

Tacit and Explicit Knowledge Management among Operational Employees at Kyriad Hotel Bumiminang Padang

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ABSTRACT

This study maps the implementation of knowledge management among operational employees at Kyriad Hotel Bumiminang Padang, with particular attention to tacit and explicit knowledge. The study used a quantitative descriptive survey designed to describe implementation levels rather than test causal relationships. Saturated sampling covered all 41 operational employees. Data were collected through a five-point Likert questionnaire and summarized using item means and the respondent achievement level (TCR). Tacit knowledge recorded a mean of 3.12 (TCR 62.4%) and was classified as fairly good, whereas explicit knowledge reached 3.63 (TCR 72.6%) and was classified as good. The pattern indicates that formal procedures, documentation, and digital tools are more established than the systematic transfer of experience-based knowledge. The lowest scores point to limited learning from operational problems and difficulties in using some systems. Management should institutionalize mentoring, short after-action reviews, regular operational briefings, accessible digital documentation, and a clear process for translating lessons learned into updated work standards.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Hotel operations depend on the consistent application of knowledge at the point of service delivery. Unlike settings in which outputs can be inspected before use, hotel services are produced through repeated interactions between employees, guests, procedures, and technology. Knowledge management is therefore particularly relevant to hospitality because service consistency depends on how well organizations retain and circulate operational know-how [1]. Knowledge sharing within hospitality teams has also been associated with service innovation, showing that employee knowledge is not merely an individual resource but an operational capability [2]. In practical terms, front office employees must respond to changing guest requests, housekeeping staff must coordinate room status and quality standards, and food and beverage employees must apply service and safety procedures under time pressure. Evidence from hotel operations also shows the importance of standardized operating procedures [3] and internal communication and teamwork [4] in supporting reliable employee performance.

Knowledge management refers to the organizational processes through which knowledge is created, acquired, organized, shared, stored, and applied. Nonaka [5] explains organizational knowledge creation as a dynamic process in which individual knowledge can be transformed and amplified through interaction. Alavi and Leidner [6] similarly emphasize the creation, storage, transfer, and application of knowledge, while Gold et al. [7] position knowledge processes as organizational capabilities. A central distinction is between tacit knowledge and explicit knowledge. Tacit knowledge is embedded in experience, judgement, intuition, and practical skill, whereas explicit knowledge can be articulated and codified in documents, procedures, databases, manuals, checklists, and digital systems [8]. Because knowledge is often embedded in interactions among people, tasks, and tools, transferring it from one employee or situation to another can be difficult even when formal documentation is available [9].

The distinction is especially important for operational hotel work. Tacit knowledge is used when an employee reads a guest situation, adapts communication, resolves an unusual complaint, prioritizes tasks during a busy period, or makes a judgement that is not fully specified in a procedure. Research on hospitality establishments shows that such knowledge is strongly tied to action and experience [10]. Informal conversation and workplace interaction are also important channels through which hotel employees learn and share operational knowledge [11]. Explicit knowledge, by contrast, supports repeatability through standard operating procedures, reports, forms, information systems, and technology-enabled communication [12]. In Indonesian hotel settings, operational communication has been linked with safety-related practice [13], while training and work experience remain relevant to service competence [14]. Communication has also been associated with employee productivity in resort operations [15]. These studies reinforce the practical need to connect codified information with everyday employee experience.

Hospitality research has largely examined knowledge management through its relationships with sharing behavior, innovation, creativity, leadership, and organizational performance. Knowledge-sharing enablers influence employee sharing behavior and organizational outcomes [16], while sharing behavior can support service innovative behavior [17]. Social and technology-enabled knowledge processes have also been linked with employee creativity [18] and hotel innovation and performance [19]. More recent evidence suggests, however, that knowledge sharing among hotel workers is not automatic. Employees may prefer knowledge seeking to active sharing when workplace conditions do not sufficiently encourage exchange [20], and technology-enabled microlearning may support more proactive knowledge seeking [21]. Motivation is also relevant to employees willingness to share knowledge [22]. A cooperative climate and empowering leadership can create conditions that facilitate voice and knowledge sharing [23], while leader humility can encourage knowledge collection and donation through proactive job behaviors [24]. Conversely, front-line employees may withhold knowledge when they perceive costs, limited time, or weak benefits from exchange [25]. Broader reviews show that knowledge management in tourism increasingly focuses on how knowledge processes support organizational learning and performance [26]. Tourism research also emphasizes the continuing need to understand knowledge sharing across different organizational settings [27]. Knowledge-oriented leadership shapes knowledge management behavior through employee attitudes [28], while early hotel research linked knowledge management implementation with organizational effectiveness [29]. Knowledge transfer in tourism nevertheless remains context dependent [30], and knowledge sharing itself is shaped by individual and organizational conditions [31]. Kyriad Hotel Bumiminang Padang has 164 rooms and nine meeting rooms and operates several service functions simultaneously. This operating context makes front-line and operational knowledge especially important because experience should not remain with individual employees, while procedures and technology must remain usable during routine service delivery. Existing hospitality studies have tended to emphasize relationships between knowledge processes and outcomes such as innovation or performance. Less attention has been given to a baseline descriptive mapping of how tacit and explicit knowledge are implemented among operational employees in a local hotel. Therefore, this study aims to describe the implementation level of both knowledge forms and to identify specific operational strengths and weaknesses that can guide practical improvement.

2. METHOD

This study used a quantitative descriptive survey. The design was selected because the objective was to map the level of knowledge management implementation rather than estimate causal relationships among variables. The population consisted of all 41 employees classified in the study as operational employees at Kyriad Hotel Bumiminang Padang, and all were included through saturated sampling [32]. Operational employees were the focus because their work involves the day-to-day application of experience, procedures, and service information where guest and operational problems are encountered directly. The available research record does not provide a department-by-department breakdown; therefore, this article does not infer that specific departments were represented in particular proportions.

Data were collected using a five-point Likert questionnaire containing 13 statements. Four statements described tacit knowledge through experience and personal knowledge, while nine statements described explicit knowledge through work procedures and the use of technology. The item domains were aligned with the established conceptual distinction between experience-based and codified knowledge [5], [6]. The available dataset did not include separate factor-analytic validity statistics or internal-consistency coefficients. Accordingly, the instrument is treated here as a descriptive operationalization rather than evidence of a validated latent measurement model, and this limitation is considered when interpreting the

results. Analysis comprised item scores, mean values, and the respondent achievement level (TCR). TCR was calculated by comparing the observed mean with the maximum score on the five-point scale, and the resulting percentage was interpreted using the descriptive category criteria adopted in the study [33]. Future validation should follow established scale-development and psychometric procedures [34].

3. RESULTS

3.1. Tacit Knowledge

Table 1 presents the results for *tacit knowledge*. The dimension obtained a mean of 3.12, equivalent to a TCR of 62.4%, and was classified as fairly good. The highest item was the statement that experience is obtained not only independently but also from other people (mean = 3.46). The lowest item concerned the ability to transform problems into valuable experience (mean = 2.80). This gap is important because it indicates that employees recognize other people as a source of experience, but learning is less consistently consolidated when problems occur.

Table 1. Respondent achievement for *tacit knowledge*

No.	Statement	Score	Mean	Category
1	Experienced employees tend to work more professionally than employees without comparable experience.	136	3.32	Fairly good
2	Experience is obtained not only independently but also from other people.	142	3.46	Good
3	Experience gained enriches employee knowledge.	119	2.90	Fairly good
4	Problems encountered can be transformed into valuable experience.	115	2.80	Fairly good
Total / indicator average		512	3.12	Fairly good

Source: Processed research data.

The *tacit knowledge* result suggests that work experience is already a source of learning, but the conversion of individual experience into shared operational learning remains uneven. This pattern is realistic in hotel operations because *tacit knowledge* is difficult to transfer through documents alone; it is embedded in action, judgement, and context [10]. For example, handling an upset guest, deciding how to sequence room recovery during high occupancy, or coordinating an unexpected service request may require judgement that cannot be captured fully in a checklist. People-management practices that create time and incentives for knowledge exchange can strengthen such transfer [35]. Workplace learning research in hotels likewise shows that employees use different learning strategies and depend on workplace facilitators to convert experience into learning [36]. The lowest item in Table 1 therefore points to a practical weakness in the culture of learning from problems. Rather than relying on problems to become experience automatically, the hotel can use mentoring, *job shadowing*, short *after-action reviews* after guest complaints or major events, and structured peer discussion. These practices would make the reasoning behind successful or unsuccessful actions visible to other employees.

3.2. Explicit Knowledge

Table 2 shows that *explicit knowledge* achieved a mean of 3.63, equivalent to a TCR of 72.6%, and was classified as good. The highest score was recorded for the statement that employee ideas and experience are converted into improved work standards (mean = 4.12). The lowest score concerned whether the systems used are easy to understand and operate (mean = 2.80). These two findings should be read together. Employees generally perceive formalization of knowledge positively, but the usefulness of *explicit knowledge* depends not only on whether SOPs or systems exist, but also on whether employees can access, understand, and use them efficiently.

Table 2. Respondent achievement for *explicit knowledge*

No.	Statement	Score	Mean	Category
1	Standard operating procedures help ensure consistent products even when tasks are performed by different employees.	145	3.54	Good
2	Standard operating procedures direct and coordinate work activities.	166	4.05	Good

No.	Statement	Score	Mean	Category
3	Standard operating procedures function as a communication tool for achieving organizational goals.	143	3.49	Good
4	Standard operating procedures improve productivity and time efficiency.	140	3.41	Good
5	Employee ideas and experience are converted into improved work standards.	169	4.12	Good
6	Employees have a good understanding of internet use.	148	3.61	Good
7	The internet is an appropriate medium for obtaining and disseminating information.	148	3.61	Good
8	Internet facilities assist employees in storing and sending data.	166	4.05	Good
9	The systems used are easy to understand and operate.	115	2.80	Fairly good
Total / indicator average		1,340	3.63	Good

Source: Processed research data.

The *explicit knowledge* findings indicate that procedures and technology function as important channels for storing and distributing operational information. Codified knowledge can reduce variation because employees can return to documented standards rather than depend solely on memory [12]. The high score for converting ideas and experience into improved work standards suggests that respondents perceive a connection between operational experience and formal procedures. However, the survey did not record the exact mechanism through which an employee idea becomes a revised standard; the result should therefore be interpreted as a perceived practice rather than evidence of a documented formal conversion process. Research on tourism *knowledge management* indicates that technology and formal repositories add value only when knowledge can be found and applied in practice [37]. Evidence from hotel chains likewise shows that successful knowledge replication depends on recipient capacity, motivation, context, and appropriate transfer routines [38]. The low system-usability score should therefore be treated as a managerial priority. The hotel should distinguish between simply having an SOP or digital system and ensuring that employees can locate the correct version, understand the content, and use it quickly during operational work.

3.3. Managerial Implications

The difference between the tacit and *explicit knowledge* scores indicates that Kyriad Hotel Bumiminang Padang is relatively stronger in formalized knowledge than in experience-based learning. The two forms of knowledge should therefore be managed as a connected cycle rather than as separate programs. Peer knowledge sharing is more likely to contribute to *knowledge management* success when managers actively support the exchange process [39]. In hotel contexts, an informal sharing climate can help employees exchange job-related knowledge, but management still needs to provide a structure that prevents useful lessons from disappearing after a shift or event [40]. A practical routine could include a short weekly operational briefing, a five-minute *after-action review* following significant complaints or service disruptions, a simple digital note for lessons learned, and a monthly review of recurring issues that may require an SOP or checklist update. For the highest explicit-knowledge item, management should establish a visible pathway from employee suggestion to supervisor review, trial, approval, and documentation so that staff can see how experience becomes a work standard. For the lowest system-usability item, managers should simplify navigation, remove obsolete documents, provide task-based system training, and ensure that current procedures can be retrieved quickly. Such integration is also useful for operational resilience because knowledge-based crisis management depends on retaining and mobilizing relevant information when routine conditions are disrupted [41].

4. CONCLUSION

Knowledge management among operational employees at Kyriad Hotel Bumiminang Padang is positive but uneven. Tacit knowledge recorded a mean of 3.12 (TCR 62.4%) and was classified as fairly good, whereas explicit knowledge reached 3.63 (TCR 72.6%) and was classified as good. The main issue is therefore not the absence of formal knowledge resources, but the weaker conversion of operational problems and personal experience into shared learning. Management should prioritize mentoring and brief

after-action reviews for complaints and significant operational events, then capture the resulting lessons in concise digital notes or revised work standards. At the same time, the low rating for system ease of use indicates that accessibility and usability of explicit knowledge require attention. This study is limited to one hotel, a descriptive design, self-reported perceptions, the absence of a department-level respondent breakdown, and the lack of separately reported psychometric evidence for the instrument. Future research should validate the measurement instrument, compare multiple hotels and departments, and test whether tacit and explicit knowledge management predict service quality, service innovation, employee performance, or operational resilience.

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