

CHALLENGES OF HOTEL INDUSTRY IN ABIA STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the challenges of hotels in Abia State. Four research objectives were formulated for the study. The population for the study was two hundred and fifty, which comprised staff of selected hotels in the state. Questionnaire and oral interview was the instrument used for data collection. The sample size of one hundred and fifty four was analysed. The data were analyzed using tabulation and simple percentage while chi-square statistical tool was used for hypothesis testing. The findings of this study showed lack of skilled manpower, insecurity and constant power outage. Also the researcher found that boosting security, constant power supply and training of employees will be the way forward. Based on the findings recommendations were made.

Keywords: Challenges, Hotels and Hospitality

Introduction

Hospitality industry has become one of the most important sectors of most developing countries, contributing significantly to their fluctuating economy through job creation, balance of payment, revenue generation and wealth creation. (Akpabio,2007). World Tourism Organisation (2002) Said that hospitality and tourism has contributed in the reduction of problems faced within the falling economy of most developing nations. The contribution of the hospitality industry has compelled many investors to invest in the industry particularly in Nigeria .The hotel industry is booming in Nigeria especially in big cities like

Lagos, Enugu, Owerri, and Abuja, creating employment opportunities, generating revenue, improving standard of living of people and increasing social interactions among people. Surprisingly, the Nigerian government is playing politics with the sector by not committing enough resources to establish favourable policies for the development of the area. The hotel industry has been experiencing a lot of setbacks, which ranges from erratic power supply, unskilled manpower, unfavourable government policies and insecurity. These problems are peculiar to hotels located in the rural areas like Ebonyi, Kwara and Abia State. A lot of threat of insecurity has been meted to customers, local communities and workers alike in the state. Many hotels in the rural areas of Nigeria are not yielding the desired results due to poor management, poor infrastructure development and lack of expertise in the hospitality sector. Therefore, the purpose of this work is to assess the challenges of hotel industry in Abia State

Statement of the Problem

Hospitality and tourism industry is contributing significantly to the economy of most developing countries, and many African countries such Kenya, South Africa and Morocco. These countries have taken a bold step towards developing the sector as a way to diversify their economy. In Nigeria, the hospitality industry has contributed to over 10% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)' (Noko, 2009), and employing huge numbers of people; 'tourism employs 8% of the global workforce thereby enhancing the economy through job creation, revenue generation, balance of payment and social relation enhancement. Despite these benefits, the industry has not been developed to compete favourably at international market. The Nigerian hotel industry is faced with a lot of problems. These problems are high charges of hotel products and the slow pace on developing hotels and tourist sites. (Akpabio, 2007). In the opinion of Awujo and Ukabuilu (2005) hotels in Nigeria is faced with erratic power supply in every state of the country particularly in Abia state where hotel operation is solely dependent on constant power. In fact even when many hotels that have invested hugely on generating power sets are not smiling because of the high cost and fluctuation of petrol prices in the country. Also, unethical behaviors by professionals in the industry have done more harm to the growth and development of hotel industry. Hotels in Abia state are faced with Bad road and dirty environment, epileptic power supply and insecurity. This has affected negatively the successful hotel operation of hotels in the state. This work therefore seeks to explore the challenges of hotel industry in Abia State with particular reference to Evergreen Hotels, Hotel Royal Damgrete and Villa Roy Hotels and Suites.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study is to assess the challenges of hotel industry in Abia State. The specific objectives are:

- i. to ascertain if hotels in Abia state have skilled manpower.
- ii. to identify if insecurity affects hotels in the state
- iii. to know if there is constant power outage in the state.

Hypothesis

This hypothesis will be tested for the purpose of drawing conclusion:

H0: There is no relationship between skilled manpower and hotels in Abia State.

Methodology

Field survey research design was used for this study as a pattern to achieve the desired objectives. In the study, samples of the of staff of the three hotels were selected to obtain relevant information about challenges of hotel industry in Abia State. The study areas were Evergreen Hotel, Hotel Royal Damgrete and Villa Ray Hotel& suites, Umuahia, Abia State. These three hotels are located at the heart of Abia State. The population for the study was 250 respondents which comprised (110 from Ever green hotel , 80 from Hotel Royal Damgrete and 60 from Villa Ray hotel). Using Taro Yamane formular, the sample size obtained was 154. Data for the study were gathered from both primary and secondary sources using both oral interview and questionnaire.

Method of Data Analysis

The researcher used tables and simple percentage for data analysis and presentation and chi-square was used for testing the hypothesis.

Data Presentation and interpretation

The questionnaire were analyzed using simple percentages while the hypothesis was tested using chi-square as a statistical tool. These are shown as follows:

Table1: Analysis to know whether Hotels in Abia State have Skilled Manpower?

Decision	Evergreen hotel	Hotel royal Damgrete	Villa Roy Hotel & Suit	Frequency	%
SA	10	5	2	17	11%
A	15	10	3	28	19%
U	0	0	0	0	0%
D	20	10	15	45	30%
SD	30	20	10	60	40%
Total				150	100%

Source: Field Survey 2021

From the table above, the researcher discovered that 17respondents representing 11% of the total respondents and 28respondents representing 19% strongly agreed and agreed respectively to the view that there is skilled manpower in Abia State, while 45 (30%) of the total respondents and 60 (40%) of the total respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed that there is no skilled manpower in hotels n Abia State.

Table 2: Analysis to know if Insecurity is a Challenge to Hotel in Abia State

Decision	Evergreen hotel	Hotel royal damgrete	Villa Roy Hotel & Suit	Frequency	%
SA	30	10	15	55	37%
A	15	20	10	45	30%
U	0	0	0	0	0%
D	20	5	2	27	18%
SD	10	10	3	23	15%
Total				150	100%

Source: Field Survey 2021

The table above shows, the researcher discovered that 55 respondents representing 37% of the total respondents and 45 representing 30% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that insecurity affects the hotel industry in Abia State, while 27 respondents representing 18% of the total respondents and 23 respondents representing 15% of the total respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed that insecurity does not affect the hotel industries in Abia State, while 0 representing 0% remains undecided.

Table 3: Analysis to determine whether Gotels in Abia State Experience Erratic Power Supply.

Decision	Evergreen hotel	Hotel royal Damgrete	Villa Roy Hotels& Suit	Frequency	%
SA	20	30	10	60	40%
A	15	10	20	45	30%
U	0	0	0	0	0%
D	15	10	3	28	19%
SD	5	10	2	17	11%
Total				150	100%

Source: Field Survey 2021

From the table above shows, the researcher discovered that 60 respondents representing 40% of the total respondents and 45 representing 30% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that there is constant power outage in the state, while 28 respondents representing 19% of the total respondents and 1 respondents representing 11% of the total respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed that there is no constant power outage in the state, while 0 representing 0% remains undecided.

In the table above, higher percentage of the respondents (40%) strongly agreed that there is constant power outage. Therefore it is obvious that hotels in Abia State face the problem of epileptic power supply which affects its operations

Table 4: Analysis to determine measures taken to reduce the challenges of hotels in Abia State

Respondents	Decision	Evergreen hotel	Royal Damgrete	Villa Roy Hotel	Frequency	%
Manpower training	SA	10	40	10	60	40%
Constant power supply	A	5	20	5	30	20%
Favourable policies	U	0	0	0	0	0%
Affordable charges	D	20	15	5	40	27%
Beef up security	SD	10	5	5	20	13%
Total	Total				150	100%

Source: Field Survey 2021

From the table above table, the researcher discover that 60 respondents representing 40% of the total respondents strongly agree and 30 representing 20% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that measure has been taken to tackle the problem facing the Hostility Industry in Abia State, while 40 respondents representing 27% of the total respondents and 20 respondents representing 13% of the total respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed that measures has been taken to tackle the problem facing the Hostility Industry in Abia State, while 0 representing 0% remains undecided.

It is obvious from the result that greater number of respondents 60 strongly agreed while about 30 agreed this indicate that there is plan underway to ameliorate the challenges

Test of hypothesis

H0: There is a relationship between skilled manpower and hotels in Abia State.

Table 5: Does hotels in Abia State have skilled manpower?

Decision	Evergreen hotel	Hotel royal damgrete	Villa Roy Hotel & Suite	Frequency	%
SA	10	5	2	17	11%
A	15	10	3	28	19%
U	0	0	0	0	0%
D	20	10	15	45	30%
SD	30	20	10	60	40%
Total				150	100%

Table 6: Calculation of chi square for EVERGREEN HOTELS .

Decision	O_i	E_i	(O_i-E_i)	$(O_i-E_i)^2$	$(O_i-E_i)^2/E_i$
SA	10	9	1	1	0.11
A	15	14	1	1	0.07
U	0	0	0	0	0
D	20	23	-3	9	0.39
SD	30	30	0	0	0
Total	75				0.57

$X_{cal} = 0,57$

$X_{tab} = (r-1)(c-1)$

$X_{0.05} (5-1)(2-1) = x_{0.05, 4} = 9.49$

Comparing the test statistical with critical value X^2 Calculated = 0.57 > X^2 table Value of 9.49

Decision Rule

Since the calculated chi-square value of 0.57 is less than the chi-square alpha (tabulated) value of 9.488 from the table, null hypothesis is therefore rejected while the alternative hypothesis is therefore accepted. Therefore, there is indeed no relationship between skilled manpower and evergreen hotels in Abia State.

Table 7: Calculation of chi square for Hotel Royal Damgrete .

Decision	O_i	E_i	$(O_i-E_i)^2$	$(O_i-E_i)^2$	$(O_i-E_i)^2/E_i$
SA	5	5.1	-0.1	0.01	0.002
A	10	8.4	1.6	2.56	0.30
U	0	0	0	0	0
D	10	14	-4	-16	1.14
SD	20	18	2	4	0.22
Total	45				1.662

$X_{cal} = 1.662$

$X_{tab} = (r-1)(c-1)$

$X_{0.05} (5-1) (2-1) = x_{0.05, 4} = 9.488$

Decision Rule

Since the calculated chi-square value of 1.622 is less than the observed chi-square (tabulated) value of 9.488 from the table, null hypothesis is therefore rejected while the alternative hypothesis is therefore accepted. Therefore, there is no relationship between skilled manpower and Hotel Royal Damgrete in Abia State.

Table 8: Calculation of chi square for Villa Roy Hotels & Suites.

Decision	O_i	E_i	$(O_i-E_i)^2$	$(O_i-E_i)^2$	$(O_i-E_i)^2/E_i$
SA	2	3.4	-1.4	1.96	0.58
A	3	6	-3	9	1.5
U	0	0	0	0	0
D	15	9	6	36	4
SD	10	12	-2	4	0.33
Total	30				6.41

$X_{cal} = 6.41$

$$X_{\text{tab}} = (r-1)(c-1)$$

$$X_{0.05} (5-1)(2-1) = x_{0.05, 4} = 9.488$$

Decision Rule

Since the calculated chi-square value of 6.41 is less than the chi-square alpha (tabulated) value of 9.488 from the table, null hypothesis is therefore rejected while the alternative hypothesis is therefore accepted. This indicated that unskilled manpower is one of the problems affecting hotels in Abia State

Interpretation of Results

The results from the hypothesis test further proved that hotels in Abia State do not have skilled man power. This is clear as the calculated χ^2 ($0.57 < 9.488$, $1.66 < 9.44$ and $6.41 < 9.488$) was less than the observed χ^2 values from the three hotels.

Summary of Findings

Based on the findings above, the researcher summaries as follows:

The findings of the study shows that hotel industry in Abia state is challenged by lack of expertise erratic power supply, high room charges and insecurity.

Conclusion

It was obvious that hotel operations if given the needed impetus by the proprietors, managers and government, will improve the socio-economy of the country through job creation and revenue generation. But many hotels have become abandoned property due to lack of expertise, insecurity, erratic power supply and high charges of hotel products.

However, if hospitality industries should be given the chance for appropriate management of resources, skilled manpower, effective staff, constant power outage, security; the hospitality industries will be able to achieve almost its objectives.

Recommendations

From the findings of the work, the following recommendations are made:

- a. Hotel operators, managers and owners should employ skilled manpower in the operation of hotel for maximum output and also, in-service training should be held for new workers to integrate the needed skills in hotel operations.
- b. Also government should beef up security in every state to ensure total safety and security of life and property of Nigerians and foreigners alike. This will encourage more hotel patronage if customers are sure that their visit to hotels is safe.
- c. Government of Abia state should ensure steady power supply which very important in hotel operation. Also, there is need for federal government to reduce and stabilize petrol prices in Nigeria to encourage more investment in hotel industry considering its contributions in the economic development of the nation.

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