

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background

The hotel industry is a vital component of the global hospitality sector and plays an essential role in driving economic growth, employment, and intercultural connectivity. In today's dynamic landscape, the hospitality industry is undergoing a profound transformation, largely influenced by rapid technological advancement, changing traveler expectations, and sustainability considerations (Baum & Hai, 2020; Sigala, 2020). Travelers are increasingly seeking more personalized, experience-driven, and eco-friendly accommodations. This trend has urged many international hotel brands to invest in automation, artificial intelligence, and green architecture to stay relevant and competitive (Yilmaz & Akgunduz, 2022; Ivanov & Webster, 2020). According to Statista (2024), the global hotel market was valued at over USD 930 billion in 2023 and is projected to grow to approximately USD 1.27 trillion by 2030, highlighting the resilience and potential of the industry. In addition to economic gains, the hospitality industry creates millions of jobs globally and offers diverse career paths ranging from operations and marketing to sustainability and revenue management (WTTC, 2023; Bharwani & Mathews, 2021).

The tourism sector is influenced by many factors, which affect not only the tourism economy but also induce changes in tourists, transforming their behaviour (Breda, Pacheco, & Dinis, 2019). In comparison to the global context, the Indonesian hotel industry is still developing but holds substantial promise. With a population exceeding 275 million and a rising middle class, Indonesia has a strong internal market to support hospitality growth (BPS Indonesia, 2023). However, the industry faces notable challenges that must be addressed to remain competitive on a global scale. These include the uneven quality of service across regions, limited adoption of digital technologies in

budget and mid-tier hotels, insufficient infrastructure in secondary destinations, and the need for enhanced human resource capacity (Hendrayati et al., 2022; PwC Indonesia, 2023). Moreover, there is a lack of standardization in hospitality education and limited public-private collaboration in developing tourism areas beyond Bali. These challenges have hindered the optimal utilization of Indonesia's tourism potential, especially in areas designated as part of the "10 New Balis" initiative aimed at diversifying tourism hotspots (UNWTO, 2023).

Despite these hurdles, both the global and Indonesian hotel industries present significant opportunities. Globally, new market segments are emerging, such as "bleisure" travelers, those who combine business and leisure alongside increased interest in sustainable and wellness-oriented tourism (Dolnicar, 2021; Xiang et al., 2021). The use of big data analytics, Internet of Things (IoT), and AI-based guest personalization tools is also becoming a game-changer in improving operational efficiency and guest satisfaction (Ivanov & Webster, 2020). Indonesia can leverage these innovations to enhance service quality and attract both domestic and international tourists. The increasing popularity of local digital booking platforms such as Traveloka, Tiket.com, and Pegipegi also indicates the market's readiness for digital transformation and broader hotel visibility (Putra & Damayanti, 2021). Furthermore, the government's support for creative economy sectors and digital startups provides additional synergy for integrated hospitality experiences, making the sector even more promising for young professionals entering the field.

In light of these global trends and domestic developments, internships in the hospitality industry, especially in hotel operations, offer invaluable learning experiences for students. Participating in real-world hotel settings allows interns to observe firsthand how operational standards are implemented, how guest services are managed, and how a hotel responds to market trends. This practical exposure is especially important in Indonesia, where hands-on training can help

bridge gaps in soft skills, service consistency, and technical expertise that are often cited as areas needing improvement (Hendrayati et al., 2022; Adinugroho & Astuti, 2022). As the industry continues to evolve, future hospitality professionals must be equipped not only with theoretical knowledge but also with critical thinking, adaptability, and a customer-centric mindset. Through internships, students can contribute to and learn from the growing hospitality landscape in Indonesia, preparing themselves to take part in shaping its future in alignment with international standards.

As for the author itself, the internship program is really important for students and to be done during their university time so that they get to experience the real industry while studying. With the internship program abroad, it is hoped that the students can implement and learn new things in the industry as well as practice their English communication skills as well, as English is important (Listiana et al., 2025). During the internship program, it is hoped that the students can learn many things that have never been taught during their studies, so that the students can gain more knowledge in the future. Hopefully, with the internship program, students can gain real life experience in the industry.

## 1.2. Purpose

The purpose of this internship program, based on the writer's point of view, is to get real-life experience in the industry. There might be a slight difference between what we have learned in our university to what the real industry teaches us. In the writer's opinion, the university only teaches us the basic things to introduce us to what the real industry will be like. It is not 100% the same, but they give an illustration of what we will face and how to deal with it.

The second purpose from the writer's point of view is to gain a network after the internship program is finished. The writer believes that the internship program is really important for a future career. During the internship, we get to

interact with new people, even new people and new cultures different from ours. The writer believes that if we do our internship diligently, nicely, always want to learn, and are open to criticism, we can be one of the trainees who are memorable to them. We will be remembered by the staff there and even by the seniors, and gain a network from it. By giving the best performance, the writer believes that it will be easy for us to get contacted and become their permanent employee at the hotel where we did our internship.

The third purpose from the writer's point of view is to gain new skills. The writer believes that the skills we have now are useful during our internship, but they will not be enough in the industry. When we do our internship, we get to learn from the real-life experience of the industry. Some things might change, and new skills will develop. The writer believes that by doing the internship, we can learn new things, such as to work fast, be agile, develop our initiative in our surroundings, and many more.

The last purpose is to fill the academy's needs. On our campus, an internship is a mandatory thing that needs to be done. We must do a 6-month period of internship to fulfill the academic needs. In my opinion, the purpose of the internship program is to get real-life experience and to prepare ourselves for the working industry. By doing the internship program, we get to know the work environment and what the real industry will be like. By finishing the internship and making a report, it is counted as a "one golden ticket" gained as a requirement to graduate from the university.

### **1.3. Period and Procedures**

As the students of Hotel Operation study program, the students are required to do a 6-month internship at a hotel as one of the requirements to graduate from the university. The classification of the hotels themselves, such as 4-star or 5-star hotels, is dependent on the GPA. Students with a GPA of more than 3 can do their internship at the 5-star hotels; meanwhile, students with a GPA of less

than 3 can only do their internship at a 4-star hotel. The department where we want to do the internship is free depending on our interest, therefore, the writer chooses to do the internship program at the Food and Beverage Service Department.

The journey of finding a hotel for an internship starts from March 2025, when the lecturer informed us to start finding hotels that we want to apply for. The lecturer also share many job vacancies not only from hotels that are located in Indonesia, but also from those located in other countries. The lecturer also share the contacts of the hotel's Human Resource team so that we can contact them directly through their email, not from the job vacancy through LinkedIn or their hotel's website. One regulation that our lecturer gives is to inform him of which hotel we are going to apply by CC our application email to him for those who are applying to hotels in other countries, and giving the data needed for applying for the job, and letting him send the application for us for those who want to apply for hotels in Indonesia.

As for the writer's experience itself, the writer was planning on doing her internship at a hotel in another country. The writer was planning on applying to a hotel in Japan, but after further consideration, the writer decided to apply to a hotel in Hong Kong. The writers sent an application email to the HR of one of the hotel at Hong Kong on April 22nd, 2025. While waiting to get the information for the second interview process with the first hotel, the writer also sent an application email to the HR team of Rosewood Hong Kong on May 14th, 2025. On May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, the writer got a confirmation email from the HR team of Rosewood Hong Kong, stating that the writer's CV and Recommendation Letter will be passed to her teams for further consideration and saying that the writer will be contacted for further arrangements if being shortlisted. The next day, the writer got an invitation email to do an interview with the Talent Development Team of Rosewood Hong Kong, and on May 23rd, 2025, the interview was conducted. On May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, another invitation

for the second interview with the Talent Development Manager of Food and Beverage was sent to the author's email. The interview was conducted on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and the result of the second interview was sent to the author's email on June 2nd, 2025, with the result of being accepted at Rosewood Hong Kong, specifically at Butterfly Patisserie outlet.

