



## **Impact of Innovation as a Competitive Advantage in the Hospitality Industry**

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### **Abstract**

Service is one of the vital and necessary aspects of the hospitality industry as customers increasingly turn towards using products and services rather than owning. Since excellent service influences a guest's decision to return to the hotel several times, it is necessary to innovate in designing the service provided in order to gain a competitive advantage that contributes to increasing the overall income. The support and cooperation of the hotel staff and the creation of an environment suitable for innovation and creative thinking are among the main factors leading to improving the quality of service and gaining the trust of guests. Therefore, employees play great importance role in the hospitality industry because their work is an integral part of innovation in designing and providing service.

This research aims to explore the impact of the four elements of innovation and creative thinking (Flexibility - Fluency - Sensitivity and Originality), which have varying proportions of their impact on the innovation process in the hospitality industry as well as measure consumer perception towards the hospitality industry and choosing it based on the degree of satisfaction with the innovative service provided. The research also aims to measuring the gap between guests' expectations and their perceptions of creative thinking methods, and developing strategies for designing production processes in the food and beverage sector to achieve a competitive advantage in order to win their satisfaction in the hospitality industry.

Almost all five-star hotels encourage creative thinking and develop strategies for designing production processes, especially in the food and beverage sector, which aims to achieve a competitive advantage to win customer satisfaction in the food and beverage sector in order to increase hotel sales.

Since innovation in city hotels has not been sufficiently investigated, the current research was presented to clarify the relationship between innovation in the quality of service provided and the level of competitive advantage in hospitality industry. The results indicate that the most important factors are; The professional competence of employees in providing an innovative competitive service, interest in innovation methods and creative thinking leads to the development of the product industry, which in turn achieves a competitive advantage in order to win customer satisfaction, so it is necessary to create an appropriate and stimulating work environment for innovation to achieve the competitive advantage within winning customer satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Innovation; Competitive Advantage; Competitive Service; Creative Thinking.

### **Introduction**

Thinking is considered one of the most important forms of human behavior, as it is considered the highest level of mental activity. Thinking is what leads us to the right path in life, especially innovation and creative thinking, which is one of the most important features of creative designers. A designer who is creative must use creative thinking behavior.

A.M. Hjalager, A. Flagestad, (2012) illustrated though, Technical, Scientific and Cognitive industrial and productive progress has changed the environment of human life and lifestyles, there has been a strong and urgent need for many new ideas creative and innovative solutions steadily, which are employed in solving problems in general and design and environmental problems in particular, which increasing day by day, especially in third and developing countries and poor countries, which suffer from the problems of population explosion, low levels of education, health, environment, unemployment, production levels, etc., which led to the exacerbation of several problems in all fields. The solution of which requires more capabilities and creative and innovative solutions, especially in the fields of industrial design and teaching creative thinking. (Rodayna, 2018).

H.Y. Hon, S.S. Lui, (2016) added that Creative thinking is also one of the important and modern topics in the current era, and it has been shown that creativity is one of the most important elements of the development and development of the hospitality industry, one of the most important profitable industries. Decline and decay, and may even reach demise.

J.A. Busser *et al* (2019) pointed creativity helps the industry to adapt to the successive changes and helps it to face multiple and different challenges, and thus achieve the competitive advantage that the hospitality industry seeks to achieve. Creative thinking leads to innovation.

The food and beverage industries are among the industries that are characterized by the occurrence of many pressures on them, which require creative thinking methods to overcome them, as this sector plays an important role in the hospitality industry. Huang, Yu Chen, (2016).

M. Li, C. Hsu, (2016) stated that it is also required to preserve itself and even advance in this environment, which is characterized by intense instability and competition, and to find effective ways and methods of creative thinking to develop strategies for designing production processes to achieving competitive advantage and win the satisfaction of guests and customers alike within this sector.

This will be done when providing a work environment that encourages the development of innovation methods and creative thinking in order to compete in gaining the a competitive advantage satisfaction of guests in particular and local customers in general in a sector that is one of the most important sectors of the hospitality industry in Egypt. (R.R. Kehoe, P.M. Wright, 2013).

### **Literature of Review**

#### **The evolution and future of hospitality and tourism service innovations**

Klocke, Fritz, (2012) pointed out that the research aims to know the current developments of hybrid production processes or production systems that exceed performance in manufacturing, and to identify the design methodology for the development of hybrid production processes, in terms of identifying solutions for hybrid processes as part of the innovation process, and the application of different.

TRIZ tools (Theory of Inventive Problem Solving) TRIZ tools) regard to the specific requirements for the development of creative processes, the research has reached several results, the most important of which are: that these abstract solutions are the origin of the integration of different technologies, and then a new approach taken in terms of terminology. To break the restrictions imposed by society and the surrounding environment. TRIZ also provides several tools and methods that support the search for innovative thinking process solutions. (Altshuller, Genrich 2005).

#### **An overview of the thinking segments**

TRIZ: is the Russian acronym for the "Theory of Inventive Problem Solving," an international system of creativity developed in the U.S.S.R. between 1946 and 1985, by engineer and scientist Genrich S. Altshuller and his colleagues.

TRIZ is most useful in roles such as product development, design engineering, and process management. For example, Six Sigma quality improvement processes often make use of TRIZ (Haines-Gadd, Lily, 2016).

#### **The Key TRIZ Tools theory**

Gadd, Karen (2011) defines the TRIZ tools that if look at two of the central concepts behind TRIZ: generalizing problems and solutions, and eliminating contradictions.

The primary findings of TRIZ research are as follows:

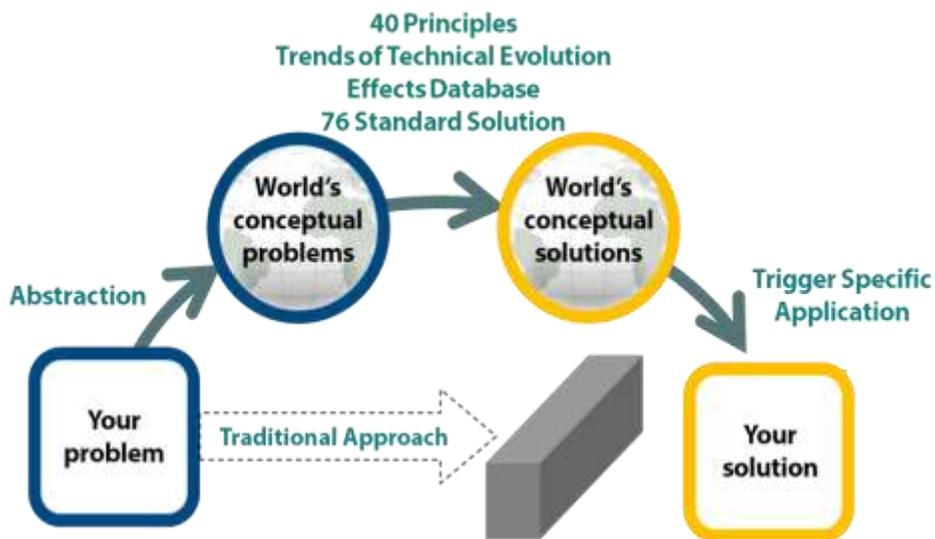
- Problems and solutions are repeated across industries and sciences. By representing a problem as a "contradiction", you can predict creative solutions to that problem.
- Patterns of technical evolution tend to repeat themselves across industries and sciences.

• Creative innovations often use scientific effects outside the field where they were developed.

Using TRIZ consists of learning these repeating patterns of problem and solution, understanding the contradictions present in a situation, and developing new methods of using scientific effects.

Then apply the general TRIZ patterns to the specific situation that confronts you, and discover a generalized version of the problem (L. McLean, 2005).

*Figure 1 – The TRIZ Problem-Solving Method- illustrates this process.*



Rahma M. (2016) mentioned that in particular, this research sought to explain the importance, their impact, and their role in resolving some of the issues related to teaching industrial design and product design. The search sought to ascertain the effectiveness of the patterns and mechanisms of teaching thinking and creative thinking in general.

The search reached many results, the most important of which are: Teaching students the mechanisms of thinking, creative thinking, and problem-solving methods to generate ideas led to a great diversity of design ideas and solutions presented. (W.L. Lin, *et al*, 2020).

Huang, Yu Chen, (2016) added the building a decision model for designing sustainable products and developing them within the framework of the principles of product service. Next, this search developed a checklist for sustainable development of product service based on the life cycle as an evaluation criterion for designing innovative products to gain customer satisfaction in a competitive advantage.

**Features of creative thinking**

R. Haytham M. (2018) mentioned that Features of creative thinking:

- 1- It is distinctive in it was less repeated in many contexts and original and innovation.
- 2- Exhibits flexibility, independence, and self-control
- 3- Demonstrates a range of the original interests without following others.
- 4- Aims to analyses, explore, and sense the situation.
- 5- Includes higher mental processes of thinking fluency
- 6- Autonomy and fluency self - motivation
- 7- Sense of problems and innovative solutions skills provided
- 8- shows how well hypotheses and cause-and-effect links work

As C.B. Dobni, (2008) observe the features of dimensional thinking:

- 1- Fluency Mindset: Requires thinking creatively
- 2- The ability for analysis: Analysis comes go together with required standards of a host of problems.
- 3- Communication: This ability encompasses listening well, as well as written and oral communication skills. The first is crucial for conveying concepts to the team at work or clients, while the second is crucial for comprehending and analysing issues.
- 4- System: When creative thinking is necessary, thinking beyond the box is the approach that is used. To enable others to profit from ideas, one must be able to arrange and communicate them.
- 5- The capacity to solve problems is one of the top qualities employers look for in job candidates, particularly since challenges are constantly evolving and require creative solutions.

Evaluate the impact of the four elements of innovation and creative thinking (Flexibility, Fluency, Sensitivity, and Originality), which have different proportions of their impact on the hospitality industry.

The following can be found from reviewing prior research on the search's topic: There aren't many studies on the effects of innovation and creative thinking techniques on creating strategies for designing production processes, gaining a competitive edge, and increasing guest satisfaction in the food and beverage industry.

**1) Flexible**

The ability of designers to change their thinking fast, using different methods, and to reevaluate the types of connections between the pieces is seen to be one of the most crucial beginning factors. The opposite of design and flexibility is mental stagnation, which is exemplified by adopting rigid, predefined notions that cannot be altered, i.e., they are stretchable and familiar.

**2) Fluency**

It means the designer's capacity to generate the greatest number of ideas at once, or, more specifically, the capacity to elicit the greatest number of ideas and suitable proposals regarding an advertising issue or problem. Verbal fluency can be employed to draught as many words as feasible while under drafting conditions. There is correlational fluency through a number of words or ideas with a common relationship in a specific aspect, either synonymous or antagonistic to the characteristics of a particular product, and specific or intellectual fluency as the production of a number of ideas appropriate to the subject of research within a specific period of time.

**3) Sensitivity**

Is the ability to generate the most ideas and easily activate the greatest number of ideas and analyses, which greatly enhances the designer's capacity to find an appropriate solution to the issue at hand and the depth of knowledge of raw materials, their uses, and their capabilities Design problem sensitivity and expertise have a great deal of potential to clarify these problems and prepare for them.

**4) Originality**

The strong desire for change and the rejection of customary approaches that enable a design to be realized and produce real responses in the best form, as well as the understanding that originality is not an absolute quality but rather a trait that is specific to the context of the person's subjective experience and is unconcerned with imitation.

And in terms of design, it means having the ability to come up with original, uninspired ideas while still keeping in mind the well-known concepts that have already been established because they could serve as a starting point or a source of inspiration for newer, more sophisticated concepts.

Rapid action and acute awareness of challenges and obstacles that require solutions, whether they are radical or partial, as well as the ability to anticipate issues before they arise based on data already available and discover suitable solutions to these issues quickly.

### **Methodology**

To achieve the objectives of the research and address the goals, personal interviews were conducted with food and beverage managers in order to verify the presence of innovation in food and beverage services. This was also done to identify the problems of the functional environment in the food and beverage sector and how to provide an appropriate and encouraging environment for innovation in service to increase competitiveness and increase the volume of hotel sales. (Jurowski and Reich, 2000).

### **Data analysis**

Data analysis was performed; first, a standardized analysis was performed to calculate partial value utilities for the responding individuals. A set of standardized analyzes was then performed again to determine the preferences of the different innovation elements.

**Primary data:** Personal Interviews.

**Secondary data:** The sources of secondary data include: Periodicals and Books: Books, theses, as well as periodicals such as hotels and restaurants magazine related to the subject of research were reviewed and discussed.

### **Results**

1- The research confirmed the existence of a good correlation between Flexibility as a method of creative thinking and developing strategies for designing production processes in the food and beverage sector in order to achieving a competitive advantage with win customer satisfaction in the food and beverage sector.

2- The research also confirmed the existence of a fundamental interdependence between the element of Fluency as one of the methods of creative thinking and the development of strategies for designing production processes in the food and beverage sector to achieving a competitive advantage and win customer satisfaction in the same sector.

And this is an indication that confirms the interest in fluency in new ideas from the employees, and the management's encouragement of them will affect the design of production processes in the food and beverage sector.

3- The search also confirmed the existence of a strong correlation between the element of Sensitivity and the sense of problems as one of the methods of creative thinking and the development of strategies for designing production processes in the food and beverage sector to achieving a competitive advantage.

4- Search confirmed the existence of a good correlation between the element of Originality as one of the methods of creative thinking and developing strategies for designing production processes in the food and beverage sector in order to achieving a competitive advantage with gain customer satisfaction in the food and beverage sector - This indicates that non-imitation of others leads to excellence and that adherence to customs and traditions is one of the foundations success in achieving customer satisfaction.

Each of the four elements of innovation and creative thinking (Flexibility- Fluency - Sensitivity - and Originality) has a different rate of influence and the proportions changes.

### **Recommendations**

In order to develop the future of innovations in hospitality and tourism services, hotel managers and food and beverage managers in particular must create an appropriate work environment that stimulates innovation to achieve competitive advantage and gain customer satisfaction, which leads to sustainable development.

The new trend of innovation techniques and creative thinking leads to the development of the products and services industry, which in turn achieves a competitive advantage within win customer satisfaction, and the greater the interest in workers and encourage them to create creative ideas, the more this leads to an increase in a good level of development of the food and beverage sector in particular and the development of the hospitality industry in general.

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### المستخلص

يعتبر التفكير من أهم أشكال السلوك البشري، حيث يعتبر أعلى مستوى من النشاط العقلي فالتفكير هو ما يقودنا إلى الطريق الصحيح في الحياة وخاصة حينما يتواجد الابتكار في التفكير الذي يعد من أهم سمات المصممين المبدعين. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقييم أثر العناصر الأربعة للابتكار والتفكير المبدع (المرونة - الطلاقة - الحساسية والأصالة)، والتي لها نسب متفاوتة من تأثيرها على عملية صناعة الضيافة لتحقيق الميزة التنافسية، والتي تعد من أهم عوامل النجاح ومؤشراً على جودة الخدمة في صناعة الضيافة، وكذلك قياس تصور المستهلك تجاه صناعة الضيافة واختيارها بناءً على درجة الرضا عن الخدمة المبتكرة المقدمة - بالإضافة إلى قياس الفجوة بين توقعات الضيوف وتصوراتهم من حيث كيفية تطبيق أساليب الابتكار والتفكير المبدع، ووضع استراتيجيات لتصميم عمليات الإنتاج في قطاع الأغذية والمشروبات خاصة لتحقيق ميزة تنافسية في صناعة الضيافة.

نظراً لأن الابتكار في فنادق المدينة لم يتم التحقيق فيه بشكل كافٍ، فقد تم طرح البحث الحالي لتوضيح العلاقة بين الابتكار في جودة الخدمة المقدمة ومستوى الميزة التنافسية في هذه الفنادق. وقد تم قياس مدى الابتكار في تصميم الخدمات المقدمة في قسم الاغذية والمشروبات بمقابلات شخصية مع مديري قسم الاغذية والمشروبات بفنادق القاهرة، وتشير النتائج إلى أن أهم العوامل هي الاهتمام بأساليب الابتكار والتفكير المبدع؛ التي تؤدي لرفع الكفاءة المهنية للموظفين في تقديم خدمة تنافسية مبتكرة، ايضاً إلى تطوير صناعة المنتجات، والتي بدورها تحقق ميزة تنافسية من أجل كسب رضا العملاء واستمرار التنمية المستدامة، لذلك من الضروري خلق بيئة مناسبة، وتشجيع العاملين وتحفيز بيئة العمل للابتكار لتحقيق الميزة التنافسية في صناعة الضيافة.

**الكلمات الدالة:** الابداع في التفكير؛ الابتكار كميزة تنافسية؛ الخدمة التنافسية؛ صناعة الاغذية والمشروبات.