

Housekeeping Supervision and Operational Performance: Evidence from a Five-Star Hotel in Bali

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Abstract

Housekeeping supervision plays a critical role in maintaining operational quality and ensuring consistent service standards in the hospitality industry. This study aims to examine the supervisory role of housekeeping supervisors in maintaining operational quality at Conrad Bali. A qualitative case study approach was employed, with data collected through semi-structured interviews, direct observations, and document analysis. The participants included the Executive Housekeeper, housekeeping supervisors, and room attendants selected through purposive sampling. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings reveal that housekeeping supervisors contribute significantly to operational quality through effective planning, staff coordination, quality inspections, employee coaching, and cross-departmental communication. These supervisory practices ensure compliance with hotel standards, improve employee performance, enhance operational efficiency, and support guest satisfaction. Despite challenges such as high occupancy and staffing constraints, adaptive leadership and effective communication enable supervisors to maintain service consistency. The study highlights the strategic role of housekeeping supervisors in achieving operational excellence and provides practical insights for hotel management to strengthen supervisory competencies and sustain high-quality hospitality services.

Keywords: housekeeping supervisor, operational quality, hotel management, service quality

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1. PENDAHULUAN

The hospitality industry is one of the fastest-growing sectors of the global tourism economy, contributing significantly to employment creation, economic development, and destination competitiveness (Thommandru et al., 2023). As

competition among hotels intensifies, maintaining high standards of service quality has become a strategic priority for hospitality organizations (Ayuningtyas, 2015). Guests increasingly expect not only luxurious facilities but also consistently clean, comfortable, and hygienic accommodations. Consequently, housekeeping operations play a fundamental role in shaping guest satisfaction, operational efficiency, and the overall reputation of a hotel.

Within the housekeeping department, the housekeeping supervisor serves as a critical intermediary between management and operational staff. The supervisor is responsible for planning daily operations, allocating work assignments, monitoring room cleanliness, ensuring compliance with hotel standards, conducting quality inspections, and providing guidance and motivation to room attendants. Effective supervision contributes to operational consistency, employee productivity, and the delivery of high-quality guest experiences. Conversely, inadequate supervision may result in service inconsistencies, delayed room readiness, increased guest complaints, and reduced organizational performance (Nathania, 2024).

The importance of housekeeping supervision has become even more pronounced in the post-pandemic hospitality environment, where cleanliness, hygiene, and service reliability have become essential determinants of customer trust and hotel competitiveness. International hotel brands have strengthened their operational standards by emphasizing rigorous supervision, continuous employee training, and systematic quality control. Consequently, understanding how supervisory practices contribute to operational excellence has become an increasingly relevant topic in hospitality management research.

Previous studies have primarily examined housekeeping performance from the perspectives of service quality, employee productivity, customer satisfaction, and operational efficiency (Husaini, & Lubis, 2024; Giovanni et al., 2022). While these studies acknowledge the importance of supervision, relatively limited attention has been devoted to examining the specific supervisory roles and responsibilities that influence housekeeping performance in luxury hotel settings, particularly within the context of Indonesian hospitality operations. Furthermore, empirical evidence exploring how supervisors implement operational standards, coordinate employees, solve operational problems, and maintain service consistency in internationally branded hotels remains limited.

A five-star luxury resort, provides an appropriate context for investigating these issues due to its internationally recognized service standards and complex housekeeping operations. Maintaining consistent room quality and operational excellence requires effective coordination between supervisors and operational employees while simultaneously preserving guest satisfaction and organizational efficiency. Therefore, understanding the supervisory practices implemented within the housekeeping department can provide valuable insights into effective hotel operations management.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to examine the supervisory role

of housekeeping supervisors in maintaining operational quality at a five-star hotel in Bali. Specifically, the research investigates the responsibilities performed by housekeeping supervisors, the strategies employed to ensure compliance with operational standards, and the contribution of supervisory practices to improving housekeeping performance. The findings are expected to enrich the hospitality management literature concerning supervisory effectiveness while providing practical recommendations for hotel managers seeking to enhance operational quality and service excellence in luxury hospitality establishments.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a case study design to obtain an in-depth understanding of the supervisory role of housekeeping supervisors in maintaining operational quality at a hotel in Bali. The research was conducted at a five-star hotel in Bali, Indonesia. The hotel was selected because of its internationally recognized service standards and well-established housekeeping department, making it an appropriate setting for examining supervisory practices in hotel operations.

Data were collected through three primary techniques: semi-structured interviews, direct observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants who possessed direct knowledge and experience regarding housekeeping operations. The participants included the Executive Housekeeper, Housekeeping Supervisors, and several Room Attendants. These informants were selected using purposive sampling because they were directly involved in supervising and implementing housekeeping activities. The interviews focused on supervisory responsibilities, work coordination, quality control procedures, employee guidance, operational challenges, and strategies for maintaining service quality.

In addition to interviews, non-participant observations were conducted to examine daily housekeeping operations, supervisory activities, room inspection procedures, briefing sessions, and employee interactions. Observation enabled the researcher to compare actual operational practices with the information obtained from interviews. Documentary evidence, including standard operating procedures (SOPs), housekeeping checklists, training materials, inspection reports, and organizational documents, was also reviewed to strengthen the credibility of the findings.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014). The analysis involved four stages: data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary evidence were coded to identify recurring themes related to supervisory roles, operational control, employee performance, and service quality. Similar codes were then grouped into broader categories that represented the major findings of the study.

Data triangulation was achieved by comparing information obtained from

interviews, observations, and documentary evidence. Source triangulation was conducted by collecting perspectives from different categories of participants within the housekeeping department. Member checking was also applied by confirming interview interpretations with selected participants to ensure the accuracy of the findings. Furthermore, the researcher maintained detailed field notes and an audit trail throughout the research process to enhance the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the study. By employing a qualitative case study approach, this research provides a comprehensive understanding of how housekeeping supervisors contribute to maintaining operational quality, ensuring compliance with hotel standards, and enhancing service excellence within the housekeeping department.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Planning and Organizing Housekeeping Operations

The findings reveal that effective planning and organizing constitute the foundation of housekeeping supervision. Daily operations begin with a morning briefing led by the housekeeping supervisor, during which room occupancy forecasts, guest arrivals, VIP reservations, special requests, and operational priorities are communicated to room attendants. Supervisors are responsible for assigning work based on employees' competencies, workload distribution, and occupancy levels to ensure that all guestrooms are prepared efficiently. Field observations further indicate that supervisors continuously monitor the progress of room cleaning and adjust work assignments whenever operational changes occur, such as unexpected early check-ins or high occupancy levels. This flexible allocation of tasks minimizes delays and supports efficient room turnover.

These findings support the classical management functions proposed by Fayol, which emphasize planning and organizing as essential managerial responsibilities. In the hospitality industry, effective operational planning enables hotels to maintain service consistency while responding to fluctuating guest demands. The results also demonstrate that systematic planning contributes significantly to operational efficiency and employee productivity (Johan, 2024).

3.2 Supervisory Practices in Maintaining Room Quality

A major finding of this study is that maintaining room quality depends heavily on continuous supervision throughout the cleaning process. Housekeeping supervisors perform routine inspections before guestrooms are released to the Front Office Department. The inspections cover cleanliness, room presentation, bathroom sanitation, guest amenities, furniture arrangement, lighting, and compliance with the brand standards. When deficiencies are identified, supervisors provide immediate feedback and require corrective actions before rooms are made available for guests. This inspection process ensures consistency in housekeeping performance while minimizing operational errors that may negatively affect guest satisfaction (Husaini

& Lubis, 2024). From a quality management perspective, these findings demonstrate the implementation of preventive quality control rather than corrective quality assurance. Continuous monitoring enables operational problems to be identified before guests experience service failures, thereby supporting the hotel's commitment to delivering premium hospitality services (Giovanni et al., 2022).

3.3 Leadership and Employee Development

The study found that housekeeping supervisors play an important leadership role beyond monitoring operational performance. Supervisors regularly coach employees, demonstrate proper cleaning techniques, provide constructive feedback, and assist room attendants in solving operational problems encountered during daily work. Interview findings suggest that employees perceive supervisors as mentors who encourage continuous learning and professional development. Newly recruited employees receive intensive guidance during their adaptation period, while experienced employees continue to receive performance evaluations and recommendations for improvement. These findings reflect the principles of transformational leadership (Deng, 2023), in which leaders inspire employees through coaching, motivation, and individualized support. Effective leadership not only improves employee competence but also increases confidence, teamwork, and commitment to maintaining high service standards.

3.4 Communication and Cross-Departmental Coordination

The findings indicate that effective communication is essential for successful housekeeping operations. Housekeeping supervisors maintain continuous coordination with the Front Office, Engineering, Laundry, Security, and Food and Beverage departments to ensure smooth hotel operations. Coordination becomes particularly important when handling VIP arrivals, maintenance requests, room status updates, and unexpected operational changes. Supervisors serve as communication facilitators who ensure that accurate information is shared promptly among departments. These findings support previous hospitality management research emphasizing that interdepartmental collaboration enhances operational responsiveness, reduces service delays, and improves overall guest satisfaction. Effective communication also strengthens organizational coordination and contributes to seamless service delivery.

3.5 Challenges in Housekeeping Supervision

Although housekeeping supervision at that hotel is generally effective, several operational challenges were identified during the research. High occupancy levels, limited staffing during peak periods, employee fatigue, urgent guest requests, and unexpected maintenance issues occasionally disrupt operational workflows. To overcome these challenges, supervisors apply adaptive leadership by redistributing workloads, reprioritizing cleaning schedules, providing direct operational support,

and coordinating closely with other departments. Rapid decision-making and flexibility are therefore essential competencies for housekeeping supervisors. These findings are consistent with contingency theory, which argues that managerial effectiveness depends on the ability to adjust leadership approaches according to changing organizational circumstances (Shenkar, & Ellis, 2022). Rather than relying on standardized procedures alone, supervisors must continuously adapt to dynamic hotel operations.

3.6 The Strategic Contribution of Housekeeping Supervision to Performance

Overall, the findings demonstrate that housekeeping supervision contributes significantly to maintaining operational quality and enhancing hotel performance. Effective supervision ensures compliance with standard operating procedures, improves employee performance, strengthens quality control, and maintains consistent room readiness. Beyond operational responsibilities, supervisors also contribute to organizational performance by fostering teamwork, improving communication, supporting employee development, and ensuring guest satisfaction through consistent service quality. These contributions reinforce the reputation as a luxury hospitality establishment capable of delivering international service standards. The study therefore suggests that housekeeping supervisors should be viewed not merely as operational inspectors but as strategic leaders whose managerial competencies directly influence service excellence, operational efficiency, employee performance, and the long-term competitiveness of hotel organization.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that housekeeping supervisors play a vital role in maintaining operational quality at the hotel under study. Their responsibilities extend beyond monitoring room cleanliness to include planning daily operations, coordinating staff, conducting quality inspections, providing employee coaching, and facilitating interdepartmental communication. Effective supervision contributes to consistent service quality, improved employee performance, operational efficiency, and enhanced guest satisfaction. These findings highlight the strategic importance of housekeeping supervisors in supporting the overall performance and competitiveness of luxury hotels.

The findings provide both practical and academic implications. Practically, hotel management should strengthen supervisory competencies through continuous leadership development, quality management training, and communication skills to maintain high operational standards. Academically, this study contributes to the hospitality management literature by demonstrating the critical role of housekeeping supervision in achieving operational excellence. Future research is encouraged to investigate supervisory practices in different hotel categories or compare operational strategies across multiple hospitality organizations.

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