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## Evaluating the Governmental Inspection Process in Five-Star Hotels in Egypt (A Comparative Study)

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### Keywords

Government Oversight, Hotel inspection, The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities

### Abstract

The research aims to assess the governmental inspection on Egyptian hotels from the private sector perspective. The inspection is crucial for ensuring compliance with health, safety, and operational standards. Since the hospitality industry, encompassing various activities, faces unique challenges, enhanced product emerges as a pivotal factor for competitive advantage. The research targeted hotel managers, and owners of the 5-star hotels in Egypt. The research applied a quantitative method. The research was conducted from October 2023 until November 2023 using Google Forms questionnaires. The researcher targeted 82 responses representing 82 hotels out of 99 Five-star hotels. The findings revealed a positive sentiment towards the positive role of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities inspection and the star rating system, though concerns exist about the process being too equipment focused. The study recommended a comprehensive approach to cover hardware and software aspects, explore strategies to ensure continuous oversight without compromising the standards during the critical times. This approach should establish clear standards for the inspection process, explore the Mystery Shopper method, and establish guidelines for continuous improvement in inspection processes. Also showed differences in perceptions of hotel inspections conducted by the Ministry of Tourism and antiquities based on demographic factors such as age, job title, and years of experience. This research contributes valuable insights for policymakers to enhance government oversight for hotels.

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## 1. Introduction

The hospitality industry is a billion-dollar industry that includes many activities, among which are the hotel business, tourism services, event planning, and transportation. The hospitality industry faces different difficulties than organizations that produce products due to the dissimilar nature of service in comparison with a product. Research reveals that a key factor for competitive advantage is service quality (Ali et al., 2021). Since the hospitality industry is in the business of providing its guests with a “home away from home” a safe haven. It thus becomes a big responsibility to ensure the guest’s well-being and physical safety while they are on hotel property (Chauhan et al., 2018). The quality of a hotel's operations and its profitability are sometimes more closely related than many managers believe. Today, international developments take place considerably faster than ever before in business. Technology innovation, management styles, and operational processes are always developing to meet customers' needs and wishes (Kichuk et al., 2023).

The hospitality industry in Egypt, particularly five-star hotels, is integral to the country’s tourism sector, which relies heavily on service quality and compliance with health, safety, and operational standards. Government oversight, primarily through hotel inspections conducted by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, plays a crucial role in ensuring that these standards are met. However, the effectiveness and impact of these inspections from the private sector's perspective remain contentious according to one study by Al-Zaghl et al., (2019) \* and another study by Hanna, (2014) issues include concerns over the inspection process being overly focused on hardware rather than service quality, potential biases, and the adequacy of current inspection practices in reflecting contemporary standards and customer expectations. Thus, there is a need to evaluate how regulatory inspections influence the hospitality product, operational efficiency, and whether there are gaps in the inspection process that affect the industry's competitiveness and service standards. Understanding these aspects is crucial for ensuring that regulatory practices effectively support the hospitality sector.

According a pilot study for twenty-five-star hotel conducted by the researchers targeted the hotel managers, the results showed that there are some concerns about the effectiveness of the inspection process which focuses only on the hotel's hardware, and the processes are subject to nepotism and involve the application of outdated standards and strategies that are not in line with the current era. They urged the implementation of the mystery shopper method to cover both hardware and software. On another note, some hotels argued that Egypt's tourism reputation could potentially be ruined without the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities inspection. While some hotels would prefer that the inspection be a tool for spreading awareness and enhancing the product rather than penalization, in a related context. Concerning the usage of third-party companies for auditing Some hotels suggest that these companies are mere consulting companies and profitable entities oriented about profit and documentation only; some hotels added that audits timing and dates of these companies should be confidential, but in reality, they inform hotels before the audits so the hotels have a chance to be ready to pass these audits, which is a question mark about the integrity of the process in these companies, plus their audit reports haven’t any level of obligation for these contracted hotels unless these reports will be shared with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities for further action, and only in that time the hotels will be obligated to fulfill all the requirements. Some hotels highlighted the importance of the safety measures and indicated that any negligence could have harmful consequences not only for a specific hotel but also the whole country's reputation. Based on the pilot study the research aims to evaluate the

governmental inspection process in five-star hotels in Egypt from the private sector's perspective and to understand how these inspections affect product standards, operational practices, and the overall competitiveness of hotels. It also aims to identify any shortcomings or areas for improvement in the inspection process, and to provide recommendations for enhancing regulatory oversight to better align with industry needs and best practices, additionally, examining how demographic factors such as age, job title, hotel location, and years of experience impact hotels' perceptions of the inspections conducted by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities.

Thus, the current study suggests the following questions:

- What is the five-star hotel managements insights about the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities' hotel inspections in Egypt?
- What are the differences in perceptions of hotel inspections conducted by the Ministry of Tourism based on demographic factors such as job title, hotel location, and years of experience?

## **2. Literature Review**

Quality is a significant competitiveness factor, not just a trendy idea. The mandatory and voluntary structure in the tourist destination should support the quality of the tourism sector. It should be elaborated on and reviewed on an ongoing basis by destination entities (Wafik, 2017). Quality of product is defined as the extent to which customer expectations, needs, and demands are met. Quality can also increase the competitiveness and profitability of hotel establishments (Kuvika., 2024). Service quality is a crucial aspect of satisfying tourists for the survival of the organization and to ensure a good market share; hence, it is important to evaluate it (Callychurn & Zarina, 2015). Service quality in the hospitality industry becomes one of the most important factors for gaining a sustainable competitive advantage and customers' confidence in the highly competitive marketplace, and therefore service quality can give the hotel industry a great chance to create competitive differentiation for organizations. (Al-Ababneh, 2017).

### **2.1. Concept of Inspection**

Hotel inspection involves evaluating and ensuring the quality of hotel services to meet guest expectations, enhance competitiveness, and drive continuous improvement in the tourism and hospitality industries (Ali et al., 2021). The key factors contributing to the systematized nature of hotel inspections include compliance with laws, regulations, protocols, the identification, and management of economic and reputational risks (Bovsh et al., 2020). Hotels are inspected in the three principal categories encompassing construction and installation standards, maintenance, and services supplied. Furthermore, inspections are conducted for hospitality companies to ensure that they adhere to health and safety regulations (Kosar et al., 2015). Hotel inspections play a crucial role in ensuring service quality, enhancing customer satisfaction, and improving organizational structure. They align with quality management practices to maintain high standards, streamline hotel operations effectively, and specify the methods necessary for improvement (Blanc, 2011; Peevski, 2022).

Panina (2023). indicated that managers of hotel enterprises, regardless of their ownership structure or operational focus, frequently encounter various types of

inspections regulated by specific laws and regulations that vary depending on the supervising authority, these inspections include:

- Emergency inspections are mainly conducted in response to urgent situations.
- Compliance checks ensure adherence to laws.
- Operational search activities conducted by investigative agencies.
- Data protection checks to verify compliance with personal data protection laws.

## **2.2. The importance of inspection**

Inspection is an important part, especially in the hospitality business since it has a direct link to the quality of services given, which is regarded as the core product in the sector. It is carried out to explore all aspects of hotel establishments and ensure that they comply with all applicable norms. Law, and services standards should be reviewed regularly to verify that they are being followed and are focusing on the demands of the customers. As a result, an inspection system based on consistent and transparent criteria may help enhance hotel service quality and raise visitor satisfaction rates (Azab et al., 2018; Peevski, 2022; Silva et al., 2022).

Hotel inspections are a key driver of refurbishment for small and medium hotels in Egypt. These inspections are vital for maintaining competitiveness, enhancing market share through improved customer satisfaction, boosting operational efficiency and productivity, and achieving long-term cost savings. Furthermore, they help preserve corporate image and standards, facilitate upgrade to higher categories, and ensure that hotels remain current with market trends and technological advancements (Hassanien, 2007). Hotel renovation refers to the process of upgrading and revitalizing hotel infrastructure to enhance competitiveness. This includes improving hotel facilities and focusing on sustainability pillars such as energy efficiency, water conservation, waste management, and indoor environmental quality enhancement (Khoury et al., 2014). Additionally, hotel renovation involves adapting and modernizing hotel buildings to meet standards and needs (Bradecki & Uherek-Bradecka, 2015). Every five to ten years, the refurbishment process must be completed to maintain the success of hotel operations. To upgrade existing hotels, renovating, or reconstructing are the two main alternatives. This may be attributed to a scarcity of good and large sites for demolition and rebuilding, as well as a desire to save time and appreciate old buildings (Abdelghany & Abotaleb, 2014).

## **2.3. Types of inspections**

Service quality may now be monitored in a variety of ways, including data analysis, mystery shopping, and hotel inspection (Azab et al., 2019). However, according to Raspor and Ambrožic (2012), there are three types of inspection, first party inspection, where an internal audit is carried out to examine the quality management system against a group of specified requirements. Second-party inspection, where an external customer investigates the product against its standards, Independent third-party inspection where an independent company conducts the inspection. However, Hussein and Gadelrab (2017) mentioned that there is also a system inspection to check whether a quality management system conforms to standards. They also labeled a compliance inspection to ensure practices comply with quality management documentation. Additionally, a follow-up inspection to ensure corrective actions have been implemented effectively .

Internal and third-party audits play a crucial role in the hospitality industry, particularly in ensuring the effective management of resources and maintaining high standards of safety and quality (Karagiorgos et al., 2011). Third-party audits are conducted by a professional firm to ensure food safety and quality, often using various

standards. These audits are seen as a way to maintain safety in the face of limited economic resources (Powell et al., 2013). The third type is the official entities, such as ministries of tourism, environment, health, and other regulatory entities that undertake government inspections to ensure that hospitality facilities meet regulations and quality standards. (Azab et al., 2019).

Governments evaluate the quality of hotels through various methods. One approach is the development of evaluation instruments, based on important factors for evaluating quality in hotels, which are calculated based on the perceptions and expectations of visitors (Singh et al., 2022). Another method is the analysis of online reviews, which provide valuable information about perceived service quality and can be used to make informed decisions (Tovmasyan, 2020). Additionally, governments may conduct surveys or questionnaires to gather feedback from guests and assess their satisfaction levels (Beck et al., 2017). The evaluation of quality costs is another important aspect, where the costs of prevention, evaluation, and failures are analyzed to identify deficiencies and guide improvement programs. By utilizing these approaches, governments can effectively assess the quality of hotels. This enables them to take necessary actions to improve the industry (Monsalve Castro & Hernandez Rueda, 2015).

## **2.4. The Inspection Process**

According to Makofske (2021), periodic inspections are a popular method for enforcing legislation, fostering the quality of service, and enforcing safety regulations. The effectiveness of these inspections depends on being unannounced and difficult to anticipate, lest firms comply only when they believe inspections are likely. Facilities are usually inspected during the same inspector visit. The effectiveness of the inspection can be noted only in the first inspected facility; the rest of the facilities anticipate the inspection process by maximizing readiness to pass. Establishments perform significantly worse when they receive the first inspection of a visit. However, Hanna (2014) argues that the third-party auditing companies are profitable companies that want to increase their profit and the number of hotels in their portfolio. The date of visit should remain unknown; however, they advise the hotels about the dates of the visits on a friendly basis so hotels can take the measures to get a high score.

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities is Egypt's official and primary entity in charge of tourism planning and regulation. It has several responsibilities, the most important of which is to oversee all tourist businesses and activities, such as tourism firms, travel agencies, and hotels. It also makes rules and enforces them to guarantee that laws and regulations are followed (Al-Batoty, 2010)\*. The Hotel Inspection Sector is a governmental sector within Egypt's Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. This sector is in charge of classifying hotels to assign them the proper star rating, and inspecting hotels regularly to ensure that they meet the minimal requirements of their respective categories (Hassanien, 2007).

The hotel inspection process in Egypt is conducted in three stages: Before the inspection, inspection committees are constituted, a work plan for the committee is provided to the minister, and budgetary allocations are agreed upon. The inspection plan should include the shape, objectives, duties, requirements, timeline of the inspection, and the number of inspectors. Furthermore, inspectors are given sufficient and reliable information to help them achieve the inspection's goals. During the second stage, numerous methods vary and differ depending on the inspection purpose, such as an inspection to authorize the award of license and periodic inspection. (Azab et al.,



2019). After inspection, which includes reporting and follow-up, is the third stage of the hotel inspection process. The inspection findings should be reported at this stage, and remedial measures should be made to fulfill the inspection standards (Azab et al., 2019).

Hotels are inspected twice a year via a checklist and an assessment sheet. A copy of the inspector's report is given to the hotel. The report tells the hotel whether it passes the inspection or not. If there are any inadequacies, a 6-month period is given for rectification. Failure to take corrective action within the time frame will be re-examined to identify the reasons for the delay, and the hotel will be officially warned plus a second-time limit chance (Hassanien, 2007). On the contrary, Hanna (2014) stated that the lack of periodic inspection by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, and the financial crisis have affected tourism quality. Tourism business owners cannot afford to pay for a private auditing company. Accordingly, the overall quality of tourism in Egypt has been highly affected, and tourism stakeholders have been impacted, there should be serious procedures against violations. Successful hospitality businesses require well-planned management, operations development, and other technical inputs. Destinations have to search for quality continuously as clients' demands continue to increase .

Effective quality management in hospitality businesses enhances customer satisfaction, competitiveness, and industry growth, ensuring success for destinations and enterprises in the hotel and restaurant sector. The integration of quality management systems in tourism destinations not only enhances service quality and tourist satisfaction but also promotes sustainability and competitiveness. These systems involve the planning, implementation of improvements, and control of changes in key service quality characteristics to enhance competitiveness and profitability (Chimbo et al., 2023; Maslihan et al., 2022).

## **2.5. The Transparency and integrity of the inspection process**

Ensuring the integrity of third-party audits requires addressing the major factors compromising inspector independence. However, the influence of bonding relationships between auditors and clients established by hospitality on auditor independence is hardly addressed in extant studies (Du, 2017). In fact, some firms provide their auditors food and beverages for free (referred to hereafter as 'hospitality'), which impairs auditor independence (Chu et al., 2011). Compromising the independence of a hotel inspector can lead to skewed grading, reduced credibility, and a lack of impartial evaluation, impacting the overall quality assurance process in the hospitality industry. It can lead to inaccurate reports (Di Domenico & Ball, 2011; Yu et al., 2020).

Maintaining professional ethics is vital for ensuring trust and business success. One of the critical issues is the acceptance of gifts by inspectors, which can lead to a loss of impartiality and potentially compromise the integrity of evaluations. Ethical standards demand that inspectors and auditors remain objective, as any perception of favoritism can undermine the credibility of their assessments (Akerstrom, 2017). To address this, governments worldwide have implemented strict codes of conduct and anti-corruption laws aimed at preventing preferential treatment and ensuring a fair process. These regulations highlight the negative impact that lavish gifts and hospitality can have on officials, potentially leading to unfair advantages and twisted evaluations (Tillipman, 2014). Law (2010) argues that receiving gifts or hospitality from clients does not influence perceived auditor independence. Similarly, Du (2017) contends that

auditor independence is not necessarily impaired due to auditors' acceptance of hospitality from the audit client.

### 3. Methodology

This research employs a quantitative methodology, which encompasses a diverse array of approaches and techniques for the statistical transformation and analysis of numerical data (Saldaña, 2018).

#### 3.1. Population and Sample

The research targeted the five-star hotels as they represent the highest tier of the hospitality industry in Egypt, and they have more complex and varied operations compared to lower-tier hotels. This complexity requires a more detailed and stringent inspection process. Studying these hotels can provide insights into the challenges and effectiveness of governmental inspections in managing complex hospitality operations, where focusing on such a high-profile sector can offer valuable findings that might be applicable or adaptable to other segments of the hospitality industry. Moreover, five-star hotels often set benchmarks for quality and service; hence, the research can provide a clearer picture of how well the inspection process ensures that the highest standards are consistently met. According to the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (2023)\*, the number of five-star hotels in Egypt is 99. The study will be a comprehensive survey of the entire community. The questionnaire targeted the hotel managers, owner representatives, management companies' representatives and owners.

According to Thompson (2012) equation to calculate the minimum sample size required for a statistical study, the minimum sample size for hotels will be 79 according to the below equation.

$$n = \frac{N \times p(1-p)}{\left[ \frac{N-1}{d^2} \times z^2 \right] + p(1-p)}$$

Where n: Sample size (?) N: Population size P: probability (50%)  
Z: Confidence level at 95% (1.96) d: Error proportion (0.05)

$$n = \frac{99 \cdot 0.5(1 - 0.5)}{(99 - 1) \left( \frac{0.05}{1.96} \right)^2 + 0.5(1 - 0.5)} = 79$$

#### 3.2. Questionnaire Layout

To achieve the research goal, one questionnaire was designed according to a Likert scale. Likert scale is one of the measurements which is applied to measure the opinions and facts for the 5 levels in that measurement to be compatible with the nature of the research. It includes 2 parts: the first one is demographic, covering the age, job title, hotel location, and years of experience. The second part related to the respondents' insights towards the implemented classification system, the impact of the inspection on the product, the continuity of the inspection during crises, the need for outsource

companies to perform the inspection process, and the relation between the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities strong supervision and the high level of services. Moreover, the design of the questionnaire was done after reviewing similar studies to the research and the dimension of the hotel inspection has been designed based on the previous studies of (Azab, Megahed, & El-Sawalhy, 2019; Alobaidi, 2019; ASQ, 2015; Satyendra, 2016; Donna, 2014; Hanna, 2014; Hassanien, 2007; Parnas & Lawford, 2003; Callan, 2000). A panel of five academics and professionals reviewed the questionnaire to make sure the items measured the research dimension and that the language and item descriptions were updated.

### 3.3. Data Collection

Data collection was facilitated through the use of Google Forms. The questionnaire was in English, and designed to include various factors connected to the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities oversight of the hospitality industry. The link to the Google Form was shared with the targeted participants, ensuring ease of access and convenience in responding. This method allowed for efficient collection and management of the data within a short time frame. The research was conducted from October 2023 to November 2023 using Google Forms. The survey was distributed to 82 hotels and provided valid responses.

### 3.4. Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data was subjected to statistical analysis to derive meaningful insights using SPSS version 22.0. Several statistical tests were used in analyzing the data, Cronbach's Alpha to assess the reliability and validity of the study instrument. Additionally, frequencies and percentages were used to describe the demographic characteristics of the sample, while means and standard deviations were applied for the descriptive analysis of the study dimension. Additionally, ANOVA one sample test to compare how demographic factors such as age, job title, hotel location, and years of experience impact hotels' perceptions of the inspections conducted by the Ministry of Tourism. These methods enabled the researcher to identify patterns, relationships, and trends within the data, ultimately contributing to a comprehensive understanding of regulatory hotel inspections from the private sector perspective and the factors influencing their views.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Validity and reliability

The dimensions and wording of the questionnaire have been reviewed by academic reviewers, who have revised and adjusted the wording to clarify it for the respondents.

**Table 1** The Reliability

N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
1	.910

Cronbach's Alpha is a commonly used statistic to assess the internal consistency and reliability of a questionnaire, A Cronbach's Alpha value ranges from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating better internal consistency. A value of 0.910 indicates that the items in the questionnaire are relatively reliable and consistent and suggests the items in the questionnaire are positively correlated with each other.



## 4.2. The sample characteristics

**Table 2** The Sample characteristics

Variables	Responses	Frequency	Percent %	Rank
Age	Less than 40 years	9	11	3
	From 40 to 50 years	54	65.9	1
	More than 50 years	19	23.2	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>--</b>
Job Title	General Manager	49	59.8	1
	Hotel owner	2	2.4	4
	Owner Representative	8	9.8	3
	Management company Representative	23	28	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>--</b>
Hotel location	Cairo	18	22	2
	South Sinai	13	15.9	3
	Red Sea	24	29.3	1
	Luxor & Qena	5	6.1	6
	Aswan	3	3.7	7
	Alexandria	7	8.5	4
	Giza	6	7.3	5
	North coast- Matrouh & Siwa	5	6.1	6
	Fayoum	1	1.2	8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>--</b>
Years of experience	From 5 to 10 years	4	4.9	3
	From 10 to 15 years	13	15.9	2
	From 15 to 20 Years	65	79.3	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>--</b>

The data presented reveals key demographic and professional characteristics of the respondents, offering significant insights into the structure and distribution of leadership within the 5-star hotels, where the age distribution of respondents demonstrates a notable concentration in the 40 to 50 year age range, with 65.9% of the sample falling within this bracket. This finding indicates that mid-to-senior career professionals are more likely to be engaged in leadership roles. Conversely, the representation of respondents aged less than 40 years (11%) and those over 50 years (23.2%) indicates a potential gap in perspectives from both emerging leaders and those nearing retirement. This distribution suggests that while experienced senior leaders

dominate the sample, the views of younger professionals who are likely to be at the beginning or middle stages of their careers are underrepresented. Similarly, the perspectives of seasoned professionals nearing retirement are also limited.

In terms of job titles, the majority of respondents hold the position of "General Manager" at 59.8%, which highlights the centrality of this role in the management hierarchy of hotels. General Managers are typically responsible for overseeing all operational aspects of a hotel, making their input invaluable for understanding managerial challenges and practices. The significant representation of this role suggests that the study captures insights from those who directly influence hotel operations and strategy. In contrast, the lower representation of hotel owners (2.4%) and owner representatives (9.8%) indicates that while these stakeholders are crucial to the overall business structure, their perspectives are less prominent in this dataset. The presence of Management Company Representatives (28%) points to the influence of external management entities, which may affect operational practices and strategic decisions in the hotels they manage.

The regional distribution of the 5-star hotel locations reveals a concentration in the Red Sea (29.3%) and Cairo (22%). These areas' prominence suggests that they are significant hubs for 5-star hotels, likely due to their high tourist appeal and economic significance. The substantial representation from these regions might reflect their developed hospitality infrastructure and operational standards. Other regions such as South Sinai (15.9%) and Alexandria (8.5%) also contribute to the dataset, though to a lesser extent. The relatively lower representation from areas like Fayoum (1.2%) and Aswan (3.7%) indicates that the study's findings might be skewed towards regions with a higher concentration of luxury hotels .

The data on years of experience shows a significant majority (79.3%) of respondents with 20 years of experience in the hospitality industry. This high level of experience indicates a wealth of industry knowledge and expertise among the respondents. The predominance of highly experienced professionals suggests that the study captures valuable insights into long-term industry trends, challenges, and practices.

### 4.3. Quantitative results

**Table 3** The Hotels inspection

The Hotels inspection		Strongly agree	Agree	Natural	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am satisfied with the current star rating assessment of hotels	F	17	43	4	13	5	3.66	1.157
	%	20.7	52.4	4.9	15.9	6.1		
The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities inspection helps to improve the quality of services provided to guests	F	37	34	0	11	0	4.18	0.983
	%	45.1	41.5	0	13.4	0		

The current procedures implemented in the inspection processes overseen by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities ensure the existence of a mechanism for measuring guest satisfaction	F	28	19	11	21	3	3.59	1.295
	%	34.1	23.2	13.4	25.6	3.7		
The Inspection processes conducted by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities are suspended in the event of any crisis in the tourism industry or a decrease in occupancy rates.	F	6	28	19	22	7	3.05	1.121
	%	7.3	34.1	23.2	26.8	8.5		
The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities employ clear and consistent inspection mechanisms aimed to enhance the quality of hotel products.	F	25	39	8	10	0	3.96	0.949
	%	30.5	47.6	9.8	12.2	0		
The tourism inspection carried out by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities is an important tool to verify the implementation of service quality standards	F	35	32	4	11	0	4.11	1.006
	%	42.7	39	4.9	13.4	0		
The use of specialized companies in the field of food safety monitoring by hotels ensures the safety of food production and distribution processes provided to hotel guests	F	48	30	4	0	0	4.54	0.592
	%	58.5	36.6	4.9	0	0		
The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities should outsource specialized companies for the inspection processes to enhance the quality of services provided in hotels	F	29	39	6	8	0	4.09	0.905
	%	35.4	47.6	7.3	9.8	0		
The more the ministry fulfills its supervisory role effectively, the higher the level of quality provided by hotels	F	38	35	9	0	0	4.35	0.674
	%	46.3	42.7	11	0	0		

The results related to the satisfaction with the current star rating assessment of hotels” show that 52.4% "agree" with the current star rating assessment. Additionally, 20.7% "strongly agree," further supporting the positive sentiment towards the existing rating system. The mean score of 3.66 suggests an overall agreement. The standard deviation of 1.157 indicates a moderate level of variability in responses; these results collectively indicate a general agreement with some variation in opinions among

respondents. This aligns with the finding of Tsao (2018), which indicated that hotel star ratings significantly impact customer satisfaction as customers tend to have higher expectations for service quality and facilities from hotels with higher star ratings.

Concerning the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities inspection benefit in improving the quality of services provided to guests, the result shows that the majority of respondents, 45.1%, strongly agreed that these inspections have a positive impact, plus 41.5% “agreed.”. The mean score of 4.18 indicates a general agreement. The slight vibrates in responses, as shown by the standard deviation of 0.983, suggests some diversity in opinions. This breakdown gives an indication into how respondents view the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities inspections, as the majority sees them as a positive force in elevating service quality. Furqan et al. (2020) argue that inspection findings and recommendations play a significant role in influencing the quality of services. Furthermore, the audit committees are expected to positively impact the performance of hotels. This suggests that government quality audits may have a positive influence on the quality of services in the hotel industry (Yameen et al., 2019) while the quality of hotel services can be measured using various tools such as the SERVQUAL scale, SERVPERF, and the standard SERVQUAL procedure (Akroush et al., 2016). These finding indicates a positive impact on the quality of service.

The perception of respondents about the existence of a mechanism for measuring guest satisfaction within the implemented inspection processes overseen by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities shows a variation in responses, while a significant 34.1% strongly agree and 23.2% agree, a notable 25.6% disagree, and 3.7% strongly disagree. The mean score of 3.59 indicates an overall agreement, with some diversity in perspectives as shown by the standard deviation of 1.295. Some respondents argue that the inspection is focusing mainly on the hardware, which is considered an important part of the process; however, the discrepancy in the service delivery can badly impact the guest’s overall experience. This aligns with Unuvar and Akgul (2017) who indicated the importance of measuring the guest satisfaction for the destinations and the success and continuity of business. There is a growing effort in using consumer-generated content to gauge guest satisfaction, which emphasizes the importance of having a robust mechanism in place for measuring guest satisfaction (Xiang et al., 2015).

The perception of respondents about the suspended inspection processes conducted by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in the event of any crisis or a decrease in occupancy rates” shows that responses are somewhat divided, 34.1% agree with the idea, and 26.8% disagree, while 23.2% are neutral. There's a subset of 8.5% who strongly disagree and 7.3% who strongly agree, showing a range of perspectives. The Mean score is 3.05, indicating a moderate level of agreement. The standard deviation of 1.121 suggests some diversity in how respondents perceive the continuation of inspections during crises or occupancy rate decreases. However, a study by Azab et al (2019) found that the hotel inspection process is not conducted properly and faces obstacles, suggesting a potential suspension of inspections during crisis situations. These findings indicate that there is suspension of the inspection during a crisis and low occupancy.

The insights of respondents about the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities employment of clear and consistent inspection mechanisms to enhance the quality of the hotel product” indicate that a significant proportion of respondents 30.5% strongly

agree and an additional 47.6% agree. The mean score stands at 3.96, showcasing a solid collective agreement. The standard deviation of 0.949 implies a consistent perception among respondents about the clarity and effectiveness of the Ministry's inspection mechanisms in improving the quality of the hotel's product. The consistent inspection mechanisms can ensure that hotels maintain the desired quality standards further highlight the significance of measuring quality in the hotel industry, emphasizing the need for clear standards and mechanisms to assess and improve quality (Ladhari, 2009).

The insights of respondents about the inspection carried out by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities as an important tool to verify the implementation of service quality standards" shows that that most respondents sees the Ministry of Tourism's inspections as a crucial tool for verifying the adherence to service quality standards. A significant 42.7% strongly agree, while an additional 39.0% agree. The Mean score of 4.11 indicates a strong agreement of the inspections as a mean to ensure service quality standards. The standard deviation of 1.006 suggests a moderate level of diversity in opinions, but the majority is aligned in spotting the importance of these inspections in upholding service quality standards. This finding aligns with Ladhari (2009) who confirmed that making inspections is essential for verifying adherence to these standards

The insights of respondents about the reliability of the specialized companies in the field of food safety monitoring ensures the safety of food production and distribution processes provided to hotel guests" indicates that a substantial 58.5% of respondents strongly agree that these companies ensure the safety of food production and distribution processes, while an additional 36.6% agree, Notably, there are no respondents in disagreement, and only 4.9% remain neutral. The Mean score is 4.54, indicating a strong agreement of the efficacy of specialized companies in ensuring the safety of food processes. The low standard deviation of 0.592 suggests a high level of agreement among respondents on the positive impact of these specialized services. Viator et al. (2017) argue that reliance on third-party audits is a method to improve food safety. Third-party audits, conducted by experienced auditors with relevant degrees, have been found to be valuable in improving food safety management systems (Park et al., 2020). However, it is important to note that audits and inspections alone may not be sufficient to ensure food safety, and there is a need for a comprehensive approach that includes official inspections and critiques to enhance food safety (Powell et al., 2013; Turku et al., 2018). These findings indicate the benefits of the specialized companies in the inspection process with some concerns about their process.

The insights of respondents about the necessity of outsourcing specialized companies by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities for the inspection processes to enhance the quality of services provided in hotels indicate a notable 35.4% of respondents strongly agree with this proposition, and an additional 47.6% agree. The mean score stands at 4.09, showcasing agreement. The standard deviation of 0.905 suggests a moderate level of diversity in opinions, but the majority aligned in believing that outsourcing specialized companies could enhance the quality of services in hotels through more effective inspections; on the contrary. This finding aligns with Lin et al. (2011) that hotels benefit from third-party auditors to assess service quality objectively, ensuring alignment with customer expectations and identifying areas for improvement, while Davydova and Sysoieva (2022). emphasize the importance of defining and measuring service quality in hotels, highlighting factors like comfort, customer



satisfaction, and staff involvement in ensuring high-quality services. While Ali et al. (2021) indicated that service quality in hospitality, including empathy, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and tangibles, which is crucial for customer satisfaction amidst growing competition.

The insights of respondents about the intense fulfillments of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities to its supervisory role and its correlation towards a higher level of quality at the hotels indicate that the consensus is strong on the positive correlation where A significant 46.3% of respondents strongly agree, and an additional 42.7% agree. The Mean score of 4.35 indicate agreement with the idea that effective supervisory oversight from the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities contributes to higher quality levels in hotels. The standard deviation of 0.674 suggests a relatively consistent perception among respondents. This finding aligns with a study by Sung et al. (2019) who recommended improving quality through effective leadership in the tourism and hospitality industry, which aligns with the role of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in supervising and guiding the industry to enhance quality levels. Additionally, the classification system affects the quality of services provided by hotels, indicating that effective supervisory roles by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities can influence the overall quality in the industry (Ozimek & Kozłowska, 2020).

**Table 4** The Differences between the respondents age and the perception towards the hotel inspection dimension.

Variable	F	Sig.
I am satisfied with the current star rating assessment of hotels	3.449	0.037
The Ministry of tourism inspection's helps to improve the quality of services provided to guests	1.300	0.278
The current procedures implemented in the inspection processes overseen by the Ministry of Tourism ensure the existence of a mechanism for measuring guest satisfaction	1.232	0.297
The Inspection processes conducted by the Ministry of Tourism are suspended in the event of any crisis in the tourism industry or a decrease in occupancy rates.	0.296	0.745
The Ministry of Tourism employ clear and consistent inspection mechanisms aimed at enhancing the quality of hotel services	0.130	0.878
The tourism inspection carried out by the Ministry of Tourism is an important tool to verify the implementation of service quality standards	0.085	0.919
The use of specialized companies in the field of food safety monitoring by hotels ensures the safety of food production and distribution processes provided to hotel guests	1.529	0.223
The ministry of tourism should outsource specialized companies for the inspection processes to enhance the quality of services provided in hotels	0.856	0.429
The more the ministry fulfills its supervisory role effectively, the higher the level of services provided by hotels	1.714	0.187

The table illustrated the one-way ANOVA to analyze the differences between the respondents age and the perception towards the hotel inspection dimension. A typical threshold for significance is 0.05. If the Sig. (p-value) is less than 0.05, it indicates that the result is statistically significant, meaning there is a difference. The results showed that among all variables, only the statement regarding satisfaction with the star rating assessment of hotels shows a statistically significant difference (Sig. = 0.037). All other statements have Sig. values greater than 0.05, indicating no significant difference in these areas.

**Table 5** The Differences between the respondent’s job title and the perception towards the hotel inspection dimension.

Variable	F	Sig.
I am satisfied with the current star rating assessment of hotels	1.758	0.162
The Ministry of tourism inspection's helps to improve the quality of services provided to guests	3.476	0.020
The current procedures implemented in the inspection processes overseen by the Ministry of Tourism ensure the existence of a mechanism for measuring guest satisfaction	3.704	0.015
The Inspection processes conducted by the Ministry of Tourism are suspended in the event of any crisis in the tourism industry or a decrease in occupancy rates.	0.946	0.422
The Ministry of Tourism employ clear and consistent inspection mechanisms aimed at enhancing the quality of hotel services	0.526	0.666
The tourism inspection carried out by the Ministry of Tourism is an important tool to verify the implementation of service quality standards	2.115	0.105
The use of specialized companies in the field of food safety monitoring by hotels ensures the safety of food production and distribution processes provided to hotel guests	0.618	0.606
The ministry of tourism should outsource specialized companies for the inspection processes to enhance the quality of services provided in hotels	4.997	0.003
The more the ministry fulfills its supervisory role effectively, the higher the level of services provided by hotels	4.726	0.004

Table 5 illustrated the one-way ANOVA to analyze the differences between the respondent’s job title and the perception towards the hotel inspection dimension, several variables have been tested for statistical significance with F-values and significance (Sig.) values provided. As with the previous analysis, a typical significance threshold is 0.05. If the Sig. value is less than 0.05, the result is considered statistically significant, indicating a difference. In this analysis, the following variables “The Ministry of Tourism inspection helps to improve the quality of services provided to guests”, “The current procedures implemented in the inspection processes ensure the existence of a mechanism for measuring guest satisfaction”, “The Ministry of Tourism should outsource specialized companies to enhance service quality” and "The more the ministry fulfills its supervisory role, the higher the level of services provided by hotels" have Sig. values below 0.05, indicating statistically significant differences between the respondents job titles and their perception towards the hotel inspection.

**Table 6** The Differences between the hotel location and the respondent’s perception towards the hotel inspection dimension.

Variable	F	Sig.
I am satisfied with the current star rating assessment of hotels	0.948	0.483
The Ministry of tourism inspection's helps to improve the quality of services provided to guests	0.826	0.583
The current procedures implemented in the inspection processes overseen by the Ministry of Tourism ensure the existence of a mechanism for measuring guest satisfaction	1.236	0.291
The Inspection processes conducted by the Ministry of Tourism are suspended in the event of any crisis in the tourism industry or a decrease in occupancy rates.	1.022	0.427
The Ministry of Tourism employ clear and consistent inspection mechanisms aimed at enhancing the quality of hotel services	0.994	0.448
The tourism inspection carried out by the Ministry of Tourism is an important tool to verify the implementation of service quality standards	0.578	0.793
The use of specialized companies in the field of food safety monitoring by hotels ensures the safety of food production and distribution processes provided to hotel guests	0.972	0.464
The ministry of tourism should outsource specialized companies for the inspection processes to enhance the quality of services provided in hotels	0.758	0.640
The more the ministry fulfills its supervisory role effectively, the higher the level of services provided by hotels	1.497	0.173

The ANOVA results indicate that there are no statistically significant differences between the mean scores for the various statements related to hotel location and the perception of respondents towards the inspection processes where all statements have Sig. values greater than 0.05, indicating no significant difference in these areas.

**Table 7** The Differences between the respondents’ years of experience and their perception towards the hotel inspection dimension.

Variable	F	Sig.
I am satisfied with the current star rating assessment of hotels	0.146	0.703
The Ministry of tourism inspection's helps to improve the quality of services provided to guests	7.473	0.008
The current procedures implemented in the inspection processes overseen by the Ministry of Tourism ensure the existence of a mechanism for measuring guest satisfaction	13.701	0.000
The Inspection processes conducted by the Ministry of Tourism are suspended in the event of any crisis in the tourism industry or a decrease in occupancy rates.	4.884	0.030
The Ministry of Tourism employ clear and consistent inspection mechanisms aimed at enhancing the quality of hotel services	10.235	0.002
The tourism inspection carried out by the Ministry of Tourism is an important tool to verify the implementation of service quality standards	8.615	0.004

The use of specialized companies in the field of food safety monitoring by hotels ensures the safety of food production and distribution processes provided to hotel guests	1.639	0.204
The ministry of tourism should outsource specialized companies for the inspection processes to enhance the quality of services provided in hotels	0.057	0.812
The more the ministry fulfills its supervisory role effectively, the higher the level of services provided by hotels	1.803	0.183

The ANOVA results indicate that there are statistically significant differences between the respondents' years of experience and their perception towards the hotel inspection for the following variables "The Ministry of tourism inspection's helps to improve the quality of services provided to guests", "The current procedures implemented in the inspection processes overseen by the Ministry of Tourism ensure the existence of a mechanism for measuring guest satisfaction", "The Inspection processes conducted by the Ministry of Tourism are suspended in the event of any crisis in the tourism industry or a decrease in occupancy rates." and "The tourism inspection carried out by the Ministry of Tourism is an important tool to verify the implementation of service quality standards" as these variables have Sig. values below 0.05.

## 5. Conclusion and Implications

The results reflect a generally positive sentiment towards the applicable star rating. Moreover, there is agreement that the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities inspections have a positive impact on service quality, with some concerns about the inspection process being hardware-centric with the suggestion of incorporating mystery shopper methods and utilizing inspections for spreading awareness rather than penalization. The study concluded that there is potential suspension of inspections during crises. There is also a robust endorsement of outsourcing specialized companies, with some concerns about the confidentiality of these audits. Hence, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities should consider implementing a more comprehensive approach that encompasses both hardware and software aspects of hotels. Furthermore, explore strategies to ensure continuous inspections without compromise during the crisis and shorter demand periods. In addition, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities should address concerns about the integrity of third-party audits and consider measures to ensure confidentiality, timeliness, and accountability in the audit process to enhance the effectiveness of these services. Moreover, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities considers exploring the implementation of the mystery shopper method to supplement current inspection processes and provide a more comprehensive evaluation of service quality. Additionally, it establishes mechanisms for continuous improvement in inspection processes based on feedback from stakeholders. Regularly, it assesses and updates procedures to align with evolving industry standards.

## 6. Study Contributions

This research contributes valuable insights for policymakers, industry stakeholders, and researchers aiming to enhance government oversight in the Egyptian hospitality sector. The recommendations provide a roadmap for refining regulatory hotel inspections and fostering sustained improvements in standards.

## 7. Recommendation

- The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities should consider enhancing the procedures for inspecting and classification by including mystery shopper tools, which are more comprehensive in assessing both the service and the hardware.
- The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities should establish transparent procedures and regularly review inspection protocols to ensure they are up-to-date .
- The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities should maintain the continuity of inspections, especially during crises, thus upholding service standards and averting potential declines in standards.
- The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities should consider partnering with specialized companies to enhance the inspections. This approach can provide access to expert knowledge and more effective evaluation methods.
- The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities should conduct targeted outreach to younger and older demographics by collecting feedback to understand the specific concerns and perceptions that helps to improve the star rating system's relevance and transparency.
- The Ministry of Tourism should create targeted training programs and communication strategies for various roles in the hotel sector such as workshops to emphasize the importance of inspections and addressing specific concerns for each job title.

## 8. Limitation and Future Research

While this research employs quantitative techniques for a comprehensive analysis of hotel inspections, a limitation affects its scope. The study's sample, covers the five-star hotels in Egypt, though substantial, may not fully represent the broader hospitality sector with different star ratings. Future research should consider expanding the sample to include a wider range of hotel types and cover the correlation between the hotel inspection and quality; incorporating longitudinal studies to track changes over time, and using in-depth interviews or focus groups to gain richer qualitative insights. Comparative studies across different countries could also offer valuable benchmarks and best practices. Future research should consider also evaluating the effectiveness of the third-party auditing companies.

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## تقييم عملية التفتيش الحكومي في فنادق الخمس نجوم في مصر. (دراسة مقارنة)

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قسم إدارة الفنادق؛ كلية السياحة والفنادق؛ جامعة المنيا

### المستخلص

يهدف البحث إلى تقييم التفتيش الحكومي على الفنادق المصرية من منظور القطاع الخاص و يعد التفتيش أداة مهمة لضمان الامتثال لمعايير الصحة والسلامة والمعايير التشغيلية. ونظرًا لأن صناعة الضيافة تشمل أنشطة متنوعة و تواجه تحديات فريدة، فإن تقديم منتج فندقي متميز يعد عامل محوري لتحقيق ميزة تنافسية. استهدف البحث مديري الفنادق ومالكي الفنادق ذات الخمس نجوم في مصر. استخدم البحث نهجًا كميًا. تم إجراء البحث من أكتوبر 2023 حتى نوفمبر 2023 باستخدام استبيانات جوجل. استهدف الباحثين عدد 82 فندق من أصل 99 فندقًا خمس نجوم. كشفت النتائج عن اتجاه إيجابي بخصوص الدور الإيجابي للتفتيش الفندقي الذي تجريه وزارة السياحة والآثار وكذلك نظام التصنيف الفندقي، وعلى الرغم من وجود مخاوف بشأن أن العملية تركز بشكل كبير على الجوانب المادية. أوصت الدراسة بنهج شامل لتغطية الجوانب المادية والخدمية، واستكشاف استراتيجيات لضمان استمرار التفتيش والإشراف المستمر حتى في خلال الأوقات الصعبة. يجب أن يؤسس هذا النهج معايير واضحة لعملية التفتيش، واستكشاف طريقة العمل المتخفي، ووضع إرشادات للتحسين المستمر في عمليات التفتيش. كما أظهرت الدراسة اختلافات في ردود المشاركين عن عمليات التفتيش الفندقية التي تجريها وزارة السياحة والآثار بناء على السن والمسمى الوظيفي وسنوات الخبرة. يساهم هذا البحث في تقديم رؤى قيمة لصانعي السياسات لتعزيز الإشراف الحكومي على الفنادق.

### الكلمات الدالة

التفتيش الفندقي  
الرقابة الحكومية  
وزارة السياحة والآثار