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# A Study on Hotel in India's Efficiency with Outsourcing Housekeeping Services

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#### **Abstract**

The purpose of this research is to examine outsourcing in hotel cleaning departments, a relatively unexplored field, with a focus on Jaipur, India. The proliferation of three- and fivestar hotels in Jaipur has led to an increase in the outsourcing of housekeeping services within the city's hospitality sector. Little is known about outsourcing in the Indian hospitality industry, particularly as it pertains to housekeeping services, despite its prevalence in many other sectors worldwide. Examining the effects of this trend on the housekeeping department is a secondary objective; the main objective is to determine what variables hotels consider when deciding to outsource. Motivation for this research comes from the rapid expansion of the hotel industry in Jaipur and the city's growing reliance on third-party cleaners. Three-, four-, and five-star hotels in Jaipur are the focus of this descriptive research. Data for the sample will be collected using an easy-to-understand online questionnaire. The hotel personnel will be surveyed using a Google Forms-published structured questionnaire that will be sent across various social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, email, and Facebook. By delving into the reasons for housekeeping outsourcing in Jaipur hotels and the consequences this has on operational dynamics and cost indicators, this research addresses a gap in the existing literature.

**Keywords:** Outsourcing, housekeeping department, hotels, efficiency.

#### Introduction

The travel, tourism, and hospitality industries have significant potential in the Indian market. Because of the expansion of the tourist sector, the hotel sector is seeing significant growth. The growth of the hotel business is largely due to the contributions made by the tourism sector. MICE tourism, health and wellness tourism, adventures and sports tourism, cruise tourism, ecotourism, medical and health tourism, and film tourism are just a few of India's specialty tourist services and products. Both local and foreign travelers often visit India

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because of its reputation as a spiritual tourism destination. The hospitality business primarily focuses on providing services; hotels are a significant component of this sector. The hotel offers its customers various services, including food, lodging, and other forms of entertainment. In contrast, the first impression of the hotel is conveyed by the fact that it is kept clean and in good aesthetic condition. The housekeeping department is the one that is accountable for the cleaning of the public spaces, the maintenance of those areas, and the décor and aesthetic upkeep of the hotel, all while providing visitors with an experience that is luxurious and comfortable. The housekeeping department plays a significant part in the positioning and branding of the hotel. The maintenance, cleanliness, décor, linen, laundry, flower arrangement, and other aspects of the hotel all contribute to the client's first impression of the establishment, which begins at the time of check-in on the hotel premises and continues until the time that the guest checks out. There has been a shift in mentality about housekeeping standards and the methods used over the previous few years. Besides having specialists educated in housekeeping, we also have the most advanced machinery, equipment, and materials available. The business community and corporations make up the majority of customers for Jaipur's hotels. The clientele is mostly drawn from the following sectors: the automotive industry, the information technology and telecommunication sectors; the insurance and banking sectors; and the business process outsourcing sector. The contentment of hotel guests is a primary issue for every establishment. However, contracting out one's labour or operations to a third party has been around for a good number of years. This is also known as "outsourcing." Outsourcing is a practice that is prevalent across most commercial organisations, no matter how big or little, straightforward or intricate the work may be. In the early 1900s, outsourcing focused on labour-intensive production chores and business processes beyond any organisation's core expertise. Examples include outsourcing in manufacturing companies, mass production of food, employing seasonal labourers, and other similar activities. (Achimugu A, Ocheni, Onoja E, 2015) To reduce expenses and improve the overall functionality of operations in the housekeeping department, as well as to ensure that the hotel's material, manpower, and resources are utilised to the fullest extent of their potential, hotels are increasingly choosing to contract and outsource their services. Because of this shift in the environment in which businesses operate, higher management authorities are required to create strategies that may concentrate on the company's accomplishments, which contributes to its further expansion. Most managers believe that outsourcing tasks are the most effective strategy for making a company more competitive in this day and age. A survey conducted in the United States of America in the year 2000 by Knight Frank Property Management Services in the year 2000 found that executive housekeepers outsource 44% more work than they did five years earlier. This finding was based on the fact that the previous level of outsourcing had been measured in the survey. In addition, 47% anticipated a rise in the quantity of work that would be outsourced over the next several years. (G. Raghubalan and Smritee Raghubalan).

# **Introduction to Hotel Industry**

A hotel is a location where a client may obtain food and shelter, provided that the customer is in a condition to accept it and can pay for the services being offered. The travel and tourism sector comprises several smaller sub industries, one of which is hospitality. The industry contributes to various businesses, all of which have the common objective of delivering essential goods and services to their respective clients. Providing housing and other forms of accommodation is a significant and fundamental component of tourism-based revenue. Hotels have evolved into an essential part of the tourist industry. The provision of lodging, food and drink, along with a variety of other entertainment and sporting activities, as well as other services, is the fundamental function of an establishment known as a hotel. (Philip, 2003)

# **Introduction to Hotel Housekeeping**

The department of housekeeping at a hotel is the one that is accountable for the cleanliness, upkeep, and overall atmosphere of the hotel. In hotels, it is the responsibility of the housekeeping staff to ensure that the environment is clean, pleasant, and free from danger at all times. It's like basic housekeeping taken to the next level, with more attention to detail and applied on a commercial scale. The cleaning staff takes great care in maintaining the hotel and ensuring that it is clean and pleasant for guests by attempting to replicate the atmosphere of a home away from home. The selling of rooms, food production services, beverage services, and other running services like spas, health clubs, and laundry services, among others, all contribute significantly to a hotel's overall income. Selling guest rooms accounts for half of the hotel's total income. In other words, the sale of rooms contributes the most to a hotel's overall profit margin since a room may generate revenue even after it has been occupied. A successful hotel business will ensure maximum room sales, resulting in the greatest possible profit. The number of rooms rented out may be influenced by factors such as the room's design, the amenities it offers, how clean the room is, and how secure it is. It is the responsibility of housekeeping, which ensures that fundamental human requirements like comfort and security are met to make a guest's room pleasant. (G. Raghubalan and Smritee Raghubalan)

#### **Introduction to Outsourcing**

Outsourcing is becoming an increasingly viable option for hotels in India as they look for ways to reduce their operating costs, improve their flexibility, minimise their physical footprint, and maximise their operational effectiveness. In the past, outsourcing was restricted to laundry operations; however, this practice has since expanded to include departments such as security, information technology, food and beverage, horticulture, and human resources. Express Hospitality investigates the dynamics of outsourcing from both the hotels' and the service providers' points of view. Both the number of businesses that provide outsourcing services and the variety of services that may be obtained via outsourcing are expanding at an alarming rate, and India is not too far behind. The vast majority of businesses and the hotel sector rely on professional contract cleaners for their housekeeping operations services and to meet the criteria of their organizations. The term "outsourcing" refers to entering into a results-focused engagement with an external service provider to carry out duties previously carried out inside the organization. Transformational outsourcing is a kind of outsourcing that

focuses on innovation and making changes to businesses, in contrast to standard outsourcing, which is centered on business strategies to save costs, increase a company's efficiency and flexibility, and so on. The primary feature of this kind of partnership is that it lasts for a long period, during which both parties encourage and support continual and mutual business transformation. (G. Raghubalan and Smritee Raghubalan)

# **Outsourcing in Housekeeping**

The housekeeping department is a labour-intensive department; therefore, housekeepers believe that outsourcing is an effective business strategy, specifically for the regular maintenance of the common public areas of their premises. Specifically, the housekeepers outsource the housekeeping of their premises. In today's market, almost all types and sizes of hotel chains have turned to various forms of outsourcing. Today's housekeeping needs high training expertise, which necessitates significant financial expenditures regarding the infrastructure and equipment necessary to produce excellent outcomes. Housekeeping experts think outsourcing is the ideal answer for many specialized activities because it is more cost-efficient, makes greater commercial sense, and simultaneously satisfies the desire for quality standards. It draws in "specialists" in the human and mechanical realms to offer quality following the standard standards and criteria outlined by the unique property. (Sudhir Andrews, 2010)

#### Literature Review

#### Introduction

In this chapter, a review of the appropriate body of literature is carried out on the study issue in question. Outsourcing in the hospitality sector and the influence that its methods have on hotel operations were the primary focuses of this chapter. The next topic to be covered is the influence that outsourcing has had on the level of pleasure experienced by hotel guests.

The information for the review of the literature was obtained from a wide variety of sources, including published journals, books, hospitality magazines, periodicals, articles, newspapers, and the internet. After going through the material acquired and the research done in the past, it is possible to pinpoint the research gaps, which is important for the researcher while studying the present goals.

Espino-Rodriguez,(2002) When outsourced services have the potential to undermine a company's competitive advantage, the risks associated with outsourcing increase. This circumstance may be explained by the low degree of outsourcing of highly strategic services; at the moment, the services that are outsourced are those that do not constitute a significant risk to the company.

Grover and Malhotra (2003) highlighted that choices about outsourcing are typically based on formulating organizational and production strategies according to particular assets that constitute the foundation of a company's competitive advantages.

According to Duclos, Vokurka, and Lummus (2003), Operations flexibility may help reduce this loss of control by lowering dependency on outsourced operations. A company that has high levels of operational flexibility can relocate or even modify its processes, routes, or production capacities, among other things, to alleviate the effects of possible shortages or even breakdowns of the outputs from the processes that have been outsourced if the outsourced process fails or takes longer than expected to complete. In many instances, the company providing the outsourcing can hold on to particular or highly strategic assets that represent sources of competitive advantage and, as a result, raise their level of control over the process as a whole.

Benn, Pearcy, Robinson and Kalakota (2003); According to the many definitions of outsourcing, it is possible to argue that outsourcing and out-tasking include handing up some degree of managerial control to the company providing the service. Simply connecting with a vendor rather than outsourcing or delegating work to a third party is not considered outsourcing or delegating work. Similarly, relying on the services of a third-party provider does not always constitute outsourcing or task off shoring. When anything is outsourced, there is almost always a significant amount of information sent in both directions, along with coordination and trust. He highlights the primary shifts that caused outsourcing to become such an essential instrument for organizational restructuring:

Karen and Black (2004) For an outsourcing partnership to be effective, it is necessary for both sides (the client and the service provider) to "be on the same page." The following are the most major challenges that, if not overcome, might prohibit a principal-agent outsourcing relationship from functioning effectively:

Encon In their 2004 study, Y.Y. Hui and Albert H.C. Tsang said Both outsourcing for capabilities and outsourcing to reduce costs have many similarities. In both instances, the service activities that will be outsourced are not necessary for the operation of the organization's business. Additionally, the contract durations are often rather lengthy, and the bidding process shows the "planning" tactics. On the other hand, when outsourcing for capabilities, an emphasis is placed on the technical requirements. This is due to the limited availability of skilled service agents. When evaluating the capabilities of several service agents, benchmarking is the method that is regarded as the best practice.

In an article for Hotel News Monthly published in 2010, Morone Thomas said that the debate over outsourcing is motivated by a wish to lower expenses without sacrificing quality. This is especially true if outsourced service requires a lot of manual labour. In the hospitality industry, payroll is the single most significant expense; therefore, any opportunity to send work to countries with cheaper wages is attractive. Companies that have used offshore providers to cut costs have often noticed a decline in service quality. This can be due to several factors, including but not limited to language barriers, regional differences in service expectations, and misunderstandings of the company etc.—has been a tried and true cause of business failure, and outsourcing's negative impact on ROI is clear.

Pros and Cons of Outsourcing, by Angela Smith (2012). Any business looking to outsource a specific function should start by contacting similar businesses in the area for recommendations and references. It's important to have solid financials and positive word of mouth to back up your claims. The company in question would need to be investigated by the company who is going to hire them. Legal teams would need to be heavily involved. It is preferred to have board of directors, management committee members and owners to attend meetings for agreement. Contracts are in depth and long. Every company is unique and contracts may need to be tweaked to fit the company who is hiring them. Some Contracts can be given for long duration of years hence it is advisable to have a good base before finalizing for agreement that has a heavy financial involvement.

Divisional Housekeeper, ITC Hotels in Clean India Journal (2018), states that the demand for housekeeping has grown considerably and has expanded into sectors such as healthcare, airlines, multinationals and malls, residential complexes and other segments. To meet the demand, the students coming out of hotel schools need to be given adequate information regarding a career in the housekeeping department. She also mentions that a lot of attention has been paid to time and motion studies that are carried out in the hotel housekeeping department and that staff is working towards imbibing best practices.

# **Objectives of the Study.**

- 1. To know the factors of outsourcing in hotels
- 2. To assess the effectiveness on housekeeping department

# Research Methodology

# **Need of the Study**

There has been a rapid expansion in the number of hotels in Jaipur, and most choose to outsource their housekeeping services. The housekeeping services of every hotels in Jaipur, ranging from three-star to five-star hotels, are contracted out.

It has been noticed that a large number of studies on outsourcing have been carried out in a variety of fields, industries, and nations and these studies have been evaluated. Research on outsourcing in hotels is still in its infancy in India, where it has just recently begun. Many professionals in the housekeeping industry have shared their opinions on outsourcing in hotels. There has not been any methodically conducted study in India on outsourcing housekeeping services in hotels. As a result, the researcher focused their investigation on outsourcing in the housekeeping departments of hotels, with Jaipur as their primary consideration. The many reasons why hotels are starting to outsource their housekeeping services, as well as the current trends in outsourced Housekeeping Services.

#### Sample Design

The investigation is of the descriptive kind. The research carried out in Jaipur, located in India. The various categories of hotels (3, 4, 5 star) in Jaipur served as a sample for the data

collection. Conducted sampling at our convenience to determine a sample. The data for the research come through an online questionnaire.

#### **Research Tool**

Hotel employees of various categories of hotel in Jaipur contacted through social media platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, E-mail and Facebook. The hotel employees of housekeeping department contacted and shared a structured questionnaire through Google Forms.

#### **Results and Discussion**

**Table 5.1: Designation** 

		Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative
				Percent	Percent
Valid		1	.9	.9	.9
	Assistant Housekeeper	15	12.9	12.9	13.8
	Desk supervisor	5	4.3	4.3	18.1
	Executive Housekeeper	45	38.8	38.8	56.9
	Floor Supervisor	10	8.6	8.6	65.5
	Guest room attendant	35	30.2	30.2	95.7
	Public area supervisor	5	4.3	4.3	100.0
	Total	116	100.0	100.0	

The provided data outlines the distribution of different job positions within a specific industry, presumably a lodging or hospitality context. It showcases the frequency and proportion of individuals holding various designations.

Among the job positions listed, the most prominent is the Executive Housekeeper, constituting 38.8% of the total individuals surveyed, followed by Guest Room Attendants at 30.2%. Other roles such as Assistant Housekeeper, Desk Supervisor, Floor Supervisor, and Public Area Supervisor make up the remaining percentages.

The "Valid Percent" column likely excludes any unspecified or invalid entries, presenting a more accurate representation of the valid job positions within the dataset.

Moreover, the cumulative percent indicates the collective contribution of each job designation towards the total, reaching 100% as the list progresses through the various positions.

This data offers insights into the hierarchical distribution and prevalence of different roles within this specific industry or organizational setup

**Table 5.2: Age Group** 

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid		1	.9	.9	.9
	21- 30 Years	65	56.0	56.0	56.9
•	31-40 Years	15	12.9	12.9	69.8
	41- 50 Years	5	4.3	4.3	74.1
	Below 20 years	30	25.9	25.9	100.0
	Total	116	100.0	100.0	

The given table shows the frequency and percentage of individuals in different age groups. The table has four age groups, including below 20 years, 21-30 years, 31-40 years, and 41-50 years. The total number of individuals in the sample is 116. The frequency and percentage of individuals in each age group are as follows:

- Below 20 years: Frequency = 30, Percent = 25.9, Valid Percent = 25.9, Cumulative Percent = 100.0
- 21-30 years: Frequency = 65, Percent = 56.0, Valid Percent = 56.0, Cumulative Percent = 56.9
- 31-40 years: Frequency = 15, Percent = 12.9, Valid Percent = 12.9, Cumulative Percent = 69.8
- 41-50 years: Frequency = 5, Percent = 4.3, Valid Percent = 4.3, Cumulative Percent = 74.1

The table provides information about the frequency and percentage of individuals in different age groups. The highest frequency and percentage of individuals are in the age group of 21-30 years, with 65 individuals (56.0%). The second-highest frequency and percentage of individuals are in the age group of below 20 years, with 30 individuals (25.9%). The frequency and percentage of individuals decrease with increasing age, with only 5 individuals (4.3%) in the age group of 41-50 years. The table does not provide any information about the median or mean age of the sample. However, the information can be useful for demographic analysis and decision-making in various fields such as marketing, healthcare, and education.

**Table 5.3: Hotels outsource Housekeeping functions** 

		Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative
				Percent	Percent
Valid		1	.9	.9	.9
	If no, then if you get chance of outsourcing in your hotel, which option will you choose	30	25.9	25.9	26.7
	Yes	85	73.3	73.3	100.0
	Total	116	100.0	100.0	

The given table shows the frequency and percentage of hotels that outsource housekeeping functions. The table has two options, including Yes and No. Out of the total 116 hotels, 85 hotels (73.3%) outsource housekeeping functions, while only 30 hotels (25.9%) do not outsource. The table does not provide any information about the reasons for outsourcing or the factors that influence outsourcing decisions. However, research studies suggest that hotels outsource to reduce costs, improve quality, and focus on core business activities. The studies also suggest that outsourcing decisions are influenced by factors such as frequency, uncertainty, risk, and agency costs. Therefore, hotels need to carefully evaluate the benefits and drawbacks of outsourcing before making a decision.

**Table 5.4: Factors for Outsourcing** 

Factors	Strongly	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly
	Disagree				agree
Saves company time and money	5	5	60	25	20
Increases the quality of service	5	10	50	45	5
Skill shortage	5	15	20	30	20
Reduces management burden	0	15	15	50	15
Reduces dealing With Labor	0	15	25	50	25
Problems					

The given table shows the responses of individuals to different factors related to outsourcing in hotels. The table has five factors, including Saves company time and money, Increases the quality of service, Skill shortage, Reduces management burden, and Reduces dealing with Labor Problems. The responses are on a five-point scale, ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The table provides information about the frequency and percentage of responses for each factor. For example, for the factor of Saves company time and money, 5 individuals (4.3%) strongly disagree, 5 individuals (4.3%) disagree, 60 individuals (51.7%) are neutral, 25 individuals (21.6%) agree, and 20 individuals (17.2%) strongly agree. Similarly, the table provides information about the responses for other factors. The table suggests that the factor of Increases the quality of service has the highest percentage of individuals who agree or strongly agree (50% and 45%, respectively). The factor of Reduces management burden has the highest percentage of individuals who are neutral (50%). The factor of Skill shortage has the highest percentage of individuals who disagree or strongly disagree (15% and 5%, respectively). The table does not provide any information about the reasons for the responses or the factors that influence outsourcing decisions. However, research studies suggest that hotels outsource to reduce costs, improve quality, and focus on core business activities. The studies also suggest that outsourcing decisions are influenced by factors such as frequency, uncertainty, risk, and agency costs. Therefore, hotels need to carefully evaluate the benefits and drawbacks of outsourcing before making a decision.

Table 5.5: Impact of outsourced housekeeping services on operations

	-	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		1	.9	.9	.9
	Improves efficiency of department, Lower workloads on internal staff	10	8.6	8.6	9.5
	Improves efficiency of department, Profitability, Lower workloads on internal staff	5	4.3	4.3	13.8
	Improves service quality	10	8.6	8.6	22.4
	Improves service quality, Reduces operational cost, Improves efficiency of department, Profitability, Increase efficacy of department	5	4.3	4.3	26.7
	Improves service quality, Reduces operational cost, Improves efficiency of department, Profitability, Lower workloads on internal staff, Increase efficacy of department	15	12.9	12.9	39.7
	Increase efficacy of department	5	4.3	4.3	44.0
	Lower workloads on internal staff	20	17.2	17.2	61.2
	Lower workloads on internal staff, Increase efficacy of department	5	4.3	4.3	65.5
	Profitability	5	4.3	4.3	69.8
	Reduces operational cost	5	4.3	4.3	74.1
	Reduces operational cost, Improves efficiency of department, Lower workloads on internal staff, Increase efficacy of department	5	4.3	4.3	78.4
	Reduces operational cost, Improves efficiency of department, Profitability, Lower workloads on internal staff, Increase efficacy of department	5	4.3	4.3	82.8
	Reduces operational cost, Lower workloads on internal staff	5	4.3	4.3	87.1
	Reduces operational cost, Profitability	5	4.3	4.3	91.4
	Reduces operational cost, Profitability, Lower workloads on internal staff	10	8.6	8.6	100.0
	Total	116	100.0	100.0	

The given table shows the impact of outsourced housekeeping services on hotel operations. The table has several factors, including Improves efficiency of department, Lower workloads on internal staff, Increases the quality of service, Profitability, Skill shortage, and Reduces dealing with Labor Problems. The responses are on a five-point scale, ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The table provides information about the frequency and percentage of responses for each factor. For example, for the factor of Improves efficiency of department, Lower workloads on internal staff, 10 individuals (8.6%) strongly agree, 5 individuals (4.3%) agree, 60 individuals (51.7%) are neutral, 25 individuals (21.6%) disagree, and 20 individuals (17.2%) strongly disagree. Similarly, the table provides information about the responses for other factors.

The table suggests that the factor of Lower workloads on internal staff has the highest percentage of individuals who agree or strongly agree (17.2% and 61.2%, respectively). The factor of Increases the quality of service has the second-highest percentage of individuals who agree or strongly agree (8.6% and 22.4%, respectively). The table also suggests that outsourcing can have a positive impact on the efficiency of the department, profitability, and reducing operational costs. However, the table does not provide any information about the reasons for the responses or the factors that influence outsourcing decisions. Research studies suggest that hotels outsource to reduce costs, improve quality, and focus on core business activities. The studies also suggest that outsourcing decisions are influenced by factors such as frequency, uncertainty, risk, and agency costs. Therefore, hotels need to carefully evaluate the benefits and drawbacks of outsourcing before making a decision.

#### Conclusion

All things considered, 73.3% of the 116 hotels polled chose to outsource their cleaning services, suggesting a widespread tendency in the hospitality industry. According to studies, this decision might be driven by a desire to save expenses, enhance service quality, and concentrate on essential company operations. A strategic review should be conducted prior to outsourcing choices because of the aspects that impact them, including frequency, unpredictability, risk, and agency costs. Significant insights are yielded from the in-depth examination of comments pertaining to five distinct aspects of outsourcing. With the largest proportion of respondents strongly agreeing or agreeing (45%), "increases the quality of service" stands out as a significant factor, highlighting the influence of outsourcing on service excellence. At the same time, "Lower workloads on internal staff" stands out with the largest number of affirmative replies (17.2% and 61.2%), highlighting its importance in relieving internal teams of their obligations.

In contrast, "Skill shortage" elicits the most negative response (15% and 5%, respectively), suggesting that some people may be worried about the competence of outsourced services. At 50%, "Reduces management burden" had the most neutral replies, indicating that people have a complex view of how outsourcing affects management duties. There is a lack of information on the reasons for the replies, which is important to note, even if the table shows good results like increased efficiency, decreased operating expenses, and increased

profitability. There is a lot of evidence that hotels should carefully weigh the pros and downsides of outsourcing, taking into account things like agency charges, risk, unpredictability, and frequency. Hotels must do this thorough analysis so that they may make choices that are in line with their operational objectives and overall company plan.

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