



Hotels' Pet Policies in Egypt: An Exploratory Study

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ABSTRACT

Background: Traveling with pets for tourism has become increasingly popular as more people view their pets as integral members of the family. This trend has prompted adjustments in the tourism industry, with accommodations, transportation services, and tourist attractions adapting to the needs of pet owners. While numerous studies have explored the intersection of pets with tourism and hospitality worldwide, none of them have specifically focused on hotels' pet policies in Egypt.

Aim: This study aims to explore the current state of hotels' pet policies in Egypt.

The methodology: A qualitative research design based on an interpretive philosophical worldview was adopted to explore the hotels' pet policies in Egypt. The study used the booking websites (Tripadvisor, and Booking.com), the hotels' websites, simulated guests with pets who planned to stay for 5 nights, and semi-structured interviews with hotel managers/representatives. The study was conducted on five-star resorts in Hurghada, Red Sea, Egypt. Data was thematically analyzed.

Findings: The results exposed that most hotels/ resorts mentioned that they are pet-friendly hotels, however, few of them provide particular services for pets. Most of the hotels accept small pets if they are protected by their owners. Few hotels provide special pet service but for an extra payment. Guarding pets with guests with disabilities may receive special service and care. Future comprehensive pet policies are required.

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1. Introduction

In recent years, the relationship between humans and their pets has gone through a profound transformation, with pets increasingly being regarded as esteemed family members rather than mere companions (Volsche & Gray, 2016; Wong et al., 2019; Buhalis, and Chan, 2023; Wei, et al., 2023). As a result, the dynamics of the tourism industry have adapted to accommodate the growing trend of individuals traveling with their pets. This shift has prompted hotels to reevaluate their policies to meet the needs of a diverse clientele, including those seeking pet-friendly accommodations. In addition, there has been a notable shift in attitudes toward pets, with many individuals considering their animals as companions rather than mere possessions. This change has influenced the way people plan and experience travel, leading to a growing demand for pet-friendly tourism options (Ying, et al., 2021; Chan & Tung, 2023).

Traveling with pets for tourism has become increasingly popular as more people view their pets as integral members of the family. This trend has prompted adjustments in the tourism industry, with accommodations, transportation services, and tourist attractions adapting to the needs of pet owners. Traveling with pets involves considerations for transportation. Airlines, trains, and buses are increasingly accommodating pets, with specific guidelines and regulations in place to ensure the safety and well-being of both animals and passengers. Pet-friendly travel options enable pet owners to include their animals in various aspects of their tourism experiences (Carr, & Cohen, 2009; Kirillova, et al., 2015; Ying, et al., 2021; Yilmaz, 2023).

Tourist attractions, parks, and recreational activities are adapting to accommodate pets. Many destinations now offer pet-friendly parks, hiking trails, and even pet-specific events. This allows pet owners to engage in a wide range of activities while exploring new places with their animals. In addition, while the trend of traveling with pets is growing, it also presents challenges. Pet owners need to consider factors such as quarantine regulations, health certifications, and the availability of veterinary services at their destination (Ying, et al., 2021). Additionally, cultural norms and local regulations may influence the ease with which travelers can bring their pets (Bagley & Gonsman, 2005; Bao, & Schreer, 2016). Furthermore, traveling with pets has also fostered a sense of community among pet owners. Online forums, social media groups, and dedicated websites provide valuable information and tips for pet-friendly travel (Siam, 2023). This sense of community helps pet owners navigate the challenges and share experiences, contributing to the overall growth of pet-friendly tourism. In conclusion, the surge in pet-friendly tourism reflects the

evolving relationship between people and their pets. The tourism industry is adapting to accommodate the needs of pet owners, enhancing the overall travel experience for individuals who consider their pets' integral companions in their journeys (Ying, et al., 2021).

Specifically, to cater to pet owners, hotels and accommodations worldwide have started adopting pet-friendly policies. Many establishments now welcome pets, offering amenities such as pet beds, bowls, and designated play areas. Some luxury hotels even provide pet-sitting services to ensure that guests can explore tourist destinations without worrying about their fuzzy friends (Siam, 2023; Taillon, et al., 2015). In addition, the cultural and historical richness of Egypt has made it a prominent global tourist destination. As the tourism industry in Egypt continues to evolve, it is imperative to understand how hotels are adapting their policies to cater to the needs of pet-owning travelers. The rationale for this study lies in the absence of comprehensive research on the specific pet policies implemented by hotels in Egypt, a gap that our study aims to fill. By examining these policies, we can gain insights into the level of accommodation provided to pet owners and the challenges faced by hotels in integrating such policies into their operational frameworks (Siam, 2023; Tomassini, and Bertella, 2023).

A review of global trends in pet-friendly tourism provides a valuable backdrop for this study. Insights into how hotels in other regions have successfully integrated pet-friendly policies can offer benchmarks and best practices for hotels in Egypt. Additionally, understanding the challenges faced by hotels in different parts of the world can inform the development of effective policies in the Egyptian context. Understanding how hotels in Egypt navigate these changing dynamics is crucial for both the industry and pet owners. While numerous studies have explored pet-friendly practices in the context of tourism and hospitality globally, there exists a notable gap in research specific to Egypt (Siam, 2023). This exploratory study aims to shed light on the current state of hotels' pet policies in Egypt.

This study holds significance for various stakeholders, including hotel management, tourism authorities, and pet owners. For hotels, insights into successful pet-friendly practices can enhance their competitive edge and customer satisfaction. Tourism authorities can utilize the findings to develop guidelines that promote a standardized and supportive environment for pet-friendly accommodations. Pet owners, on the other hand, will benefit from a better understanding of the available options and the specific requirements associated with traveling with pets in Egypt. In conclusion, the exploratory study on hotels' pet policies in Egypt seeks to fill a crucial gap in

existing literature by providing a comprehensive understanding of how hotels address the evolving needs of pet-owning travelers. Through this study, we aim to contribute valuable insights that can shape the future of pet-friendly tourism in Egypt.

2. Literature Review

2.1 pets in Egypt

Egypt is one of the earliest countries that paid attention to pets. In ancient Egypt, pets held great significance and were viewed as divine offerings bestowed by the gods. They were cherished and nurtured throughout their lives, with the belief that upon their passing, they would return to the divine realm from whence they came. Much like humans, pets received attentive care during their lifetime, and upon their demise, they were frequently mummified in a manner akin to human mummification practices (Mark, 2016; Ikram, 2013).

With time and through different ages of the Egyptian civilization, pets were considered for numerous reasons and purposive (Mark, 2016). In modern Egypt there are thousands of pets' owners and many pets companies in different cities, including Cairo (F6SNetwork Limited. 2024; GlobalPETS 2024; Euromonitor, 2024b). According to Euromonitor data, the pet population in 2022 stood at 4 million, with an anticipated increase of 90,000 pets this year. However, figures from the Egyptian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals suggest a higher number, estimating the household pet population at 8 million, comprising 5 million cats and 3 million dogs (Euromonitor, 2024b). According to AhramOnline (2020) this huge number lead to regulate the ownership of pets according to their types, existence in the public places, etc.

However, the current economic issues negatively influenced the care and attention to pets. In sequence, many pets' owners abandoning their pets as cost of living shoots up (Helmi, 2024). This was already addressed in Euromonitor, (2024b) report as despite facing difficult economic circumstances, the pet care sector in Egypt demonstrated consistent growth in value sales and advancement throughout the review period. The pet care industry had to navigate challenges such as currency devaluation, high inflation rates, and new import regulations, causing certain importers to suspend their operations in 2022. The same report underlined that pet care products are mainly distributed through grocery retailers and pet shops, along with superstores, which serve as the primary selling channels. Throughout the review period, specialized pet shops and superstores expanded their offerings and introduced additional services to cater to pet owners. These services

include grooming and veterinary services, kennel and boarding facilities, as well as platforms for connecting pet owners with one another (Euromonitor (2024a)).

2.3. Hotel pet policies

Pets serve various roles in our lives, ranging from companionship to emotional support, guiding, and therapeutic purposes. Over the past century, there has been a notable expansion in the societal, emotional, and physical presence of companion animals within our households, reflecting a significant shift in the human-animal relationship (Podberscek, et al., 2000). This evolving trend underscores a growing societal interest in examining and reassessing the complexities and contradictions inherent in this relationship. However, within the hospitality and tourism industry, the sociological and physical dimensions concerning companion animals have received limited attention and remain relatively unexplored (Dotson, 2010).

Chan and Tung (2023) highlighted the necessity for hotels to adapt their service design processes to customer-focused encounter patterns amidst the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This adaptation necessitated the introduction of a redefined hotel service blueprint, incorporating contactless services to address hygiene and safety concerns. Similarly, pet-friendly hotels must develop service blueprints that cater to both human and pet needs concurrently, considering the requirements of all hospitality stakeholders, including guests and staff unfamiliar with or not receptive to pets.

Due to an increasing desire among individuals to involve their pets in recreational pursuits, numerous lodging establishments have implemented pet-friendly policies. Industry professionals have thoroughly discussed the reasoning behind adopting pet-friendly policies, as well as devised marketing strategies targeting this demographic and outlined the advantages associated with such initiatives (Kirillova, et al.,2015).

Moreover, as per data from Smith Travel Research (2007), the proportion of hotels permitting pets varies across segments: luxury hotels at 71%; upper-upscale at 47%; upscale at 45%; midscale with food and beverage at 59%; midscale without food and beverage at 41%; economy at 75%; independent at 45%. While numerous hotels currently cater to guests with pets, certain establishments have instituted new pet-friendly policies, which could contribute to enhancing their positive reputation. For instance, each of Loews' hotels offers a "Loews Loves Pets" program (Kirillova, et al.,2015).

In hotel environments, having a comprehensive and well-defined set of regulations is deemed particularly crucial to prevent conflicts among guests and potential revenue loss. *"Even managers who do not typically permit pets may find themselves obligated to accommodate a four-legged resident occasionally due to fair housing laws, which may prohibit the exclusion of guide dogs and other assistance animals for handicapped individuals"*. In such circumstances, pets may emerge as potential residents with whom hoteliers must contend (Zhang, 2012).

In addition, hotel pet policies encompass various components. Dogs are typically not permitted to remain in common indoor areas of the hotel. However, there is usually a designated outdoor area where dogs can be taken for walks. Hoteliers generally find that owners are responsible about cleaning up after their dogs. For example at the AmericInn, disposable bags are provided in the dog-walk area (Alisau, 2004). While some hotels allow pets in all rooms, the majority restrict dogs to specific areas or a set of rooms. Even hotels that are pet-friendly strive to limit animals in certain areas and consistently designate the same rooms for pets, preserving most rooms for guests without pets (Alisau, 2004).

Another study by Hidalgo-Fernández, et al (2023) found that the center on examining the manner and timing in which families organize trips with their pets, excluding visits to their secondary residence. There are various motivations for both families and their pets that influence these trips and should be taken into account by tourist destinations. Moreover, it is concluded that these motivations are strongly connected to the emotional bond that the family shares with their pet.

In the Egyptian hotel context, Siam (2023) conducted a qualitative study to explore the status of pet-friendly tourism in Egypt and the primary considerations that accommodation providers take into account when offering pet-friendly services. This exploratory study involved conducting structured interviews with three distinct focus groups (pet owners, accommodation service providers, including managers of hotels, travel agents representatives). The findings indicate that the pet tourism sector is still in its nascent stages. Additionally, while many tourists express a desire to travel with their pets, constraints associated with pets, such as the requirement for proper documentation for international travel and medical insurance, negatively impact their motivation and behavior. However, Siam (2023) underlined that more research is required in this era.

3. Methodology

Research Design: This exploratory study on hotels pet policies in Egypt employed a qualitative research design to delve into the nuances and intricacies of how five- star resorts and hotels in the red sea region approach and implement their pet-friendly policies. The qualitative approach allows for a rich and in-depth understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and practices associated with accommodating pets in hotels (Abdelhakim and Badr, 2021).

Sampling: The sampling strategy involves purposeful alongside snow-balling sampling of hotels' managers and /representatives. In this regard, we interviewed 10 managers/representatives working for five-star resorts in Hurghada, Red Sea, Egypt where the study were conducted.

Data Collection:

1. Semi-Structured Interviews: Semi-structured interviews (n=10) were conducted with hotel managers, and representatives responsible for implementing pet policies. The interviews were developed to elicit detailed narratives about the development, implementation, and challenges associated with pet policies. The interview schedules were developed based on the previous related literature review (e.g. Chen, et al., 2013; Yilmaz, 2023; Carr, 2009; Chen, 2019; Marmolejo-Martín, et al, 2023). The interviews were conducted via telephone and lasted for 10-20 minutes.

2. Document Analysis: A thorough analysis of relevant documents, such as hotel policies, booking websites (Tripadvisor and Booking.com), and promotional materials. This provide supplementary information on the formalized aspects of pet policies, as well as any promotional strategies or amenities offered for guests traveling with pets (Bowen, 2009; Zilola, & Muhammad Qo'zi o'g, 2023).

3. Simulating: "simulated guest" typically refers to a fictional or virtual representation of a hotel guest used for training, testing, or simulation purposes. In the hospitality industry, simulated guests may be created for various reasons. Using simulated guests allows hotels to assess and improve their services, train their staff, and ensure that systems and processes are functioning correctly. It provides a controlled environment for testing and learning without directly impacting real guests' experiences (Maloney, et al., 1976; Fukey, & Issac, 2014). In this study, we used two scenarios to find how hotels handle guests with pets (Figure 3).

Data Analysis: Qualitative data analysis will follow an iterative process, allowing for continuous refinement and validation of emerging themes. The data transcribed, coded, and organized using thematic analysis. In light of the guideline of Patton, (2002). Braun and Clarke, (2012) and Vaismoradi, et al. (2016), themes be identified based on recurring patterns, and unique insights obtained from interviews, and document analysis. In addition, to ensure the trustworthiness of the study, established qualitative research criteria such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were considered. Member checking, where participants have the opportunity to review and validate findings, enhanced the credibility of the study. Triangulation of data from multiple sources, including interviews, documents, and simulation, contributed to the dependability and confirmability of the research (White, et al, 2012).

4. Results and discussions

4.1 Interview results

Table 1 shows that demographic profile of 10 respondents participated in the interview.

Table 6.2: Overview of the interviewees’ profiles

Hotel	Interviewee’s position	Code	Sex	Age	Years in hotels	Ethnicity	Education level
H1	Housekeeping manager	H1HKM	M	47	18	Egyptian	Bachelor
H2	Front office manager	H2FOM	M	43	15	Egyptian	Master
H3	Sales Supervisor	H3SS	F	53	31	Egyptian	Bachelor
H3	Guest relations	H3GR	F	53	31	Egyptian	Bachelor
H4	Front office manager	H4FOM	M	45	13	Egyptian	Bachelor
H5	Front office supervisor	H5FOS	F	58	37	Egyptian	Bachelor
H6	Front office supervisor	H6FOS	M	34	9	Egyptian	Bachelor
H7	Sales Supervisor	H7SS	M	41	14	Egyptian	Bachelor
H8	Housekeeping manager	H8HKM	M	45	21	Egyptian	Bachelor
H9	Hotel manager	H9HM	M	45	12	Egyptian	Master
H10	Housekeeping manager	H10KM	M	36	8	Egyptian	Bachelor

The demographic profile of the respondents provides valuable insights into the composition of the interviewees participating in the study. The respondents predominantly consist of males, with only two female interviewees (H3SS and H3GR). The age range of the interviewees varies, with

individuals ranging from 34 to 58 years old. This diversity in age suggests a broad spectrum of experiences and perspectives among the respondents.

The years of experience in the hotel industry range from 8 to 37 years. This indicates a mix of seasoned professionals with extensive experience in the field and relatively newer entrants who bring fresh perspectives to the table (1). All respondents identify as Egyptian, suggesting a homogeneous ethnic background among the interviewees. In addition, the majority of the respondents hold Bachelor's degrees, with a few individuals possessing Master's degrees. This indicates a relatively high level of education among the interviewees, which may influence their decision-making processes and perspectives on various issues related to the hospitality industry. Finally, the respondents hold various positions within the hotel, including Front Office Managers, Sales Supervisors, Guest Relations, Hotel Managers, and Housekeeping Managers. This diverse representation across different departments suggests a comprehensive understanding of various aspects of hotel operations and management.

Table2: Summary of the main findings of the interviews

Theme	Example of Evidence(s)
1.The classification as pet-friendly	<i>Yes. Our resort is a pet friendly (H2FOM) Yes we are (H10KM) Booking websites say that we are a pet friendly accommodation (H7SS)</i>
2.Availability of pet policy	<i>No we do not have a complete pet policy(H4FOM) There is no pet policy at our resort (H2FOM) we are developing a pet policy at the moment (H9HM) The development of our pet policy stemmed from a recognition of the increasing demand for pet-friendly accommodations. We conducted market research and observed a growing trend in guests wanting to travel with their pets. Additionally, we considered the cultural acceptance of pets in Egypt (H3GR).</i>
3.The challenges facing integrated pet-policy	<i>One challenge we faced initially was ensuring a seamless experience for guests without pets. We addressed this by creating clear zones within the hotel and implementing policies that strike a balance between accommodating pets and ensuring the comfort of all guests (H9HM). Another challenge we faced, was balancing the needs of guests with and without pets. To address this, we established clear guidelines for pet behaviour and designated specific areas for pet activities. Regular staff training helps mitigate potential challenges (H5FOS)</i>
4.The future perspective of Pet policy	<i>Looking ahead, we plan to enhance our pet-friendly offerings by introducing specialized services like pet-sitting and grooming.</i>

	<p><i>Additionally, we aim to implement eco-friendly practices within our pet-friendly services to align with sustainability trends.(H4FOM)</i></p> <p><i>We actively collaborate with other pet-friendly hotels in the region to share best practices. An emerging trend we've observed is a demand for pet-specific experiences, such as guided pet-friendly tours, which we are exploring as a potential addition to our offerings (H9HM).</i></p> <p><i>We're considering expanding our pet amenities and collaborating with local pet services. Additionally, we anticipate incorporating sustainable practices into our pet-friendly offerings to align with growing eco-friendly trends (H3SS).</i></p>
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4.1. 1The classification as pet-friendly resorts

The findings indicate a consistent affirmation among the resorts regarding their classification as pet-friendly establishments. The responses "Yes. Our resort is pet-friendly" (H2FOM), "Yes we are" (H10KM), and the mention that booking websites state their pet-friendly status (H7SS) suggest a clear recognition and promotion of their accommodation's pet-friendly status. This is in line with previous study by Siam (2023) clarified that there is at least 172 pet-friendly hotels in Egypt.

Such clarity in communication is beneficial for pet owners seeking suitable lodging options, as it helps them make informed decisions when planning their travels. Moreover, the alignment between the resorts' assertions and the information provided on booking websites enhances transparency and builds trust among potential guests

By embracing their pet-friendly classification, these resorts not only cater to the needs of pet owners but also potentially attract a niche market segment seeking pet-friendly accommodations. This proactive approach reflects a commitment to customer satisfaction and highlights the resorts' responsiveness to evolving guest preferences and market trends.

4.1. 2 Availability of pet policy

These findings indicate a varied response to the availability of pet policies among Red Sea resorts. The absence of a complete pet policy (H4FOM) and the acknowledgment that there is no existing pet policy at the resort (H2FOM) suggest a lack of formalized guidelines regarding pets at these establishments. On the other hand, the response indicating the development of a pet policy at the moment (H9HM) reflects a proactive approach towards addressing the growing demand for pet-

friendly accommodations. This suggests that the resort is recognizing the importance of catering to guests who wish to travel with their pets. In addition, the explanation provided for the development of the pet policy (H3GR) highlights a thoughtful consideration of market trends and cultural attitudes towards pets in Egypt. This suggests that the decision to develop a pet policy is informed by a strategic understanding of guest preferences and societal norms. Overall, while the absence of complete pet policies at some resorts may present a challenge for pet owners, the recognition and development of pet policies by others indicate a positive trend towards accommodating the needs of guests traveling with pets in the Red Sea region.

4.1.3 Challenges facing integrated pet policies in Red Sea

The findings regarding the challenges facing integrated pet policies shed light on the complexities involved in accommodating both guests with and without pets in hotel settings in the Red Sea region of Egypt may face regarding pet policies. Here are some examples.

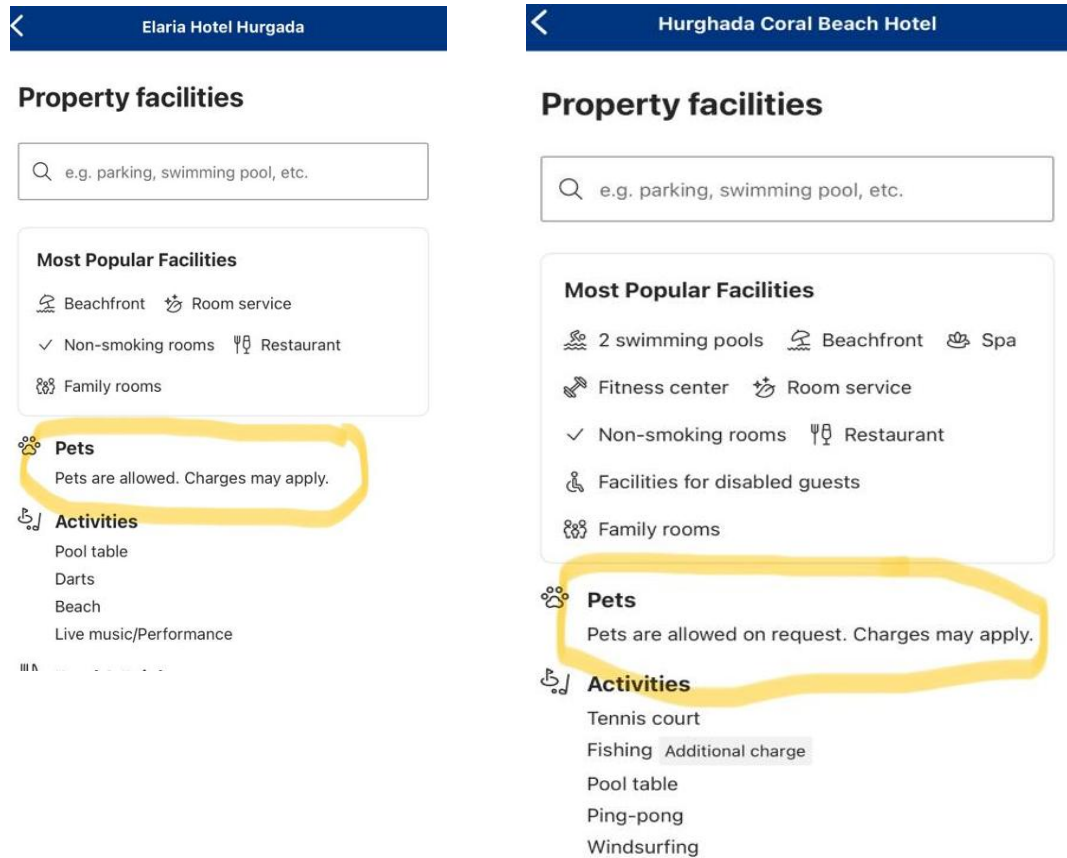
1. **Seamless Guest Experience:** Ensuring a seamless experience for guests without pets poses a significant challenge for hoteliers. Creating clear zones within the hotel and implementing policies to strike a balance between accommodating pets and ensuring the comfort of all guests (H9HM) is a proactive approach to address this challenge. By delineating specific areas for pet-related activities, hotels can minimize potential disruptions to guests without pets while still catering to the needs of pet owners.
2. **Balancing Needs:** Balancing the needs of guests with and without pets requires careful consideration and clear guidelines (H5FOS). Establishing specific areas for pet activities and providing regular staff training are effective strategies to mitigate potential challenges. These measures help maintain a harmonious environment within the hotel and ensure that all guests, regardless of their pet preferences, feel comfortable and accommodated during their stay.
3. **Hygiene and Cleanliness:** Maintaining cleanliness and hygiene standards in pet-designated areas can be challenging. Pet waste management, sanitation, and odor control require consistent attention and resources to ensure a pleasant environment for all guests.
4. **Allergies and Sensitivities:** Some guests may have allergies or sensitivities to pet dander, fur, or saliva. Accommodating pets while ensuring the comfort and safety of guests with allergies can be a delicate balance. Hotels may need to implement measures such as specialized cleaning protocols and designated pet-free zones to address these concerns.

5. **Noise and Disruption:** Pets, especially dogs, may cause noise disturbances that can disrupt the peace and tranquility of other guests. Barking, whining, and other vocalizations can be particularly bothersome, especially in shared accommodation spaces such as hallways and common areas.
6. **Damage to Property:** Pets may inadvertently cause damage to hotel property, such as scratching furniture, chewing on fixtures, or soiling carpets. Repairing or replacing damaged items can be costly and time-consuming for hotel management.
7. **Legal and Regulatory Compliance:** Hotels must adhere to local regulations and licensing requirements related to accommodating pets. Compliance with health, safety, and animal welfare standards may necessitate additional resources and oversight to ensure full compliance.
8. **Liability Concerns:** Hotels may face liability issues related to incidents involving pets, such as bites, injuries, or conflicts between animals. Clear policies, waivers, and insurance coverage may be necessary to mitigate potential legal risks and liabilities associated with pet-related incidents
9. **Communication and Education:** Effectively communicating pet policies and expectations to guests, staff, and other stakeholders is essential. Providing clear guidelines, signage, and educational materials can help manage guest expectations and prevent misunderstandings or conflicts related to pet accommodations.

4.2 Results of document Analysis

The results of the document analysis provide valuable insights for travelers seeking pet-friendly accommodations in the Red Sea region of Egypt. By reviewing the information available on Booking.com and TripAdvisor, travelers can make informed decisions and plan their trips accordingly to ensure a comfortable and enjoyable experience for themselves and their pets. The analysis confirms the existence of pet-friendly resorts in the Red Sea area, as indicated by the listings on both Booking.com and TripAdvisor. These resorts have been classified as accommodating to guests traveling with pets (Figure1 a&b).

Figure (1a): Examples of pet-friendly hotels in red Sea



In addition, the analysis of document found that some resorts are developing their policy. Egyptian hotels are notorious for being non-pet friendly in a market that constantly demands new and fresh ideas. Many of (XX) Hotel’s visitors inquired about pet accommodation and seem to be willing to pay an extra buck or two to have their extended family members join (i.e. their dogs & cats). Aside from its location and view, the hotel does not yet have a unique selling point – to help it stand out amongst competing hotels in the area and Egypt.

Figure (1b): Examples of pet-friendly hotels in red Sea

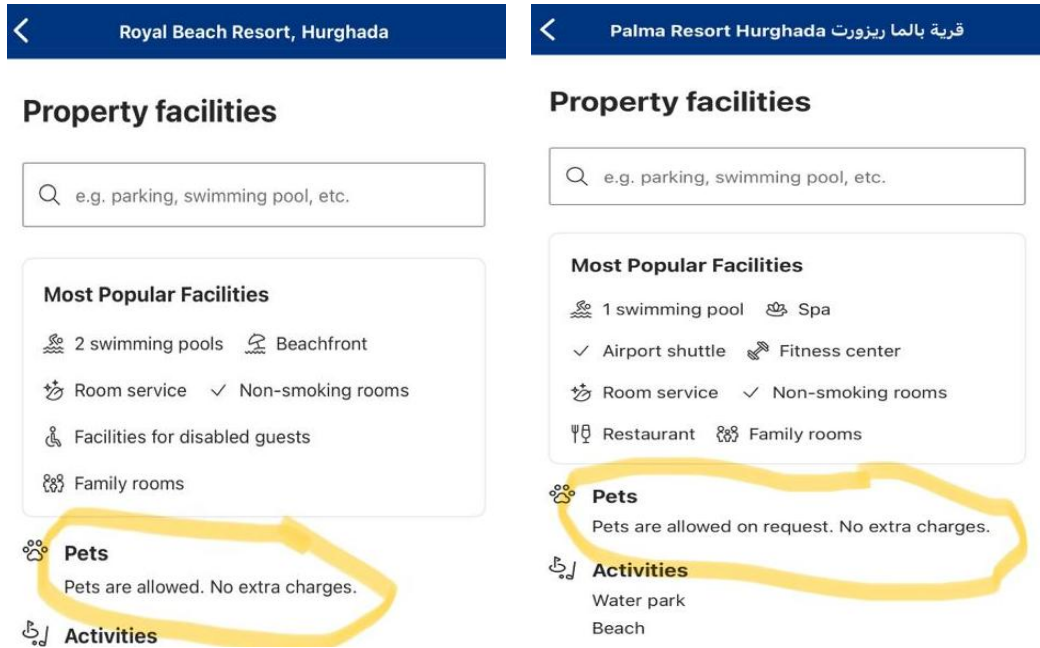


Figure (2): In progress pet-friendly policy

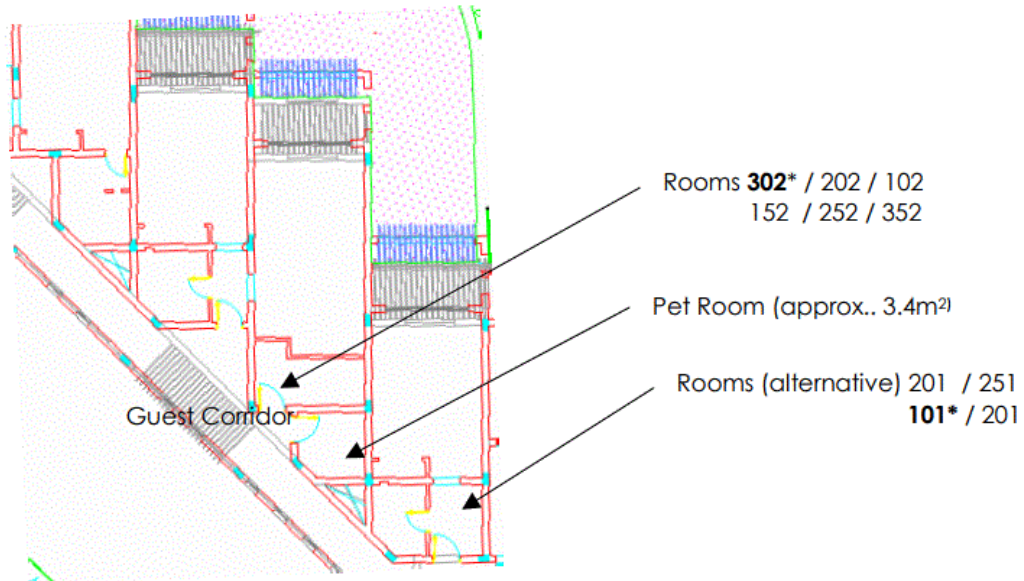


Table3: Example of in progress pet-friendly policy

The Hotel Loves Pets Policy
<p>Thank you for choosing to visit X Hotel with your pet(s). It is our intent to provide you with not only a wonderful and enjoyable stay but also a safe one. For the comfort and safety of all guests and pet, we kindly request that all pet owners act responsibly with their pets. Please read, adhere and agree to the following <u>hotel pet policies</u> .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ <i>Small to medium sized cats & dogs only – under 24kgs – max. two pets per pet room.</i>✓ <i>Pet rooms cannot be sold separately but as supplement to a guest room.</i>✓ <i>A LE 80.00 fee is applied per pet, per night.</i>✓ <i>Your pet(s) should have all recommended vaccinations currently up-to-date, and you agree to obtain and provide current records from a licensed veterinarian regarding your pet(s) should our resort request this information from you at any time.</i>✓ <i>Our resort allows a maximum of two pets per room.</i>✓ <i>Pets should be leashed or restrained at all times in public spaces in the hotel or on the property .</i>✓ <i>Pets should be supervised at all times while in the hotel or on the property.</i>✓ <i>Pets must not be left unattended. If guest requires a pet-sitter or pet supplies, they should contact the concierge with advance notice. Since these services are not provided by the resort we cannot be held responsible for any pet service engaged by you.</i>✓ <i>A LE 10.00 per hour “time out” fee is assessed by the resort if a pet is left unattended and needs to be removed from a guestroom.</i>✓ <i>Guests should display the special the resort Loves Pets “Do Not Disturb” sign to alert housekeeping that a pet is in residence. Guests must contact the housekeeping department to arrange for a convenient time for servicing their room.</i>✓ <i>Pets are not allowed in food & beverage outlets, pool or lobby areas.</i>✓ <i>Guests are responsible for pet waste clean-up inside the hotel and throughout the property grounds (use plastic bags & gloves provided)</i>✓ <i>Guests are responsible for all personal injuries and/or property damage related to their pet(s) the resort reserves the right to charge guest's account commensurate to the cost of such damages.</i>✓ <i>Guest agrees to indemnify and hold harmless our resort, the hotel, its operators and owners and their respective affiliates from all liability and/or damage suffered as a result of their pet(s)</i>✓ <i>Any disturbances such as barking must be curtailed to ensure other guests are not inconvenienced. Our resort reserves the right to remove guests whose pets are deemed noisy, disruptive, or</i>

Financial brief and revenue opportunities

In addition, the analysis of the in-progress pet-friendly policy underlined that since this is a small scale project intended to gauge the market with its unique selling point, one room will not add much revenue. However, since the unused storage rooms don't generate revenue this can be an additional source of revenue (Figure 3)

Figure (3): In progress pet-friendly policy

5. Financial brief and revenue opportunities

Since this is a small scale project intended to gauge the market with its unique selling point, one room will not add much revenue. **However, since the unused storage rooms don't generate revenue this can be an additional source of revenue.**

- 80 LE x 2 pets x 1 pet room = 160 LE per night
- 160 LE x 30 days = 2'400 LE per month (based on 50% occupancy)

2'400 LE from one pet room per month. Further expansion can be taken into consideration if demand for these pet rooms increases.

6. Funding required (what'll be needed?)

A. Development

- o Unused storage room(s)
- o Walkways, passage paving and cleaning in and around hotel
- o Pet shower area
- o Signage
 - Pet Friendly Zone
 - Pet Walking Trails (this way → ←)
 - Please clean up after you pets
 - Room ## Pet Friendly

B. Print Materials

- o Hotel Pet Policies (see policies below)
- o V.I.P. Very Important Pets
 - Snack Menu
 - Basic Equipment Menu
- o Pet Walking Trails map

C. FF&E/Tools/Amenities

o Pet beds with covers	3x
o Pet cage	3x
o Pet room portrait	2x
o Pet room carpet	1x
o Pet room seating for owner (table + 2 chairs)	2x
o Litter box	1x
o Pet towels	20x
o Feeding & drinking bowls	8x
▪ extra-larae trays for pet room service	2x

4.3 Simulating results

The previous findings suggested that there many pet-friendly hotels in Egypt. In addition, although there is a lack of integrated and in practice pet-policies, some resorts started to develop their pet polices. Thus in this final stage of the study, we went further via adopting simulated guests with pet who planned to stay in Red Sea resorts.

1. The first scenario was about **a group of ten tourists with their pets coming to visit red sea.**
2. The second scenario was about **a blind tourist with his guide dog coming to visit red sea.**

The simulating was conducted with the help of the authors' friends' who working for travel agents. Thus, the email was sent by travel agents representatives working in red sea (Figure 4a&b).

The results of first scenario highlight a significant discrepancy between the identification of resorts as pet-friendly and their actual practices regarding hosting guests with pets. It is concerning to learn that five resorts expressed regret in hosting a group of ten guests with pets, citing despite being classified as pet-friendly establishments a lack of services and the absence of a pet policy in practice. In addition, this finding raises important questions about the definition and implementation of pet-friendly policies within the hospitality industry. The designation of resorts as pet-friendly implies an openness and willingness to accommodate guests traveling with pets. However, the reluctance of these resorts to host guests with pets undermines the credibility of their pet-friendly classification and calls into question the consistency and transparency of their policies.

Furthermore, the apology expressed by these resorts suggests a lack of preparedness and responsiveness to the needs and expectations of pet-owning guests. It is essential for resorts to recognize the growing demand for pet-friendly accommodations and to proactively address the needs of this demographic. Moving forward, resort management should consider revising their policies and procedures to ensure that they align with their classification as pet-friendly. This may involve developing clear guidelines and protocols for accommodating guests with pets, including provisions for pet-friendly amenities and services. Additionally, efforts should be made to enhance communication and transparency with guests regarding the availability and limitations of pet-friendly accommodations. By fostering a culture of openness and responsiveness, resorts can better meet the diverse needs of their guests and uphold their commitment to providing inclusive and welcoming environments.

Figure (4a): Simulating results

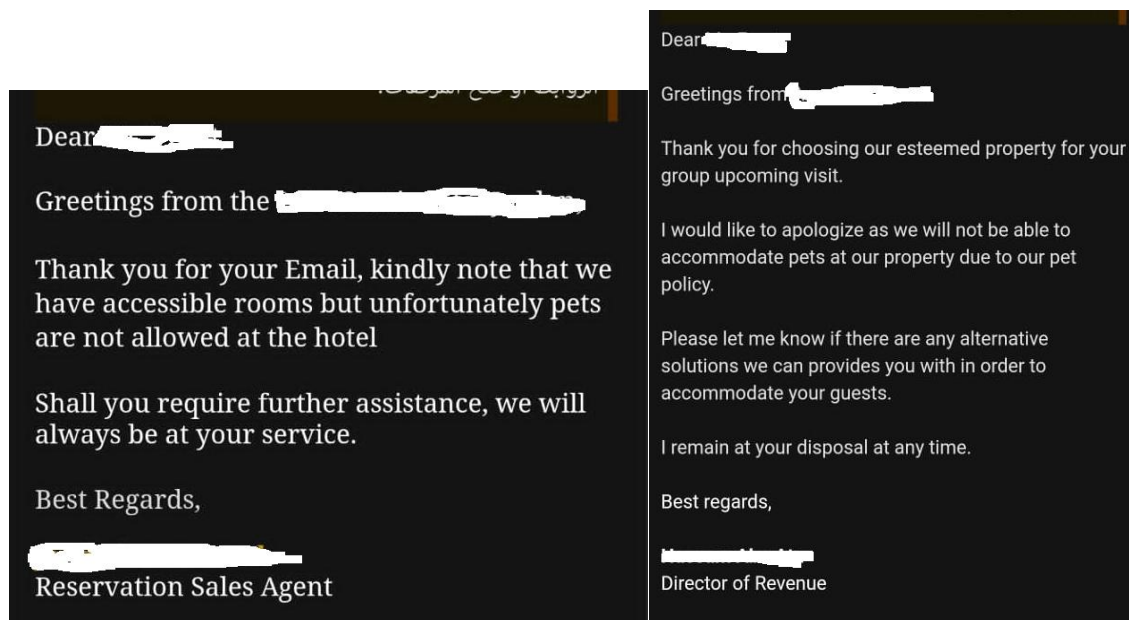
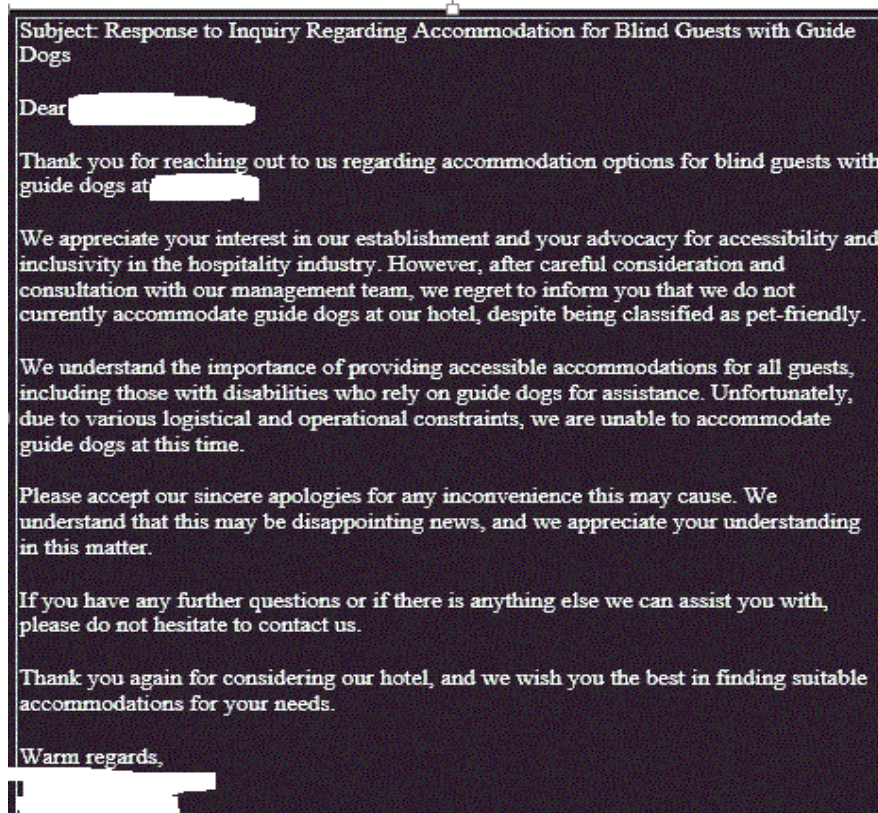


Figure (4b): Simulating results



With regarding to the second scenario, It is disheartening to discover that five resorts expressed regret in hosting a blind guest with a guide dog, citing a lack of services and the absence of a pet policy in practice, despite being identified as pet-friendly establishments.

This discrepancy raises important questions about the definition and implementation of pet-friendly policies within the hospitality industry. While labeling resorts as pet-friendly may attract guests who wish to travel with their pets, it is essential for these establishments to uphold their commitment to inclusivity and accessibility for all guests, including individuals with disabilities who rely on guide dogs for assistance. The reluctance of these resorts to accommodate blind guests with guide dogs not only reflects a failure to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities but also undermines the principles of inclusivity and hospitality. It is crucial for resorts to recognize the importance of providing equal opportunities and access to all guests, regardless of their abilities or the presence of pets.

These findings underscore the need for greater transparency, accountability, and consistency in the implementation of pet policies within the hospitality industry. Resort management should consider revising their policies and procedures to ensure that they align with their classification as pet-friendly and promote inclusivity and accessibility for all guests. Furthermore, efforts should be made to raise awareness and educate resort staff about the rights and needs of individuals with disabilities, including the importance of accommodating guide dogs as service animals. By fostering a culture of inclusivity and empathy, resorts can create welcoming and supportive environments where all guests feel valued and respected.

5. Conclusions, implications, limitations and future research

The aim of this study was to explore the current situation of hotels' pet policies in red sea region. We used three different methods for data collection. The major findings can be summarised into these points:

- **Classification as Pet-Friendly Resorts:** The affirmation by resorts regarding their pet-friendly status demonstrates a proactive approach to meet the needs of pet-owning guests. However, discrepancies between claims and actual practices raise questions about transparency and consistency in pet policies.
- **Availability and Development of Pet Policies:** While some resorts have developed pet policies in response to market trends and cultural attitudes, others are in the process of formulating such policies. This highlights a growing recognition of the demand for pet-friendly accommodations and the need to address the preferences of guests traveling with pets.
- **Challenges Facing Integrated Pet Policies:** The challenges identified, such as ensuring a seamless guest experience and balancing the needs of guests with and without pets, underscore the complexities involved in accommodating pets in hotel settings. Strategies to mitigate challenges include creating clear zones, establishing guidelines, and providing staff training.
- **Future Perspectives of Pet Policy:** Resorts are exploring opportunities to enhance pet-friendly offerings by introducing specialized services and incorporating sustainable practices. Collaboration with other pet-friendly hotels and consideration of emerging trends reflect a forward-thinking approach to pet accommodations.
- **Simulated Results:** The simulation of guest scenarios highlights significant discrepancies between the identification of resorts as pet-friendly and their actual practices. Reluctance to host guests with pets, including blind guests with guide dogs, suggests a need for greater transparency, accountability, and inclusivity in pet policies.

In conclusion, this study underscores the importance of transparent, consistent, and inclusive pet policies in the hospitality industry. By addressing challenges and proactively meeting the needs of guests traveling with pets, resorts can create welcoming environments that cater to diverse preferences and enhance the overall guest experience.

The findings underscore the need for the hospitality industry in the Red Sea region of Egypt to align their classification as pet-friendly resorts with their actual policies and practices. Resorts should prioritize transparency and consistency in communicating their pet-friendly status to guests. In addition, by addressing challenges identified in accommodating pets, resorts can enhance the overall guest experience. Clear guidelines, specialized services, and staff training contribute to a seamless and inclusive environment for all guests, including those traveling with pets. Finally, resorts that proactively develop comprehensive pet policies and embrace sustainability trends can differentiate themselves in the market. By catering to the growing demand for pet-friendly accommodations and incorporating eco-friendly practices, resorts can attract a niche market segment and strengthen their competitive advantage.

6. Limitations and future studies

Like all studies this study has some limitations that may guide future studies. First, this study's sample size of interviewees may limit the generalizability of findings to the broader hospitality industry in the Red Sea region. Additionally, the predominance of Egyptian respondents may overlook perspectives from other cultural backgrounds. Thus, future longitudinal studies can provide insights into the evolution of pet policies and practices in the hospitality industry over time. Tracking changes in guest preferences, market trends, and regulatory environments can inform strategic decision-making for resorts. Second, the interpretation of interview responses and document analysis may be subject to biases or subjective judgments. It is essential to acknowledge the potential for interpretation differences among researchers and respondents. Therefore, mixed method designs for future studies may be more realistic and give in-depth analysis and findings of the pet policies. Finally, Constraints such as time and resources may have impacted the depth and breadth of the study. Future research should consider allocating sufficient time and resources to conduct comprehensive investigations into pet policies and practices.

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