

Information and Communication Technology (Ict): A Panacea for Hotel Service Delivery in Osun State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study assesses the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as Panacea for Hotel service delivery in Osogbo Metropolis of Osun State. The study population comprises of two hundred and forty (240) Hotels managers within the hotels in Osogbo metropolis, with a sample population size of one hundred and fifty (150), randomly selected with stratified sampling technique. The design of the study was qualitative Research design. Four research questions were raised at the beginning of the study, in attempts to answer these questions, four hypotheses were stated. And twenty (20) research instruments (questionnaires) relating to the questions raised early on the study were constructed. The chi – square statistical method was used to analyze the stated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significances. The result from the analyzed hypotheses revealed that although majority of the hotels management in Osogbo metropolis are aware of the wonder (ICT) will do in terms of effective service delivery in their daily business activities, but many are yet to embrace this modern state of art that we not only reposition their business but increase their revenue generation. The study recommends the following among others based from the findings, that (ICT) should be embraced not only the hotels in the area of study but hotels in Osun State of Nigeria. That management of hotels in the area of study should develop an (ICT) strategic plan; have more self-service enabled that will improve customer services.

Keywords: Information Communication Technology, Hotel and Service Delivery

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

In today business competitive world, the information and communication technology (ICT) has impacted tremendously in the areas such tourism, hospitality, security, law, business, commerce, education and governance. The need to achieve profit-based and developmental objectives through target audience satisfaction has made the information and communication technology (ICT) a strong factor in the survival of organizations, and governance. Any organization that wants to survive in the contemporary society should adopts (ICT) techniques, not just to make its products or services available known to the public but also to ensure patronage of such products or services. The drivers of change in today's world includes, Deregulation, global competition, changing customer expectations, demographic shifts and changing work and lifestyles. The authors are on the view that these changes we lead organization

to embark on activities that will provide a source competitive advantage that we enhance their usage of ICT. That Information and communication technology (ICT), will improve efficiency and cost effectiveness, and present quality products and services to customers. According to (Laudon and Laudon, 2007) (ICT) includes all the technology that facilitates the processing, transfer and exchange of information and communication services. It is considered as a subject of expertise that links information technology (computers and application) and telecommunication networks (intranet and internet) and left people and computers interrelate irrespective of physical location. Werthner and Klein, (2005), explained that (ICT) is a concept contains hardware, software, networks and people that should be integrated as one unit by linking each one to the other in a clear process to generate the information that helps the decision makers, producing products and services presenting, promotion, controlling and for achieving the

organization's aims and goals. The linkage between technological development and service delivery in hotel has been well revolution sweeping across developed nations has altered the economic landscape and the business environment (Grovt. et al, 2006). Similarly, the hospitality industry is at the forefront of the whole tourism sector and it is especially sensitive to the ever increasing competitive pressure and to the growing need for more effective operation and control tools (Santignazio, 2004). Hence, information and communication technology (ICT) is therefore much sought after and is seen as capable of providing new opportunities for business development. It is also quite obvious that most indigenous hospitality business establishment in Nigeria have not maximized the use of information and communication technology strategically and are not reaping benefit commensurate with the substantial sums of money being expended on information and communication technology (ICT), (Peters and Buhalis, 2004). It is against this background that this study is designed to investigate the correlation of information and communication technology (ICT) and Hotels service delivery in Osun State of Nigeria.

Statement of Problem

Market trend in Nigeria today suggests that hospitality organizations need to embrace information and communication technology because it might help in completing against traditional competitors, as well as entrants that build their businesses with the latest technology. In this changing environment, new models of distribution must be designed to lead the change.

A strategic information management function should facilitate the business mission of its enterprise through managed information, managed processes and managed information and communication technology (ICT). Study has shown that the diffusion of the system of information and communication technology in hospitality may increase the efficiency, quality and flexibility with which travel services are supplied. It will also lead to the generation of new services, such as online brochures and interactive video text.

It will also increase the efficiency and quality of service provided and leads to new combinations of hospitality services. Withamongother benefits of (ICT) in hospitality management.Hence this

study sought to investigate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as panacea for Hotel Service delivery in Osogbo metropolis in Osun State of Nigeria.

Objective of This Study Are To

- Determine the extent of relationship between information and communication technology (ICT) and effective service delivery in the selected hotels within the study area.
- Ascertain if the hotels in the study area are equipped with information and communication technology (ICT) facilities for efficient service delivery.
- Ascertain the application and utilization of (ICT) in the selected hotels in the study area.
- Identify the challenges militating against the usage of information and communication technology (ICT) in hotels organization in the study area.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in this study

- Do the hotels in Osogbo metropolis equip with information and communication technology in the running of their daily business?
- What are the effects of information and communication technology (ICT) facilities in the delivery of efficient service in the study area?
- Do the hotels use and apply information and communication technology under the study area?
- What are the challenges militating against the usage of information and communication technology (ICT) implementation in the Hotels under study?

Research Hypotheses

The null hypothesis Ho, was used to formulate the following hypotheses.

- Ho; there will be no significant differences between information and communication technology (ICT) equipment under the study area and efficient service delivery.
- Ho; there will be no significant differences between the effect of information and communication technology (ICT) facilities

and delivery of efficient service in the Hotels under the study area.

- Ho; there is no significant relationship between information and communication technology (ICT) usage and the service delivery on the Hotels under the area of study.
- Ho; there will be no significant relationship between the challenges militating against information and communication technology (ICT) adoption and efficient service delivery on the Hotels under study.

Significance of the Study

This study may be of immense benefit to the professionals in the tourism, hospitality industry, government and the general public. It may serve as further enlightenment to the professional in the industry on the usefulness of information and communication technology (ICT) in their day to day running of their business activities. Furthermore, it may equally educate the public especially customers to the hotels on the usefulness of information and communication technology (ICT) in hospitality services.

Scope of the Study

This study examines the relationship between Information and communication Technology (ICT) usage in some selected hotels in Osogbo metropolis. The study is concerned with the use or adoption of the information and communication technology by hotel operators in Osogbo metropolis.

It explores the views of hoteliers over the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in their day to day services delivery. The management cadres of the hotels within the study area were the target respondents. The study was restricted to the hoteliers within Osogbo metropolis.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE CONCEPT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Effects of (ICT) on Service Delivery

Today's business environment means that tourism and hospitality business have to work hard to maintain and develop their competitiveness. The success of a business, to certain extent, depends on its ability to acquire and utilize updated information and to assist its management and marketing processes. Hence

information and communication technology (ICT) assists organization to manage information dynamically and influence business competitiveness through assisting decision makers to appropriate investments and decisions. Information and communication technology (ICT) helps to meet the demands for timely and accurate information by customers and the (ICT) diffusion in the tourism and hospitality industries has recently increased at an unprecedented rate, (Singh and Kasavana, 2005), further suggested that information and communication technology (ICT), by acting as a protector and enhancer, directly influence the experiences and behavior of tourist.

(Law and Jogaratnam, 2005), suggested that information and communication technology (ICT) can transform the nature of tourism and hospitality products, processes, businesses, and competition, and that tourism and hospitality organizations that have failed to master the right (ICT) systems would find it difficult to direct and manage their information-intensive business damaging their competitiveness.

Buhalis (2003) said that the merging of (ICT) is having and will in the future continue to have a significant role in the hotel operations, society, the way we live our lives and certainly how we conduct our business. Lillicrap and Cousins, (2006) are of the views that its impacts are as follows: This world-wide network of computers allows anyone connected to have virtually limitless data base of information and almost instantaneously communicate with anyone connected.

For most business users, the internet is used to send and receive e-mail and to access information through the World Wide Web. Technically, the internet is the name of the system and the World Wide Web is the software of its most popular elements.

Another effect of (ICT) is the use of the web services to extract information in addition to text and graphics, many sites offer video, images and sound files and with this the demands of customers are easily met.

Interestingly, websites have become an important marketing and promotional tool for business of which the hospitality establishment in Nigeria is no exception. Also Information Technology is the selling aid of reservation of hotel accommodation. Many hotels now have their own websites which serves as an

Electronic Brochure that usually offers opportunity to reserve accommodation. This is already having an impact on global distribution company and travelling agent and the way they do business. Many restaurants and other catering operation are also using website as a valuable means of promotion. Furthermore, Harish (2007) also emphasized that (ICT) provides a versatile promotion tool can be used for variety of purposes such as marketing and direct selling.

Benefits of (ICT) Application in Hotel Services Delivery

(ICT) enables two-way Communication between the hotel industry and consumers, so they have a growing impact on hotel promotion and sales (Buhalis and Jun, 2011; Jenckova and Abraham, 2015).

Hotel Services are better advertised via the internet rather than published brochures, leaflets, or catalogs. Multimedia message is more attractive to customers. ICT allow also to recognize consumers' profiles and offer personalized services. Many of researchers consider advantage associated with new information and communication technology to include reduction of operational costs for business, convenience for consumers, and rapid speed of transactions (Parsons & Oja, 2013). The use of ICT results in a significant cut on transaction costs for hospitality sector enterprises and eliminates the geographical barriers created by distance (through accumulating, processing and distributing proper data), which were necessary to control business processes and in that sense, the healthy development of a company (Minghetti and Buhalis, 2013).

Information and Communication Technologies offer a wide spectrum of solutions influencing the increased efficiency level of economic processes in the area of marketing and sales. (Getzel and Fesenmaier, 2006), argues that tourism cannot develop without the support of ICT and information and communication technology bring in the new potential for hotel business competitiveness. That they also provide both opportunities and challenges for the entire hotel companies.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Adoption Factors

Information and communication technology (ICT) has been described as simply working with computers (Adeosun, and Adetunde, 2009); technology used to support information

gathering, processing, distribution and use (Beckinsale and Ram, 2006). According to Rice and Leonardi (2013), ICTs generally refers to the devices, applications, media, associated hardware and software that receive and distribute, process and store, retrieve and analyze, digital information, between people (as Communication).

Evidence suggests that a firm's propensity to adopt a new ICT is affected by several factors, both internal and external (Nkwaman et. al, 2014), which are connected to each other. The "external (internal) environment consists of those physical and social factors outside (within) the boundaries of the organization or specific decision unit that are taken directly into consideration".

The concept of ICT adoption has been widely investigated across many organizations ranging from manufacturing to service industries with a number of authors (e.g.) Rice and Larnardi, 2013, Lee and Lee 2010; Bayo- Moriones and Lera-Lopet, 2007) dedicating their time trying to understand the factors that impacts ICT adoption by firms.

While recent studies have indicated a keen interest on hospitality and tourism organizations on ICTs adoption factors. (e.g. Crystal, et al; 2011; Duffy, 2010, Mihalic and Buhalis, 2013), the rate and degree of ICT adoption varies considerably across the hospitality and tourism enterprise.

There is consensus in the extent in which literature regarding to contingency and structural factors that determine ICT adoption by organizations with a number of studies (Nwakanma et al., 2014; Yousaf, 2011; Seyal et al; 2007; Bayo-Moriones and Lera-Lopet, 2007) pointing to the relevance of adopter's characteristics.

(For example, firm size, firm location, age, capabilities, etc.) in determining ICT adoption. Nwakanman et al. (2014). For instance, considered the geographical position of a hotel as a significant causal factor of ICT adoption by hotel as a significant causal factor of ICT adoption by hotels as this would limit their market size, profile of visitors if targets and competition level. Seyal et al.

(2007) in their study reported that organizational attributes such as organization nature and sizes as well as type of business are important predictors of SMEs adopting e-commercialism.

METHODOLOGY

This session presents a comprehensive description of how this study was carried out. It covers areas such as the research design, population of the study, sample size and sampling technique, research instrument, reliability of the research instrument, validity of the research instrument, and method of data analysis.

Research Design

Qualitative Research designs were adapted for this study. According to (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2003), qualitative research design, is a research design where the natural setting is the direct source of the data. That is, where the collected data is without further manipulation. The research observed the research participants and collected data in their natural setting without controlling any aspect of the research situation. This study intends to find out information and communication technology usage in terms of hotel service delivery in Osun state of Nigeria.

Population of the Study

The population of this study comprises of two hundred and forty (240) hotel managers randomly selected within the Hotels in Osogbo metropolis.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

A sample size of (150) one hundred and fifty respondents were used for the study, which represent 63% of the studied population. Stratified sampling technique was adopted for the study because it possesses the characteristic that can serve the purpose of the study.

Research Instrument

Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into two sections; section ‘A’ contained the personal data of respondents; while section ‘B’ presented twenty (20) questions that sought respondents view on information and communication technology (ICT) as correlate

Hotels services delivery in Osun state. Also the questionnaire adopted Likert five points scale of Strongly Agree(SA), Agree(A), Undecided, disagree(D), and strongly disagree(SD).

Validity of the Instrument

In order to ensure validity of the data generated, care was taken to make sure that the contents or questions contained in the questionnaire were appropriate and exhaustive. Also the measuring instrument was given to an expert in the field for them to critically examine it and thereafter corrections were effected following their suggestions.

Reliability of the Instrument

A pilot test was carried out before the actual data collection with the questionnaire to ascertain the reliability of the qualitative instrument and test for correctness and clarity of items in the questionnaire.

Method of Data Analysis

The descriptive statistics of percentages and frequency counts were used for analysis of the collected data, while the inferential statistics of chi-square was used for testing the hypotheses at 95% level of confident interval or 0.05level of significance. The chi-square statistics is given as

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where

χ^2 = Chi-square

O = Observed frequency

E = Expected frequency.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Research Question 1

Do the hotels in Osogbo metropolis equip with information and communication technology in the running of their daily business?

Table4.4. Respondents on the statement: Do the hotels in Oshogbo metropolis equip with information and communication technology in the running of their daily business?

VARIABLE	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
S.A	40	40	72	42	60	254
A	25	35	34	30	20	144
SD	30	15	7	25	15	92
U	20	18	3	15	10	66
S.D	5	12	4	8	15	44
TOTAL	120	120	120	120	120	600

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Hypothesis 1

Ho: There is no significant difference between (ICT) equipment under the study area and efficient service delivery

Hi: There is significant difference between (ICT) equipment under the study area and efficient service delivery.

The Chi- square statistics was used to test the effectiveness of the above statement at 0.05 level of significant.

The test is conducted at 0.05 level of significant.

Degree of freedom (d/f)(C – 1)(R – 1) = 16

That is, (5 – 1) · (5 – 1) = 4 * 4 = 16

For reliability and accuracy of our findings, a statistical test of significance of ICT equipment relationship with efficient service delivery was conducted as required by Hypothesis 1.

The calculated chi-square value is obtained from the calculations contained in Table 4.5 above. Since the chi-square calculated value of 64.16 is greater than the tabulated value which is 26.296 at 0.05 level of significance, it is therefore concluded that we reject the null hypothesis (H₀) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H₁). This implies that information and communication Technology (ICT) equipments

Table4.5. Respondents on the statement: Effects of ICT facilities in the delivery of efficient service in the study area.

VARIABLE	6	7	8	9	10	TOTAL
S.A	70	10	45	55	41	221
A	20	15	25	26	31	117
SD	7	50	20	12	23	112
U	13	15	17	15	14	74
S.D	10	30	13	12	11	76
TOTAL	120	120	120	120	120	600

Hypothesis 2

H₀: There is no significant difference between the effect of (ICT) facilities and delivery of efficient service in the hotels in the study area.

H₁: There is a significant difference between the effect of (ICT) facilities and delivery of efficient service in the hotels in the area of study

The test is conducted at 0.05 level of significant.

Degree of freedom (d/f)(C – 1)(R – 1) = 16

That is,(5 – 1) · (5 – 1) = 4 * 4 = 16 Effort was also made to empirically validate this

we correlated with hotel service delivery in the study area. Our result is in submission to (Connolly et al, 2005) who suggested that ubiquitous presence of (ICT) equipments (systems),work cooperatively to assist managers to deliver quality service to their customers and to enhance operational efficiency and control costs.(Law and Jogaratnam, 2005) also argue in favor to Connolly et al (2005), suggesting that information and communication technology (ICT) can transform the nature of tourism and hospitality products, processes, businesses, and competition, and that tourism and hospitality organizations that have failed to master the right (ICT) systems would find it difficult to direct and manage their information-intensive business, damaging their competitiveness.

Evidence from literatures revealed that in order to have an effective and efficient hotel service delivery, it is important to recognize and to anticipate ICT in running of their daily business. Tourism cannot develop without the support of ICT, information and communication technology brings in the new potential for hotel business competitiveness (Getzel and Fesenmaier 2006).

Research Question 2

What are the effects of information and communication technology (ICT) facilities in the delivery of efficient service in the study area?

hypothesis as stated above with the use of chi-square statistics.

The computation is shown, the chi-square calculated value of 119.42 is greater than the tabulated value which is 26.296 at 0.05 level of significance, it is therefore concluded that we reject the null hypothesis (H₀) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H₁).This implies that (ICT) facilities in the hotels in the study area will enhance efficient service delivery.

Moreover, opinion gathered from our respondent suggested that if hotels in Osogbo metropolis adopted modern state of art (ICT) facilities, it

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will improve their effectiveness of service delivery, which will in turn improve their revenue generation.

Research Question 3

Do the hotels use and apply information and communication technology in the study area?

Table4.6. Respondents on the statement: (ICT) Usage and Services delivery.

VARIABLE	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
S.A	60	30	70	38	45	253
A	30	48	25	32	23	158
SD	10	22	5	17	17	71
U	15	15	7	15	12	64
S.D	5	5	13	18	13	54
TOTAL	120	120	120	120	120	600

Hypothesis 3

H_0 : There is no significant relationship between information and communication Technology (ICT) usage and service delivery in the Hotels under the study area.

H_i : There is significant relationship between information and communication Technology (ICT) usage and service delivery in the Hotels under the study area.

The Chi-Square Statistics is given as
$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$$

The test is conducted at 0.05 level of significant. Degree of freedom (d/f)(C – 1)(R – 1) = 16 That is, (5 – 1) · (5 – 1) = 4 * 4 = 16

The critical value of chi-square at 5% level of significant is 26.296. To validate this claim, a chi-square test of significance is also conducted as required by hypothesis 3. The calculated chi-square value is 61.737, at 5% level of significance, is greater than the tabulated chi-

square value of 26.296, we reject the null hypothesis H_0 and accept the alternative hypothesis H_i which by implication, means that ICT usage in hotel operations we correlated with effective and efficient service delivery. The researcher specifically interviewed a number of hotel operators who insisted that ICT usage in their operations have so far be effective in services delivered to their customers. (Ritchie, 2003), asserts, ICT such as computers are presently widely used in sectors such as Hotel, banking, education, health, commerce, agriculture, transportation, and communication. It could be used for typing, documents, keeping and retrieving information, data analyses, sending and receiving information over short and long distances

Research Question 4

What are challenges militating against the usage of information and communication technology (ICT) implementation in the Hotels under study?

Table4.7. Respondents on the statement: Challenges militating against the usage of (ICT) implementation in the Hotels under study.

VARIABLE	16	17	18	19	20	TOTAL
S.A	75	56	54	80	60	325
A	25	30	33	20	40	148
SD	5	15	10	5	5	40
U	10	6	11	10	5	42
S.D	5	13	12	5	10	45
TOTAL	120	120	120	120	120	600

Hypothesis 4

H_0 : There is no significance relationship between the challenges militating against information and communication technology (ICT) usage and efficient service delivery in the hotels under the study area.

H_i : There is significant relationship between the challenges militating against information and

communication technology (ICT) usage and efficient service delivery in the hotels under the study area. The Chi-Square Statistics is given as
$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$$

The test is conducted at 0.05 level of significant.

Degree of freedom (d/f)(C – 1)(R – 1) = 16

That is, (5 – 1) · (5 – 1) = 4 * 4 = 16

The chi-square statistics was used to test the effectiveness of hypothesis 4. The calculated chi-square value obtained from the calculations stands at 36.29, at 0.05 level of significance, is greater than the tabulated chi-square value of 26.296, we reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1). This implies that silent factors such as the size of the hotel, location of the hotel and host of others, will militate against the adoption of information and communication technology (ICT) in the hotels under the study area. Evidence from literatures have argue in favor, suggesting that a hotel's propensity to adopt a new ICT is affected by several factors, both internal and external (for example, firm size, firm location, age, capabilities, etc.) Our results are in submission to Nwakanman et al. (2014) who for instance considered the geographical position of a hotel as a significant causal factor of ICT adoption by hotels, as this would limit their market size, profile of visitors targets and competition level.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The results from the analyze hypotheses revealed that although majority of the hotels management in Osogbo metropolis are aware the wonder information and communication technology (ICT) will do in terms of effective service delivery in their daily business activities, but many are yet to embrace this modern state of art that we not only reposition their business, but increase their revenue generation. Following the theoretical and empirical analysis carried out in this study, this study has pointed out, if the hotels in the area under study are well equipped with information and communication technology (ICT) equipments, it we enhance their effective service delivery and increase their revenue based. The study also revealed modern state of art (ICT) facilities we have positive relationship with effective service delivery if the hotels in Osogbo metropolis under study embrace it. Information and communication technology facilities in the hotels under study will improves their daily business activities and re-position their business for better performances. The study also revealed that information and communication technology usage by the hotels in the area of study will not only create customer's awareness of the products and services offered for sales by the hotels, but we also enhance efficient and effective service delivery in their daily business activities. The study further revealed that the

challenges militating against (ICT) adoption in the hotels under study have a strong negative correlation in their daily business activities. Silent factors like, the size of the hotel, location of the hotel, age, capabilities and host of others are some of the challenges militating against the adoption of information and communication technology (ICT) adoption in the hotels under study.

These silent factors have been affecting their effective and efficient service delivery in their business activities.

The hotels under study we benefit from information and communication technology (ICT) among others, the following;

(ICT) will help individuals to book rooms from home by using online security to protect their privacy and their financial information.

Individual can use services provided by online travel agents to compare prices and facilities at different hotels.

(ICT) will reduce the operational costs for business, convenience for consumers, and rapid speed of transactions.

(ICT) will influence the efficiency of particular economic processes, alter the nature of connections between the chain links and ultimately open new possibilities for meeting customer's needs, both in term of the product and price of their services.

(ICT) adoption will influence operational productivity of the hotel more than customer satisfaction.

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