

Chapter 6

Minimizing Waste in the Hospitality Industry: The Opportunities and Challenges of Lean Tourism

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ABSTRACT

Despite economic difficulties, global warming, and the ongoing recovery from the pandemic, the hospitality industry, a key player in the global economy, is under more urgency to adopt sustainable practices. This chapter examines 'Lean Hospitality,' an approach to the hospitality industry that borrows lean concepts from manufacturing operations to strengthen efficiency, reduce waste, and satisfy customers more. It examines how these concepts have changed and how they manage different kinds of waste, such as solids, liquids, gases, food choices, and potentially hazardous materials. The 5S Lean Philosophy, Value Stream Mapping, Standardized Work,

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and Poka-Yoke are some of the methodologies studied to see how they might promote operational excellence and continuous improvement, offering a promising future for the industry. Examples of real-world advantages and disadvantages are provided through case studies, including the Ritz-Carlton in Riyadh's effective lean implementation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Despite the increasing mechanisation of modern society, people continue to maintain a strong desire for travel as they seek opportunities to discover new places and rejuvenate themselves through international travel. Various factors, such as seasonal shifts, weather conditions, family incomes, and the political landscapes of nations, all impact the complex hospitality and tourism sector (Legrand et al., 2023). The significance of this industry is undeniable, considering the substantial contributions it makes to the global economy and the role it plays in promoting sustainable development, particularly in emerging and underdeveloped nations that are in the process of transitioning towards development (Salem et al., 2023, Karim 2020, Gazi et al., 2024). Following the pandemic, the hotel sector has experienced remarkable growth, which has marked a worldwide rebound. According to the United States Travel Association, the travel sector in the United States made a substantial contribution to the economy by accounting for half a trillion dollars in direct expenditure (Abdelmoety et al., 2022). This resulted in a total monetary impact of 2.6 trillion dollars, equivalent to the levels seen in 2019. The industry significantly contributed to the labour market in 2022, supporting approximately 15 million jobs in the United States, with immediate workforce estimates exceeding 8 million. With a 22% growth from the previous year, the travel and tourism industry had its best year for employment in 2022, supporting one out of every eleven jobs globally and contributing 7.6% to the global GDP, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council's 2022 Economic Report (Colmekcioglu et al., 2022; Khan et al., 2023). A global interaction trend with other cultures and customs has driven this expansion.

The hotel business has encountered substantial obstacles in establishing a sustainable and distinctive approach to operations, management, and guest services due to economic hardship, climate change, and the COVID-19 epidemic. Over time, the need for change in the tourist industry has become more and more pressing. Although the manufacturing sector has had significant advancements in transitioning from handicrafts to Industry 4.0 (Roshid et al., 2024), the hospitality business has yet to undergo such revolutionary transformations during the industrial age. The advent of information technology and the digital era has brought about the introduction of new opportunities. These new opportunities substantially impact our day-to-day

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