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Optimizing Receiving Operations in the Hospitality Industry: A Case Study of Sensory Validation and Supplier Accountability at Hotel New Saphir Yogyakarta

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji strategi yang diterapkan oleh Hotel New Saphir Yogyakarta dalam menangani tantangan operasional dalam proses penerimaan barang, khususnya terkait ketidaksesuaian kuantitas, keterlambatan pengiriman, dan ketidakpatuhan kualitas. Kami menggunakan desain studi kasus tunggal kualitatif, dengan memanfaatkan observasi partisipan selama periode empat bulan dan wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan Chief Accountant, Petugas Purchasing, dan Petugas Receiving. Kami juga menganalisis dokumen internal seperti Market List, Bin Card, dan faktur untuk memverifikasi akurasi pengadaan. Temuan kami mengungkapkan bahwa hotel berhasil memitigasi risiko pengadaan melalui kombinasi protokol validasi sensorik yang ketat—seperti uji penciuman dan pengecap untuk barang yang mudah rusak—serta sistem peringatan pemasok tiga kali yang bertahap. Kami menemukan bahwa komunikasi antar-departemen berfungsi sebagai simpul umpan balik waktu nyata yang vital, memastikan bahwa ketidaksesuaian berat atau kualitas diselesaikan melalui negosiasi segera daripada sekadar penolakan. Penelitian ini memberikan nilai orisinal dengan menyoroti peran keahlian sensorik manusia yang sangat penting sebagai filter kualitatif yang melengkapi metrik inventaris digital dalam lingkungan perhotelan standar tinggi. Meskipun terbatas pada satu konteks organisasi, penelitian ini memberikan implikasi praktis bagi para praktisi untuk melembagakan standar organoleptik dan disiplin pemasok yang terstruktur guna menjaga integritas operasional.

Kata Kunci: Manajemen Operasional; Proses Penerimaan; Pengendalian Kualitas; Manajemen Rantai Pasok; Industri Perhotelan.

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the strategies employed by Hotel New Saphir Yogyakarta in addressing operational challenges within the receiving process, specifically concerning quantitative discrepancies, delivery delays, and quality non-compliance. We adopted a qualitative single case study design, utilizing participant observation over a four-month period and semi-structured interviews with the Chief Accountant, Purchasing Officer, and Receiving Officer. We also analyzed internal documents such as Market Lists, Bin Cards, and invoices to verify procurement accuracy. Our findings reveal that the hotel successfully mitigates procurement risks through a combination of rigorous sensory validation protocols—such as olfactory and gustatory tests for perishable goods—and a graduated three-strike supplier warning system. We found that cross-departmental communication acts as a vital real-time feedback loop, ensuring that discrepancies in weight or quality are addressed through immediate negotiation rather than simple rejection. This research provides original value by highlighting the indispensable role of human sensory expertise as a qualitative filter that complements digital inventory metrics in high-standard hospitality environments. While limited to a single organizational context, the study offers practical implications for practitioners to institutionalize organoleptic standards and structured supplier discipline to safeguard operational integrity.

Keyword: Operations Management; Receiving Process; Quality Control; Supply Chain Management; Hospitality Industry.

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1. Introduction

The hospitality industry operates within a complex and dynamic supply chain where the receiving and purchasing departments serve as critical anchors for operational stability (Vu *et al.*, 2025). Effective procurement management is not merely a back-office function but a fundamental pillar that ensures the seamless delivery of services to guests (Petropoulos *et al.*, 2026). In high-standard hotel environments, the receiving section acts as a primary gatekeeper, tasked with validating the quality and quantity of incoming goods against stringent corporate standards. However, the operational reality often presents significant challenges, including discrepancies in weight and quantity, delivery delays, and fluctuations in the quality of perishable goods (Aziz *et al.*, 2025). At Hotel New Saphir Yogyakarta, the receiving process involves a multi-stage workflow—from the initial request by the Food Beverage Product department to the final verification of invoices. Despite having established Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), preliminary observations indicate recurring issues such as the delivery of non-fresh produce (e.g., wilted vegetables or substandard seafood) and logistical bottlenecks that disrupt the daily production cycle. Such inefficiencies do not only impact immediate food production but also carry broader financial implications and risks to the hotel's reputation.

Previous research has underscored the importance of receiving departments in maintaining the quality of perishable materials and the necessity of robust Supply Chain Management (SCM) to mitigate procurement delays (Baglio *et al.*, 2025; Burgess *et al.*, 2023; Carel *et al.*, 2024). For instance, studies by Suradi (2018) emphasize that the synergy between purchasing and receiving is a prerequisite for organizational quality, while Rahayu and Arnawa, (2023) highlights that rigorous internal controls are essential to prevent inventory deviations. Building upon these perspectives, this study seeks to explore how a four-star hotel in Yogyakarta navigates these operational hurdles through strategic communication and quality control. This research aims to analyze the strategies employed by Hotel New Saphir Yogyakarta in addressing three core issues: discrepancies in goods received, logistical delays, and quality non-compliance. By aligning empirical field findings with theories of Operations Management, Logistics, and Quality Control, this study contributes to the literature on hospitality supply chains. Practically, the findings provide a framework for hotel managers to enhance the reliability of their supplier networks and optimize the integrity of their receiving operations.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Foundations of Operations Management in Hospitality

Operations management in the service sector is defined as a series of value-added activities that transform inputs into outputs (Heizer *et al.*, 2024), specifically through the optimization of resources to achieve organizational goals (Garrido *et al.*, 2024). In a four-star hotel context, this involves the precise management of capital, labor, and raw materials to ensure consistent service delivery. Effective operations are critical as they represent the most significant cost component for an organization (Liu & Lai, 2025), yet they offer the greatest opportunity for profit enhancement and improved guest satisfaction (Wilson, 2025).

2.2 Integrated Supply Chain Management (SCM) and Receiving Dynamics

The receiving function is a fundamental stage within the broader Supply Chain Management (SCM) framework (Du Toit & Vlok, 2014), which integrates the procurement of raw materials with the distribution of final products (Lu & Swaminathan, 2015). In hospitality, the receiving section serves as the primary point of entry for goods, where the validation of physical integrity and document verification—such as matching invoices with delivered stock—is paramount (Adani & Rahayu, 2023). Disruptions at this stage, particularly regarding quantity or weight discrepancies, often stem from a lack of coordination between the hotel, the distributor, and the supplier. Strategic SCM requires proactive cooperation across teams to manage these external partnerships effectively (Anwar *et al.*, 2025).

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2.3 Logistics and Procurement Efficiency

Logistics management is defined as the process of planning, implementing, and controlling the efficient and effective flow and storage of goods, services, and related information from the point of origin to the point of consumption, aimed at meeting customer requirements (Heizer *et al.*, 2024). For hotel receiving departments, this includes managing the "manajerial" aspect—planning and resource allocation—and the "operasional" aspect—procurement, maintenance, and distribution. The primary objective of logistics is to ensure that materials are available in the correct quantity, at the specified quality, and within the agreed-upon timeframe to prevent operational stagnation (Chen, 2025; Dadzie & Richard, 2025).

2.4 Quality Control and Total Quality Management (TQM)

Quality control involves technical and managerial actions taken to ensure that a product or service meets standardized specifications and customer expectations (Zacharias, 2022). Within the hospitality receiving process, this requires rigorous inspection before goods enter the inventory to identify performance gaps between standard and actual quality. Adopting a Total Quality Management (TQM) perspective shifts the focus toward optimizing the entire organizational process, emphasizing that every employee—particularly those in receiving—contributes to the final guest experience (Alawag *et al.*, 2024).

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This research adopts a qualitative approach utilizing a single case study design to investigate the operational dynamics of the receiving process at Hotel New Saphir Yogyakarta. The selection of a case study design is predicated on its ability to provide a granular exploration of contemporary phenomena within a real life context (Eisenhardt, 1989). By focusing on a single organizational entity, the study captures the intricate social and technical interactions inherent in hospitality supply chains. Following the principles established by Yin and Eisenhardt, this approach allows for the development of theoretical insights from empirical observations within a specific environment.

3.2 Research Site and Unit of Analysis

The study was conducted at Hotel New Saphir Yogyakarta, a four star hospitality establishment in Indonesia. The unit of analysis is the Accounting Department, specifically the receiving section, which serves as the primary gateway for all goods entering the hotel. This department was selected because it possesses the most relevant data and direct experience regarding the management of operational inputs and quality control.

3.3 Data Collection Methods

To ensure the credibility and transparency of the findings, data were gathered through multiple sources to facilitate triangulation as suggested by Miles and Huberman (2014).

- 1) Participant Observation: The primary researcher was embedded in the receiving section for a duration of four months, from March 2024 to July 2024. This prolonged engagement allowed for the documentation of daily routines, logistical challenges, and the actual application of standard operating procedures.
- 2) Semi-Structured Interviews: Formal dialogues were conducted with key personnel to understand the underlying strategies used to mitigate procurement issues. These sessions lasted approximately sixty minutes each to ensure depth of inquiry. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their specialized roles and responsibilities within the procurement and receiving cycle. The details of the research informants are presented in Table 1.
- 3) Documentation Analysis: The study reviewed internal records including Market Lists, receiving records, invoices, and Bin Cards to verify the accuracy of physical deliveries against procurement requests.

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Table 1. Respondent Profile

Name of Respondent	Division	Interview Duration
BK	Chief Accountant	60 Minute
DK	Purchasing Officer	60 Minute
SY	Receiving Officer	60 inurte

3.4 Data Analysis

The analysis follows the thematic analysis framework, involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing as advocated by Miles and Huberman. Field notes from observations and interview transcripts were systematically coded to identify recurring themes related to supply chain discrepancies and quality management. Member checking was performed by reconfirming information with respondents to ensure the accuracy of the interpreted data.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Thematic Analysis of Operational Challenges

The empirical evidence gathered through four months of participant observation and in depth interviews reveals three primary thematic challenges in the receiving operations of Hotel New Saphir Yogyakarta. These challenges—logistical delays, quantitative discrepancies, and qualitative non compliance—represent significant friction points in the hospitality supply chain.

4.1.2 *Logistical Synchronization and Supplier Discipline*

Logistical delays emerged as a recurring obstacle, often attributed to external factors such as traffic conditions or supplier mismanagement. To mitigate this, the management implemented a structured notification system and a graduated penalty framework. Unlike some industry practices that favor immediate financial penalties, the hotel adopts a corrective approach through sequential warnings:

"We utilize a specialized schedule board in the receiving area to ensure suppliers are aware of strict delivery windows. Discipline is maintained through a three strike warning system; persistent failure to meet timelines results in a reduction of purchase volume or the termination of the partnership." (BK, Chief Accountant)

4.1.3 *Quantitative Accuracy and Physical Verification*

Discrepancies between the Market List and the actual weight or quantity of goods delivered constitute a primary administrative risk. The study found that rigorous physical verification using specialized industrial scales is the hotel's most effective defense against financial loss. When weight discrepancies occur, the receiving section does not simply reject the goods but initiates a coordinated communication loop with the purchasing department to negotiate adjustments or replacements

Table 2. Verification Protocols and Discrepancy Management

Dimension of Discrepancy	Verification Tool	Mitigation Strategy
Weight Inaccuracy	Avery Industrial Scale	Re weighing in presence of supplier and invoice adjustment
Quantity Mismatch	Market List & Receiving Record	Immediate reporting to Purchasing for supplemental delivery.
Administrative Error	Bin Card & Invoice Audit	Data reconciliation by Accounting Department.

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4.1.4 Quality Control and Sensory Validation Protocols

A significant finding of this study is the hotel's reliance on sensory validation for perishable goods, which transcends basic SOPs found in lower tier establishments. This process ensures that the high standards expected of a four star institution are maintained before raw materials enter the production cycle.

4.1.5 Perishable Goods Standardization

The receiving section applies specific organoleptic tests—using smell, touch, and taste—to validate the freshness of seafood and produce.

- 1) Seafood and Proteins: Officers perform olfactory and visual inspections to ensure clear eyes and fresh aromas, rejecting any items exhibiting signs of oxidation or decay.
- 2) Fresh Produce: For fruits and vegetables, the "taste and texture" protocol is applied. Officers frequently sample produce to verify sweetness and crispness.
- 3) Standardized Weights: For specific items like eggs, the hotel enforces a precise weight standard (80g per unit) to ensure consistency in culinary output.

4.2 Discussion

The findings indicate that PPSD's implementation of the RFID-based LOS system is not merely a technical upgrade. The main findings of this study demonstrate that receiving operations at Hotel New Saphir Yogyakarta are governed by a complex interplay of sensory expertise, graduated supplier accountability, and cross-departmental communication. The research identifies a distinct pattern where human intuition and organoleptic validation serve as the ultimate fail-safe for quality assurance, complementing formal administrative records. These findings highlight the critical role of the receiving section not merely as a checkpoint, but as a strategic filter that safeguards the hotel's operational integrity and guest satisfaction standards. The emphasis on sensory-based quality control found in this study represents a significant operational pattern that extends the current understanding of hospitality logistics. While Carel *et al.* (2024) emphasized that receiving departments often struggle with a lack of technical precision and failure to adhere to Purchase Orders (PO), the evidence from Hotel New Saphir suggests that sensory protocols—such as tasting fruit for sweetness or checking the olfactory profile of seafood—provide a more immediate and reliable quality filter for perishable items than traditional documentation alone. This finding challenges the prevailing focus on purely quantitative metrics in logistics, suggesting that in high-end hospitality, qualitative sensory data is paramount for maintaining 4-star service standards.

Furthermore, the strategy for managing supplier non-compliance through a graduated "three-strike" warning system illustrates a structured approach to supplier discipline that balances firmness with partnership stability. This contrasts with the findings of Wulandari and Azwar (2025), who identified a need for more rigid SOP additions to fix procurement delays. In this case study, the pattern of gradual escalation—moving from warnings to volume reduction and finally to termination—allows the hotel to maintain supply chain continuity while enforcing accountability. This approach underscores the importance of the "managerial" aspect of logistics, focusing on relationship management rather than just transactional enforcement. The cross-departmental synergy identified between receiving, purchasing, and accounting departments confirms the integrated nature of Supply Chain Management (SCM) within the hospitality sector. This aligns with the work of Mahyudi and Suradi (2018) regarding the necessity of communication to minimize errors. However, this study adds a novel dimension by showing how the receiving section acts as a real-time feedback loop that triggers immediate purchasing negotiations. The strength of this study lies in its 4-month participant observation, which captured the lived experience of staff managing these discrepancies. A limitation remains the focus on a single case, which may be influenced by specific local supplier behaviors in Yogyakarta. A potential alternative explanation for the high reliance on sensory checks could be the inconsistent quality of local agricultural produce, which necessitates manual intervention over automated systems. While the current findings provide clear evidence of effective internal controls, questions remain regarding how these manual sensory protocols can be integrated into digital inventory management systems without losing their qualitative depth. Future research should

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explore the feasibility of digitizing organoleptic data to further enhance the transparency and reproducibility of quality control in the tourism industry.

5. Conclusion

This study successfully addresses the fundamental operational questions regarding how a 4-star hospitality establishment manages supply chain discrepancies through a single case study of Hotel New Saphir Yogyakarta. The original inquiries concerning the resolution of quantitative mismatches, logistical delays, and qualitative non-compliance have been answered by identifying a robust framework of cross-departmental communication and sensory-based validation. The main argument concludes that while administrative SOPs provide the necessary structure, the effectiveness of the receiving process is ultimately determined by the sensory expertise of personnel and a disciplined, graduated approach to supplier accountability. In practice, this research offers a replicable model for hospitality practitioners to enhance procurement integrity. The findings suggest that hotels can mitigate the risks of substandard perishable goods by institutionalizing organoleptic tests—such as the "taste and texture" protocol for produce and olfactory checks for seafood—into their formal receiving training. Furthermore, the implementation of a graduated warning system combined with public scheduling boards in receiving areas serves as a practical tool for improving supplier discipline without prematurely severing vital supply links. These strategies demonstrate that operational efficiency is achieved through a balance of rigorous physical verification and proactive relationship management.

For the research community, these findings imply a need to reconsider the over-reliance on purely quantitative or digital supply chain metrics in the service sector. The study highlights that in contexts where raw material quality is variable, human intuition and sensory data remain indispensable components of Quality Control that current digital frameworks often overlook. However, this study is limited by its specific focus on a single urban hotel in Yogyakarta, which may reflect unique local supplier behaviors and logistical constraints. Future research should explore the integration of these qualitative sensory standards into automated inventory systems to bridge the gap between human expertise and digital transparency. Based on the findings, several concrete recommendations are proposed for Hotel New Saphir Yogyakarta to further optimize its operations. The management should develop a standardized checklist for sensory inspections to ensure consistency across different shifts and personnel. Additionally, implementing a monthly supplier performance report that aggregates data on delivery delays and quality rejections would provide a more objective basis for contract renewals. Finally, providing routine training for receiving staff on advanced weighing techniques and quality recognition will ensure that the hotel continues to uphold its commitment to high-standard culinary outputs and guest satisfaction.

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