



CHALLENGES FACED BY HOTEL OPERATORS AND HOTEL OWNERS IN THE MAINTENANCE OF HOSPITALITY INDUSTRIES IN ADO-EKITI, EKITI STATE, NIGERIA



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Abstract: The paper assessed the challenges faced by Hotel operators and Hotel owners in the maintenance of hospitality industries in Ado Ekiti. The study involved the use of a well-structured questionnaire to elicit information from respondents. Purposive sampling technique was used to select three (3) star Hotel as the sample for the study. Three (3) star Hotels are the ones that have at least some average facilities that can be maintained. In all the 3 star Hotels in Ado Ekiti, a total sample of 20 Hotels were selected for the study using convenient sampling technique which form 10% of the total population of the Hotels in the study area. The patrons who responded to the questionnaire were selected with the use of convenient sampling technique. A total of 6 management staff were selected from each of the 20 Hotels. However, the researcher was able to retrieve 116 out of 120 copies of questionnaire administered. The data collected were analysed using descriptive method of data analysis. The study revealed that: yearly budget allocation is a major problem facing Hotel operators and Hotel owners; accelerating change and emerging technology are global issues and challenges to Hotel management; majority of the three (3) star Hotels in Ado Ekiti do not experience any problem in executing their maintenance plans and energy efficiency in light of increasing electronic equipment, high volume of lights, chillers, air conditioners were the major global issue and challenges to Hotel management in Ado Ekiti. Hotel maintenance should not be taken lightly in the present day Hotel business as people needs adequate and efficient hospitality services in the face of the high level of work rate they engage in. The study recommended that: preventive maintenance should be commonly carried out as a schedule to save cost of emergency repairs in Hotels consideration must be given by the Hotel owners to the fact that a building ages as the years go by and its maintenance challenges increases. Owners and operators should consider refurbishment every 8-10 years followed by minor renovation in the years after because minor renovation is rational in this industry which is characterised by rapid changes in Hotels building structures and influences by technological and societal changes. This will restore Hotels to a better than new condition and the Hotel's revenue generation and value will not decrease.

Keywords: Hotels, Hotel operators, hospitality industries and maintenance

Introduction

Maintenance is the key for providing better built environment to building customers and users. Maintenance of the hospitality building is significant as its effectiveness will directly affect the quality of services, which have direct and significant effect on satisfying customers' wants and expectations. Proper maintenance management is essential for Hotel operations for many reasons including (Wordsworth, 2011). According to Francis (2011), maintenance is defined as 'work undertaken in order to keep, restore or improve every part of a building, its services and surrounds, to a currently acceptable standard, and to sustain the utility and value of the building. Maintenance is defined as the combination of all technical and administration actions, including supervision actions, intended to retain an item in, or restore it to a state in which it can perform a required function'. Maintenance is defined as "the effort in connection with different technical and administrative actions to keep a physical asset, or restore it to a condition where it can perform a required function (El-Haram, 2012).

Hotel maintenance is the performance of general, preventative, corrective and emergency maintenance for a given Hotel facility. It involves a combination of technical and administrative actions carried out to retain an item, equipment, system, plant or machine in order to restore it to an acceptable working condition (Tse, 2002).

Generally, Hotels are complex and costly when it comes to maintenance with various uses of spaces that have different schedules and uses for guest rooms" restaurants, health club, swimming pool, retail store and each has a functional

engineering system required for its maintenance. Maintenance therefore has to be done throughout the year, requiring competent staff to undertake building services, operation and maintenance, supplemented by outsourced contractors (Chan, 2001; 2003). In the hospitality industry the maintenance of the engineering systems is important despite its complex processes as its effectiveness will directly affect the quality of Hotel service, food, and beverage which have direct and significant effect on guests' impression of the Hotel (Chan, 2001).

Hassanien & Looseket (2002) in conducting a survey in the Hotel market in Egypt observed that almost 70% of respondents stated that owners are the main barriers to renovation in both limited and full service Hotels. This is followed by lack of money, lack of appropriate in house experience and lack of suitable manpower to renovate respectively. Their findings further revealed that Hoteliers give more attention to intangible part of the Hotel product (services like offering food and beverages) because creating value in intangible products was significantly higher than in tangible products.

This confirms Guiding (2003) assertions that Hotel owners pay more attention to profitability than brand image. The writers therefore concluded that there is a need for „greater articulation of goals and objectives“ when it comes to renovation. In Ado Ekiti, Hotel maintenance has been a major problem for the Hotel owners; this could be seen on my visit to many of the Hotels in the study area, building a Hotel is one thing, while maintaining the Hotel is another thing. This is the reason many of the Hotels are not performing

effectively in satisfying customer needs in the study area most especially from the three star Hotels as gathered from superficial survey made by the researcher at the beginning of this research. Hence, the need for this investigation.

The objective of this paper is to examine the challenges faced by Hotel operators and Hotel owners in the maintenance of hospitality industries in Ado Ekiti.

Maintenance is “the effort in connection with different technical and administrative action to keep a physical asset, or restore it to a condition where it can perform a required function (British Standard Institute, 1993; cited in Chan, 2001). Lind & Muyingo (2009) also stated the meaning of maintenance as “restoring to or retain to a state in which an item can perform an initially specified function and all actions aimed towards this are maintenance activities” Maintenance is also seen as an investment because resources are spent today to do maintenance in order to reduce cost or get higher benefits in the future as compared to if the resources are not spent. However despite this opinion maintenance is generally separated from “true” investment because it is matter of restoring an old function or keeping up an old function (Lind and Muyingo, 2009).

Many Hotel owners make 3-5 year maintenance plans, however they fail to practise this plan until about a few months. This is frustrating for property managers because they believe that maintenance plans should be followed to a larger extent and not postponed because deferment of such planned measures are irrational from an economic perspective (Lind & Muyingo, 2011).

Summarizing stylish facts about Hotel maintenance in Sweden, Lind & Muyingo (2011) stated that a large share of maintenance was done as corrective measures, maintenance planning is also done at shorter period of time like a year and therefore there is rescheduling of maintenance actions all the time. Furthermore maintenance are opportunistic and done when tenant needs a change or corrective maintenance to be carried out. Maintenance therefore is affected by the budget situation and done when a property owner like a public authority has money left in its "investment budget", or when situations are good economically that more maintenance is carried out. This is contrary when economic situation becomes tougher because maintenance expenditure is reduced (Lind & Muyingo, 2011).

As such planning of building maintenance is underdeveloped and the goal is often thought to be to build up a system, resembling systems from various industrial sectors like the airline industry where more detailed plans are followed rather closely (Lind & Muyingo, 2011). The writers further stated

that the attitudes (stylish facts) mentioned above are rational because of several uncertainties in the adaptation of planned maintenance.

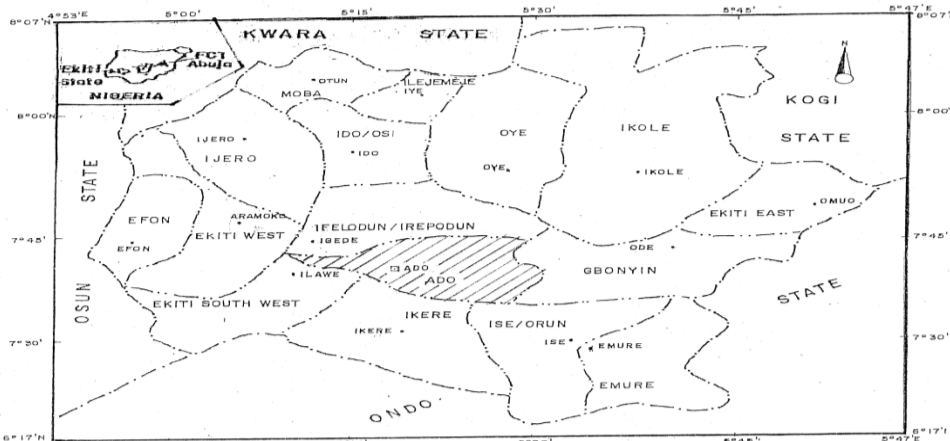
Uncertainty about cost of specific measures compels most organizations to work within some kind of budget. In the public sector there are yearly budgets that should be kept but in private companies there are typically also a wish to show stable results and therefore an interest in smoothing costs. There are also instances when in situations of uncertainty it might be rational to wait because new information can affect the value of this option. Putting such a measure on hold when there might be policy changes in a near future might be rational. Economic changes according to the writers affect what is rational to do with a specific building. This requires building up a knowledge management system incorporating flexibility in planning and where continuous adjustment of the plans is a built-in part of the system (Lind & Muyingo, 2011).

Kim (2012) writing on the status of Swedish hospitality firms stated that only small amount have written maintenance strategies or computerized maintenance information systems and quite a lot of them give maintenance low status. However preventive maintenance at predetermined intervals and corrective maintenance are the most common maintenance planning techniques. Swedish firms according to the writer have not fully made maintenance a company oriented issue and centralized maintenance departments govern resources in large firms, but outsourcing has become important in small firms, despite this the writer is of the opinion that the average firm should be able to improve.

Materials and Methods

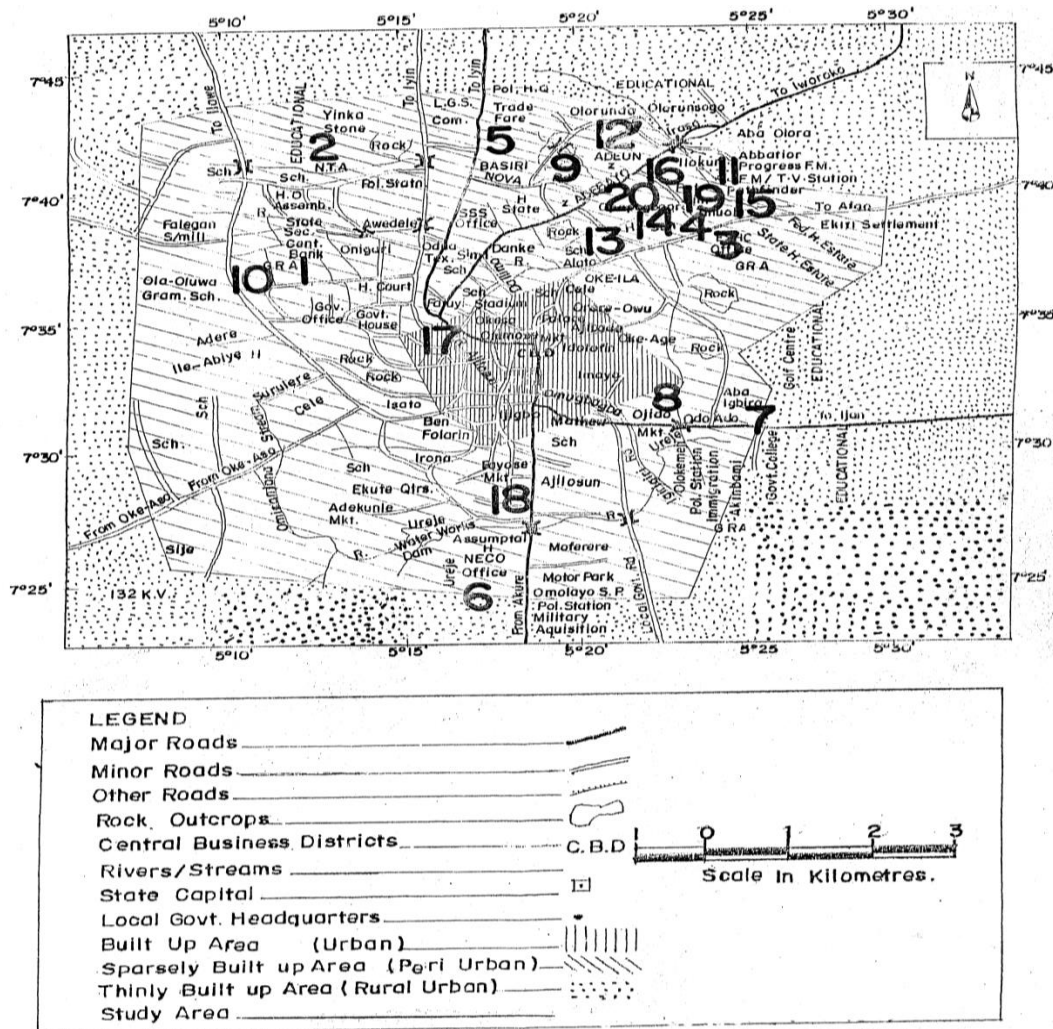
The study area

Ado-Ekiti is located between latitude 7°25'N and 7°45'N of the equator and between longitude 5°05'E and 5°30'E of the Greenwich Meridian as shown in Fig. 1. Ado-Ekiti has length has breadth of 32 and 28 km, respectively. It is about 199km to the Northern Ekiti and Erio to the north (43.5 km), Ijero to the North East (7.5 km), Southern and South Eastern to the South (59 km) and Western Ekiti of the West (9 km). Politically, Ado Ekiti is the capital city of Ekiti-State and has since 1996 enjoyed this status. Ado Ekiti has evolved and continued to enjoy urban status and adequately qualify to be called a city as it reflects in political, economic, social and cultural identity than many modern urban areas lack. Ado Ekiti last known population was put at is 424, 300 (NPC, 2006) with a growth rate of 3.2% per year, the projected population of Ado Ekiti will be 545,447 in 2019.



Source: Ado local government Secretariat, Ado-Ekiti/Department of Geography and Planning Science Cartographic Unit, Ekiti State University, EKSU, Ado-Ekiti

Fig. 1: Ekiti State political: Ado Local Government Area



Source: Ado local government Secretariat, Ado-Ekiti/Dept. of Geography & Planning Science, Cartographic Unit, Ekiti State University, EKSU, Ado-Ekiti

Fig. 2: Ado-Ekiti in map showing the sampling locations

Table 1: Table showing name of Hotels and their addresses in the study area

S/N	Name of Hotel	Address
1	Soteria Hotel	GRA Onigari, Ado Ekiti.
2	Hosanna Hotel	NTA road along Satellite campus, Ado Ekiti.
3	Banky Suites	Along Ado-Iworoko road, Ado Ekiti.
4	Home Away Hotel	Along Afao road, Ado Ekiti.
5	Royal Castle and Suites	Basiri along Iyin road, Ado Ekiti.
6	Festmag Hotel	Opposite Akure garage, Ado Ekiti.
7	De Jewels Apartment and Suites	Along Ijan road, Ado Ekiti.
8	Southwestern Hotel	Along Ijan road, Ado Ekiti
9	Radjut Hotel	Along Ado-Iworoko road, Ado Ekiti.
10	D'bliss Tit Hotel	GRA Onigari, Ado Ekiti.
11	Pathfinder Hotel	Behind De Head block industry, Ado Ekiti.
12	Prosperous Royal Hotel	Along Ado-Iworoko road, Ado Ekiti.
13	Yemraf Hotel	No 2, Fagbuaro avenue off housing road, Ado Ekiti.
14	Parkview Hotel	Opposite Tinuola Maximum School off housing road, Ado Ekiti.
15	Don Clemens Hotel	Behind Tinuola Maximum School Ado-Iworoko road, Ado Ekiti.
16	Midas Hotel and Arena	Midas way, off Ado-Iworoko road, Ado Ekiti.
17	Simbol Hotel and Suites	Ajilosun along Ado-Ikere road, Ado Ekiti
18	Kay Galaxy Hotel	Ajilosun behind little by little plaza, Ado Ekiti.
19	Tani Vic Hotel	Opposite Olawuwo Filling Station along Ado-Iworoko road, Ado-Ekiti.
20	Friendly's Hotel	No 34, Opopogboro Street, Ado Ekiti.

Source: Author's compilation (2020)

Sampling techniques

The research employed the use of survey research method; it involved the use of a well structured questionnaire to elicit information from respondents. Purposive sampling technique was used to select three (3) star Hotel as the sample for the study. The reason for making use of the purposive sampling was because the researcher feels it is right to use 3 Star Hotel for the research. Three (3) star Hotels are the ones that have at least some average facilities that can be maintained.

In all the 3 star Hotels in Ado Ekiti, a total sample of 20 Hotels were selected for the study using convenient sampling technique which form 10% of the total population of the Hotels in the study area; the Hotels selected were: Soteria Hotel, Hosanna Hotel, Banky Suites, Home Away Hotel, Royal Castle and Suites, Festmag Hotel, De Jewels Apartment and Suites, Southwestern Hotel, Radjut Hotel, D'bliss Tit Hotel, Pathfinder Hotel, Prosperous Hotel, Yemraf Hotel, Parkview Hotel, Don Clemens Hotel, Midas Hotel, Symbol Hotel and Suites, Kay Calaxy Hotel, Tani Vic Hotel and Friendly's Hotel all in Ado Ekiti, Ekiti State (Fig. 2 and Table 1). The patrons who responded to the questionnaire were selected with the use of convenient sampling technique. A total of 6 management staff were selected from each of the 20 Hotels. However, the researcher was able to retrieve 116 out of 120 copies of questionnaire administered. The data collected were analysed using descriptive method of data analysis.

Results and Discussion

Data in Table 2 revealed that 31.9 and 42.2% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that yearly budget allocation for financing repairs is a major problem facing Hotel operators and Hotel owners while 20.7 and 5.2% of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree to the assertion. However, this implies that yearly budget allocation is a major problem facing Hotel operators and Hotel owners as stated by the respondents. The finding also revealed that 27.5 and 39.7% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that accelerating change and emerging technology are global issues and challenges to Hotel management while the remaining 32.8% of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree, respectively. Hence, this implies that accelerating change and emerging technology are

global issues and challenges to Hotel management as stated by the respondents.

Table 2: Challenges encountered in hotel management

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yearly budget allocation problem		
Strongly Agree	37	31.9
Agree	49	42.2
Disagree	24	20.7
Strongly Disagree	6	5.2
Accelerated change and emerging technology challenges		
Strongly Agreed	32	27.5
Agree	46	39.7
Disagree	19	16.4
Strongly Disagree	19	16.4
Total	116	100

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 3: Hotel maintenance plans execution is confronted with challenges

Maintenance plans execution is confronted with challenges	Frequency	%
Yes	26	22.4
No	90	77.6
Total	116	100

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Hotel maintenance plans execution

From the Table 3, it is revealed that 22.4% of the Hotels experience problems while executing their maintenance plan and some of this problem include: insufficient man power, lack of fund, financial problem, reluctance of Hotel operator/owner in maintenance work, unskilled professionals in the field etc. While 77.6% of the Hotels do not experience any problem in executing their maintenance plan. However, this implies that majority of the three (3) star Hotels in Ado Ekiti do not experience any problem in executing their maintenance plans.

Table 4: Global issue and challenges to hotel management

Global issue and challenges of hotel management	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Emergency repairs for plumbing, power or gas and others	34	29.3
Energy efficiency in light of increasing electronic equipment, high volume of lights, chillers, air conditioners	50	43.1
Escalating renovation and constructional cost	11	9.5
Financial Constraints	21	18.1
Total	116	100

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Global issue and challenges

As shown in Table 4 that 29.3% of the respondents asserted that emergency repairs for plumbing, power or gas and others is a global issue to Hotel management, 43.1% of the respondents revealed that energy efficiency in light of increasing electronic equipment, high volume of lights, chillers, air conditioners are the major global issue and challenges to Hotel management while 9.5% of the respondents' asserted that escalating renovation and constructional cost are the hidden global issue and challenges to Hotel management meanwhile 18.1% of the respondents further revealed that most Hotel global issue and challenge is financial constraints. Hence, this implies that energy

efficiency in light of increasing electronic equipment, high volume of lights, chillers, air conditioners were the major global issue and challenges to Hotel management in Ado Ekiti.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study revealed that: yearly budget allocation is a major problem facing Hotel operators and Hotel owners; accelerating change and emerging technology are global issues and challenges to Hotel management; majority of the three (3) star Hotels in Ado Ekiti do not experience any problem in executing their maintenance plans and energy efficiency in light of increasing electronic equipment, high

volume of lights, chillers, air conditioners were the major global issue and challenges to Hotel management in Ado Ekiti. Hotel maintenance should not be taken lightly in the present day Hotel business as people needs adequate and efficient hospitality services in the face of the high level of work rate they engage in.

Recommendations

However, preventive maintenance should be commonly carried out as a schedule to save cost of emergency repairs in Hotels. Whilst issuing purchasing orders operators should consider durable finishes, high quality, long-life equipments because these have direct effect on implementation and cost of operation by reducing maintenance expenditure over a period of time. Preventive maintenance should be done daily and on monthly basis by the Hotels owners. While pursuing preventive maintenance, consideration must be given by the Hotel owners to the fact that a building ages as the years go by and its maintenance challenges increases. Owners and operators should consider refurbishment every 8-10 years followed by minor renovation in the years after because minor renovation is rational in this industry which is characterised by rapid changes in Hotels building structures and influences by technological and societal changes. This will restore Hotels to a better than new condition and the Hotel's revenue generation and value will not decrease. All Hotels owners should consider energy management and come out with specific policies and actions for the maintenance of their facilities, reduction in energy usage and conservation of the use of water. It is recommended that future researchers should consider management of energy in Hotels due to increasing number of equipments required for operating this industry that consume high volume of electric power that results in rising energy cost.

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