

Facilities Management in Hospitality: A Systematic Review of Concepts, Practices, and Strategic Implications

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Facilities management (FM) plays a critical role in ensuring the effective functioning of hospitality establishments such as hotels, resorts, and restaurants. As hospitality organisations increasingly rely on sophisticated infrastructure, technology systems, and service environments to enhance guest satisfaction, the management of facilities has evolved from a purely operational support activity to a strategic organisational function. The purpose of this review paper is to examine the conceptual foundations, operational roles, and strategic significance of facilities management in hospitality. The study aims to synthesise existing literature on facilities management practices within hospitality environments and to explore their implications for operational efficiency, service quality, and organisational sustainability.

Design/methodology/approach: The study adopts a systematic literature review approach based on the analysis of academic publications, industry reports, and empirical studies related to facilities management within the hospitality sector. Scholarly articles were identified through databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, Emerald Insight, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar. The review focuses on theoretical frameworks, empirical findings, and emerging trends related to hospitality facilities management.

Findings: The review reveals that facilities management significantly influences hospitality operations through effective maintenance management, infrastructure optimisation, environmental sustainability, safety compliance, and technological integration. The findings highlight that well-managed facilities contribute to improved operational efficiency, enhanced guest experience, and increased organisational competitiveness. Emerging trends in hospitality facilities management include smart building technologies, sustainable infrastructure management, digital maintenance systems, and integrated facility planning.

Research limitations/implications: The review is limited to published literature and primarily focuses on hospitality facilities within accommodation establishments such as hotels and resorts. Further empirical studies are required to examine facilities management practices across different hospitality segments including restaurants, cruise ships, and event venues.

Practical implications: Hospitality managers should recognise facilities management as a strategic management function that contributes to service quality, operational reliability, and organisational sustainability. Investment in preventive maintenance systems, digital facility management technologies, and environmentally sustainable infrastructure can significantly enhance hospitality performance.

Originality/value: This paper provides a comprehensive synthesis of facilities management literature within the hospitality sector and highlights emerging research directions for both scholars and practitioners.

Keywords: Facilities management, Hospitality operations, Hotel maintenance, Sustainable facilities management, Infrastructure management, Hospitality service quality, Asset management, Hospitality engineering

INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry is one of the most dynamic and service-intensive sectors of the global economy, encompassing hotels, resorts, restaurants, tourism facilities, and event venues. Hospitality organisations rely heavily on physical infrastructure, technological systems, and built environments to deliver high-quality services to guests. The management of these facilities is therefore essential for ensuring operational efficiency, service reliability, and customer satisfaction.

Facilities management (FM) has emerged as a critical managerial discipline that focuses on the effective coordination of buildings, infrastructure, people, and organisational processes. Within hospitality organisations, facilities management ensures that the physical environment supports service delivery by maintaining operational systems such as heating, ventilation, air conditioning (HVAC), electrical systems, plumbing, safety infrastructure, and technological networks.

Historically, facilities management in hospitality was primarily associated with maintenance and repair activities. Maintenance teams were responsible for ensuring that equipment functioned properly and that buildings remained operational. However, the scope of facilities management has expanded significantly in recent decades due to technological advancements, sustainability concerns, and increased competition in the hospitality industry.

Modern hospitality establishments operate in highly competitive environments where guest expectations continue to evolve. Guests expect comfortable, safe, aesthetically pleasing, and technologically advanced environments. Facilities management therefore plays a strategic role in ensuring that physical infrastructure aligns with service quality standards and brand positioning.

Facilities management also contributes significantly to operational efficiency. Energy consumption, water use, waste management, and equipment maintenance represent substantial operating costs for hospitality establishments. Effective facilities management strategies can reduce operational expenses while improving environmental sustainability and regulatory compliance.

Furthermore, facilities management influences employee productivity and workplace efficiency. Well-maintained and ergonomically designed environments support staff performance and reduce operational disruptions. Research suggests that hospitality employees perform more effectively in environments where infrastructure systems are reliable and operational processes are well coordinated.

Despite the growing importance of facilities management in hospitality, academic research in this area remains fragmented. Many studies focus on specific operational aspects such as maintenance management, sustainability initiatives, or energy management rather than providing a comprehensive understanding of facilities management within hospitality organisations.

This review paper therefore seeks to synthesise existing literature on facilities management in hospitality and to provide a comprehensive analysis of its conceptual foundations, operational roles, and strategic implications.

Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to provide a comprehensive review of facilities management practices within the hospitality industry and to evaluate their role in enhancing operational efficiency, service quality, and organisational sustainability.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this review paper are to:

1. Examine the concept and evolution of facilities management in hospitality.
2. Analyse the operational roles of facilities management within hospitality organisations.

3. Identify key facilities management practices adopted in hospitality establishments.
4. Evaluate the relationship between facilities management and hospitality service quality.
5. Explore emerging trends and technological developments in hospitality facilities management.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a systematic literature review methodology to synthesise existing research on facilities management within the hospitality sector. Systematic literature reviews are widely used in academic research to identify, evaluate, and synthesise relevant scholarly publications on a specific topic.

The literature search was conducted using major academic databases including:

- Scopus
- Web of Science
- Emerald Insight
- ScienceDirect
- Google Scholar

The search process used keywords such as:

- Facilities management in hospitality
- Hotel facilities management
- Hospitality maintenance management
- Sustainable hotel infrastructure
- Hospitality asset management

The selection criteria for inclusion in the review were based on:

- Relevance to facilities management in hospitality
- Publication in peer-reviewed journals
- Contribution to theoretical or empirical understanding of facilities management practices

The selected literature was analysed thematically to identify key patterns, themes, and research gaps related to facilities management in hospitality environments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Facilities Management

Facilities management is generally defined as the integration of people, processes, and technology to ensure that the built environment supports organisational objectives. In hospitality organisations, facilities management focuses on managing buildings, infrastructure systems, and operational environments in ways that support service delivery.

Facilities management encompasses various operational functions including building maintenance, infrastructure management, energy management, space planning, security management, and environmental

sustainability initiatives. These functions ensure that hospitality establishments maintain operational reliability and provide comfortable environments for guests.

Within hotels and resorts, facilities managers are responsible for overseeing complex building systems such as electrical infrastructure, plumbing systems, HVAC equipment, fire safety systems, and information technology networks. Effective management of these systems is essential for maintaining service continuity and guest comfort.

Role of Facilities Management in Hospitality Operations

Facilities management plays a critical role in supporting hospitality operations by ensuring that physical infrastructure enables efficient service delivery. The operational responsibilities of facilities management include maintenance management, energy management, safety compliance, waste management, and infrastructure planning.

One of the most important responsibilities of facilities managers is ensuring that hospitality environments remain safe and functional. This includes maintaining building systems, ensuring regulatory compliance, and responding promptly to equipment failures.

Facilities management also supports housekeeping operations by ensuring that cleaning processes, waste disposal systems, and laundry facilities operate efficiently. Effective coordination between housekeeping and maintenance teams helps maintain high standards of cleanliness and hygiene.

Maintenance Management in Hospitality Facilities

Maintenance management is a core component of facilities management in hospitality organisations. Maintenance activities ensure that equipment and building systems remain operational and safe.

Maintenance strategies in hospitality generally fall into three categories:

1. Corrective maintenance
2. Preventive maintenance
3. Predictive maintenance

Preventive maintenance is particularly important because it helps prevent unexpected equipment failures that may disrupt hospitality services. Preventive maintenance programmes include regular inspections, equipment servicing, and infrastructure monitoring.

Sustainable Facilities Management in Hospitality

Sustainability has become a major priority in hospitality facilities management due to increasing environmental awareness and regulatory requirements. Sustainable facilities management focuses on reducing the environmental impact of hospitality operations through efficient resource management.

Examples of sustainable practices include:

- Energy-efficient lighting systems
- Water conservation technologies
- Waste recycling programmes
- Green building design

These initiatives not only reduce environmental impact but also improve operational efficiency and reduce costs.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The literature review reveals that facilities management plays a strategic role in hospitality organisations by supporting operational efficiency, service quality, and sustainability. Several key themes emerge from the analysis.

First, facilities management contributes significantly to guest satisfaction by ensuring that hospitality environments remain comfortable, safe, and aesthetically appealing. Guests often evaluate hospitality services based on the quality of physical environments, including room conditions, cleanliness, lighting, and temperature control.

Second, preventive maintenance strategies are widely recognised as essential for reducing operational disruptions and improving asset lifespan. Hospitality establishments that implement proactive maintenance programmes experience fewer equipment failures and lower maintenance costs.

Third, sustainability initiatives have become a major focus in hospitality facilities management. Energy-efficient infrastructure, water conservation systems, and waste reduction programmes are increasingly adopted by hospitality organisations seeking to reduce environmental impact.

Fourth, technological advancements are transforming facilities management practices. Smart building systems, digital maintenance platforms, and automated monitoring technologies enable more efficient management of hospitality infrastructure.

CONCLUSION

Facilities management plays a critical role in the successful operation of hospitality organisations. Effective management of buildings, infrastructure systems, and operational environments ensures that hospitality establishments can deliver high-quality services to guests while maintaining operational efficiency.

The literature review demonstrates that facilities management contributes significantly to hospitality performance through maintenance management, sustainability initiatives, technological integration, and infrastructure planning.

As hospitality organisations face increasing competition and environmental challenges, the strategic importance of facilities management will continue to grow.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this review, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Hospitality organisations should implement preventive maintenance programmes to improve infrastructure reliability.
2. Hotels should adopt digital facilities management systems to enhance operational efficiency.
3. Sustainable infrastructure practices should be integrated into hospitality operations.
4. Facilities management should be recognised as a strategic management function within hospitality organisations.
5. Further research should explore smart building technologies in hospitality environments.

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