Feasibility Study for Entrepreneurial Venture (Express Maids)



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Department of Business Studies Bahria University Islamabad Spring - 2021

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Abstract

This project was proposed to identify and promptly solve the problems faced by people who have difficulty finding and managing cleaning activities. As more and more conventional businesses are entering the digital sphere, online cleaning services have a lot of potential for success. Initially, this project will start its operation at a small-scale, offering cleaning services to Rahmat Heights apartments in Bahria Enclave. The approach of this study is to provide a user-friendly online platform for customers to access quality services of vast variety from cleaning, sanitization to fumigation of pests. The aim of this project is to provide easy access online where customers can avail quality cleaning services, which is carried out by trustworthy and competent employees to achieve satisfaction or exceed customer expectations. Not only the residents of the apartment will benefit from these offerings but also the commercial areas nearby like restaurants, offices and parks. Additionally, it is proposed that employees will be trained and be provided with a friendly work environment where they are given incentives to encourage them to provide quality service to its customers. A quantitative research method was used where an experimental questionnaire was conducted using google forms, which was to determine how people feel about hiring maids online and what they expect from such cleaning companies.

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1. Introduction

The 21st century has seen a lot of changes and the emergence of things. Over the past decade, we have seen how digital media has grown and what role it has been playing in conducting business activities. These days, online business is at its peak due to the Covid-19 pandemic. There are a lot of different platforms that are being used to conduct online businesses. The platform for this feasibility is going to be a website as well as a mobile application. It has become a known phenomenon that the reach of online business is far more than the business conducted in physical environment. Customers in this day and age are more productive than ever and are less likely to waste time on menial activities. Furthermore, they look towards activities that are less time-costly and convenient at the same time.

In Pakistan, there is a lot of potential for cleaning businesses as we have seen the importance of maids in every aspect of our lives from households to offices or any space or things that require cleaning. Customers in almost every household wants a maid to clean their homes, even offices and avail other different cleaning services too. However, these customers go through a great deal of hassle in finding and selecting the right maid which can be hard sometimes as it can take up a lot of time and energy. Therefore, it is not easy to find a maid since there are no platforms or anything where people can go and hire a maid. The other aspect is the trust issue, a maid can be a complete stranger to whom people are willing to give access to their homes or office space where customers have their valuable items or important paperwork. This issue can cause customers to become reluctant and hesitant in hiring a maid to clean up spaces. Currently, there is no proper system to check whether the maids are trustworthy or not as there has been many unfortunate incidents which has resulted in lack of trust when hiring help. Another important service has made its way into the cleaning industry with a lot of potential due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Furthermore, keeping in mind the

pandemic, sanitization services shall also be offered to satisfy the customers and make them feel safe in any environment there are in. In this regard, "Express Maids" will use the standard equipments, chemicals, skills and sanitizing products used in accordance with the international standards.

This project is aimed to start small and work its way up based on expanding its operation location-wise. First of all, this project shall begin its cleaning operation at Rahmat Heights. Rahmat Heights is an apartment complex, located in Sector I, Bahria Enclave, Islamabad. It provides its own services like maintenance, security and quality. As there is little to no access of hiring maids through any sort of platform, Express Maid would provide the highest service quality and become a part of Rahmat Heights' team in order to achieve customer satisfaction and become a successful business. As this project will have its operations in the Rahmat Heights, not only will the residents benefit from Express Maids services but also the offices and restaurants around that area. As this setup will be located in Sector I, Bahria Enclave, Express Maids will have the advantage of providing services to the commercial, nearby schools and recreational areas. This way, Express Maids will be able to operate conveniently in residential, recreational and commercial areas all falling in the common area.

The cleaning service is typically a low-skilled profession; however, sanitization or disinfection is considered to be a specialized task which requires proper training (Herod and Aguiar, 2006:102). Other than sanitizing services this project will include basic training in how to use the cleaning equipment, use different chemicals, clean different spaces and it also defines the employee role in the organization (Herod and Aguiar, 2006:102). This training is going to be of standard form which will not only train them in how to do a job but also educate the employees so they become competent, skillful and also understand the job so that it can be done effectively.

To cope with the security and trust issues of maids, this project will carry out basic background checks on the employees by verifying their identity cards and also get a police verification of their criminal record. Only then people shall be hired when their profile history is clear. Similarly, to ensure that the maids who are visiting consumer is safe and not a Covid-19 virus carrier, a basic health checkup will be performed before each visit. This will include checking temperature, flu, and other symptoms which reflect chances of Covid-19 virus. Their brief introduction of the employees will be available on the website stating their name, specialization, feedback history, their picture and whether or not they are vaccinated.

1.1. Project Purpose

Cleaning services has become quite popular in the service industry. The purpose of tapping into this service market is to satisfy customers by providing them quality cleaning services and also being conscious of the current pandemic of Covid-19, providing sanitization services in accordance with the basic standards. The aim of this project is to provide an online platform for customers where they can satisfy their needs through the services that are being offered and become a leading business of cleaning services in Pakistan.

The core issue of this project is to provide a platform for consumers where they can have easy access to availing cleaning services. The desired output of the project is going to be a user-friendly website which will contain information and services offered in the area. The consumers will have the option of browsing and selecting the services they want. This whole process will be online, reducing the need of physically going out there for the purpose of finding and hiring a maid when all this can be done by trustworthy service.

1.2. Project Scope

In the cleaning production service, it is the employees who are directly involved in producing that service which is to clean. The employees play the main essential competitive roles which can directly affect the quality of the service. According to a research, professional and motivated employees are more likely to produce good quality service than less motivated, unqualified ones. When professional and eager employees are hired then the service production is likely to be of good quality. Other than being qualified and competent to do a job, employees need to be aware of the company's mission which can help keep them motivated to work. (Bergström & Leppänen 2009, 172-178; Papinaho 2011)

Feasibility Study for Entrepreneurial Venture (Express Maids) is the topic for this report and its particularly interested in creating an online platform to provide cleaning services for customers at their homes, offices, or any space. Initially, this project will be carried out for the customers living in the Rahmat Heights in Sector I, Bahria Enclave, Islamabad. In order to provide this service, there are some steps that need to be taken before reaching the final stage of delivering the service. The cleaning staff will be the main factor so keeping them motivated is very important as it is a service industry. They will be in contact with the customers directly so if the employees are happy the customers are happy.

In order to provide an effective and efficient service, the cleaning staff will be trained and educated accordingly. It will be taught to them what kind of cleaning equipment should be used to clean different kind of stains and in case of the virus the required steps that need to be taken to sanitize effectively in accordance with the accepted standards so this would lead them to becoming professionals at their jobs. After creating an online platform and training the cleaning staff, this brand will be marketed and promoted.

As the fear of the pandemic is growing every day it is necessary to build a brand image so that the customers can trust and feel safe when buying the service. Necessary information will be provided on website about the services and qualified employees. As cleaning services can be challenging, however for this project to be successful we need to show the customers through brand image that the services this project will provide is trustworthy, effective and will leave the customers satisfied.

1.3. Project Objectives

Following are the objectives of this project:

- To provide a one stop solution for all cleaning needs where customers can easily have access to a trustworthy maid with efficient internal management system and with top notch quality service.
- To be flexible in order to allow customers to pitch in their ideas as of what they would desire as a part of the service quality so that this project can tailor its services accordingly with time.
- With the increasing cases of Covid-19, we want this project to become a leading business in providing the best sanitization services, which we believe the community is in dire need of so that they can live safely and also prevent the spread of Covid-19.

1.4. Anticipated Benefits

This project has many benefits to the consumers as well as stakeholders. Educating the employees can help increase their knowledge and also make them feel more competent and skillful whereas the organization will have a good image that they have qualified employees who are good at their jobs. This project will also benefit the community as well because the services that is offered also includes sanitization which is very important nowadays because of the pandemic, which in the long run can reduce the number of Covid-19 cases. Similarly, for customer it brings convenience and comfort as nowadays people don't have time to clean their homes or offices themselves, this is where the Express Maids cleaning services come in so that the customers can use their time doing something that is more productive for them. These services done efficiently will lead to the satisfaction of the customers resulting in

customer loyalty towards Express Maids. This way customers can spread a good word about the services through word of mouth which in turn will improve the business reputation and performance.

1.5. Key Success Factors

Following are the key success factors for this project:

- Fulfillment of individualistic needs
- Feedback from customers
- Motivation and team spirit
- Brand image
- Word of mouth
- Educating and training employees
- Covid-19 specific offerings

1.6. Quality Definition

At Express Maids, great emphasis will be put into ensuring that the quality of service meets the consumer expectations. The service blueprints will contain all the necessary items that a cleaning staff will follow in addition to training being provided. Consumer satisfaction will be monitored regularly through surveys and service feedbacks.

1.7. Major Deliverables

As the project is focused on providing services related to maids and cleanliness, the most important deliverable of the project is going to be the platform for the above-mentioned services. In order to make the website, we first have to get a domain and hosting and then get the website up and running. From the customer's perspective, the key deliverable would be the fully functional platform where they can easily find people for their work. The next part which come into play are the marketing strategies that will be adopted. The marketing strategies would be designed to target people who are looking for cleaning services through online platforms. The advertisements will shed a light on the benefits of this platform and how it's going to make things simpler and easier. The concept of 'Integrated Marketing Communication' will be used which would ensure that advertising done through different platforms give the same message to public.

Moreover, a good user interface will be kept in focus while developing the website, since no person would want to spend time on a website which does not have a good user interface, cluttered or is difficult to navigate. It shall be easy on the eyes, easy to navigate and user-friendly. The final output of the project will be the delivery of an online system which is going to provide cleaning services through cleaning staff by making them available to people and to reduce the time and effort one has to face while looking and selecting such services.

1.8. Estimated Time frame

The initial time frame which has been decided for this project is going to be around three months, but the time frame can vary according to the changes that may take place during the project development.

1.9. Constraints

Our team is strongly motivated towards putting 100% in this project and deliver an outcome which can be considered as one of the best, but with every project, some constraints also come in the way. Our first constraint will be the areas that we are going to cover. The decision's to first go with Rahmat Heights, the commercial area nearby only and covering other areas outside of Sector I would require this project to go on big scale. Other constraint is going to be the budget for this project, we will need some funding to cover our main objectives. Additionally, if we would like to develop application for other platforms out there, it's also going to cost us some extra amount.

The biggest constraint would be the time frame. Projects like this undergo a lot of development phases and changes so that best outcome could be achieved, but since we only have few months for this, we would have to consider the time frame and work accordingly to deliver what is possible to achieve under this time period.

1.10.Assumptions

Like other services which went online like Careem and Uber for cabs, Phoenix Wash and Gari Wash for home car cleaning services we hope this project will be one of its kind for home as well as office cleaning and sanitization services.

1.11. Potential Risks

One of the scenarios that could jeopardize the success of Express Maids is that consumer does not opt for online cleaning services but would rather go for conventional mechanisms of hiring and getting cleaning services. Another risk is when other businesses enter the same market and start offering similar platforms and services. But in such case Express Maids will create a difference through its exceptional quality of service.

2. Problem Definition and Requirement Analysis

In our country, the task of finding and appointing a maid is very difficult one. People may not put much focus on this issue, but it still exists. People tend to get this job done by relying on links, for example, a person can tell a friend to see if any maid is available for work and then that friend asks his or her maid to tell them about someone. There is no particular market, or a one stop solution from where people can go and look for cleaning services, from the start, they have to rely on different kinds of links. Another problem that arises is the proper structure in place to charge fees. Once someone can find a maid, it is up to the maid to demand any price that the maid wants. There is no system in place to charge fairly based on the amount of work that is required in one house. It is generally seen that maid working in high societies charge more and maids working in small areas charge less. It is often difficult to trust a maid which is why people always have doubts in the back of their minds because there is no proper system in place to track a maid in case of any bad event.

All these problems lead towards demand of a platform where people can easily find and appoint maids as well as a system for tracking and accountability. The idea for this project derives from this demand. The basic focus is to solve all of these problems by utilizing the latest technology aspects. Now a days, we live in a time known as digital age. Everything is going towards digitalization and hence the physical efforts are becoming minimal in all fields of life. The advent of smartphones and 3G/4G technology has completely revolutionized the world. Express maids will be a website and a one stop solution for the people where they can find different cleaning services and can choose from them. This online platform will have a proper system in place to keep track and record of each and every maid working.

2.1. Identify Customer Needs

For requirement analysis, we first have to identify what are the needs of customers. All of the above problems can also be considered as needs of the customers. Basic need is simple, which is that people want their premises to be clean and for that purpose they would like to seek help from a cleaning service provider. People also want an easy way of finding maids and not the one where they may have to face some difficulties. Other than that, a proper established system is also required which would be used to manage cleaning staff and would be able to keep their track and record.

2.2. Evaluate System for Feasibility

For this project, it has been decided that this platform will be initially launched in Rahmat Heights. The goal is to start from small area first and then expand it in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. This approach would be feasible because currently there isn't any well-known service provider available in Islamabad which provides what we aim to provide. This will reduce the threat of competitors, giving this project a upper hand. Nowadays, every mobile user is also a user of 3G and 4G services which has allowed many businesses and platforms to grow online. A lot of people now rely on online services for their daily routine work. A good example of this would be Careem and Uber applications. They were there before, but since 3G/4G entered in Pakistan, user base for these applications started to grow very fast. Secondly, residents of Islamabad are mostly well educated and are familiar with latest technology. So, it would be easier to attract them towards our service.

2.3. Perform Economic and Technical Analysis

From economic point of view, it is safe to say that now trust of people have been built up towards online service applications. They would like to spend money on the services which are making their work easy and reducing the physical effort. The customers would be charged based on the number and size of room a cleaner has worked on and the type of work that has been done. The receipt will be generated by the online platform and the payment can be made using cash or card. A transaction of this nature would not leave any room for doubt. The requirement from the customer's side would be the availability of web browser on any device with an active internet connection. The items for cleaning would be provided by the company and customers would not have to provide anything.

2.4. Allocate Functions to System Elements

The structure of our proposed organization will have to be efficiently and effectively managed. For this purpose, the structure and working of the organization will be divided into different departments with each department performing a separate function. The result of all these departments will be combined to give one final output which may help in achieving the goal of this project. The Human Resource department will be there to deal with everything related to personnel. This includes searching for potential workers, hiring of employees and maids, training them, and getting them familiar with all the aspects of the platform. Similarly, supply chain department will be there, which will cover all the needs for the materials that are required to clean a house or apartment. The supply chain department will make sure that necessary resources are available at all time so that Express Maids never run short on supplies. There will be a finance department which will keep track and record of all the finances that are coming in or going out of the company. At the end, this department will be responsible to provide a full report of all the finances and make suggestions about what the company should do in the future to have a strong financial base. There will also be a presence of marketing department which will be responsible for advertising and promotion of Express Maids on all available platforms. The main focus of advertising will be on social media platforms, because it allows people to reach maximum target audience with just one click.

2.5. Establish Schedule and Constraints

The project will proceed according to a proper schedule. In the beginning, the idea is to make a platform which will be easily available online to different people. For this purpose, it has been decided that a website will be made which is going to provide all the proposed features online. Users will be able to easily access and use this platform. Once the development phase is finished, the next task would be the marketing of Express Maids. The advertisements will run on different mediums as well as on social media. Both banners and video advertisements will be made available for people to see and understand the offering of our services. Moreover, once the marketing activities are done, the next step would be to launch this project. The project would initially start from Rahmat Heights. As it is always a good idea to launch anything in small area first and then expand it in other areas if the business goes well. The future plans of Express Maids involve expanding the service in Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

2.6. Create System Definitions

This online platform will allow users to browse and choose a service for cleaning their residence, offices and areas of commercial nature. The platform will be able to provide these services to the people in specific areas and it will also create job opportunities for different people including maids. The system will be able to keep track of all the maids and keep the record of their work, which will help to generate an automated bill to the customers. Customers will also be able to report an issue they may face during their time with an employee. The rating system will also be there to evaluate an employee's performance. All of the other facilities like transportation and resources will be provided by the company itself so that users would not have to worry about any overhead cost.

3. Design and Implementation

3.1. Design

This project is designed to address a niche that is not yet been tapped by the current wave of innovation and digitalization. As these days most of the services are getting influenced by information technology especially with the acceptance of 4G networks. Express Maids will provide a one of a kind platform to offer one stop solution for all the customer's cleaning needs.

Initially, a web-based portal will be provided from where consumers can book an appointment for a cleaning staff. There are wide range of services that can be offered. The user will opt for the desired option from website and a confirmation call or email will be received. A recurring appointment can also be booked through the system. The web-based system will ensure that a user can book for only those timeslots that are available. Behind the scenes, a set of professional staff would be hired, trained, and groomed by Express Maids team. The cleaning staff will be rated by consumers once they avail any service. Based on this rating and efficiency mechanism in place certain KPIs will be set. Upon fulfilling these KPIs the staff will be given bonus, recognition and incentives. This will not only keep them motivated to offer the best of their services but also ensure quality of service and client satisfaction.

The most important factor in the service process are the front-line employees. The employees for this project will be arranged through personal contacts, advertisements, references. For hiring, this project will mainly target the people living in the outskirts of Bahria Enclave. This can reduce the cost and time taken by these employees to offer services.

This project is not just a single set of services rather is a complete ecosystem. It focuses on offering quality services to its customer in just a few clicks, bringing the cleaning staff to mainstream. The training and compensation mechanism change the perception and repute of the cleaning profession.

3.2. SWOT Analysis

SWOT is an abbreviation which stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It is a framework which is used by different organizations so that they could know about their key aspects. This is a very essential and useful framework as it helps a company to understand where it stands, what are things that this company does best, what are the elements that a company lacks, what potential opportunities are out there which company can take advantage of and what are the dangers or threats that a company has to face.

Like for all the other projects, it has been decided to perform the SWOT analysis for Express Maids as well. The reason behind this is that we want to understand where we currently stand in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It will also help us to understand that what are things that Express Maids has to do in order to be among the people's favorite platform.

3.2.1. Strengths

The strengths mainly represent the main functioning of an organization. It identifies what an organization does best and what are the products or services that it is offering. In case of Express Maids, the main service is the availability of maids or staff to perform cleaning services in homes, flats, offices, restaurants etc. It also aims to provide sanitization services in the areas where Express Maids will be operating. In addition to all this, it will be one of the leading platforms to provide such high-quality services as no other organization is providing services based on individualistic needs in Rahmat Heights or nearby areas of Bahria Enclave.

It will be easier for customers to access this platform as the system will be purely online and it will be up to customers to call the maids or cleaning staff at their own selected time, so customers will have more freedom to make their own choices. Express Maids will make sure that the staff it hires has at least 10 years basic education so that they can read and write properly. Proper training will be provided to all staff members which will make them highly skilled workers. Express Maids will have best equipment and chemicals to facilitate in cleaning operations. It will be made sure that Express Maids use high quality equipment and chemicals as it will give the impression of high standard company and that is what we want to strive for. It will also focus on low-cost models because if the service is too expensive, then people would avoid using that service. Express Maids aims to provide high quality services in exchange for reasonable prices. All of these play the role of strengths for Express Maids.

3.2.2. Weaknesses

The section of weaknesses represents the qualities that an organization or business lacks which may affect the overall performance of that particular organization or business. As we know that Pakistan is still a developing country and people here have still not completely transitioned towards online businesses and platforms. Our service will be completely online, but consumer rate might be little low because not all people rely on online services and most of the people still prefer conventional means of hiring help. Another thing to mention here is the trust issue while using online services. It is still hard for people here to trust online services, this may prove a big barrier in the way of Express Maids. As this is a large-scale project, it will also require a seed funding through some source. The services that Express Maids aim to provide are not going to be cheap and maintenance services will also be costly.

3.2.3. Opportunities

The opportunities tell what an organization or business can do to grow more or achieve competitive advantage or to be ahead to other businesses. One big potential opportunity for Express Maids is the expansion of business so that it could cover more ground. Currently, the aim is to operate in Rahmat Heights and nearby areas of Bahria Enclave. If this business does well in its starting days, then it can expand its operation to whole Bahria Enclave. In addition to this, cleaning and sanitization services can also be provided in different parks, public areas and educational institutions in nearby locality. The platform will be initially available on web only, but mobile based applications can be made for android and iOS in near future. This will help gain more customers since every other person is a smartphone user.

3.2.4. Threats

The threats are the potential dangers and risks that an organization may face during its operation. The major threat for any organization is the threat of competition. Although there is no well-established company in Bahria Enclave exclusively which is providing all the high-quality services that Express Maids aims to provide. There will be barriers to entry for Express Maids as it is not the first of its kind. Different companies are already providing some sort of cleaning services in Islamabad, so market is already there, and it will be not be easier to enter it due to high costs. The prices of different items keep shifting due to change in governmental policies and regulations. Recently it has been seen that prices are constantly going upwards due to inflation. Such events will also increase the prices of supplies and the burden will be on Express Maids as they will have to deal with the increased prices.

3.3. Porter Five Forces

This framework was developed by Michael Porter and it tells about the competitive environment of an organization. This framework has five aspects which are barriers to entry by potential customers, industry rivalry, bargaining power of suppliers, bargaining power of buyers and threat of substitutes. It also helps to determine the company's strengths and weaknesses when it comes to competitors, buyers and sellers.



3.3.1. Barriers to Entry

Barriers to entry describe what difficulties an organization may have to face when it decides to enter a particular market. When it comes to the business of cleaning, the barriers are high mainly because of the cost. Launching such a business would require a lot of finances and most startups cannot come up with such huge financial support. Secondly, This project will also be providing other services like termite proofing and sanitization services which would add more cost on the company. So, we can say that cost is the major barrier to entry for any company.

3.3.2. Industry Rivalry

Industry rivalry sometimes proves a great source of profitability for organizations. For industry rivalry, Express Maids face competition in the form of saaf.pk and Clean & Green

Services. Both of these service providers offer services in different cities including Islamabad and are very professional and standardized. Express Maids will prove to be a competent competitor, if we compare the services that these companies are providing. Even though the competitors of the focus of Express Maids is to make use of the maids to perform services, which in return will create job opportunities. Secondly, we also aim to provide individualistic needs like laundry, dish washing and car wash which none of these competitors are providing at the moment.

3.3.3. Bargaining Power of Suppliers

Suppliers have the power to increase prices of inputs for companies. In case of Express Maids, suppliers are the ones who will provide us with different chemicals and equipment used for cleaning services. As we aim to provide top quality stuff, it goes without saying that bargaining power of suppliers will be high, since quality comes with a price. There will always be a chance that suppliers start demanding higher prices in exchange for their services.

3.3.4. Bargaining Power of Buyers

Buyers have the ability to make demands and they expect the company to fulfill them. These buyers are satisfied once their needs are satisfied by a particular organization. When it comes to Express Maids, there is not much room for the buyers to make extra demands since the basic purpose of organization is to provide cleaning services. If a particular buyer is not satisfied with the standard of cleaning, then they may make some additional demands to improve the service standard, but the chance of that happening is still very low.

3.3.5. Threat of Substitutes

Substitutes are always a major threat for any organization. If a person does not find your product in the market, they can always go for alternatives which may be proven very

dangerous for a company in the long run. Our competitors can also become substitutes for our service. For Express Maids, the number of substitutes is low because this industry does not have many players in it yet. The major ones are Saaf.pk and Clean & Green Services. There is always a chance of customer deciding to use their services if they somehow are not satisfied with the services of Express Maids. Other than that, threat of substitutes is very low for Express Maids.

3.4. Marketing Mix

In order to make a product or business successful, marketing plays a very important role. Without the proper marketing and promotion of a brand, the chances of growth are very low. Marketing also allows companies to be engaged with their customers for a long period of time. Marketing is also necessary to gain trust of people, convince them to try out your product, build positive reputation of an organization and it also serves a channel for communication between company and the customers. A good marketing or promotion tells what your company is offering and how it benefits the people.

The marketing for a brand is not an easy task obviously, it involves many different factors that an organization has to focus on. For this purpose, there is a framework known as marketing mix, which covers all the factors from marketing's point of view. Marketing Mix consists of 4 Ps, these 4 Ps stand for product, price, place and promotion. The product section covers the main product offering of the company. The price represents how a particular product will be priced in the market. The place represents the areas where the product or service will be available. The promotion aspect represents how a particular product will be available. The promotion aspect represents how a particular product will be available. The promotion aspect represents how a particular product will be available. The promotion aspect represents how a particular product will be available. The promotion aspect represents how a particular product will be available. The promotion aspect represents how a particular product will be available. The promotion aspect represents how a particular product will be available in the market. Although these 4 Ps cover most of the factors, but they were not enough from service's point of view. When it comes to a service organization, there are 3 more Ps that have been added to these 4 Ps. These new 3 Ps are people, process

and physical evidence. The people factor represents the employees that work for an organization and who make the existence of product or service possible. The processes represent the overall steps that are included to deliver the service or product to the end user. Lastly, the physical evidence represents any physical element that gives the proof of existence of a company, it can be the way an office is decorated, color of building or perhaps a nice unique smell in a restaurant. All these factors need to be worked upon effectively when planning about marketing or promotion of a product of service.



3.4.1. Product

In case of Express Maids, the product section will cover the services that are going to be offered. These services are cleaning services for Rahmat Heights in Bahria Enclave and areas nearby. Not only this, but also provide sanitization services in these areas as well. Dynamics of the world have changed due to the current pandemic of Covid-19 as it is not safe to clean any area where Covid virus is present. So, the team will be able to do that because it will have the necessary equipment and tools to provide sanitization services. Moreover, the aim is to provide cleaning services for buildings like window cleaning, for offices, restaurants, outlets, malls and plazas. Other than that, Express Maids will also focus on providing pest

control services which will include termite proofing, mosquito sprays etc. All of these will be the main offering for Express Maids.

3.4.2. Place

The place of operation for Express Maids will be Rahmat Heights in Bahria Enclave and areas nearby. Express Maids is not initially covering all of Bahria Enclave, but the aim is to provide services to Rahmat Heights apartments including nearby offices and commercial areas. Moreover, services will also be provided to restaurants, educational institutions, and parks. It will initially start on a small scale because it would be easier to find out how the business operates. If all goes well then, it would expand its operations to whole of Bahria Enclave and to more places in future.

3.4.3. Price

For the pricing section, it has been decided that prices will be based upon the work that a maid or cleaner performs. The base price for cleaning a room of 30sq feet will be 600 PKR. Total hours for cleaning staff will be 9 hours in a day, out of which 5 will be for work and 4 will be the adjustment time e.g., travelling time, breaks etc. Other than that, if consumers choose to go on with company's chemicals for cleaning, they will be charged extra accordingly, and if they decide to provide chemicals and supplies of their own then they will not be charged extra for that. The pest control services will be much higher than normal services. Termite treatment for an apartment and office with 6 rooms will be 10,000 PKR. The mosquito sprays will cost 1000 PKR for apartments and office with 6 rooms. These prices may vary from time to time due to changes in the prices of supplies.

3.4.4. Promotion

Special attention would be given to promotion and advertisement of our services. The company's pages on different social media platforms will be available. These pages will

consist of pictures and videos regarding service offering of Express Maids. Small video advertisements will also be made to run on YouTube ads and advertisements will run on radio. Word of mouth marketing will be used to encourage customer to tell their friend about their experience with Express Maids. Moreover, pamphlets will be made and distributed by our marketing team in different places so that more and more people could know about the service of Express Maids. Strong emphasis will always be on promotion using social media platforms as it can help in conveying message to maximum number of people.

3.4.5. Physical Evidence

Physical evidence refers to any physical aspect that represents the organization. For Express Maids, the theme color is green and yellow, so office spaces and vehicles will be branded accordingly. The working staff would be wearing theme-colored uniform, making the evidence aspect stronger. Customers will interact with the service through the website, which plays the role of main physical evidence for Express Maids.

3.4.6. People

This category involves all the people associated with Express Maids from the business side. This would include staff members, all members of management team, maids, workers, IT team etc. In short, everyone involved in delivering the service of Express Maids to customers. It is very essential to have good relations with these people since they will be the backbone of the business and the role of every employee is integral to the success of Express Maids. Selection and hiring of right type of employees is also a very crucial stage since the right type of employee will lead to positive results.

3.4.7. Process

Lastly, process describe the steps and procedures that are taken to deliver a product or service to the consumers. In case of Express Maids, the process of the delivering service will be mostly online, only the cleaning and travelling would be physical. Customer would be registering online and will book an appointment from website. Once a request has been made, availability of the particular maid will be checked, and it will be appointed to work for that particular customer. After that, maid will be sent to the specified address and will start performing the service. Once the work is done, customer will be billed and will have option to either pay by cash or through a debit/credit card.

3.5. Marketing Plan

3.5.1. Market Survey

As per the survey we conducted there is a need and demand to offer online cleaning service. Due to uncertain and lack of work satisfaction from the conventional cleaning maids people have a dire need to look for platform through which they can get quality services in a secure manner with less hassle. Moreover, there are some online cleaning services providers like clean and green Pakistan, saaf.pk but they have limited operations in Islamabad. So, there is a good opportunity and less competition to enter this business and revolutionize the current cleaning practices. Moreover, as Express Maids is coming with the mindset to target traditional home based cleaning providers, it also aims to provide cleaning services to corporate clients which can range from offices, restaurants, etc who can outsource their cleaning service to Express Maids and become hassle free.

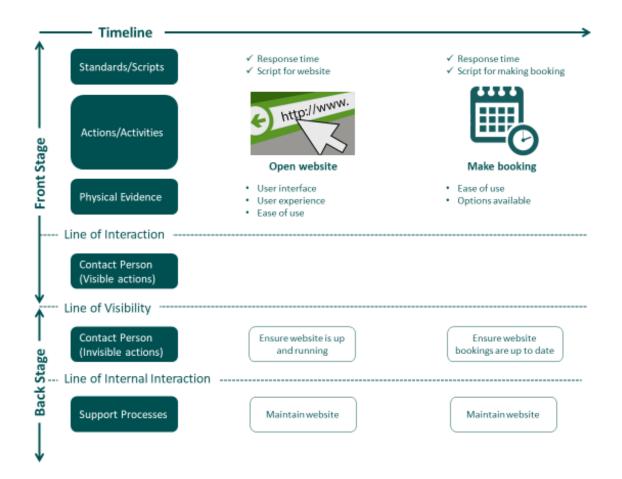
3.5.2. Generic Strategies

Using Porter's generic strategies which provides a direction for a company to attain competitive advantage across the market. The strategies are differentiation, cost leadership and focus. For this project to pursue a position of competitive advantage we will use focus strategy. This will narrow down our efforts to target areas where the segment of population is more interested in getting best service in least amount and at the same time these localities should mainly be apartments and nearby commercials. Apartments are point of interest for this project as the people living in such areas usually does not have full time servant and prefer to use part time workers to carry out such tasks.

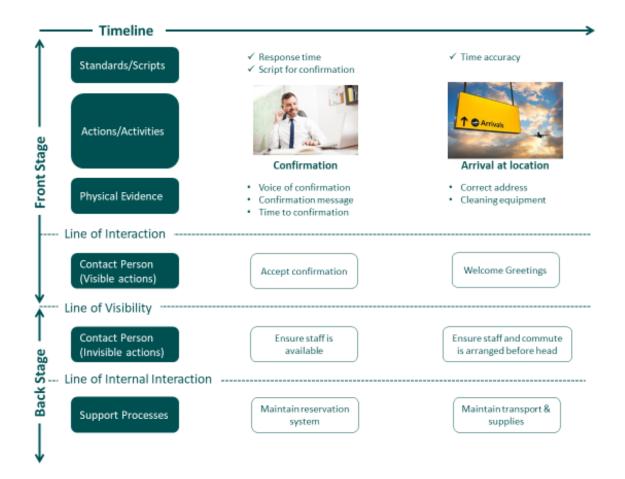
The focus strategy of porter's generic strategies has further two types which are cost focus and differentiation focus. This project excels in both these strategies. For differentiation focus, Express Maids differs from its competitors mainly conventional maid services in a way that we offer sanitization services, pest control, sofa carpet and curtain cleaning services. The regular training and grooming of staff allow Express Maids to stand out among its competitors. Also, Express Maids will have the advantage of standing out by offering individualistic needs of the customer. Moreover, looking at the output and efficiency of services being offered it will be cost effective solution for customers.

3.6. Service Blueprint

A service blueprint provides design for service and to identify if there were any shortcomings when the service is being implemented. It also provides a roadmap for the people involved in service delivery process as to how different activities will be performed. What set of actions are generally expected as part of service delivery process and what actions needs to be done for customer stimulus. Blueprint also helps in maintaining what backstage and internal system needs to be kept in place in order to provide best of services.



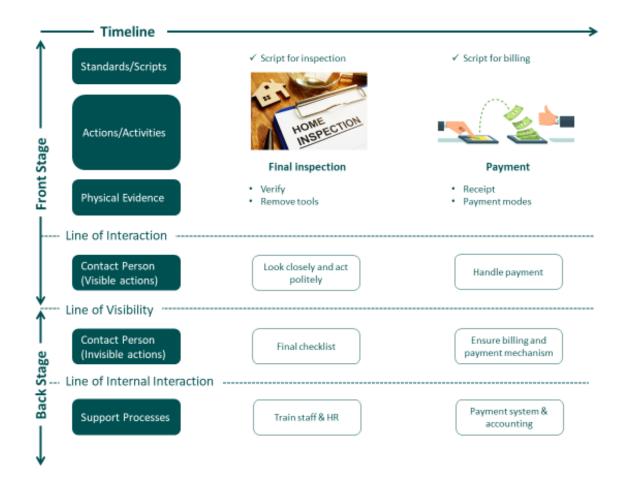
For Express Maids as depicted in above blueprint, a typical flow starts from the user visiting the website. The website act as first point of contact with consumer and the perception is set from its first look therefore a strong emphasis is given to ensure that the website's user interface and user experience is based on the latest principles of design and clarity. Afterwards user navigates to booking form to make necessary service reservations.



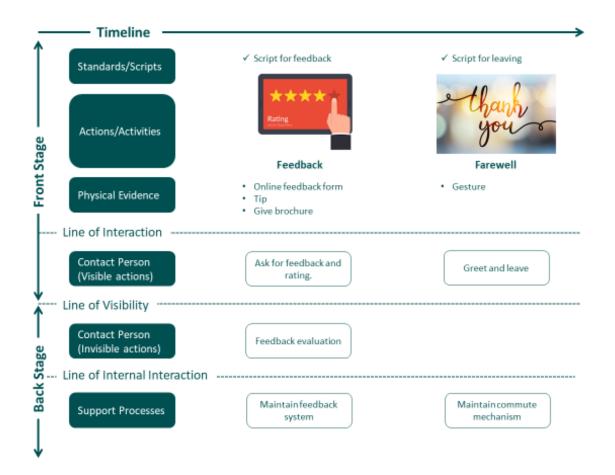
Once a service appointment is booked from website, a confirmation call and email are sent. This ensures any spam and inconvenience that can be avoided at a later time. The cleaning staff of Express Maids reach the location of client on date and time as designed and confirmed in appointment.



Next, the selected services are performed. Strong emphasis is given to ensure quality work and fulfilment of customer satisfaction. Once the cleaning job is finished all the waste is removed and things are put back in place.



After the service is offered the customer is called to perform a final inspection. If required, actions are performed based on customer's suggestion. Finally, after all the concerns are settled and the client is happily satisfied, payment receipt is presented.

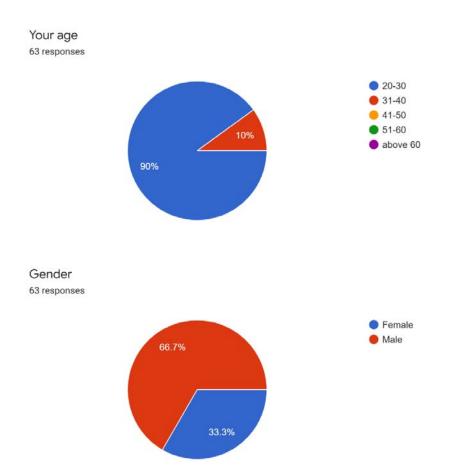


In last stage, customer is presented with an online feedback form in which they can rate the staff member's performance, give feedback and suggestions if any. The customers are also asked as to how the service offerings can be improved. Lastly, the staff leaves the customer's premises.

4. Testing and Deployment

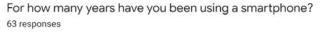
4.1. Demographics

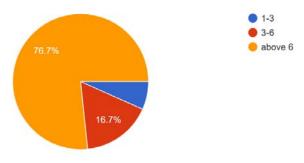
Using the following results, we found that respondents have been divided into different age segments. The results depict that most popular age group is among 20-30. While the remaining respondents were of the age group 31-40. Moreover, 66.7% respondents were male while 33.3% respondents were female.



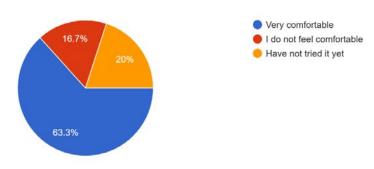
4.2. Online Services

The purpose of this section in survey was to gather data regarding how comfortable audience is in using online services and how dependant they are on such services. More than 76% of respondents are smartphone users, since "more than 6 years" which depicts people are pretty much comfortable in using and understanding of how smartphones work. The stats show 63.3% respondents were comfortable in using online services, 20% said they have not tired any online service yet. While only 16.7% said they do not feel comfortable in using online services. This implies a large target audience ranging from 60% to 80% could be reached and informed regarding our services. Moreover, through these stats we also identified the preferred mode of payment when using online services. 50% respondents said they prefer using cash as the mode of payment, while 36.7% said they prefer credit/debit card, 6.7% said they prefer microfinance banks like easy paisa, jazz cash, u paisa, etc. 3.3% of respondents mentioned that they prefer voucher/prepaid/wallet services while same number of respondents said they prefer postpaid/monthly billing as the mode of payment.

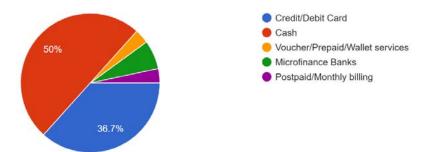




How comfortable you are in using online services? 63 responses



What payment mode you prefer when using online platforms ⁶³ responses



4.3. Cleaning Services

The survey included questions particularly related to how people have been feeling about their current cleaning services and what is the retention time of them. Similarly factors that are necessary when selecting for a maid or cleaning service was also part of the survey. Lastly, reason why a maid or cleaning service provider was changed was also asked. This question is crucial to identify what factors are important for consumers and particularly Express Maids needs to focus in order to help people transition from their conventional maids or cleaning services providers to Express Maids.

From the stats 53.3% say they are satisfied with their current maid which is indeed a challenge for Express Maids though through proper marketing campaign this can be exploited. 30% of respondents say they do not have a maid, and this means Express Maids can target them to try and use the platform. From stats, 16.7% respondents mentioned they are not satisfied with their current maid and would certainly prefer to get a new one.

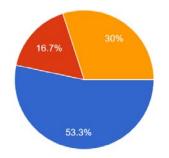
Next question in this section was how many times maid was changed in last five years for which, 33.3% respondents said they changed their maid once while same number of respondents changed their maids two to five times. 23.3% of respondents said they do not have a maid in last 5 years. 10% of respondents changed their maids more than five times in

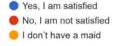
last five years. As we will be targeting new localities therefore people of those areas will be interested to try this new service.

When respondents were asked what factors are important for them when selecting a maid or cleaning service provider, 22 respondents opted for punctuation and on time arrival. 20 respondents preferred maids with good reputation and past working history. 19 respondents preferred maids that are being recommended by someone and have a good feedback. Similarly, 19 respondents said they consider cost and wage paid to maid for the services to be a crucial factor when selecting a maid. Lastly, 13 respondent considered experience with service provider to be important for them.

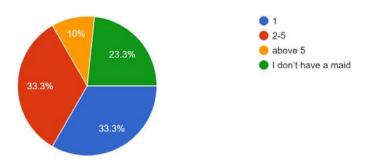
Last question in this section was related to what reasons resulted in their maid to be changed. Here 50% respondents said they were not satisfied with the performance and output results of the work being done by them. 20% said they were not happy with the efficiency of their maids, like they took a lot of time to perform their tasks. 13.3% respondents changed their maids because they thought they were a security threat and their presence were not considered safe for house. 10% responded with concerns regarding the reputations of their maids not being up to mark. Lastly, 6.7% said their maids were costly and they couldn't afford them.

Are you satisfied with your current maid? 63 responses

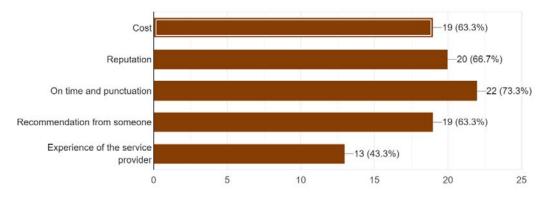




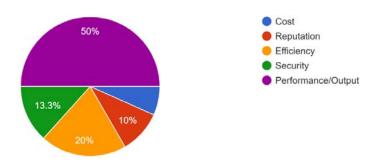
How many times you have changed a maid in last 5 years? 63 responses



What is important to you when selecting a maid or cleaning service provider? select all that apply. 63 responses



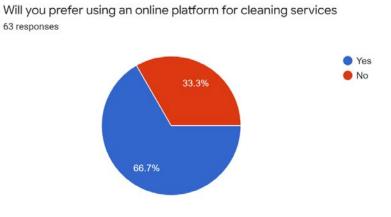
If you have changed your maid in the past what was the reason ⁶³ responses



4.4. Need for Online Platform

This section had one question and it was to ask respondents directly regarding their preference of using an online platform for the purpose of cleaning services. Here 66.7%

respondents mentioned yes, they would prefer online platforms and Express Maids is going to be one of the platforms offering such services. 33.3% of respondents did not felt the need to have such an online platform.



5. Future Enhancements/Action Plan

For any organization, future plans hold a very special importance. They define where do you want to go in future. But just having a future plan is not enough, a company needs to establish its aims and objectives accordingly and proper monitoring system should be in place which would help in identifying whether the company is going in the right direction according to its future plan or not. For Express Maids, there are couple of future plans that will always be in focus. As we know that we are living in a digital age which keeps changing and so are the customer's needs. For a service organization, it always has to put customer's needs and satisfaction at the top, that is the only way it can get ahead of the others. The future plans of Express Maids involve couple of factors to focus on, but strong focus will be on integration to other platforms and expansion of operating area.

5.1. Mobile Applications

The service of Express Maids will be available through website to the consumers. But almost everyone is a smartphone user now and in order to grow and reach more people, Express Maids will have to develop a mobile application for the platforms of Android and iOS. Existing users will not have to make a separate account to use mobile applications, they can use their old credentials to use mobile application. A team of qualified mobile application developers will be hired to make a visually stunning and user-friendly application for the customers. The colors that will be featured in those applications would be theme colors of Express Maids i.e., green and yellow. The application would be designed in a way that even a person with no tech knowledge would be able to easily use it. Mobile application will open more sources of revenue for Express Maids, as different advertisements can be shown in the application and in return, advertisers will have to pay. The existence of mobile application for a business is very important these days because number of smartphone users are growing rapidly with time and it is always a good idea to exist on a platform which customers use the most.

5.2. Area Expansion

As we already know that service of Express Maids will be initially available for Rahmat Heights in Bahria Enclave Islamabad. But we do not intend to stay in this area for the whole time. When it comes to future planning, we plan to expand our services in complete Bahria Enclave. The focus would also be to provide services in all of the areas nearby. Not only this, but we aim to expand our services in other areas of Islamabad as well. The focus would be to target apartment majority sectors to cover as much apartments as possible. The main target sectors would be F-10, F-11, G-9 and G-10. Not only this, but we will have a huge opportunity in the face of Markaz in these sectors because it is a commercial area, so the services of Express Maids can be made available to different offices, buildings, schools, parks, restaurants, fast-food outlets and much more.

5.3. Sponsorship Events

Different companies arrange different live events to showcase their products and services. But for a startup company, it would be very difficult to gather finances for arranging big events of this scale. For this purpose, we can seek help from different sponsors. The sponsor could be any company whose products are related to cleanliness e.g., Harpic, Domex and Dettol etc. The place for these events would be famous public spots like F-9 park or any other area. The events will show the services that Express Maids offer and will focus on the importance of sanitization these days. Moreover, brief tutorials of websites or mobile applications will also be shown so that customers could know how to interact with the platform.

6. Conclusion

In Pakistan, people have been hiring maids on a more permanent basis by letting them live in their servant quarters. The permanent conditions would be such that the maids would usually move in with their families and either one family member or more would work at that house exclusively. Other types of maids work part time in each house that would hire them by carrying out the basic cleaning activities such as vacuuming, mopping, washing dishes and clothes except in some cases some even cook a meal with extra charges obviously. Same goes for the employees hired by organizations or institutes to clean their offices, also lack efficiency in their work. The issues with such conventional methods are that the maids become inefficient with time, people usually have to tolerate them because they have trained them accordingly or have built a level of trust with them. Sometimes, it's the other way round, where maids are freshly hired, and they turn out to be frauds or commit theft. Such maids that get hired are either uneducated or not skilled enough to do other activities. These issues can be a problem for most people not just for households but office spaces as well. A maid should have the basic education to carry out activities and know what to do and how to do it.

This project aims at providing people services that are missing or unavailable and correcting the ones that are not done efficiently. To fulfill these, this project is going to start small by offering its services to Rahmat Heights in Bahria Enclave and then expand its operations with time. Express maids, after entering the cleaning industry will be offering a variety of services performed by skilled and competent employees. Moreover, due to these wide variety of services offered from vacuuming to fumigation of pests, customers will more likely avail these services offered by the same business. This makes it easy for customers to get what they want without searching for it. This project will solve the problems of people using conventional methods and have complain about their lack of efficiency and effort or who have fallen victim to unfortunate events like theft or negligent activities on their part. Therefore, this project on the other hand would perform their services with care and full sense of responsibility as the employees will undergo training not just about cleaning but also interactions with customers and handling situations with care and trust. Basically, what this project is offering is security, competence, quality, standard and a guaranteed satisfaction.

Although, this project will make its mark in the cleaning industry because of its solid concept and strategy as it will be using the online approach to attracting customers. Ultimately, the issues that were a major concern in this industry have been identified and will be avoided and corrected in order to meet our customers' expectations and achieve satisfaction.

7. Appendices

7.1. Questionnaire

- 1. Your age:
 - 20-30
 - 31-40
 - 41-50
 - 51-60
 - above 60
- 2. Gender:
 - Male
 - Female

3. For how many years have you been using a smartphone?

- 1-3
- 3-6
- above 6

4. Are you satisfied with your current maid?

- Yes, I am satisfied
- No, I am not satisfied
- I don't have a maid

5. How many times you have changed a maid in last 5 years?

- 1
- 2-5

- above 5
- I don't have a maid

6. How comfortable you are in using online services?

- Very comfortable
- I do not feel comfortable
- Have not tried it yet
- 7. What payment mode you prefer when using online platforms
 - Credit/Debit Card
 - Cash
 - Voucher/Prepaid/Wallet services
 - Microfinance Banks
 - Postpaid/Monthly billing

8. What is important to you when selecting a maid or cleaning service provider? select all that apply.

- Cost
- Reputation
- On time and punctuation
- Recommendation from someone
- Experience of the service provider
- 9. If you have changed your maid in the past what was the reason
 - Cost
 - Reputation
 - Efficiency

- Security
- Performance/Output

10. Will you prefer using an online platform for cleaning services

- Yes
- No

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