agent through the four factors that influencing room occupancy, which may generate the operating profit margin. □

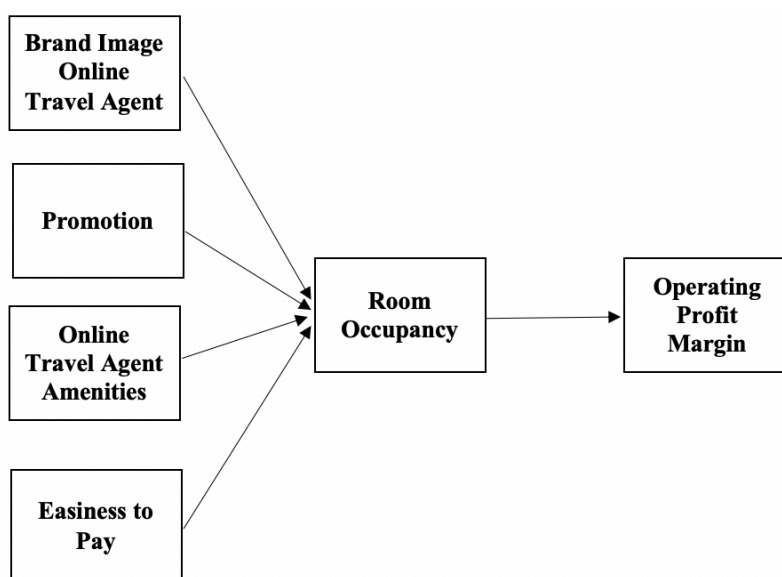


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Authors' Analysis

Based on the literature review, the following hypothesis were drawn as follows:

H1: Brand image online travel agent has a positive impact on room occupancy.

H2: Promotion agent has a positive impact on room occupancy.

H3: Online travel agent amenities has a positive impact on room occupancy.

H4: Payment method (easiness to pay) has a positive impact on room occupancy.

H5: Room occupancy has a positive impact on profit margin.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Qualitative Research

This research is one of the types of scientific research which consists of an investigation that: seeks answers to a question, systematically uses a predefined set of procedures to answer the question, collects evidence, produces findings that

were not determined in advance, and produces findings that are applicable beyond the immediate boundaries of the study. On this research, direct interviews with customer, hotel, and online travel agent are conducted.

3.2. Data Analysis

The data obtained from the interview will be further analyzed using the content analysis method. Content analysis is one of the tools of qualitative research to analyze the data. According to Cole (1998), content analysis is defined as a method of analyzing written, verbal, or visual communication messages. Through systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns, content analysis is a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

4. RESEARCH ANALYSIS

4.1 Interview Analysis

The data were obtained from interviews with nine respondents from 3 parties; The first party was The Summit Siliwangi Hotel with three respondents, the second party was an online travel agent with three respondents, and last expert customers three respondents.

Table 1: Intensity of Using Online Travel Agents

Do you often book hotels through online travel agents?	
C-1	Usually use online travel agent service
C-2	Usually use online travel agent service
C-3	Usually use online travel agent service

Source: Authors' analysis

To get the data from The Summit Siliwangi Hotel, the authors conducted interviews with different positions extending from general manager and supervisor. Then to get data from online travel agents, the authors conducted interviews with two different online travel agents, namely RedDoorz and OYO. There were six questions inquired for the interview to find the impact of hotel and online travel agents' collaboration on profit margin of The Summit Siliwangi Hotel. The analysis of the factors is presented as follows:

4.1.1. Brand Image

Interviews with 15 respondents, and the first question was about hotel accommodation, what would an online travel agent do in order to increase occupancy rooms are conducted. This question is useful to find out how much

influence the online travel agent has in increasing occupancy rooms. The results of the interview will be analyzed using the content analysis method as below:

Table 2: First Question of Brand Image

Do you think the brand image of online travel agents play an essential role in your decision to book a hotel? (Expert Customers)	
C-1	Brand image of online travel agent is essential because of the result in the form of exposure.
C-2	Brand image of online travel agent is essential due to its significant role in building trust and mind-set.
C-3	Brand image of online travel agent is essential due to its significant role in building trust and safety.

Source: Authors' analysis

Table 3: Second Question of Brand Image

Do you think brand image online travel agents play an essential role in increasing the occupancy room? <input type="checkbox"/>	
H-1	Brand image of online travel agent is essential to promote the properties listed for people originated from inside or outside the city.
H-2	Brand image of online travel agent is essential to boost occupancy room and to reach more customers.
H-3	It is essential because most of the customers that categorized as tourists booked their room via an online travel agent.
OTA-1	Brand image is essential so that company use several methods to build the brand image.
OTA-2	Brand image is important because the better brand image, the bigger chance the company get to be the customer's top of mind and first choice.
OTA-3	Brand image is essential to build world-class communities.

Source: Authors' analysis

Of the three expert clients, brand image online travel is very critical to increase room occupancy. It is because the brand image will increase the visibility of the Summit Siliwangi Hotel. Other than the picture of the brand because of the

essential role of confidence-building, mind-set, and security. From the hotel point of view, brand image online travel agent is very critical in promoting properties to attract more customers, such as within or outside the area. Also, customers who have identified themselves as visitors are booking their room from an online travel agency. From the perspective of the online travel agent, brand image online travel agent is essential because the better brand image, the higher the potential for the business to become the customer's top priority and the first choice. Furthermore, brand image is also essential for building world-class communities.

4.1.2. Promotion

From three expert clients, the offer is said to affect the customer's decision to book a hotel. It is because the form of promotions that offer cost reduction is significant. The type of promotion that consumers want is discount, travel vlogger endorsement, and cashback.

Table 4: First Question of Promotion

- Do you think the promotions carried out online travel agents affect your decision in booking a hotel? (Expert Customers)	
- Do you think the promotions carried out online travel agents affect your decision in booking a hotel? (Expert Customers)	
C-1	- Of course, because the respondent travels for holiday reasons. Hence then the reduction in costs is significant - Discount as the most effective promotions
C-2	- Of course, it is important - Endorsement from travel vlogger and discount.
C-3	- Discount and cashback so the respondents may get a cheaper price. □ - Discount and cashback

Source: Authors' analysis

From the hotel viewpoint, two respondents said that the promotion is necessary to develop positive awareness while also increasing the standard of service in order to attract more visitors as well as to increase the occupancy rate. The type of promotions that the hotel likes are discounts, cashback and ads on radio, TV, blogs, social media, engaging content and continually leveraging social media. From the standpoint of the online travel agent, promotion was the most important thing to increase the occupancy rate and to grow a new international market. The type of advertising favoured by an online travel agent is Discount,

Coupon Hotel, Cashback, YouTube Ads, Social Media, TV. As an outcome, the promotion plays a vital role in increasing the occupancy of the Summit Siliwangi Hotel.

Table 5: Second Question of Promotion

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you think that the promotion carried out by online travel agents affects hotel room occupancy? - What promotions are conducted by online travel agents to increase hotel occupancy? 	
H-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No, because the most important thing is the comfort and service provided by the property. - Discount, cashback, and advertisement on radio, TV, website, and social media.
H-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create promotions that build positive exposure while also increase the quality of service in order to add more guests. - Discount, voucher, cashback, YouTube ads, media social, TV.
H-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion considered as the essential thing to increase the rate of occupancy room. - Promotion via website, engaging article and continuously optimizing social media.
OTA-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion considered as the essential thing to increase the rate of occupancy room and develop a new foreign market. - Social media pop-up ads (YouTube, Google ads), ease of payment, develop new market of local tourist.
OTA-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Depends on how the implementation of their advertising. - Discount, Voucher Hotel, Cashback, YouTube ads, Media social, TV.
OTA-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a promotion package and special rate in terms of giving free voucher. - Engaging advertisement that share the exposure property's facilities and services

Source: Authors' analysis

4.1.3. Amenities

Including its three expert customers, the amenities offered by the online travel agent have a very significant effect on the decision to book a hotel. Most of the amenities needed to be offered by online travel agents are the complete information on standard amenities and cleanliness.

Table 6: First Question of Amenities

Do you think the amenities provided by online travel agents can influence your decision in booking a hotel? (Expert Customers).	
C-1	The most important thing is cleanliness and the standard amenities provided.
C-2	The comfort from staying in the property are highly influenced by completeness of standard amenities and cleanliness.
C-3	The more the amenities provided, the more comfort experienced as well.

Source: Authors' analysis

Table 7: Second Question of Amenities

Do you think the amenities provided by online travel agents can affect hotel room occupancy?	
H-1	Amenities provided and shown in the promotion may attract more customers.
H-2	Amenities provided and shown in the promotion may introduce the hotel itself and make the customers know how to set their expectation of the comfort and cleanliness standard that suits to their needs.
H-3	No, since the amenities are considered as the property's internal standard.
OTA-1	Promotion may increase the occupancy rate and develop new local guests' market that may give guest recommendation according to the guests' destination.
OTA-2	No, but the amenities shown in the promotion must be strictly provided during the guests' stay in the property.
OTA-3	Yes, because the more engaging the way to show the amenities, the more guests will be attracted

Source: Authors' analysis

From the viewpoint of the hotel, two respondents agree that the amenities are essential to the decision in the hotel booking so they can introduce the hotel itself and let the customers know how to set their standards of the comfort and cleanliness quality that meets their needs. From the online travel agent, the amenities are essential to the decision of the hotel booking, since the more appealing the way to present the amenities, the more guests would be attracted. As a result, amenities play a vital role in raising the occupancy of the Summit Siliwangi Hotel. □

4.1.4. Ease of Payment

Of the three expert customers, two respondents said that ease of payment is not a factor that can increase hotel occupancy because there are several other factors, such as amenities and promotion, that impact decision - making. However, one respondent said that ease of payment was one of the factors which might increase hotel occupancy, as credit card, virtual account and bank transfer favoured.

Table 8: First Question of Ease of Payment

- Is payment convenience consider as one of the factors that you consider when making hotel bookings? (Expert Customers)	
- What payment media is often used to make hotel booking transactions through an online travel agent? (Expert Customers)	
C-1	- Yes, Credit card, virtual account, and bank transfer are preferred
C-2	- No since every kind of payment method will be the same. - Credit card.
C-3	- No sense there are many other factors such as amenities and promotion to influence the decision making. - Debit card and credit cards.

Source: Authors' analysis

Table 9: Second Question of Ease of Payment

- Is the ease of payment considered as one of the factors that can increase hotel occupancy?	
- What are payment media most often used to make hotel booking transactions through an online travel agent?	
H-1	- The option of payments is the last thing considered after comfort. - Cash, debit/credit cards, and m-banking. Financial technology, such as OVO, Gopay, and Kredivo are also an option.
H-2	- Not really because there is a residential meeting that becomes a more significant influence on occupancy room - M-banking, debit/credit cards
H-3	- Yes, because the ease of payments is considered essential by most of the guests. - Cash, debit/credit cards, and m-banking.
OTA-1	- I do not think Hence, since the comfortability such as availability of facility is more important than the ease of payment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the ease of payment considered as one of the factors that can increase hotel occupancy? - What are payment media most often used to make hotel booking transactions through an online travel agent?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pay at hotel, debit/credit card, OVO, Gopay.
OTA-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, of course, since customers tend to choose ease of payment such as automatic payment, so it does not consume much time. - M-banking, cash, debit/ credit card.
OTA-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In my opinion, this factor is not as important as any other factors since if someone wants to stay in the hotel, they have prepared the cash to pay. - Debit card and cash.

From a hotel viewpoint, two respondents said that ease of payment is not a consideration that will increase hotel occupancy, since there is a residential meeting that will have a more significant effect on room occupancy. One respondent said, however, that ease of payment is one of the factors that can increase hotel occupancy because the ease of payment is considered to be necessary to most of the guests.

From the online travel agent, two respondents said that ease of payment is not a factor that can increase hotel occupancy, since comfort, such as the availability of facilities, is more important than ease of payment. However, one respondent said that the ease of payment could be one of the factors that could increase hotel occupancy, as customers prefer to favour the ease of payment. As a result, ease of payment is not a significant factor in the rising occupancy of the Summit Siliwangi Hotel.

4.2 Profit Margin Analysis

Based on the table below, the findings revealed that the revenue for the Summit Siliwangi Hotel in December 2016, where the hotel did not cooperate with the online travel agent, was Rp 153,656,069.00. Also, revenue for the Summit Siliwangi Hotel in January 2017, where the hotel cooperated with the online travel agent, was Rp 207,006,261.00. It implied that the revenue improved after the hotel had cooperated with the online travel agent. However, growing income has also raised variable costs in the hotel, such as wages, tax facilities, utilities and many more. As a result, the profit margin in this hotel falls due to the rise in variable costs. Even though the profit margin decreased, the hotel's revenue after partnering with the online travel agent increased dramatically in one month. The hotel profit in December 2016 was Rp 164,794,421,60 with a profit margin of 41,38 per cent, while the hotel profit in January 2017 was Rp 181,391,096,48

with a profit margin of 42,91%. Thus, the relationship between the Summit Siliwangi Hotel and the online travel agent can still be considered to have a positive effect on the revenue of the hotel.

Figure 2: Profit Margin of The Summit Siliwangi Hotel Before and After Collaboration

TOTAL	219,250,330.40	256,927,790.52	57.09%	58.62%
LABA / RUGI	164,794,421.60	181,391,096.48	42.91%	41.38%
PENGELUARAN TENANT				
Spa Lemont Graat	15,603,750.00	18,318,375.00	95.23%	84.85%
Guest Laundry Cost	781,950	3,269,850.00	4.77%	15.15%
TOTAL	16,385,700.00	21,588,225.00	4.93%	4.93%
PEMBAYARAN SUPPLIER				
Food	9,868,413.00	8,174,138.00	1.86%	24.52%
Beverage	347,917.00	330,773.00	0.08%	0.00%
HK Dry Cleaning & Laundry	4,958,200.00	7,255,750.00	1.66%	21.77%
Front Office (printinf stationari)	1,930,996.00	2,095,546.00	0.48%	6.29%
HK (gs,cleaning,printing,gardiner)	5,851,511.00	5,724,240.00	1.31%	0.17
F & B (Kit utensil,fuel,gues supplies,printing,cleaning)	1,332,424.00	1,265,828.00	0.29%	3.80%
HRD (air minum isi ulang w/ security)	1,526,030.00	1,654,872.00	0.38%	4.96%
ADM & General (printing)	582,759.64	1,495,769.00	4.49%	4.49%
Marketing (Print Advertising & sales call)	1,753,750.00	1,000,000.00	3.00%	3.00%
Maintenance (Electrical Maintenance)	2,005,896.00	4,335,246.00	0.99%	13.01%
TOTAL	30,157,896.64	33,332,162.00	7.60%	7.60%
PENGELUARAN KAS				
Salary (All Departemen + Casual)	78,950,000.00	84,700,000.00	19.32%	41.93%
Tunjangan Hari Raya (THR Bulan Juli 2015)		-		
Pengeluaran Kas Per Departemen		-		
Front Office (gasolin, parki & decoration,sewa mesin foto copy)	413,000.00	173,000.00	0.04%	0.09%
House Keeping (Decoration)		-	0.00%	0.00%
Food & Beverage (gasolin,glass,)	809,423.00	806,000.00	0.18%	0.40%
HRD (perijinan,iuran rutin rt)	1,226,030.00	2,654,872.00	0.61%	1.31%
ADM & Genaral (materi,jne,pulsa,Bank Charge,gasolin)	628,000.00	1,000,000.00	0.23%	0.50%
Marketing (sales call, pulsa)	4,450,000.00	4,700,000.00	1.07%	2.33%
Me (gasolin)		220,000.00		
Maintenance				
Internet	1,094,500.00	1,116,500.00	0.25%	0.55%
Telephone & Telex	1,800,231.00	1,843,919.00	0.42%	0.91%
TV Kabel	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	0.91%	1.98%
Removal of waste metter			0.00%	0.00%
AC Refrigerator Maintenance			0.00%	0.00%
Genset maintenance			0.00%	0.00%
Engenering Supplies			0.00%	0.00%
ME-Water			0.00%	0.00%
Solar			0.00%	0.00%
PLN (2 Gardu)	20,407,005.00	28,020,430.00	6.39%	13.87%
Service Charge	9,417,249.00	11,235,354.00	2.56%	5.56%
Biaya Management	9,011,295.76	21,037,328.52	4.80%	10.41%
Sewa Gedung	40,500,000.00	40,500,000.00	9.24%	20.05%
TOTAL	172,706,733.76	202,007,403.52	44.97%	46.09%

Source: Financial Report of The Summit Siliwangi Hotel

4.3 Hypothesis Testing

H1: Brand image online travel agent has a positive impact on room occupancy.

Based on the data analysis, the first hypotheses in this study was approved. Hence, the brand image online travel agent has a positive impact on room occupancy.

H2: Promotion agent has a positive impact on room occupancy.

Based on the data analysis, the second hypotheses in this study was approved. Hence, the promotion agent has a positive impact on room occupancy.

H3: Online travel agent amenities has a positive impact on room occupancy.

Based on the data analysis, the third hypotheses in this study was approved. Hence, the online travel agent amenities have a positive impact on room occupancy.

H4: Payment method (easiness to pay) has a positive impact on room occupancy.

Based on the data analysis, the fourth hypotheses in this study was not approved. Hence, the payment method (easiness to pay) has no impact on room occupancy.

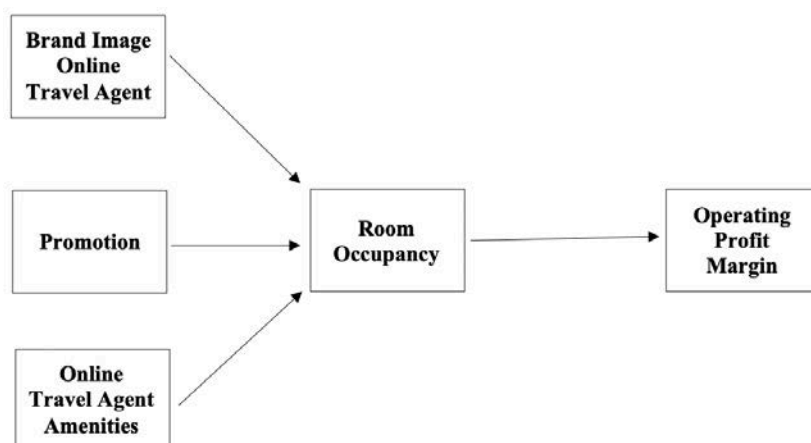
H5: Room occupancy has a positive impact on profit margin.

Based on the data analysis, the fifth hypotheses in this study was approved. Hence, the Room occupancy has a positive impact on profit margin.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This research aims to find a connection between online travel agents and hotels in terms of their profit margin and room occupancy. Since the Summit Siliwangi Hotel is considered a three-star hotel, the effect of the online travel agent is mainly due to improvements in the system, most of which are aimed at rising occupancy rate.

There is an aspect that shifts, namely ease of payment, because these factors do not have a significant impact on the occupancy space, and according to the results of the survey, not all respondents classified as an essential factor. As far as the brand image online travel agent is concerned, the marketing of online travel agent services affects the occupancy room because it satisfies the needs of clients, the number of people who stayed at the hotel. This updated structure can be used for a similar analysis on the effect of hotel and online travel agent partnership on the profit margin of the Summit Siliwangi Hotel.

Figure 3: Final Conceptual Framework

Source: Author's Analysis

Recommendation for the hotel management: they should try to meet with several online travel agencies to get a variety of deals. Also, before working together, they need to know the credibility of the online travel agent so that the partnership can operate smoothly. Second, the hotel must pay priority to cleanliness in the hotel setting so that visitors want to stay at the hotel again.

For the online travel agent, they must provide good service and also have detailed information on the hotels in which they operate, so that when customers ask questions such as rates, services and payment methods, they can answer these questions. Also, online travel agents should be able to train workers in different hotels that work with them in such a way that they have the same quality. Moreover, the essential thing for online travel agents is that they must be able to compete with their rivals by providing deals, discounts or coupons, since this is the best way to draw clients to stay in hotels that operate with these online travel agents.

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