

Implementation of Housekeeping Standard Operating Procedures to Achieve Excellence Service: A Qualitative Case Study at Atria Hotel Gading Serpong

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for room cleanliness conducted by Room Attendants in the Housekeeping Department of Atria Hotel Gading Serpong and evaluates their role in supporting service quality. A qualitative descriptive method was applied through non-participant observation, interviews, and documentation analysis. The results reveal that SOP implementation is generally aligned with established operational standards; however, several deviations were observed, particularly during peak occupancy periods. Factors that support effective SOP implementation include continuous supervision, routine training programs, and adequate operational facilities. Conversely, variations in guest preferences and increased workload were identified as factors that hinder consistent implementation. Overall, the findings indicate that effective and consistent SOP execution contributes significantly to maintaining room cleanliness standards and enhancing the delivery of excellent service within the Housekeeping Department.

KEYWORDS: Housekeeping, Room Attendant, Standard Operating Procedures, Excellent Service

I. INTRODUCTION

The hotel industry is an integral part of the tourism sector, providing accommodation services that support travel and tourism activities. The increasingly competitive nature of the hospitality industry requires hotels to consistently deliver high-quality services in order to meet guest expectations and sustain customer satisfaction. Service quality plays a crucial role in shaping guests' perceptions of hotel performance and overall experience. Among various service components, room cleanliness and comfort are fundamental aspects that directly influence guest satisfaction and are primarily managed by the Housekeeping Department.

The Housekeeping Department holds a strategic position within hotel operations, as its performance is closely linked to guest satisfaction levels and the hotel's professional image (Walker, 2020; Sutrina, 2023). To ensure uniformity and consistency in service delivery, hotels establish Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) as formal guidelines governing operational activities, particularly for Room Attendants responsible for room cleaning and preparation. SOPs function as standardized written instructions designed to ensure that work processes are carried out systematically, efficiently, and in compliance with organizational standards (Holloway & Humphreys, 2021). Proper SOP implementation has been shown to improve operational efficiency and maintain consistent cleanliness standards in hotel rooms (Rahmawati & Suryana, 2024).

Despite the existence of SOPs, their implementation in daily hotel operations is not always optimal. Operational challenges such as high occupancy levels, diverse guest preferences, and increased employee workload may affect adherence to established procedures. Discrepancies between written SOPs and actual practices can potentially reduce service quality and negatively influence guests' perceptions of professionalism (Ardiyanti & Suryani, 2022; Park et al., 2019). Nevertheless, empirical studies that specifically examine the consistency between documented SOPs and real operational practices in four-star hotels remain limited.

Most existing research focuses on identifying service failures in hospitality operations, while limited attention is given to high-performing hotels as examples of best practices. Atria Hotel Gading Serpong, a four-star hotel located in a strategic area of Tangerang, operates under high service quality expectations. Therefore, consistent SOP implementation by Room Attendants in the Housekeeping Department is essential to support excellent service delivery and maintain guest satisfaction. This study aims to examine the implementation of housekeeping SOPs at Atria Hotel Gading Serpong and analyze their contribution to achieving

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excellent service. The findings are expected to provide empirical insights for hotel management in evaluating and improving operational service quality.

The research questions addressed in this study are: (1) How are SOPs implemented by Room Attendants in the Housekeeping Department of Atria Hotel Gading Serpong?; (2) What factors support and hinder SOP implementation?; and (3) How does SOP implementation contribute to the achievement of excellent service?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) of Housekeeping Department

The housekeeping department is responsible for maintaining cleanliness, hygiene, and comfort in guest rooms and public areas. Effective housekeeping operations significantly influence guest satisfaction and hotel reputation. Clean and well-maintained rooms are often considered a primary indicator of hotel service quality (Sulastiyono, 2011). Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) are written and structured guidelines designed to standardize work processes, ensure consistency, and maintain service quality across hotel operations (Holloway & Humphreys, 2021). In the hospitality industry, SOP function as operational control tools that guide employees in performing tasks efficiently while minimizing service errors and inconsistencies.

Within the Housekeeping Department, SOP for room attendants regulate key activities such as room cleaning, sanitation, linen replacement, room inspection, and coordination with the front office. Consistent adherence to SOP enables room attendants to deliver uniform service quality regardless of workload or occupancy levels (Mahesa, 2023). SOP-based operations also support employee discipline, clarity of responsibilities, and measurable performance standards, which are essential for maintaining operational reliability (Wijoyo et al., 2023). Standard Operating Procedures are formal documents that describe standardized steps for performing operational tasks. SOPs aim to ensure consistency, efficiency, and quality in service delivery. In housekeeping operations, SOPs reduce errors, improve work efficiency, and support service standardization (Moekijat, 2008).

B. Role of Room Attendants

Room attendants are frontline employees whose performance directly shapes guests' perceptions of hotel cleanliness, comfort, and professionalism. Previous studies indicate that the quality of room attendant performance significantly influences guest satisfaction, particularly in terms of cleanliness and room readiness (Mu'is et al., 2022). The performance of Room Attendants directly affects guests' perceptions of professionalism and service quality (Rumekso, 2002).

Effective implementation of SOPs equips room attendants with clear procedural guidance, enabling them to perform tasks systematically and efficiently. Adequate training, supervision, and availability of cleaning equipment further strengthen SOP compliance and service consistency (Prayogi, 2018). As a result, room attendants play a strategic role not only in operational execution but also in shaping overall guest experience. Hotel cleanliness is consistently identified as a primary determinant of guest satisfaction and hotel selection. Turner (2020) found that cleanliness is prioritized above price, location, and additional facilities. In the post-pandemic context, cleanliness standards have expanded to include hygiene and sanitation practices that signal trust, safety, and professionalism to guests (Zaki, 2023).

Clean rooms that meet SOP standards reduce guest complaints, enhance perceived service quality, and increase the likelihood of repeat visits. Therefore, cleanliness achieved through consistent SOP implementation by room attendants represents a critical link between operational performance and guest satisfaction (Pillai et al., 2021).

C. Relationship between SOP Implementation by Room Attendant

The implementation of SOPs by room attendants has a direct and indirect relationship with hotel occupancy rates. Consistent SOP compliance ensures room cleanliness, comfort, and readiness, which enhances guest satisfaction and strengthens hotel image (Kusdharyanto & Nugroho, 2025). Satisfied guests are more likely to return and recommend the hotel, thereby supporting higher occupancy levels.

Conversely, inconsistent SOP implementation particularly during high occupancy periods can lead to service delays, cleanliness issues, and guest dissatisfaction, ultimately affecting occupancy stability (Rosadi & Putri, 2021). Therefore, SOPs function not only as operational guidelines but also as strategic instruments that support service quality, guest loyalty, and sustainable occupancy performance. Occupancy rate is a key indicator used to measure hotel performance, reflecting the effectiveness of room management and service delivery (Barrows et al., 2022). From a managerial perspective, occupancy rate data support workforce planning, operational scheduling, and resource allocation (Hayes & Ninemeier, 2017).

Occupancy levels are not solely influenced by market demand but are also shaped by service quality experienced by guests. Hotels that consistently deliver clean, comfortable, and well-prepared rooms tend to achieve higher guest satisfaction and loyalty, which contributes to stable or increasing occupancy rates (Zhang et al., 2018).

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III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a qualitative descriptive approach to gain an in-depth understanding of SOP implementation in real operational settings. A qualitative method was selected to explore employee work behaviors and procedural compliance within a natural work environment. According to Moleong (2019), qualitative research enables a comprehensive examination of social phenomena based on actual field conditions, making it suitable for hospitality operational studies.

The research was conducted in the Housekeeping Department of Atria Hotel Gading Serpong, a four-star hotel operating in Tangerang. The department was selected due to its essential role in ensuring room cleanliness, comfort, and readiness for guests. Previous studies have highlighted that room cleanliness is a key determinant of guest satisfaction and hotel experience (Walker, 2020). Accordingly, this study focuses on Room Attendant activities related to SOP implementation, including room cleaning procedures, amenity arrangement, bathroom sanitation, and adherence to work schedules.

Data collection techniques consisted of non-participant observation, interviews, and documentation review. Non-participant observation was employed to directly observe Room Attendants performing their duties without researcher involvement, allowing for objective assessment of SOP implementation. Moleong (2019) notes that this method minimizes researcher influence on participant behavior. Interviews were conducted with Housekeeping staff and management to obtain insights into SOP application and operational challenges. Documentation analysis included SOP manuals and internal operational records, which served as supporting data.

Data analysis was carried out using qualitative analysis techniques involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was conducted to focus on information relevant to research objectives, while data presentation facilitated the identification of patterns and relationships among findings. Conclusions were drawn iteratively throughout the research process, following the analytical framework proposed by Miles et al. (2019), to ensure that the results accurately reflect field conditions and meet academic standards.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. SOP Adjustments in Housekeeping Operations

The findings reveal that Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) at Atria Hotel Gading Serpong are not applied rigidly but are adjusted to operational conditions. SOP adjustments are made during public holidays, low-occupancy periods, and when serving guests with special needs. These adjustments aim to ensure that service quality remains optimal under varying circumstances. This adaptive approach indicates that SOPs function as flexible guidelines that support service continuity rather than as inflexible rules.

The findings also show that SOPs are consistently implemented in daily housekeeping activities. Room Attendants follow SOP guidelines during room preparation, cleaning, inspection, and handover processes. This ensures standardized room cleanliness and operational efficiency, supporting previous findings that SOP implementation improves service quality (Sugiarto, 2014). Based on field observations, Room Attendants at Atria Hotel Gading Serpong perform check-out room cleaning procedures in accordance with the workflow outlined in the Housekeeping Department's SOPs. The cleaning process is carried out sequentially, beginning with room entry procedures and concluding with waste disposal and final inspection. Throughout the observation period, Room Attendants consistently applied privacy and safety protocols, including verifying room numbers, knocking before entry, and using personal protective equipment (PPE).

Linen management was conducted by separating soiled linen according to established categories to maintain hygiene standards and prevent cross-contamination. The use of appropriate cleaning chemicals and tools was observed, particularly in bathroom sanitation and bedroom arrangement tasks

B. Stages of Room Cleaning Based on SOP

According to the informants, room cleaning stages are carried out systematically in accordance with established SOPs. Each Housekeeping staff member is required to follow the same procedures consistently, regardless of external conditions such as weather or occupancy levels. SOP compliance ensures that work processes are structured, safe, and efficient. The consistent application of SOPs also helps minimize conflicts, reduce operational errors, and maintain positive guest reviews. Even during high-occupancy periods, SOPs continue to be implemented to safeguard service quality. Guest complaints and negative reviews are not merely reacted to but are analyzed proactively to improve future procedures.

SUMMARY OF SOP IMPLEMENTATION FOR CHECK-OUT ROOM CLEANING

No.	Work Stage	Observational Findings
1.	Room entry procedure	Room number verified, door knocked at least three times, staff introduced themselves
2.	Cleaning preparation	Trolley organized, "Cleaning in Progress" signage displayed, equipment prepared

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3.	Linen Handling	Used linen separated and placed in designated containers
4.	Bathroom Cleaning	Toilet, shower, and washbasin cleaned using SOP-approved chemicals
5.	Bedroom arrangement	Furniture dusted, bed arranged neatly using hospital corner technique
6.	Final inspection	Room facilities checked to ensure no damage or guest belongings left behind
7.	Waste management	Waste disposed of according to procedures and work area left clean

C. Supervision and Daily Inspection Practices

Supervision is conducted on a daily basis for both vacant and occupied rooms. Housekeeping supervisors inspect rooms every day to ensure that cleanliness standards are met. Supervisors also monitor employee performance, distribute tasks according to working hours, and ensure that Room Attendant targets are achieved. When room targets exceed normal workloads, overtime is assigned to maintain service quality. This daily supervision mechanism plays a crucial role in quality control and SOP compliance.

D. Impact of SOP Implementation on Employee Performance

The findings indicate that SOP implementation has a significant impact on employee performance. Consistent application of SOPs makes work processes more organized, efficient, and structured. Employees are able to perform their tasks with greater clarity, reducing the likelihood of errors and guest complaints. At Atria Hotel Gading Serpong, SOPs serve as the main reference for continuous performance improvement. Discipline in following procedures enhances professionalism and ensures reliable work outcomes across the Housekeeping team..

E. SOP Implementation and Hotel Occupancy Rates

Based on operational documentation data, the occupancy rate of Hotel Atria Gading Serpong shows an increase during certain periods. Despite the increase in occupied rooms, room readiness can still be maintained according to established standards. The informants emphasized that SOP implementation indirectly affects hotel occupancy rates. By consistently applying SOPs, the hotel is able to maintain cleanliness, comfort, and service consistency, leading to positive guest experiences and higher chances of repeat visits. Occupancy rates tend to increase during high seasons, reaching between 81% and 94%. Major religious holidays significantly influence occupancy levels. During Christmas and the period leading up to New Year, occupancy can reach up to 98%. When negative reviews occur, management responds by conducting thorough analysis and service improvements, which ultimately contribute to maintaining and increasing occupancy levels. The increase in occupancy from August to September 2025 indicates higher work pressure, yet it does not disrupt the consistency of SOP implementation.

OCCUPANCY DATA OF ATRIA HOTEL GADING SERPONG

Period	Total Rooms	Rooms Sold	Occupancy (%)
August 2025	4,676	3,282	70,13
September 2025	4,677	3,494	74,67

Source: Operational Documentation of Atria Hotel Gading Serpong (2025)

F. SOP Training and Employee Development

Training related to SOP implementation is conducted regularly for both new and senior employees. Training materials cover cleanliness standards, safety procedures, communication skills, and technical competencies such as hygiene practices and bed-making techniques. In addition to routine training, employees also participate in special training sessions outside regular working hours to enhance their skills. One notable outcome of this training program is the Housekeeping Department's achievement of second place in a hotel competition across Jakarta, demonstrating the effectiveness of SOP-based training in improving employee competence and service quality.

This study concludes that the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) by Room Attendants in the Housekeeping Department of Hotel Atria Gading Serpong generally complies with established operational standards and contributes to consistent room cleanliness, readiness, and service quality. SOP compliance supports operational efficiency and plays an important role in maintaining guest satisfaction, which in turn influences occupancy performance. However, minor inconsistencies were identified in the execution of certain SOP details during periods of high occupancy, indicating that increased

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workload and time pressure may affect procedural accuracy. Overall, the findings suggest that while external market conditions also influence occupancy levels, consistent SOP implementation supported by effective supervision and workload management remains a critical internal factor in sustaining service quality and stable hotel occupancy.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that effective implementation of housekeeping SOPs plays a vital role in achieving excellent service at Atria Hotel Gading Serpong. SOPs support service consistency, operational efficiency, and guest satisfaction. Continuous training, supervision, and adaptive application of SOPs are essential to sustaining service excellence, particularly during high occupancy periods. Hotel management is encouraged to strengthen SOP training programs, enhance supervisory monitoring, and maintain flexibility in SOP application to accommodate guest needs. Future studies may employ quantitative approaches or comparative studies across different hotels to further examine the impact of SOP implementation on guest satisfaction and loyalty.

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