



# **The Imperatives of Maintenance Culture in the Sustainability of Hotels in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria**

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## **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. Author AAS designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Authors OOO and VIE managed the analyses of the study. Author SJA managed the literature searches. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

The paper assessed the roles of maintenance culture in the sustainability of hotels in Ado-Ekiti 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 will be 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 its right to use 3-star hotels 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 20% 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 4 patrons were selected from each of the 20 hotels. However, the researcher

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was able to retrieve 79 out of 80 copies of questionnaire administered. The data collected were analysed using descriptive method of data analysis. It was revealed that proper and effective maintenance culture helps to shape the image and quality of services rendered by hotels which in turns attracts both old and new customers; maintenance culture is valuable for the sustainability of hotels and their brands as it helps in retaining the corporate image, retaining competitive advantage and satisfies current and intending customers of the hotel; poor knowledge of the need of rebranding of hotels, looking at most of the hotel owners from observation, one can deduce that many of them does not have a good knowledge of maintenance culture, hence, many hotels have a snail growth. It was recommended in the paper that the hotel owners should create a strategy to imbibe the use of maintenance culture into their business, and by so doing they will be able to gain and retain new and existing customers. The association of hotel business owners should dim it fit without sentiments to train and re-train their members on the new maintenance culture methods.

*Keywords: Maintenance; maintenance culture; hotels.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Maintenance is a combination of actions carried out to retain an item/machine equipment, system or plant in order to restore it to an acceptable working condition [1]. The purpose of maintenance is to increase the system availability. According to Harold [2], maintenance is the day to day problem of keeping the physical plant in good generating condition. He also added that it is necessary to ensure that availability of machine, building and service needed by other units of the organization for the performance of their organization for the performance of their function, at an optimum returns' investment is generated.

The basic function of maintenance is to keep plant, machinery, equipment, system in a condition that will meet normal operating requirements [1]. Maintenance therefore, has to be done throughout the year, requiring competent staff to undertake building services, operation and maintenance, supplemented by outsourced contractors [3]. As such, the development of a suitable maintenance strategy is gaining publicity, greater reliance is placed on it to keep high system availability and achieve acceptable environmental conditions for the occupants [4]. Powell and Watson [5] have confirmed that most hotel rooms and accommodation lead, while other departments follow, because most revenues come from the sales of these rooms. Of the three core consumer products in the hospitality industry (accommodation, food and beverage), the standard of accommodation significantly affects the customer satisfaction and inclination to return.

Maintenance management also plays a main role in improving energy efficiency and keeping the

amenities at the total costs optimal. The costs of operating and maintaining the engineering systems and structure, in particular the in-house manpower, out-source contractors, energy consumption and equipment deterioration, must be properly monitored and controlled. Among the commonly adopted strategies in the hospitality industry is outsourcing, which managers use to squeeze operating costs in a tough business environment.

## 2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Awoseyin [6] has assessed hotels in Ado Ekiti and found out that there are several infrastructural problems arising from the poor method adopted by the hotels management in Ado Ekiti which has resulted to the epileptic condition of most of the facilities and services rendered by the hotels. Maintenance culture has not been a common phenomenon in the hotels which often makes the sustainability of the hotels to be at stake.

Also, Ayodele [7] has opined that for the development of hotel business, there must be domestication of modern maintenance culture methods of the developed countries' hospitality industry which could help to boost the maintenance culture. This justifies the need to carry out this research. Maintenance culture refers to all activities directed towards 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 (Pinkerton, 2005). Looking at the nature of the hotels in the study area, one can observe that the imperatives of maintenance culture is not well understood and this keeps costing them money day-in day-out.

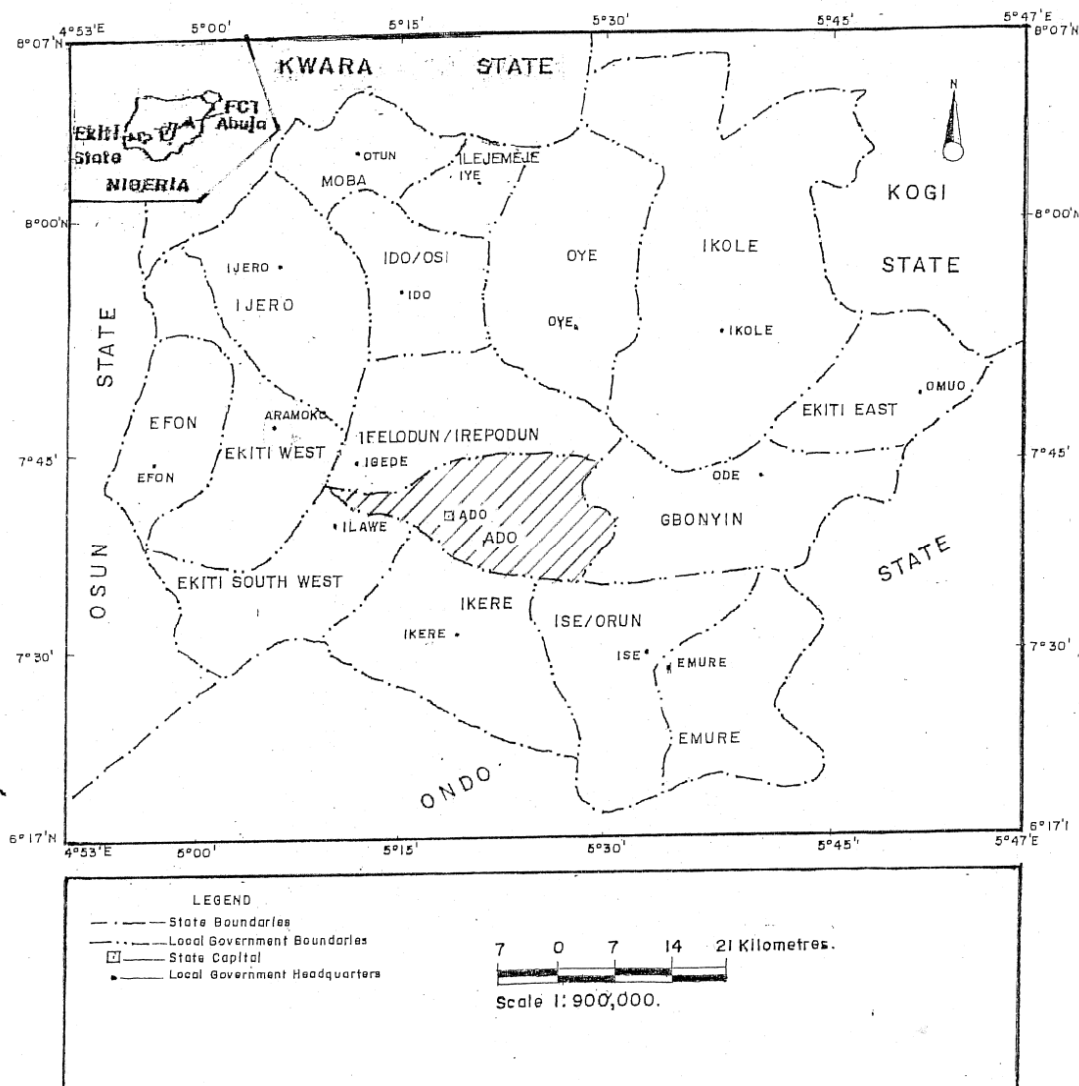
## 2.1 Objective of the Study

The objective of this paper is to examine the imperatives of maintenance culture in the sustainability of hotels.

## 2.2 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 and breadth of 32 and 28 km respectively. It is about

199 km to the Northern Ekiti and Erio to the north (43.5 km), Southern and South Eastern to the South (59 km) and Western Ekiti of the West (9km). 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.



**Fig. 1. Ekiti State Political: Ado Local Government Area**

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

### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Maintenance management has also been categorized by many writers into three maintenance procedures being corrective maintenance (unplanned) approach which is a failure-driven maintenance referring to running equipment until unexpected event breakdown of equipment or malfunctioning.

Preventive maintenance (planned) entails time-based maintenance requires regular task of maintenance irrespective of the condition of the item and thirdly, condition-based maintenance, which also entails periodic inspection of equipment to check it and replace it when a faulty condition is observed before breakdown [8].

Burt and Pinkerton [9], opined that maintenance in general is a very broad concept in hospitality and tourism industries because one cannot maintain a particular aspect of facilities and equipment and forget others. Also, it could be said to be the custom adopted in carrying out a systematic supporting service for the continued operation of the facility and equipment such as fluid, lubricating, grease, washing, wiping, oiling, servicing painting, repairing, weathering, polishing etc.

Despite the importance of maintenance in hospitality industry, it is characterized by the personal ownership and management structure. There is a division in a hospitality industry where one party owns the physical assets (the owner), and an independent second party manages the hospitality industry [10]. Maintenance is a combination of actions carried out to retain item machine equipment, system, plant in order to restore it to an acceptable working condition [1].

Some hospitality writers have explained many different reasons, which make maintenance essential for hotel operations. These reasons according to Hasssanien, (2003) include:

- i. To carry on with the competition.
- ii. To keep or increase market share by pleasing the current or impending customers.
- iii. To develop the operational competence of the hotel that will lead to an increase in both productivity and long term savings in operational expenses.
- iv. To retain corporate image and standards.
- v. To promote the hotel to a higher class (e.g. from 4 star to 5 star).

- vi. To conform to the new trends and technology in the market (e.g. the green movement).
- vii. To handle governmental requirements like Disability Act, health and safety regulations in different countries.
- viii. To make progress from natural disasters such as hurricanes and earthquakes.

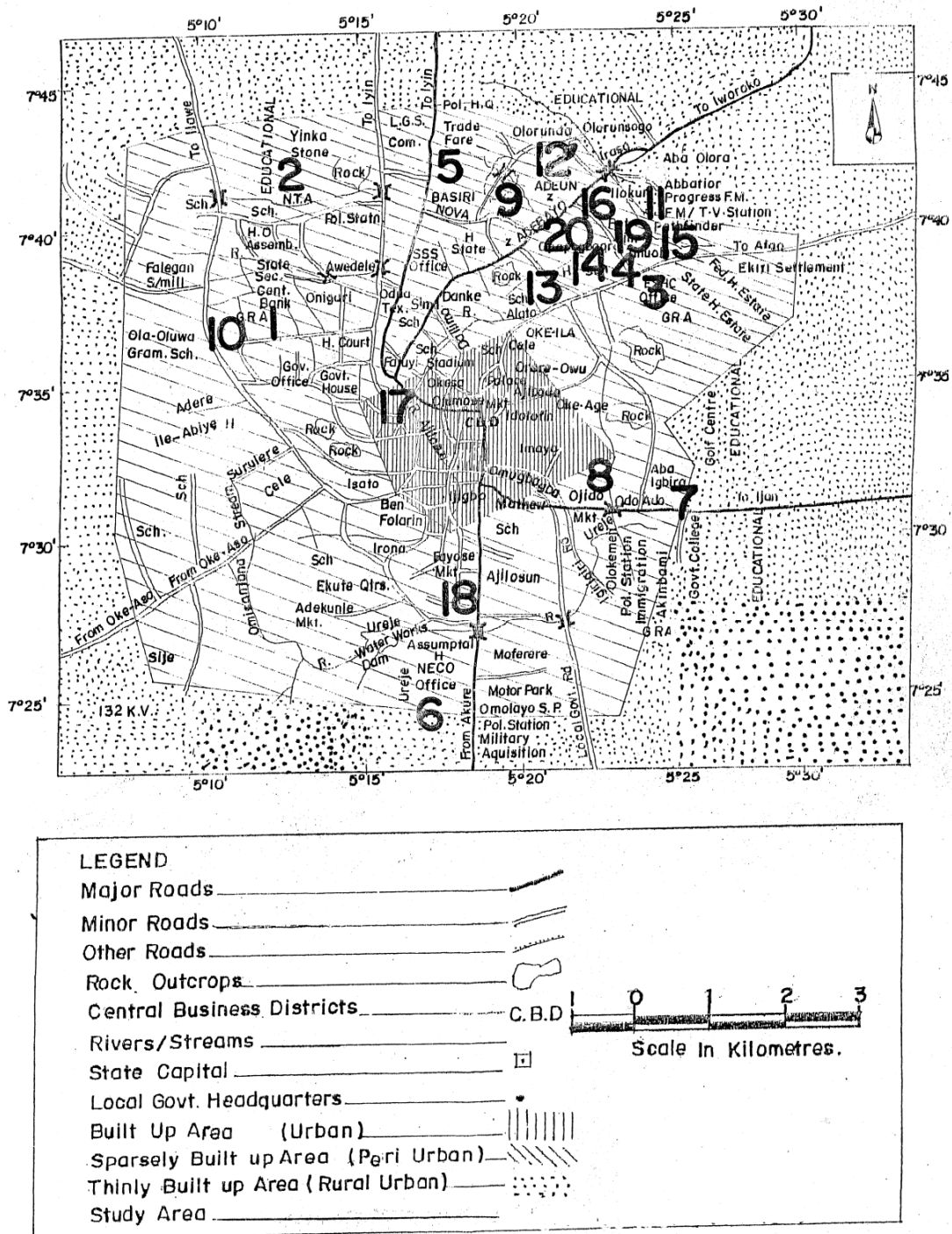
Furthermore, Henley [11] has highlighted that maintenance is significant in hotels because room quality reflected the price paid for it. In providing quality evaluation, hotels have been awarded "stars", more stars means higher quality hotels. On yearly basis the writers observed that "star" rating increase or decreases in hotels. Managers losing star should then know that the hotel is beginning to lose ground when it comes to maintenance of amenities required to retain their current "star" status. Potential customers also have the means to picking up this signals and messages indicating lower quality.

### 4. RESEARCH METHODS

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 hotels as the samples for the study. The reason for making use of the purposive sampling was because these are the hotels that have modern facilities that can be maintained. 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 (20%) hotels were selected from among about 100 3-star hotels in the study area using convenient sampling technique, which form 20% 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. The patrons who responded to the questionnaires were selected with the use of convenient sampling technique. A total of 4 patrons were selected from each of the 20 hotels. However, the researcher was able to retrieve 79 out of 80 copies of questionnaire administered.

The data collected were analysed using descriptive method of data analysis. The survey was carried out on one Saturday and Sunday with the use of three research assistants.



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

Source: Ado Local Government secretariat, Ado-Ekiti / Dept. o Geography and planning science, Cartographic Unit, Ekiti State University, EKSU, Ado-Ekiti

**Table 1. 3 star hotels on Fig. 2 in accordance with the numbering on the map**

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, (2019)

## 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are several imperatives played by maintenance culture in the sustainability of hotels, findings in Table 2 revealed that 42.2% and 56.0% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that maintenance culture has helped to increase patronage while the remaining 1.8% of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree respectively. In hotels, proper and effective maintenance culture helps to shape the image and quality of services rendered by hotels which in turns attracts both old and new customers. Hence, this implies that the maintenance culture in hotels has helped to increase the level of patronage.

Hotels in Ado Ekiti carry out maintenance culture for several reasons, the identified ones are shown in Table 3, in which 31.0% of the respondents revealed that the most important reason for carrying out maintenance activities is to retain competitive advantage, 3.8% of the respondents asserted that the important thing is to retain corporate image while 6.0% and 24.1% of the respondents revealed that the best thing to do is to conform to new trends and satisfy current and impending customers. However, this implies that maintenance culture is valuable for the

sustainability of hotels and their brands as it helps in retaining the corporate image, retaining competitive advantage and satisfies current and intending customers of the hotel.

It can be observed in Table 4 that 65.5% of the respondents asserted that the effective use maintenance culture in the hotels is above average while 25.0% and 9.5% of the respondents asserted that the effectiveness of the use of maintenance culture in hotels is average and below average respectively. This can be said to be as a result of the poor knowledge of the need of rebranding of hotels, looking at most of the hotel owners from observation, one can deduce that many of them does not have a good knowledge of maintenance culture, hence, many hotels have a snail growth.

Sustainability is one of the major soul of a business, findings in Table 5 revealed that 38.7% and 57.8% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that maintenance culture has helped to achieve sustainability of their facilities while 2.6% and 0.9% of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree respectively. Hence, this implies that maintenance culture is a good tool to achieve sustainability of hotel facilities.

**Table 2. Increase patronage**

Increased Patronage	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	49	42.2
Agree	65	56.0
Disagree	1	0.9
Strongly Disagree	1	0.9
Total	116	100

Source: Authors' Field Survey, 2019

**Table 3. Reasons for carrying out maintenance activities**

Reasons for carrying out maintenance activities	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Retain Competitive Advantage	36	31.0
Retain corporate image	45	38.8
Conform to new trends in the market	7	6.0
Satisfy current and impending customers	28	24.1
Increase long term savings in operational expenses	0	0
Total	116	100

Source: Authors' Field Survey, 2019

**Table 4. Effectiveness of the use of maintenance culture**

Effective use of maintenance culture	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Above average	76	65.5
Average	28	25.0
Below average	11	9.5
Poor	0	0
Total	116	100

Source: Authors' Field Survey, 2019

**Table 5. Maintenance culture has helped in facility sustainability**

Maintenance culture has helped in facility sustainability	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	45	38.7
Agreed	67	57.8
Disagree	3	2.6
Strongly Disagree	1	0.9
Total	116	100

Source: Authors' Field Survey, 2019

## 6. CONCLUSION

From the above findings, it was made known that proper and effective maintenance culture helps to shape the image and quality of services rendered by hotels which in turns attracts both old and new customers; maintenance culture is valuable for the sustainability of hotels and their brands as it helps in retaining the corporate image, retaining competitive advantage and satisfies current and intending customers of the hotel; poor knowledge of the need of rebranding of hotels, looking at most of the hotel owners from observation, one can deduce that many of them does not have a good knowledge of maintenance culture, hence, many hotels have a

snail growth and maintenance culture is a good tool to achieve sustainability of hotel facilities. However, it can be concluded that there is still dire need for the hotel business hotels to get more acquainted with the importance of rebranding so that it can help to improve their business.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is therefore recommended that the hotel owners should create a strategy to imbibe the use of maintenance culture into their business, and by so doing they will be able to gain and retain new and existing customers. The association of hotel business owners

should dim it fit without sentiments to train and re-train their members on the new maintenance culture methods. There should also be a section or unit in the hotel establishment that will be handling and specialize in maintenance of the business facilities, image and services.

### COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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