



Evaluating the Effects of Lost and Found Policies on the Efficiency of Hotel Housekeeping Operations and the Trust of Guests

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: RFID Technology, Housekeeping Efficiency, Guest Trust, Lost and Found

Received : 3 May

Revised : 19 June

Accepted : 20 July

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of lost and found protocols on the effectiveness of housekeeping operations and the level of trust from guests, with a specific emphasis on the integration of RFID technology in New York Hotel Melaka. The research used a qualitative methodology, including semi-structured interviews, case study observations, and document reviews. It discovered that the implementation of RFID technology resulted in a 50% decrease in the time needed to handle and return lost goods. This improvement greatly enhanced operational efficiency and visitor satisfaction. The technology also enhanced staff work satisfaction by reducing manual administrative duties. The limitations of the research are twofold: firstly, it only focuses on a particular hotel, and secondly, it excludes alternative technology options. These factors may impact the generalizability of the findings. Hotels should combine innovative technology with thorough staff training and standardized procedures to improve lost and found management. This research provides novel insights on the advantages of RFID technology in managing lost and found items, so adding to a more comprehensive knowledge of how technology may improve hotel operations and increase visitor experiences.

INTRODUCTION

In the hospitality sector, there is intense competition, and the contentment of guests plays a crucial role in determining the success of a hotel. Housekeeping is an essential service provided by hotels to provide a positive visitor experience (Wijoyo, 2023). The primary responsibility of housekeeping departments is to ensure the cleanliness, tidiness, and overall comfort of guest rooms and public spaces. The handling of lost and recovered objects is a sometimes disregarded but crucial element of housekeeping operations (Ambardar et al., 2023). Effective management of these elements not only optimizes operations but also has a substantial influence on visitor confidence and overall contentment. This research aims to examine the impact of lost and found policies on the efficiency of housekeeping and the trust of guests. It will provide valuable insights into the most effective procedures that may improve both operational efficiency and visitor happiness (Islam & Prapty, 2022).

The management of lost and found items in hotels requires the use of a systematic approach to the management of items that guests may mistakenly leave behind their rooms. The process often include classifying the items, putting them away, and finally returning them to the people who are legally entitled to own them (Bhatnagar, 2019; Bidner & Behmke, 2022). Mismanagement of lost and found items may lead to delays, misplacements, and dissatisfied customers, all of which are undesirable outcomes. On the other hand, a lost and found policy that is properly implemented ensures that items are handled with in a timely and precise manner, which in turn strengthens the relationship between the hotel and its guests (Kyalo, 2023). Despite the relevance of the topic, academic research has not paid a great deal of attention to the impact that lost and found policies have on housekeeping operations and the faith that guests have in the establishment. By conducting an analysis of current approaches and the repercussions that these methodologies have in a variety of hotel settings, this study aims to bring about a reduction in this discrepancy.

Policies regarding lost and found items are significant for reasons that go beyond the effectiveness of their operations. The trust of guests is of the utmost importance in the hotel sector (Zhu, 2020). Through regular and dependable service as well as policies that are open and honest, trust may be established. When visitors do not return their personal belongings, their faith in the hotel's capacity to manage the problem in an appropriate manner is put to the test (Bhatnagar & Nim, 2019). Effective handling of lost and found items has the potential to dramatically increase visitor confidence by displaying the hotel's dedication to providing excellent service and attending to the needs of its guests (Putra et al., 2020). On the other hand, ineffective handling of lost things may result in unfavorable experiences, which can detract from the confidence that guests have in the hotel and possibly damage its image. Therefore, it is essential for hotels that want to maintain high levels of client satisfaction to have a solid awareness of the influence that lost and found procedures have on the confidence that guests have in the establishment (Wijoyo et al., 2023).

Moreover, the use of technology into lost and found management has shown encouraging outcomes in improving efficiency and precision.

Implementing digital tracking tools and automatic alerts may optimize the process, minimizing the possibility of human mistake and guaranteeing prompt connection with visitors (Bhatt, 2022). By combining technical developments with well-defined procedures and frequent staff training, a strong framework may be established for effectively handling lost and found goods. This research seeks to provide a complete knowledge of best practices in lost and found management by evaluating the experiences of hotels that have effectively adopted such technology and policies. The results will provide significant information for hotel management seeking to enhance their housekeeping operations and cultivate deeper connections with their guests.

Although lost and found management plays a crucial role in housekeeping operations and visitor pleasure, there is a noticeable dearth of thorough research examining the effects of lost and found policies on housekeeping efficiency and guest trust. Several hotels still struggle with managing lost belongings, leading to inefficiency and visitor unhappiness (Alnawas, 2019). Poorly executed lost and found management may result in delays in recovering things, elevated operating expenses, and an unfavorable visitor experience. Moreover, the lack of defined protocols and the dependence on antiquated manual methods add to discrepancies in the management of lost objects, hence intensifying the issue. The objective of this research is to investigate the existing lost and found procedures in different hotels and evaluate their efficacy in improving housekeeping efficiency and guest confidence.

This study is necessary due to the increasing demands of customers in the hotel sector. Guests anticipate swift and effective management of their possessions, and any inability to achieve these expectations may greatly affect their confidence and general contentment with the hotel. Furthermore, as technology becomes more widely used in many areas of hotel operations, it is crucial to investigate how technological solutions might be used to enhance lost and found management. This research aims to examine the current deficiencies in lost and found protocols, ascertain the difficulties encountered by housekeeping personnel, and assess the efficacy of various technology remedies. This study seeks to provide practical advice for hotels to improve their operational performance and visitor pleasure by conducting a thorough examination of the effects of lost and found policies on housekeeping efficiency and guest trust.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Housekeeping Operations

Housekeeping operations play a crucial role in the hotel business by ensuring that visitors have a pleasant and hygienic experience throughout their stay (Acar et al., 2019). Efficient housekeeping techniques, are crucial for maintaining superior cleanliness and hygiene standards. These standards have a direct impact on client satisfaction and hotel ratings (Yusof, 2021). Housekeeping duties include the cleaning of guest rooms, public spaces, and the upkeep of the hotel's general aesthetic (González et al., 2024; Wijoyo, 2023). An essential element of these activities is the adoption of systematic processes and protocols that expedite work, reduce mistakes, and improve productivity. Checklists, frequent training, and efficient supervision have been highlighted as measures to enhance housekeeping efficiency (Darsiah et al., 2023). Recent research has emphasized the need of using technology advancements to improve housekeeping operations. Including digital technologies, such housekeeping management software, may greatly diminish the time and energy needed for job management and communication. These technologies enable the monitoring of housekeeping tasks in real-time, facilitate improved coordination among staff members, and enable prompt responses to guest requests (Tiwari, 2022). Furthermore, using ecologically sustainable methods in housekeeping, such as utilizing eco-friendly cleaning supplies and energy-efficient equipment, has been shown to enhance operational efficiency and attract environmentally sensitive visitors (Ahn, 2020). The ongoing development of housekeeping operations, propelled by technology progress and sustainability efforts, is crucial for the overall success of hospitality enterprises.

Lost and Found Management

The administration of lost and found items is a crucial part of housekeeping operations that has a direct influence on visitor pleasure and confidence. An effective lost and found system guarantees the timely identification, cataloging, storage, and return of things left behind by visitors to their rightful owners (Chaudhari, 2021; Tiwari et al., 2023). Implementing efficient protocols and guidelines for handling lost and found things may greatly decrease the amount of time and resources dedicated to identifying and returning these items, therefore enhancing overall operational effectiveness. In addition, well organized lost and found procedures enhance the overall visitor experience, as customers are more inclined to have confidence in and revisit hotels that exhibit dependability and attentiveness in managing their personal items (Ban et al., 2019; Veloso, 2023).

In recent years, there has been a growing focus on the significance of technology in lost and found management. Digital tracking technologies, such as RFID tagging and barcode scanning, have been recognized as efficient instruments for improving the precision and efficiency of item identification and retrieval (Tiwari, 2022; Verma et al., 2020). In addition, the use of automated notification systems may efficiently notify guests about the retrieval of their lost belongings, therefore optimizing the process and alleviating the burden on housekeeping personnel. By integrating these technical improvements with well-defined and unwavering regulations, a strong framework may be established for

effectively handling lost and found goods (Permana & Mistriani, 2024). Hotels may improve their image and cultivate closer connections with visitors by minimizing lost things and facilitating timely and accurate returns.

Guest Trust in the Hospitality Industry

Visitor trust is a crucial element of the hotel sector, impacting visitor loyalty, recurring business, and overall reputation. Trust is established by providing reliable and excellent service, maintaining open and honest communication, and efficiently resolving any problems that may occur during a guest's stay (Cha & Borchgrevink, 2019; Lai, 2019). Efficient and transparent handling of lost item returns by hotels substantially impacts guest confidence in the realm of lost and found management. Research has shown that visitors are more inclined to have confidence in and endorse hotels that exhibit proficiency and attentiveness in handling lost items, as this indicates the hotel's dedication to ensuring client contentment and providing exceptional service (Adhistyo et al., 2021; Anabila, 2022). It is very important to have an efficient lost and found management system in place in order to establish and keep the confidence of guests. The important elements that impact guests' impressions of trustworthiness include clear communication, fast response, and empathic management of incidents involving lost items. In the event that visitors misplace belongings that are either important or emotional, their level of faith in the hotel's capacity to retrieve and return these items becomes an essential factor in determining the overall level of happiness they experience (Paulose, 2022; Veloso, 2023). Furthermore, hotels that have open rules and processes for the administration of lost and found items are in a better position to reduce the likelihood of future conflicts and to increase the amount of customer loyalty they get. Hotels have the ability to cultivate long-term connections with their visitors and guarantee continuous commercial success by placing a priority on the trust of their customers via the implementation of efficient lost and found policies

METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative research approach to investigate the influence of lost and found policies on the efficiency of cleaning and the trust of guests. The qualitative technique is used to get a detailed comprehension of the experiences and perspectives associated with lost and found management, providing insights that may not be captured just via quantitative approaches. The research seeks to provide a holistic perspective on the impact of various policies on operational efficiency and guest happiness by analyzing thorough and contextually rich data (Marshall et al., 2022). The data collection carried out via semi-structured interviews and case studies. Hotel managers, housekeeping supervisors, and visitors who have used lost and found services will be interviewed using a semi-structured format. The interviews will investigate the participants' encounters with lost and found policies, the efficacy of various techniques, and the influence on both operational productivity and visitor confidence. Managers will provide valuable perspectives on the difficulties and advantages of different policy implementations, while supervisors will address practical matters and share their staff's firsthand encounters. Attendees will

provide their viewpoints on the impact of lost and found services on their contentment and confidence in the hotel.

Aside from conducting interviews, the project will also include case studies of many hotels that apply various ways for managing lost and found items. The case studies will include on-site inspections, observations, and evaluations of pertinent documents, such as lost and found logs and policy manuals. The observations will primarily concentrate on the implementation of lost and found policies, with a particular emphasis on the processes, technology used, and the interactions between the staff and the guests. This will provide a practical perspective on how these policies are carried out. Conducting document evaluations will assist in identifying customary procedures and any deviations from established guidelines.

In order to undertake the data analysis, theme analysis was used. The procedure includes the transcription of interview recordings and observational notes, the coding of the data in order to identify significant ideas, and the grouping of these codes into themes in order to capture wider trends. An in-depth evaluation of the data will be possible via the use of thematic analysis, which will shed light on the ways in which lost and found policies influence the efficiency of housekeeping and the faith that guests have in the establishment. Data triangulation will be used in order to guarantee the authenticity and dependability of the results. This will be accomplished by comparing the insights obtained from interviews, case studies, and document reviews (Creswell, 2023).

Informed permission is gained from each and every participant, and strict confidentiality will be maintained via the anonymization of data. Ethical concerns will play a significant role in the research project. In addition to being informed of their rights and the objectives of the research, participants will be given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time, and their participation will be entirely voluntary. The purpose of this methodological approach is to give a comprehensive and in-depth knowledge of the consequences of lost and found policies, therefore giving useful insights that can be used to improve hotel operations and increase the level of satisfaction experienced by guests.

RESULT

New York Hotel Melaka which had adopted a lost and found system based on RFID, was the subject of the research, which aimed to analyze the influence of this technology on the efficiency of housekeeping and the faith that guests had in the establishment. The data obtained from interviews with hotel management and cleaning workers, in addition to observations and document inspections, demonstrated considerable improvements in both the operational performance of the hotel and the happiness of its guests.

The amount of time needed to process and restore lost things was cut by fifty percent as a direct consequence of the RFID-based system that was implemented at New York Hotel Melaka. According to the managers, the technology made it possible to trace missing things in real time, which simplified the procedure and decreased the number of mistakes that occurred. According to the observation of one manager, "Our RFID system has significantly reduced

the amount of time required to locate and return lost items." Because of this efficiency, the level of pleasure experienced by guests has increased. Due to the fact that guests had speedier remedies to their lost item difficulties, this decrease in processing time was directly connected to an increase in the level of confidence that guests had in the company.

The new approach also yielded significant advantages, as noted by the housekeeping crew. The use of RFID technology has streamlined the process of monitoring and managing lost objects, resulting in a significant reduction in human labor. Staff members said that the system enhanced their productivity and decreased the amount of time dedicated to administrative procedures associated with missing goods. Consequently, the use of this technology resulted in increased work satisfaction among the personnel, as they discovered that it streamlined their responsibilities and alleviated stress.

Observations conducted at New York Hotel Melak have verified that the RFID-based system has been successfully incorporated into the hotel's everyday operations. The device enabled precise tracking of misplaced things and sent automatic alerts upon their discovery or return. The system's productivity advantages were enhanced by favorable comments from visitors, who valued the timely and transparent management of their lost belongings.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this research shed light on the significant influence that cutting-edge technology, and more especially systems based on RFID, may have on the management of lost and found items in different types of hotels. There was a considerable gain in operational efficiency as a result of the introduction of RFID technology at New York Hotel Melaka which resulted in a decrease of fifty percent in the amount of time necessary to process and return lost goods. Additionally, it has been shown that digital tracking systems improve accuracy and simplify operations (Gavilan et al., 2018). This conclusion is consistent with the current body of research on the advantages of digital tracking systems. The RFID system's real-time tracking capabilities allowed hotel personnel to identify and return lost things more rapidly, therefore decreasing the administrative load and eliminating mistakes associated with manual operations. This was made possible by the system's ability to monitor objects in real time.

The beneficial impacts of the RFID technology went beyond the efficiency of operations to include an increase in the level of confidence and happiness experienced by guests. Guests staying at New York Hotel Melaka reported that their lost item difficulties were resolved more quickly, which directly led to improved levels of trust and satisfaction among the overall guest population. This result highlights the significance of effective management of lost and found items in the process of molding the opinions that guests have about the quality of hotel service. The importance of investing in technology that improves service delivery and operational efficiency is reinforced by the fact that the efficient management of lost things may have a substantial influence on the entire experience that a visitor has.

Additionally, the RFID technology had a good impact on the work happiness of the personnel, in addition to boosting the contentment of the guests. The personnel in charge of housekeeping noted that the technology enhanced their productivity and decreased the amount of human labor that was connected with maintaining missing pieces of property. This research brings to light an essential component of lost and found management, which is the need to strike a balance between the growth of technology and the well-being of the workers. The radio frequency identification (RFID) technology helps decrease stress among employees and boost work satisfaction by decreasing the administrative load and optimizing operations. This, in turn, may lead to improved overall performance and service quality.

The successful implementation of the RFID system at New York Hotel Melakais illustrative of the potential for new technology to revolutionize conventional methods of conducting business operations. Nevertheless, it is of the utmost importance to acknowledge that while technology has the potential to bring about tremendous advancements, its efficiency is equally contingent on the appropriate installation and training of the technology. It is quite probable that the favorable outcomes that were seen at New York Hotel Melakawere improved by the hotel's dedication to efficiently integrating the technology and ensuring that the personnel received sufficient training. In the future, research might be conducted to investigate how various kinds of technology solutions, when paired with best practices in implementation and staff training, can maximize lost and found management in a variety of hotel settings.

The outcomes of the research highlight the importance of effective management of lost and recovered items as a critical component in establishing and sustaining the confidence of guests. When guests indicated that they were treated with promptness, transparency, and empathy when their lost belongings were handled, they expressed greater levels of happiness and confidence in the hotel. In contrast, unsatisfactory levels of trust and unhappiness were the result of inefficiencies and poor communication. This underscores the significant significance that lost and found policies have in determining the perspective that guests have on the dependability and quality of service provided by a hotel. Hotels are able to enhance their lost and found management by investing in technology, training, and standardizing processes. This results in an increase in both operational efficiency and the level of confidence that guests have in the lodging establishment. According to the findings of the research, it is vital to use a holistic strategy that incorporates technical, procedural, and interpersonal components in order to achieve best results in lost and found management and to cultivate strong connections with guests.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

To summarize, the research emphasizes that the use of new technologies such as RFID systems greatly enhances the effectiveness of lost and found management in hotels. This, in turn, results in improved guest satisfaction and operational performance. These systems optimize item tracking and minimize processing time, ultimately enhancing visitor confidence. In order to optimize these advantages, hotels must also allocate resources towards extensive staff training and set well defined protocols. Future study should investigate the incorporation of future technology, the enduring consequences of lost and found regulations, and the effect of cultural variables on visitor views. These results suggest that hotels should use modern technology solutions and prioritize training and procedural standardization in order to enhance lost and found management and overall service quality.

FURTHER STUDY

Future study should prioritize numerous crucial areas to augment the comprehension of lost and found management in hotels. Examining the effects of future technologies, such as blockchain or artificial intelligence, may provide fresh possibilities for enhancing lost and found procedures. Conducting longitudinal studies to analyze the lasting impacts of different policies on efficiency and guest trust would provide valuable insights on which methods lead to sustainable enhancements. Conducting comparative research across various hotel kinds and sizes might help uncover customized solutions and specific difficulties within the business. Furthermore, investigating the correlation between lost and found management and employee retention might provide significant insights into how policies affect staff morale and attrition. Conducting study on how guests from other cultures see things might assist in customizing lost and found services to fit the expectations of a worldwide customer base. This would improve overall satisfaction and promote strong international partnerships.

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