

The Effect of Insecurity On Hotel Business Operations in Enugu State, Nigeria.

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Abstract

The study examines the effectiveness of security measures and systems put in place in hotel operations in Enugu State, the challenges encountered and the measures to remedy the situation. Survey research design was adopted as the method of study, while Taro Yamane formula was employed to determine the sample size. The respondents were selected using convenience sampling techniques. Simple descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that recordable locks, alarm system, surveillance systems, emergency plan, fire sprinkler among others are some of the security measures used to curb insecurity in the study area with an acceptable mean score of 2.50. The study recommends that security officers should collaborate with government security agencies in order to curb the menace of insecurity in hotel business operation.

Keywords: Hotel, insecurity, business, safety, guest, security

Introduction

Insecurity is the state of being exposed to risk or anxiety. The exposure could be as a result of inadequate measures against insecurity by the state or by a group of people etc. This usually happens when the law enforcement agents are poorly educated, trained, remunerated and motivated. It could also occur when people's basic necessities of life are lacking. Similarly, Beland (2015) views the concept of insecurity as a state of fear or anxiety, due to absence of protection. For Ezemonye (2011), it is also a state of not being secured, in certain environments while Ajodo-Adebanjo and Okorie (2014) view it as a state of being subjected to danger or threat. Under this circumstance, people's state of mind concerning safety could be categorized by self-doubt and defenselessness and such persons could consider themselves targets for harm. Thus, the concept of insecurity connotes different meanings such as danger, hazard, uncertainty, lack of protection, lack of safety, kidnapping among others.

The hotel establishment has been associated with crime-related challenges since the days of small inns to the present times (Smith, 2014). These challenges are attributed to a 24/7 business operation times that the industry provides (Campbell, 2015). Security measures in the hotel industry are lax basically due to the permission granted to members of the public, who are strangers to the hotel to visit the premises (Hebdo, 2015). Numerous types of

crimes like, internet fraud, data breach, robbery, theft among others take place in a hotel facility. However, theft is a crime that is undeniably the most prevalent in the hotel industry (Mansfeld & Pizam, 2006 in Chartier, 2014). Perpetrators of crimes committed in hotels are seldom arrested and convicted as they sometimes commit victimless crimes, such as money laundering, drug trafficking and robbery during prostitution, which are not reported. This is due to the fact that some guests contribute towards crimes committed against them. According to Maune, (2013), a victimless crime is a form of behavior that is illegal but is consensual in nature and lacks a complaining participant in crime. However, these activities are used by the same victims to campaign for legalization and decriminalization (McLaughlin & Muncie, 2006 in Maune, 2013). Some crimes in the hotel begin in the foyer as well as at the reception counter, such as theft, robbery and credit card fraud among others. Hotels strive to portray the host-image of openness, relaxation, comfort and enjoyment as well as of a friendly environment, but it is sometimes difficult due to security challenges, especially in the study area (Khan, 2013). Though, a well-secured hotel leads to a satisfactory outcome which is likely to reinforce customer loyalty (Diminyi *etal*, 2021).

Existing security measures need to be reviewed to protect valuable hotel assets, personnel, and most importantly, the guests and their valuables. The hotel industry's goal, like any other industry, is to ensure the safety and security of people and their belongings. Thus, the internal security-related tools, namely recordable locks, alarm system, surveillance system and emergency plan, are required to reduce security risks (Hymanson, 2015). Guests also need to be protected in the swimming pool areas, spas, and parking bays. External resources like local law enforcement and property insurers also contribute towards the safety and security of guests and hotel employees (Hymanson, 2015). Indeed, internal and external threats contribute significantly to property loss experienced by the hotel, requiring that the hotel industry demonstrates reasonable care to identify unique and specific threats that exist to asset security (Hymanson, 2015). A hotel guest brings with him or her valuable items that will make their stay worthwhile, expecting the hotel to protect them. The guest will leave certain property behind in the room that the belongings are safe, but he/she will be shocked, if the opposite is the case (Hebdo, 2015). Though, a well-secured hotel leads to a satisfactory outcome which is likely to reinforce customer loyalty (Diminyi *etal*, 2021). Upon identifying that there is lack of protection, the hotel guests may anticipate risks and associated criminal activities. The security of assets, the safety of the personnel who keep them running, and the well-being of the guests becomes increasingly important as insecurity threat spreads around the globe. However, uncertainties regarding security can significantly determine fluctuations of touristic flows, so residents' and tourists' safety

becomes a global problem for a sustainable tourism, (Ijeomah & Ukabuilu, 2023).

In today's world of proliferating terrorism, incessant killing, kidnapping and heightened security concerns, security department in the hotel industry are faced with a grim, new reality. Hotels are increasingly vulnerable to attack by radical groups who use terror as their strategy of choice. Rising attacks against hotels in the Eastern part of Nigeria especially in Enugu State is an indication that no region is immune and no hotel is completely safe. The only way to prevent or reduce insecurity threats is for the security department in the hotels to be alert at all time and play their roles with full responsibilities in partnership with government security agents like armed police officers, among others. The main objective of the study is to determine the effect of insecurity on hotel business operations in Enugu State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to: (1) examine the effectiveness of security measures and systems in hotels operating in the study area, (2) determine the security challenges encountered in the area, and (3) identify the measures to remedy the security issues in hotels.

Literature Review

The roles and responsibilities of the security department are to ensure that guests and employees are safe and properties are protected. Guests' and personnel's safety as well as facility damage are serious liability issues, hotels encounter in day to day running of their business (Hymanson, 2015).

Terrorist attacks against hotels throughout the world over the last few years have underscored the need to assess each location and provide security solutions for both facilities and the customers and staff who work in hotels. This include, but not limited to religious threat, kidnapping, herdsman attack, ethnic threat, bombing, stealing, fire outbreak, fraud, cybercrime, sexual harassment, ethnic violence, among others. All these unarguably compromise the safety and security of guests and staff in the hotel industry. However, the solutions and tools that can help to facilitate the efforts of security personnel to reduce insecurity in hotels are CCTV, walkie-talkie, metal detector devices, chemical/bomb detectors among others (Obiora & Nwokorie, 2018). In addition, security department in hotel should use current intelligence that provides a thorough evaluation of the locality, and reliable practical solutions to close vulnerability gaps, protect assets personnel and guest of hospitality establishments (Onugha, Ibem, & Aderonmu, 2014; Obiora & Nwokorie, 2018). Most hotel enterprises are moving towards strengthening their security systems by providing advanced security arrangements to ensure increased confidence on the part of hotel investors, employees, and guests, who form the core elements that foster industry development (Onugha, Ibem, & Aderonmu, 2014; Obiora & Nwokorie, 2018). Furthermore, Nwokorie,

Everest & Ojo (2014) emphasize that one major problem that affects the development of the hotel industry is the unfavourable government decisions and its lack of policy development on hospitality and tourism security challenges. This should be treated as an essential condition for the success of the hospitality business operations.

Khadka (2014) posited that the lack maintenance of sufficient degree of safety and confidence among customers and employees of an establishment, provides a fertile backdrop for the work, structures, and processes known as 'security.' It applies to any vulnerable and valuable asset, such as a person, dwelling, community, nation, or organization. Security, as a condition, is the degree of resistance to or protection from harm. The main function of the hotel security system, according to Negi & Manohar (2011) is to safeguard guests' and employees' lives and their properties. The security department of a hotel is responsible for the overall security of the building, in-house guests, visitors, day users, and employees of the hotel (Khadka, 2014). The critical points for consideration in hotel security include the prevention of theft and pilferage by employees and guests, the avoidance of intentional waste by employees, and the development of emergency plans for the protection of employees and guests in the event of a civil disturbance (Negi&Manohar, 2011). It is the moral and legal responsibility of a hotel to protect its employees, guests, and their property against threats posed by those with a conscious intent to cause havoc (Khadka, 2014). In all, hotel owners should ensure the safety and wellbeing of their customers and staff at all times. This explains the need to put in place adequate security gadgets to monitor the occurrences within hotel environment to minimize the rate of insecurity (Akpan, 2017).

Frey, Luechinger, & Stutze (2017) opined that hotels have become a frequent target of terrorist activities in recent years. For this reason, hotels are being affected as individuals planning their holidays are less likely to choose a destination with a higher threat of terrorist attack. The hotel industry has been a great source of revenue to the government through value added tax and similar revenue collections, but without the government necessarily providing most of the social services required for successful business operations (Khemani, 2011). The government, at the state level, is usually uninterested in the size of private organizations set up in relation to the provision of all-round security for such businesses, because security is exclusively under the aegis of the legislative authority of the central government (Nwokorie et al.,2014). Hymanson (2015) identified the security measures protecting hotels to include but not limited to, hotel staff identification, identification passes, fire and security alarm system, close circuit television (CCTV) and camera system for recording and storage control or video surveillance of hotel premises and various devices. They also

1	Recordable locks	55(64%)	25(29%)	6(7%)	0	86	307	3.57	Accept
2	Alarm system	50(58%)	26(30%)	10(12%)	0	86	298	3.47	Accept
3	Surveillance security system	45(52%)	35(41%)	6(7%)	0	86	297	3.45	Accept
4	Emergency plan	60(70%)	21(24%)	5(6%)	0	86	313	3.64	Accept
5	Fire sprinklers	50(58%)	26(30%)	10(12%)	0	86	298	3.47	Accept
6	Smoke detector	55(64%)	25(29%)	6(7%)	0	86	307	3.57	Accept
	Grand Mean							3.53	

Note: VHE= very high extent, HE=high extent, LE= low extent, VLE= very low extent

Table1 shows that recordable locks, alarm system, surveillance security system, emergency plan, Fire sprinklers and Smoke detector are available in some hotel establishments in the study area for effective security operations. Each of the items had an acceptable mean response score that is greater than 2.50. This implies that effective security measures and systems are put in place hotel establishments.

Table2: Mean responses of respondents on the Security challenges in the hotel in the study area.

S/N	ITEMS	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total no	Total score	Mean	Remark
1	Unauthorized visitors	50(58%)	20(23%)	10(12%)	6(7%)	86	286	3.33	Accept
2	Theft	45(52%)	35(41%)	6(7%)	0	86	297	3.45	Accept
3	Parking Area theft	51(59%)	22(26%)	12(14%)	1(1%)	86	295	3.43	Accept
4	Disorderly conduct	47(55%)	30(35%)	9(11%)	0	86	296	3.44	Accept
5	Safety emergency	50(58%)	26(30%)	10(12%)	0	86	298	3.47	Accept
6	Criminal activities	45(52%)	35(41%)	6(7%)	0	86	297	3.45	Accept
7	Terrorism	55(64%)	25(29%)	6(7%)	0	86	307	3.57	Accept
8	Pilfering	50(58%)	26(30%)	10(12%)	0	86	298	3.47	Accept
9	Sexual harassment	45(52%)	35(41%)	6(7%)	0	86	297	3.45	Accept

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	Grand mean							3.45	
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Note: VHE= very high extent, HE=high extent, LE= low extent, VLE= very low extent

The result on table 2 shows that unauthorized visitors, theft, parking area theft, disorderly conduct, safety emergency, criminal activities, terrorism, pilfering and sexual harassment pose security challenges in the hotels in the study area. This is because all the items had acceptable mean response scores of above 2.50. This implies that there are security challenges in the hotels in the study area.

Table 3: Mean responses of the respondents on the Measure to remedy the situation or challenges

S/N	ITEMS	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total no	Total score	Mean	Remark
1	Closed circuit television	40(46.5%)	40(46.5%)	6(7%)	0	86	292	3.40	Accept
2.	Walkie-talkie	45(52%)	35(41%)	6(7%)	0	86	297	3.45	Accept
3	Metal detector device chemical/bomb detectors	55(64%)	25(29%)	6(7%)	0	86	307	3.57	Accept
	Grand mean							3.47	

Note: VHE= very high extent, HE= high extent, LE=low extent, VLE= very low extent

The result represented on table 4 shows that Closed circuit television, Walkie-talkie, and Metal detector device chemical/bomb detectors security measures and systems are currently in place to protect the assets in the study area. This is so because all the items had mean response scores of above 2.50. This implies that there are measures to remedy the situation or challenges of insecurity in the study area.

Discussion of Findings

The findings on table 1 shows that recordable locks, alarm system, emergency plan, Fire sprinklers, Smoke detectors, among others are available in some

hotels in the study area for surveillance and other security purposes. The findings corroborate the study by Nwokorie et al (2018) which revealed that the high level insecurity in hotel businesses and limited efforts to address them, but contradicts the findings of Adoyi et al (2014), which revealed that insecurity does not affect hotel business. The implication of the above is that with recordable locks, alarm system surveillance, security system, emergency plan, Fire sprinklers and Smoke detector among others, hotels are effective security measures aimed at minimizing the rate of crime and insecurity in the business.

The findings on Table 2: show that unauthorized visitors, theft, parking area theft, disorderly conduct, safety emergency, criminal activities, terrorism, pilfering and sexual harassment are the major security challenges in the hotels in the study area. The findings are consistent with the findings of Khadka (2014), which revealed that insecurity has not abated, but has assumed a dangerous dimension, threatening the corporate existence of hotel business. The findings are also consistent with the findings of Adoyi et al (2014) which revealed the influence of insecurity as it affects sales of hotel tangible and intangible products. Thus, the security challenges outlined above have continued to bedevil the hotels in the study area.

The result in Table 3 shows that closed circuit television, Walkie-talkie, and Metal detector device, chemical/bomb detectors and systems are currently in place as measures to remedy the situation or challenges. The findings are consistent with the findings of Nwokorie et al (2018), which revealed that insecurity affect hotel business and its growth, and recommended the way forward. The findings are also in consonance with the findings of Adoyi et al (2014) on insecurity and its effect on hotel business and recommended that hotels must ensure the provision of adequate security and guest privacy. The findings showed that security measures impact significantly on the performance of hotels.

Conclusion

This study is significant to the local community as a whole since most of the guests at the hotel facilities come from within. The results of the study revealed the glaring need for security infrastructure and collaboration among hotels within the study area and government security agencies in order to minimize security threats and promote the safety of guests and employees in all departments. It is, therefore, pertinent to make the following recommendations: (1) Hotel securities should work in partnership with government security agencies in order to fight the menace of insecurity in hotel business operations, (2) CCTV surveillance systems should be installed in strategic points such as the reception area; entrances, exit points, parking areas and around the facilities. However, the privacy of the guests should be

take n into consideration at all times. The CCTV should be monitored by trained Security Officers at all times for proactive crime prevention, (3) The baggage of guests must be scanned through a scanner to monitor hotel related items, like towels, robes, cushions, among others, where identifiable colours will be programmed by the hotel for easy identification both on arrival and at the departure of guests, and (4) Multiple entry and exit points should be discouraged in the hotels for easy security checks and control.

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