Evaluation of the Performance of Guest Room Attendants of Housekeeping Department (Application to Cairo Three Star Hotels)

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Abstract
Tourism is considered the locomotive that drives countries towards development, especially third world developing countries. Therefore, countries, including Egypt, paid much attention and took interest in building tourism infrastructure: new up to date hotels and tourism villages, with modern European standard facilities, and training workforce that can satisfy tourists expectations.

According to Ministry of Tourism Report 2013, Tourists spent 8 Milliard US dollars in 2013 in comparison with 12 milliard spent in 2010, these figures as a result of the youth uprising in Tahrir Square.

The study concentrates on evaluation of performance of housekeeping personnel in Cairo three star hotels and suggests methods to train them to update their performance to reach European levels. One of the finest results is to create a model training center attached to hotel management whose job is to train housekeepers responsible for guests rooms via developing their professional, behavioural and language skills.

Key Words: Evaluation, Housekeeping Attendants, Reports, Tasks

Introduction
Tourism is considered one of the main sources of increment of national income to many countries especially developing countries. Egypt directed its efforts in the last ten years to cater for tourism, local and foreign, by encouraging building hotels, resorts and tourism villages, in addition to upgrading services offered to tourists.

According to (Ministry of Tourism Report of 2013), the number of tourists reached 8 million tourists who spent 8 milliard US dollars.

That number is way below of what was fulfilled in 2010 when the number of tourists reached 10 million tourists who spent 12 milliard US dollars. That sorry state of affairs was due to the 25, 2011 youth uprising.

The housekeeping department is considered one of the most important departments in any hotel (Raghubalan B. 2011, Michael j. and Dennry G. 2010), especially in room division, as it is responsible for cleanliness in all parts of a hotel whether front or back. Examples of front areas are: the lobby, the reception, guest relations offices, swimming pool and the parking lot (Ender M. 2009 and Cherly M. 2005). As for examples of back hotel areas: most restaurant and banquet halls, managerial and employee offices in addition to guests’ rooms (William F.2008, Aleta A.2008 and Jangij. 2013)

Employees in housekeeping department are differentially graded as rooms and public areas cleaners and public area supervisor, then floor supervisor, then assistant
housekeeping manager and lastly housekeeping manager (Sudhir A. 2013 and Derney G. 2001). Housekeeping is considered one of the highest densities in the number of female employees. This does not include employee males especially for jobs that require physical strength like cleaning bathrooms, toilets in guests rooms and in public areas (George R. 2002 and James A. 2010). There is an organic bond between Housekeeping Department and Front Office Department where accommodation and check-out is concerned, in addition to the relation with Room Service concerning VIP guests: for providing them with complimentary fruit baskets and sweets plates attached to general manager card (Thomas J. 2007 and Margret M 1997). Housekeeping Department is also associated with Security Department (Mary E. 2013 and Matt 2011) in terms guests belongings.

**Research Problem**
The research problem lies in housekeeping employees' dissatisfaction performance in Cairo three star hotels due to guests' reports and complaints.

**Research Objective**
Upgrading the performance of housekeeping employees to meet guest needs.

**Research Hypothesis**
Non standard performance of first-time housekeeping employees leads to dissatisfaction among guests and thus a decrease in income. Upgrading employees' performance will result in guests' satisfaction and therefore raising a hotel income.

**Materials and Methodology**
- Field study of Cairo three star hotels using the descriptive and analytical method.
- References

**Sample of the Study**
The population of the study consists of 180 hotel housekeeping personnel working in 45 three star Cairo hotels (The Egyptian Hotel Guide 2011-2012). 160 questionnaire responses had been returned.

**Field Research Technique**
This study was conducted via personnel questionnaire with housekeeping attendants in Cairo three star hotels to get their responses to the questionnaire. Responses were collected through a profile sheet and were analyzed. Responses were represented in the form of statements to be used as indicators useful in categorizing the results to reach realistic recommendations.
Results and Discussion

Figure 1: The ideal way of entering guest room

![Bar Chart](chart1.png)

Figure (1) indicates that 38% of employees enter the guests' room without stopping or pausing at all. A ratio of 50% enters after pausing for two minutes and 12% of employees enters after knocking 3 times at a door. The correct procedure is for a housekeeping employee to announce his presence 3 minutes before entering the room and he/she should mention "Housekeeping." If the guest is still in the room, a housekeeper should ask the guest about the appropriate time for cleaning. If this could be a little or even now while the guest is still in the room. If the sign" don't disturb" is still hanging at the knob of the door, then the housekeeper should not knock as the guest might still be sleeping or busy at something.

Generally, after entering for cleaning, a housekeeper should keep the trolley at the guest room door to prevent anyone else from entering.

Figure 2: Cleaning the guest room closet

![Bar Chart](chart2.png)

Figure (2) indicates that housekeepers clean the guests wardrobe at a percentage of 38%. They clean it from the inside at a percentage of 38%. As for cleaning the wardrobe floor was at 24%. The result indicates that housekeepers should not neglect cleaning any part of the wardrobe, especially the floor, as there might be some liquids spilling from the guests belongings which might cause nasty odours in the
wardrobe or there might be certain items falling from the guests pockets that must be collected and returned to him. The wardrobe must be sprayed with air purifier to keep it in a good smelling condition.

Figure 3: Dusting guest room

Figure (3) indicates that removal of a guests dust varies according to its state: being vacant, occupied or out of order. If the guests room is vacant the housekeepers remove dust at a percentage of 3%. If it is occupied, and there are guests using it, removal of dust occurs at a percentage of 55%. If the room is out of order, the dust removal occurs at a percentage of 42%. The ideal procedure is that room dust should be removed 100% regardless of the rooms condition: vacant, occupied or out of order. If not cleaned, dust may accumulate in the room and help breed harmful insects and cause polluted air which might cause disease.

Figure 4: Provision of guest room amenities
Figure (4) is concerned with providing a guests room with some necessary items that help him /her have a pleasant time: dry pens, writing pads, envelopes, cards of the hotel and its surrounding, pins, needles, thread, list of hotel telephone services, emergencies plans to exit the hotel, etc. Pens are available at 20% .lists of room services at 27% Exist procedures at 53% The Results indicate that housekeeping and does not cater well for the needs of room guests which leaves a bad impression on their stay in the hotel. They might not repeat a visit to that same hotel.

Figure 5: Cleaning windows, frames and tracks

Figure (5) deals with cleaning guest room windows. Cleaning window glass is performed daily at 50% window frames are cleaned at 37% Window sills are cleaned at 13% .This is of course a very weak percentage compared with European standards .If not cleaned at 100%, windows may breed harmful insects.

Figure 6: Performing final touches in guest rooms

Figure (6) deals with putting the last and finishing touches to a guests room .That varies from one hotel and another depending on the skill and motivation of the
housekeeping personnel themselves and the standard practice implemented by each individual hotel. Examples of this: putting a chocolate bar at a guest's pillow, arranging a face towel in the form of a duck or flower in addition to spraying air purifier in the room and putting beautiful smelling soap in the bathroom. The figure shows that 31% do that daily, 50% do it weakly and 19% do it monthly.

Figure 7: Vacuum-cleaning the room

![Figure 7: Vacuum-cleaning the room](image1)

Figure (7) indicates that 56% of the sample cleans the room by a vacuum cleaner and starting from inside the room to the outside. Cleaning from outside room to the inside was 31%. As for cleaning from the middle was 13%. This reflects lack of training among hotel housekeepers concerning vacuum cleaning.

Figure 8: Turning bed mattress

![Figure 8: Turning bed mattress](image2)

It is very important to change the position of the bed mattress now and then. This is to prevent one part or one side of the mattress to fall low in comparison with other parts, thus preventing a guest from sleeping comfortably. Figure (8) indicates that 50% of housekeepers rotate or change the position of the bed mattress daily. That is commendable. A ratio of 25% change it weakly while 25% others change it monthly.
Figure 9: Cleaning guest room floor stains

Figure (9) shows that removing stains from room floor is practiced daily which is a good thing which gives the guest no chance to complain about spotting a greasy stain here or there on the room floor.

Figure 10: Cleaning walls, ceiling and curtains

Figure (10) indicates that cleaning walls and curtains does not follow standard pre-fixed procedures. Cleaning was either 43% daily, 60% weekly and 30% monthly.

Figure 11: Dealing with guest room linens and restaurant table cloth
Figure (11) results indicate that items were practised daily at a percentage of 100% which is a commendable thing for Cairo three star hotels.

Figure 12: Existence of a night shift cleaning crew

Figure (12) shows that lack of a cleanliness night shift registered 56% no answers and 44% for yes which is a weak point in the score of Cairo three star hotel.

Figure 13: Cleaning of toilet bowl and counter

Figure (13) indicates that Cairo three star hotels clean the bath room fixtures with water with a percentage of 19% . with water and soap 25% and with water, soap and detergents 56%.

The following question was about changing guest bathroom amenities which shows that bathroom amenities are changed daily with a percentage of 100%.
Figure 14: Writing housekeeping reports

Figure (14) shows that the daily housekeeping report has been written once daily with a percentage of 32%, twice daily with a percentage of 43% and three times daily with a percentage of 25%.

Figure 15: Housekeeping trolley cleaning

Figure (15) indicates that there are no routine, standard procedures in cleaning the trolley that is used to carry cleanliness equipment. It was cleaned monthly at a ratio of 37% weekly at a ratio of 50% and daily at a ratio of 13%.

Recommendations
Establishing a model training centre supervised by hotel management whose job is to train housekeepers responsible for cleaning guests rooms, especially new recruits, in different related skills: professional, behavioural and linguistic, will cater for:
- Performing correct and hygienic cleaning for guests' rooms which contain different furniture items from the inside and perpetual changing of beds mattresses positions.
- Performing correct daily cleaning of rooms windows and walls, curtains and dust furniture in a systematic way.
- Providing a night shift cleaning operation on a daily basis
- Renovation of room required items such as pens, envelopes, writing pads, food and beverage room service menus, matches, etc, on a daily basis.
- Renovation of bathroom and toilet paper, soap, different towels, etc. on a daily basis
- Teaching housekeeping personnel how to keep neat and tidy themselves and teach them enough expressions to welcome incoming tourists and tourists on check-out. Personnel must avoid a grim face and keep a natural smile on their face.

References
A. Books
تقييم اداء مسؤولى تنظيف غرف النزلاء بقسم الاشراف الداخلى بالتطبيق على فنادق الثلاث نجوم بالقاهرة

تعتبر السياحة قاطرة التنمية العديدة من الدول إذ يقع على عاتقها تنميه البلاد و خاصيه تلك الدول المتواجدة بالعالم الثالث. ولذلك اهتمت حكومات تلك الدول ومنها مصر على بناء العديد من الفنادق والقرى السياحية و الاهتمام بتدريب العماله لجذب مزيد من السائحين. وطبقا لتقدير وزارة السياحة لعام 2013م فقد وصل عدد السائحين الي 8 مليون سائح انفقوا حوالي 8 مليار دولار امريكي وهو رقم ضعيف مقارنة بعام 2010م و الذي يعتبر أفضل عام سياحي بمصر من حيث اعداد السائحين وعدد اللبال السياحية التي تم قضائها.

هذا ويركز البحث على تقييم اداء مسؤولى الغرف بقسم الاشراف الداخلى للوصول الى أفضل المهارات التي يجب ان يتحلى بها العاملين بالقسم و كان من أهم النتائج انشاء قسم تدريب نموذجي نابع لادارة الفندق يقع على عاتقه تدريب مسؤولى نظافة غرف النزلاء من ناحية المهارات المهنية والسلوكى واللغوية.