



## The Role of Waiters and Waitresses in Supporting Front Office Performance: A Case Study in Five-Star Hotels

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### ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to examine the crucial contribution of waiters and waitresses in enhancing the performance of the Front Office in the setting of luxury hotels. The study examines the impact of effective communication, mutual support, training programmes, and guest feedback integration on service delivery in two luxury hotels. This is done through qualitative approaches such as semi-structured interviews and participant observation. The results emphasise the significance of establishing effective communication channels to provide prompt information exchange, enabling the Front Office to efficiently anticipate and fulfil guest requirements. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of interdepartmental collaboration and the influence of comprehensive training programmes in promoting a unified service culture and enhancing guest satisfaction. Incorporating client input into operational operations is a vital factor in achieving ongoing service enhancement and guest loyalty. Potential areas for future research include investigating cutting-edge communication technologies, examining the impact of cultural diversity on collaborative efforts, and utilising emerging technologies in luxury hotel management to enhance service quality to its maximum potential

## **INTRODUCTION**

The hotel business is a complicated and multidimensional sector that places a high priority on providing excellent service and ensuring the pleasure of its guests. In particular, five-star hotels make it their mission to go above and beyond the expectations of their guests by providing an exceptional level of service (Adhistyo et al., 2021; Ahmad, 2019). Due to the fact that it is the main point of contact for visitors, the Front Office plays an extremely important function in this context. The success of the Front Office, on the other hand, is not accomplished in isolation; rather, it is strongly supported by a number of departments inside the hotel, particularly the Food and Beverage (F&B) Service. Waiters and waitresses, who are considered frontline workers in the food and beverage department, play an important role in improving the overall guest experience and supporting the operations of the front office. However, their contributions are sometimes unappreciated (Suardana & Nurhayati, 2019).

For the purpose of providing hotel guests with a smooth and pleasurable experience, it is vital for waiters, waitresses, and front office personnel to work together (Akomaning, 2023; Alnawas, 2019). For example, waiters and waitresses typically engage with visitors while they are eating, which provides them with opportunity to respond to questions, manage special requests, and communicate vital information to the front office. Maintaining a constant quality of service over the duration of the visitor's stay is essential for ensuring the happiness and loyalty of the guest, and this interaction helps to achieve that goal (Assaker, 2020). Despite the significance of this partnership, there is a paucity of research that investigates the ways in which these interactions explicitly enhance Front Office performance and contribute to the overall operational efficiency of the hotel.

Researchers in the field of hotel administration have traditionally focused their attention largely on the specific functions of departments like the Front Office and the Food and Beverage Service. According to these research, the duties and difficulties that are encountered by each department on their own are brought to light (Bagyalakshmi, 2024). Nevertheless, the dynamic interplay that occurs between these departments, in particular the supporting function that waiters and waitresses play, is still not being thoroughly investigated. The lack of study that has been done on the topic restricts our knowledge of how integrated service delivery may be optimised to improve both the enjoyment of guests and the efficiency of operations. In order for hotel management to build strategies that would eventually increase service quality and encourage greater cooperation amongst departments, it is essential for them to address this gap via the development of plans (Alnawas, 2019).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the function that waiters and waitresses play in supporting the performance of the front office in five-star hotels in order to fill this gap from previous research. Using a qualitative methodology, the purpose of this study is to discover the precise ways in which the F&B personnel contribute to the success of the Front Office, to identify the variables that promote good cooperation, and to highlight areas in which there is room for development. The purpose of this research is to provide hotel

managers and policymakers with meaningful insights that will help them improve interdepartmental collaboration, simplify operations, and provide an extraordinary experience for their guests. This will be accomplished by giving a complete analysis of these encounters.

at the hospitality sector, especially at five-star hotels, providing an excellent experience for guests demands fluid collaboration across the numerous departments that are responsible for providing that experience. Additionally, the assistance that is offered by other departments, particularly the Food and Beverage (F&B) Service, is quite important, despite the fact that the Front Office is often considered to be the major point of contact for visitors. Waiters and waitresses play a key part in this ecosystem since they engage with customers on a regular basis, attend to their requirements, and provide vital information to the front office. On the other hand, the degree to which this assistance affects the performance of the Front Office and the overall happiness of the guests is yet completely investigated. Having this lack of awareness makes it more difficult for hotel management to fully capitalise on the possibilities of interdepartmental cooperation in order to improve service delivery.

Despite the fact that it is well acknowledged that coordinated efforts in hotels are of great significance, there is a dearth of research that particularly investigates the contributions that waiters and waitresses make to the success of the Front Office. The research that is now available has a tendency to concentrate on the function of separate departments rather than the interaction that occurs between them. In light of this, there is a pressing need for a more in-depth examination of the ways in which waiters and waitresses contribute to the operations of the front office, the difficulties they encounter, and the characteristics that make successful cooperation possible. Addressing this research gap is critical for establishing strategies that may optimise operational efficiency, boost guest happiness, and ultimately, enhance the competitive advantage of five-star hotels.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Guest Satisfaction**

Guest happiness is a crucial factor that determines the level of success in the hospitality sector, especially in luxury hotels with a five-star rating (Alzoubi, 2021; Koburtay, 2022). Multiple studies have emphasised the need of delivering great service to guarantee elevated levels of client satisfaction and repeated patronage. The quality of interactions with hotel staff, namely those in the Front Office and F&B Service, had a substantial impact on client satisfaction (Akgunduz, 2022; Bae et al., 2018). The smooth integration of services across different divisions may result in a more unified and gratifying visitor experience. Guests often see the hotel as a whole entity, and any discrepancies in the way services are provided by different departments may have a detrimental effect on their overall happiness (Lee, 2021). Hence, understanding the role of waiters and waitresses in this integration is crucial for maintaining exemplary service standards. Furthermore, the emotional connection that is built via personalised treatment is just as important as the quality of the

physical facilities that are provided to guests in order to ensure that they are satisfied with their reservation (Baquero, 2023). Waiters and waitresses play an important part in establishing this relationship with the guests during the duration of dinner service, which is an essential component of the total experience that the visitor has (Jerez-Jerez, 2021). They are able to anticipate and meet the wants of the guests, make suggestions, and immediately handle any difficulties that may arise, all of which lead to a great dining experience, which in turn boosts the guest's view of the hotel as a whole (Prin, 2021). This interdepartmental synergy is critical for obtaining high satisfaction ratings and promoting guest loyalty, both of which are key criteria for the performance and reputation of a hotel.

### **Operational Efficiency**

The ability to deliver services in a seamless and effective manner across several departments is the determining factor in the operational effectiveness of the hotel industry (Huang, 2012). Operations that are efficient are dependent on the Food and Beverage Service and the Front Office being able to communicate and coordinate with one another effectively. The use of streamlined processes may result in better resource allocation, shorter waiting times, and higher visitor satisfaction (Susskind, 2011). The ability of waiters and waitresses to effectively communicate the preferences and special requests of guests to the Front Office of the establishment is beneficial to the management of expectations and the provision of personalised service (Misra, 2019). The implementation of this integrated approach results in a reduction in errors, an improvement in the delivery of services, and a guarantee that visitors get information that is consistent independent of the department with which they interact. In addition, centre on work that is done in cooperation across different departments. Through the process of cross-training, individuals from various departments may increase their knowledge of one other's roles and duties, which ultimately results in more efficient departmental collaboration (Wachira et al., 2022). As an example, waiters and waitresses who are knowledgeable with the operations of the front office are better able to anticipate the demands of guests and collaborate with the front office personnel in order to handle difficulties in a timely manner (Nguyen, 2019). The implementation of this comprehensive strategy for staff training not only improves operational efficiency but also helps to cultivate a culture of collaboration, which is beneficial to the overall hotel operation. Hotels are able to reach a greater degree of service quality and operational efficiency by capitalising on the capabilities of both the facilities and food service workers as well as the front office team.

### **Role of Waiters and Waitresses**

Waiters and waitresses play a crucial role in not just providing food and drinks, but also in enhancing the entire guest experience and contributing to the operational success of the hotel (Yu, 2021). Waiters and waitresses often serve as the first point of interaction during dinner times, presenting a distinct chance to shape visitors' impressions and experiences. visitor interactions may provide significant information on visitor preferences, complaints, and satisfaction levels, which can then be sent to the Front Office to enhance the quality of

personalised service (Banh, 2019). This direct means of contact guarantees that any requirements from guests are swiftly attended to, hence improving the overall experience and contentment of the guests. Additionally, waiters and waitresses play a significant part in the management of the flow of information between the dining rooms and the front office (Ünüvar & Sarı, 2019). As frontline staff, they are in a position to notice and report any problems or special requests that visitors may have. The Front Office is then able to handle these concerns and fulfil the customers' wishes effectively. Through the combined efforts of everyone involved, we guarantee that all interactions with guests are consistent and that any potential issues are remedied as promptly as possible. Waiters and waitresses make a vital contribution to the seamless functioning of the hotel and the delivery of a high-quality experience for guests by demonstrating a grasp of and providing support for the goals of the Front Office (Jawabreh, 2022).

### **Interdepartmental Collaboration**

Given that the quality of service is a significant differentiator in five-star hotels, interdepartmental teamwork is very necessary for the effective running of these establishments (Adam, 2019). It is essential for departments to have culture that encourages collaboration and good communication channels. Particularly important is the link that exists between the Food and Beverage Service and the Front Office, since both of these departments routinely engage with individual visitors as well as with one another. This cooperation may be improved by the implementation of training programmes that place an emphasis on the significance of teamwork and communication (Grefe, 2020). By way of illustration, holding frequent meetings and briefings may assist in aligning the objectives and actions of both departments, therefore ensuring that they collaborate in order to fulfil the requirements and expectations of the guests. Additionally, cooperation across departments may result in the development of novel approaches to service delivery and enhanced capacities for problem-solving (Alhisan, 2019). When staff from various departments collaborate, they are able to share their distinct points of view and devise more efficient ways for dealing with the requests and problems that are brought up by guests. In addition to enhancing the quality of the service, this collaborative approach also promotes employee morale and work happiness. This is because employees feel more supported and respected in their responsibilities, which in turn leads to increased job satisfaction. It is possible for hotels to improve their operational efficiency, increase the level of happiness experienced by their guests, and keep a competitive advantage in the hospitality business if they cultivate a culture of cooperation (Aswan et al., 2023).

## **METHODS**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the function that waiters and waitresses play in supporting the performance of the front office in five-star hotels using a qualitative research technique. For the purpose of this inquiry, qualitative approaches are especially well-suited since they provide a profound comprehension of the intricate interactions and experiences that are experienced by hotel workers (Marshall et al., 2022). The researcher is able to acquire rich, comprehensive information from a variety of viewpoints via the use of a mix of semi-structured interviews and participant observation, which takes place throughout the data collecting process together. It is the purpose of this investigation to discover the myriad of ways in which waiters and waitresses contribute to the operational efficiency of the Front Office as well as the pleasure of the guests. Semi-structured interviews are done with a purposive sample of thirty hotel workers in order to acquire in-depth insights. The sample consists of twenty waiters and waitresses from the Food and Beverage (F&B) department as well as ten staff members from the Front Office. Participants are chosen for participation based on their jobs and experiences inside the hotel, which ensures that a wide variety of viewpoints are represented. The interview guide is intended to address important subjects such as daily tasks, communication methods, obstacles in interdepartmental cooperation, and the perceived influence of their jobs on the performance of the front office and the happiness of guests. The semi-structured style provides for flexibility, which encourages participants to discuss their experiences and opinions in depth while simultaneously ensuring that all pertinent topics are covered. For the purpose of facilitating comprehensive analysis, interviews are recorded and transcribed word for word.

At the same time as interviews are being done, participant observation is being carried out in two five-star hotels over the course of one month. For this approach, the researcher will observe the interactions that take place between the personnel working in the front office and the food and beverage department during peak operating hours, such as breakfast, lunch, and dinner services. The patterns of communication, the joint efforts, and the management of visitor requests and problems are the primary areas of emphasis for the observations. A comprehensive set of field notes is taken by the researcher, which includes not only verbal and non-verbal behaviours but also any noteworthy situations that bring attention to the assistance that waiters and waitresses offer to the Front Office. Through the use of this immersion technique, the researcher is able to get first-hand knowledge about the dynamics of interdepartmental cooperation as well as the actual obstacles that are encountered by staff. Thematic analysis is a technique that is well-suited for detecting, analysing, and reporting patterns within qualitative data (Creswell, 2023). It is used to analyse the data that was acquired via interviews and observations. Before beginning the analysis, it is necessary to get acquainted with the data by reading the transcripts and field notes many times. This is the first phase in the analysis process. After that, it is necessary to develop initial codes in order to systematically classify the important characteristics of the data. After that, these

codes are categorised into more general themes that are reflective of the most important components of the duties that waiters and waitresses play in providing assistance to the front office. A thorough examination and improvement of the themes is carried out in order to guarantee that they correctly portray the facts and provide significant insights into the research issues. In order to get a thorough knowledge of the interdepartmental cooperation that occurs in five-star hotels, the final themes are analysed within the framework of the available literature. This meticulous method of analysis guarantees that the conclusions are properly based on the data and that they make a significant contribution to the area of hotel management by providing important information.

## **RESULTS**

This study's results provide valuable insights into the contribution of waiters and waitresses in enhancing the performance of the Front Office in luxury hotels. The data collected from semi-structured interviews and participant observation emphasises the significance of communication, mutual support, training programmes, and guest feedback in promoting efficient cooperation across different departments.

### **Enhanced Communication**

According to the findings of the research, it is very important for waiters, waitresses, and front office personnel to maintain consistent and efficient communication in order to provide flawless service delivery. The participants who took part in the study noted that daily briefings and informal communication channels, such as short check-ins during shifts, greatly increase coordination. The Food and Beverage crew is able to communicate with the Front Office in a timely way due to these communication techniques, which enable them to convey crucial guest information such as specific requests and preferences. This guarantees that the Front Office is well-prepared to manage queries and demands from guests, which ultimately results in a service that is more attentive to the individual and more effective.

### **Mutual Support**

Waiters and waitresses have additional duties that go beyond their main tasks in the dining rooms. The research demonstrates that food and beverage personnel often aid the Front Office in handling visitor queries and special requests, particularly during busy periods. Waiters and waitresses often assist in verifying visitor bookings, offering guidance, and handling minor complaints on behalf of the Front Office. This reciprocal assistance reduces the burden on Front Office personnel, allowing them to concentrate on more intricate responsibilities and improving overall visitor contentment.

### **Training Programs**

Cross-training programmes play a crucial role in fostering interdepartmental comprehension and collaboration. Both waiters, waitresses, and Front Office workers highlighted the need of training sessions that include the duties and obligations of several departments. These programmes assist staff members in developing an understanding and recognition of one other's difficulties and strengths, resulting in a more united and harmonious

workforce. Participants observed that this training enhances both operational efficiency and the development of a collaborative culture inside the hotel. This leads to staff being more inclined to assist one another and work together towards shared objectives.

### **Guest Feedback**

Guests often praise the smooth service experience that arises from the efficient teamwork between the Food and Beverage (F&B) department and the Front Office personnel. Guests often praised the uniformity and diligence of the service they got throughout their stay, crediting it to the efficient collaboration of the hotel personnel. The research reveals that both departments actively solicit and exchange visitor input in order to consistently enhance their service. This method facilitates the identification of areas that need improvement and enables the implementation of modifications that enhance the overall experience of the guests.

## **DISCUSSION**

The research highlights the crucial importance of efficient communication channels among waiters, waitresses, and Front Office personnel in guaranteeing smooth guest experiences at luxury hotels. Hotels may promote the prompt sharing of important guest information, such as preferences and special requests, by implementing frequent briefings and casual check-ins. By engaging in proactive communication, the Front Office is able to predict and meet visitor requirements in a more effective manner, thus improving overall guest satisfaction. Implementing defined procedures and extensive training programmes may enhance operational efficiency and promote a more personalised guest service approach.

Moreover, the symbiotic connection seen between F&B Service and Front Office workers underscores the crucial significance of reciprocal assistance in handling visitor encounters. Waiters and waitresses often operate as the first point of contact for visitor questions and small difficulties, allowing Front Office personnel to focus on more intricate work. This collaborative approach not only simplifies the process of delivering services but also promotes a unified service culture throughout hotels. By implementing cross-training efforts and collaborative methods, the supporting functions within the organisation may be recognised and formalised. This would lead to stronger collaboration across departments, resulting in improved service quality.

The research highlights the significant influence of comprehensive training programmes in fostering interdepartmental comprehension and collaboration. Participants emphasised the importance of training sessions that acquaint employees with the various tasks and duties within different departments. This enables them to anticipate the demands of guests in advance and contribute to a smooth and uninterrupted service experience. These efforts not only provide workers more control, but also help them develop a better understanding of how different parts of the hotel work together. Hotels may enhance their workers' ability to consistently provide great service by investing in continuous training and development.

Furthermore, it becomes clear that incorporating customer feedback into daily operations is a key component of service quality and ongoing development. Positive reviews from customers often emphasised the seamless service that comes from efficient coordination between waiters, waitresses, and front desk employees. Hotels can find areas for improvement, quickly close service gaps, and adapt to changing guest expectations by actively seeking out and evaluating visitor feedback. This response boosts the hotel's competitive stance in the upscale hospitality industry in addition to increasing visitor pleasure and loyalty.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study emphasises the crucial importance of waitstaff in enhancing the efficiency of the Front Office in luxury hotels. This is achieved through efficient communication, mutual assistance, thorough training initiatives, and the integration of client input. Improved communication channels enable the Front Office to exchange information quickly, allowing them to anticipate and meet guest demands more effectively, hence increasing visitor satisfaction. Interdepartmental mutual assistance enhances the efficiency of delivering services and promotes a unified service culture. This underscores the significance of establishing formalised supportive roles through cross-training programmes. Thorough training programmes enable personnel to predict guest demands in advance and contribute to a smooth service experience, highlighting the significant influence of continuous professional growth. Incorporating guest input into operational methods allows hotels to consistently enhance service standards and meet guest expectations, hence increasing long-term guest loyalty. In the future, it is recommended that study focuses on investigating advanced communication technologies, analysing the influence of cultural diversity on collaboration, and exploring the potential of emerging technology to enhance luxury hotel management practices. By focusing on these specific areas, hotels may enhance interdepartmental communication and improve service delivery standards in the highly competitive hospitality business.

## **FURTHER STUDY**

Further investigation could examine the effectiveness of using sophisticated communication technology, such as mobile applications or digital platforms, to improve the immediate exchange of information among waiters, waitresses, and Front Office workers in high-end hotels. Examining the impact of cultural diversity on the dynamics of teamwork and the delivery of services would offer valuable insights into promoting inclusive collaboration. Continued monitoring of the long-term effects of cross-training programmes on staff satisfaction and service quality measures could provide valuable insights for improving training tactics. Furthermore, exploring the capabilities of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and data analytics to enhance personalised guest experiences and improve operational efficiencies offers a significant opportunity for innovation in luxury hotel management. Conducting comparative research on various types of hotels and in different

geographical regions will provide detailed insights into the contextual factors and effective methods for collaboration between different departments in the hospitality industry.

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