



HOSPITALITY WORK ENVIRONMENT AND LABOUR TURNOVER INTENT IN THE POST COVID-19 ERA: EVIDENCE FROM NIGERIAN SMALL-SIZED HOTELS IN PORT HARCOURT, RIVERS STATE

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between hospitality work environment and labour turnover Intent in small-sized hotels in Diobu, Port Harcourt. The cross sectional survey design was adopted for the study whereby data were obtained through the questionnaire method from 122 employees purposively drawn from 10 small-sized hotels operating in the Diobu area of Port Harcourt. Both descriptive and inferential statistical tools were deployed for data analysis. Simple percentage, mean score and standard deviations were utilized for descriptive analysis whereas the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) coefficient technique was adopted for the test of hypotheses, aided by the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 21, tested at 5% level of significance. The findings revealed that the physical work environment factors (workplace safety and atmospheric conditions) were favourably perceived by employees, however, the psychological components (job security and pay) were not well perceived by the employees, which could not support employee retention. Based on the findings, it was concluded that the dimensions of hospitality work environment (workplace safety/hygiene, atmospheric conditions, job security and pay) correlated with labour turnover intent. Therefore, it was recommended that the hotels should continue to maintain workplace safety/hygiene standard and improve on employee incentive system for improved productivity, employee commitment and retention.

Keywords: Hospitality work environment, labour turnover Intent

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has dealt a terrible blow on all businesses worldwide with the travel and tourism industry being the hardest hit because of travel restrictions. Jung, Jung and Yoon (2021) have argued that technological changes, economic fluctuations, and political instability and other disruptions have constantly been the features of working environments. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has amplified the unpalatable situation. As the tourism and hospitality businesses gradually rebound from the scourge globally, uncertainties still linger on the horizon, provoking instability of



employment, streamlining of operations, downscaling with attendant sense of apprehension among employees regarding the future (Udymoni, & Shassi, 2022).

Prior research confirms high rate of movement of workers from one organization to another or from one sector to the other in search of the proverbial greener pasture has become a common feature of many organizations (Ajala, 2012). Industrial psychologists and organizational behaviour experts believe that this phenomenon may be traceable to many factors such as working conditions (Johnnie, 2002). Thus, an organization that is unable to satisfy its employees to fulfill their aspirations while working for the organization is likely to lose them to other organizations (Christina & Dogan Gursoy, 2009).

The need for an effective employee-oriented policy that will secure employee commitment and loyalty to the organization has been stressed by many industrial relations experts. This is because of the negative impact frequent employee emigration can have on organizational productivity, efficiency and survival. An organization that characterized by high labour turnover is not likely to attract experienced and qualified workers because of the perceived poor leadership, which finds expression in poor condition of service. Perhaps this explains why Akpenoma (2006) asserts that low morale exists among employees in Nigerian organizations because the organizations do not place high premium on the welfare and interest of their employees. Consequently, performance is retarded due to poor working conditions or unconducive physical work environment (Dickson, 2005).

Hospitality work environment is a surrounding in which an employees in hotels, fast food/restaurant organizations, entertainment centres and bars operate (Ajala,,2012). In another sense, it is perceived as a place where productive hospitality activities take place. Generally, work environment which consists of both physical and psychological elements, is crucial workers' morale, social relations, physical and mental well as productivity for organizational success and growth. Hospitality work environment also connotes official space or room where various organizational activities are conducted (Ahmed & Zulquernain, 2012). There are many components of working conditions (physical and psychological) all of which combine to exert an influence on employee productivity. Physical work environment facets include workplace safety and healthy environment, noise, illumination, atmospherics, colours and hours of work. The psychological components include salary and wages, fringe benefits, job security, training, pension and career advancement opportunities. Work environment play a vital role in employee's satisfaction, commitment, productivity and retention (Dickson, 2005).

Consequently, the critical role of working conditions or work environment in employee satisfaction, commitment, productivity and labour mobility has informed continuous research work by industrial psychologists. Empirical evidences from the works of Tampik and Jones (2017) suggest that the levels of employee satisfaction and performance, intention to stay or leave depends on the working conditions of the establishments.

Studies on the correlate of work environment and other variables have accumulated (Awases et al, 2004). But most of them were concentrated either on the psychological conditions such as pay, job security, career development opportunities and recognition or on workplace safety and security in



explaining employee retention and labour mobility in developed economies in many non-service sectors and proffering solutions. However, there is limited knowledge in the literature regarding an integrative work environment which combines some facets of physical and psychological work environment in predicting labour turnover in the hospitality sector in Nigeria in a single study, especially in the post COVID-19 era. Consequently, this has created a gap in the literature that needs to be bridged. Since a hospitality business organization is made of both physical and behavioural components, a study investigating the effect of integrative work environment on labour turnover can also make meaningful practical and theoretical contributions as to which facets have more explanatory power in predicting labour mobility in the new normal.

Extant research report suggests that employee retention is a difficult and challenging task to achieve in an organization characterized by poor working conditions (Dietrovic, 2002). Consequently, labour mobility has become a constant human resource issue which managers must contend with. To what extent does the above-stated condition pertains to the hospitality industry in Nigeria? What is the perception of employees in the hospitality industry regarding the quality of their work environment and to what extent does work environment influence their intention to stay or quit? It is the need to provide answers to the afore-stated answers that the study was undertaken to investigate hospitality work environment and employees' turnover in small-sized hotels in Port Harcourt in the post COVID-19 business environment in Rivers State.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Foundation of the study

Maslow's Hierarchy of needs theory and Hertzberg's two-factor theory are the two important theories that are used to underpin this work. Together, they provide a solid theoretical foundation for explaining the relationship between hospitality work environment and labour turnover intent. Maslow's Hierarchy of needs theory postulates that individuals in organizations are motivated to perform by a desire to satisfy a set of internal needs. Maslow (1954) based his theory of human motivation which assumes that individuals have certain needs that influence their behavior. According to Maslow, only unsatisfied needs can influence behavior, satisfied needs do not act as motivators. The theory also assumes that needs are arranged in an order of importance, or hierarchy from the basic physiological to the complex self-actualization needs. The third assumption is that an individual's needs at any level on the hierarchy emerge only when the lower needs are reasonably well satisfied. Maslow proposed five needs sets, which represent the order of importance to the individual. The most basic being physiological needs, also known as primary needs. They include the need for food, shelter and clothing. The organization helps individuals satisfy their basic needs by providing good salaries, benefits and working conditions. After satisfying these basic needs, individuals move onto higher levels such as safety, social needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization (Johnnie, 2002).

The relevance of this theory to the present is that Maslow's need theory requires hospitality managers to recognize the various needs of the individual in the organization and the extent to which the individual perceives them as being satisfied. Since employees are enthusiastically motivated by what



they are seeking, more than what they already have, it is expected that if the manager can identify the individual's level in the need hierarchy, he would be better able to motivate him. (Akiri, 2002).

Hertzberg's Two-Factor Theory:

Another illuminating theory relating to the needs of individuals in the work place is the one proposed by *Fredrick Herzberg in 1959*. The theory popularly known as Hertzberg's two-factor theory or motivation hygiene theory grew out of a research aimed at determining the factors that influence satisfaction on the job. One class of needs which he referred to as hygiene factors make up a continuum ranging from dissatisfaction and are external to the job. They include: pay, job security, company policies, and status, working conditions, fringe benefits and interpersonal relations. Hertzberg indicates that these factors if absent in the work place, lead high levels of dissatisfaction, if present, they create a state of 'zero factors do not motivate individuals to better performance.

The second class of factors of needs, referred to as motivators make up a continuum leading from no job satisfaction to satisfaction. The items in this group are job content factors. They include: challenging job, recognition for accomplishment, opportunities for growth and advancement, feeling of achievement, increased responsibility and the job itself. It is these factors in Hertzberg's opinion that serve to motivate employees to greater performance (Akiri, 2002).

The relevance of this theory to the present study is the fact that both the physical and the psychological elements of work environment is germane to employee productivity and organizational performance through satisfaction. This in turn influences employee retention.

2.2 Conceptual Clarification

Hospitality Work Environment

The term "hospitality work environment" is sometimes used interchangeably with "working condition" which is a subset of the general working conditions prevailing in hospitality industry. Broadly speaking, Smith (2011) view work environment as comprising of the totality of forces, actions and other influential factors that are currently and/or potentially contending with the employees' activities and productivity. It shows the interrelationship that exists within the employees' in persons and their working environment (O'Neill, 2010).

Work environment can be described in terms of physical and behavioural components. An organization's physical environment includes its design and layout, workplace safety/hygiene. The psychological components include pay, job security, job satisfaction, retention, etc. These components can further be divided in the form of different independent variables which can affect employees' behaviour in the workplace (Savin, 2013).

Dimensions of Hospitality Work Environment

Scholars have advanced many dimensions or facets of working conditions or work environment. Ademola (2015) operationalized working environment which captures some physical and psychological facets of working conditions. According to Zimmerman (1999) 'working conditions



could be classified into physical and psychological work conditions'. This study, however, focused on some of the elements of the two domains known as the integrated approach. Besides, many previous studies had concentrated on either the psychological or physical facets of working conditions, which are equally important in understanding employees' work behavior.

Workplace Safety/Hygiene

Work place safety/hygiene refers to the ability of an organization to provide adequate safety and hygiene measures for employees (Vischer, 2008). The author explained that safety, tranquility and peace are necessary conditions for tourism success. This is because most workers will not like to work in a hotel where their safety and well-being are not guaranteed. It has been generally accepted that workplace safety and security are critical determinants of its competitiveness. Vischer (2008) identifies workplace safety and security problems in the hospitality industry include thefts, attacks, fire-outbreaks, injury and the free girls. Another important aspect of workplace safety and security is a sense of personal and property safety (Leather et al 2010). Hospitality business cannot thrive in an insecure environment. Thus, employees and guests need constant assurance of safety to concentrate and be productive at work. Ruchi and Surindr (2014) claims that entrenchment of security measures in the tourist enterprises have become competitive weapons for employees and customer retention. Today, COVID-19 pandemic has brought workplace safety and hygiene to the fore more than ever before. World Health Organizations (WHO) and other professional regulatory organizations such as World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) report (2020) recognized the importance of tourism and hospitality workplace safety and hygiene as one of the strategies for customers and employee protection from the corona virus. Strict adherence to measures such as physical distancing, wearing of nose masks/face shields, fumigation, hand sanitization and other personal protective equipment are advocated and promoted by regulatory agencies. Ruchi and Surindr (2014) note that delivering a safe experience to customers and employees is a major responsibility of hospitality managers across the globe.

Atmospheric Condition

Atmospheric condition refers to the hotness or coldness of the physical environment, which in the organizational context, is commonly known as the workplace temperature. Jaakola (2012) identified atmospheric condition to consist of air temperature, humidity, airflow and temperature of objects. He opined that workplace atmospheric condition is a function of the nature of the task, the object involved and the person to perform the task. Thus, some activities may require open air, other may make air-conditioning system necessary for better performance. Berry, Bowen and Kjellstrom (2010) established that temperature plays important role in workplace environment in terms of productivity enhancement when it is reasonable. They contend that high or low workplace atmospheric condition induces discomfort in employee which ultimately results in decline in productivity.



Job Insecurity

Ansiau, Wild, Niezborala, Rouch and Marquie, (2008) view job insecurity as an employee's sense or fear of possible job loss or being out of employment. A sense of job insecurity affects the psychology, health, enthusiasm or commitment of employees, which is antithetical to organizational growth and prosperity. Earlier, Ansiau et al (2008) had asserted that organizational streamlining, job cuts and environmental disruptions had always created a sense of job insecurity among employees. Unfortunately, COVID-19 and its aftermaths have worsened the situation. It is therefore not surprising that Vischer (2007) argues that job insecurity is a major workplace stress with attendant negative impact on employees' work attitude.

Pay (Salary and Wages)

Pay represents the wages and salaries that workers earn (Ajala, 2012). It is through wages and salaries earned that employees can purchase goods and services which reflect their quality of life in general and standard of living in particular in their families, communities and a larger society. Ajala (2012) recognize the importance of pay in these words:

Since money represents a quantifiable measure of their worth, employees are quite sensitive about the amount of pay they receive in return for their contributions on the staff and how the amount compares with what other employees are receiving for their contributions. Employees therefore want their wages to be equitable both in terms of what is being demanded of them on the staff and in tears of what other employees are paid in return for the demands of their respective staffs.

Implicit in the above statement is the fact that pay represents an important facet of an organizational incentive system which can influence a positive work attitude, and therefore constitutes a critical aspect of psychological work environment.

The Concept of Labour Turnover

The word "labour turnover" simply means movement of labour from one job to another; from one organization or even from one country to another. Thus, labour turnover or labour mobility could be occupational, geographical, rural-urban migration, and international mobility of labour (Awases, 2004). The argument has always been that people move from economic, social and political opportunities that are poor to where they are better (Edmans & Zhang 2014).

Turnover Intent (Measure of Labour Turnover)

Turnover intent refers to employees plan, resolve or determination to leave their present organizations or quit current jobs for perceived better ones. McGuire and McLaren (2009) argue that turnover intent is both a warning indication to the organization on impending staff mobility and the need to improve job context and positions for employee retention. Viewed from this perspective, turnover intent can thus be assumed to be an antecedent of real voluntary turnover rate. However, an expression of intent to quit a job or leave an organization is not the same as actually leaving or quitting current jobs.



2.3 Empirical Review and Hypotheses development

Empirical studies on working conditions have accumulated in both advanced and developing economies. This is probably because of the recognition that the workplace environment is one of the critical factors in keeping an employee satisfied in today's business world. Where the reverse is the case, then staff retention is difficult with attendant negative consequences. This sub-section of the study presents a review of previous empirical studies on the constructs.

Workplace Safety/Hygiene and Labour Turnover

The relationship between workplace safety/security and employee behaviour is well documented in the literature. Ruchi, and Surindr (2014) carried out a study to test the proposition that employee perception of safety can significantly influence organizational commitment. The results indicated that there was no difference in the perception of quality safety and security standard between back-of – the house and front-of- the house employees of the fast-food organizations.

An important study conducted by Smith (2011) on the relationship between a hotel's image in volatile tourist destination within the context of perceived risk. The results from the analysis of data collected from 166 respondents; show that respondents were unfavourably disposed towards hotels they perceived as unsafe. The study established a correlation between attributes such as security and hotel choice and staff retention. Thus, employees' perception of a hotel in a volatile destination correlates inversely with employee retention or intention to leave.

In spite of the importance of findings of previous studies on workplace safety/security and their effect on employees work behavior, little attention was paid to the phenomenon in the Nigerian hospitality context and its role in labour mobility. Thus, a gap exists in the literature, which this study is set to fill. Therefore, we propose the underlying hypothesis:

H1: Poor workplace safety/hygiene is correlated with employees' turnover intent in small-sized hotels in Diobu, Port Harcourt.

Atmospheric Conditions and Labour Turnover

Eze (2005) carried out an important study, the main purpose of which was to determine the effect of physical work environment on employees' satisfaction and productivity in five-star hotels in Egypt, Hilton Hotels and Resorts. The analysis of data revealed a correlation between physical work environment and employees' satisfaction and productivity. In the same vein, the study conducted by Berry, Bowen and Kjellstrom (2010) had earlier confirmed that temperature acts a significant part in workplace environment and influenced labour turnover intention in organizations whose atmospheric conditions were perceived as unconducive.

Dickson (2005) investigated the effect of working conditions on the morale of employees in oil servicing companies in Rivers State. Drawing from a sample of 231 employees made of junior and senior staff through the questionnaire method, the study revealed that workplace atmospheric conditions or office temperature correlated significantly with their productivity. Thus, an office



characterized by high temperature tends to be a disincentive to staff concentration at work. Therefore, the study set to test the proposition in other context thus:

H2: Atmospheric condition is correlated with employees' turnover intent in small-sized hotels in Diobu, Port Harcourt.

Job Security and Labour Turnover

The study by Vischer, J.C., (2007) acknowledged that job insecurity increased employee turnover intent and noted that managing stress caused by job insecurity was critical for its reduction. Similarly, Vischer (2007) investigated job insecurity and turnover intent. Findings from data analysis confirmed a strong nexus between the two variables. Furthermore, Ansiau (2008) investigated the effect of job insecurity on turnover intent. The study revealed that perceived job insecurity increased the inclination of employees to arrive late for work and leave early as well as labour turnover intention. In the light of the above, we suspect that the small-sized hotel context in Nigeria might not be different, hence the underlying hypothesis is stated thus:

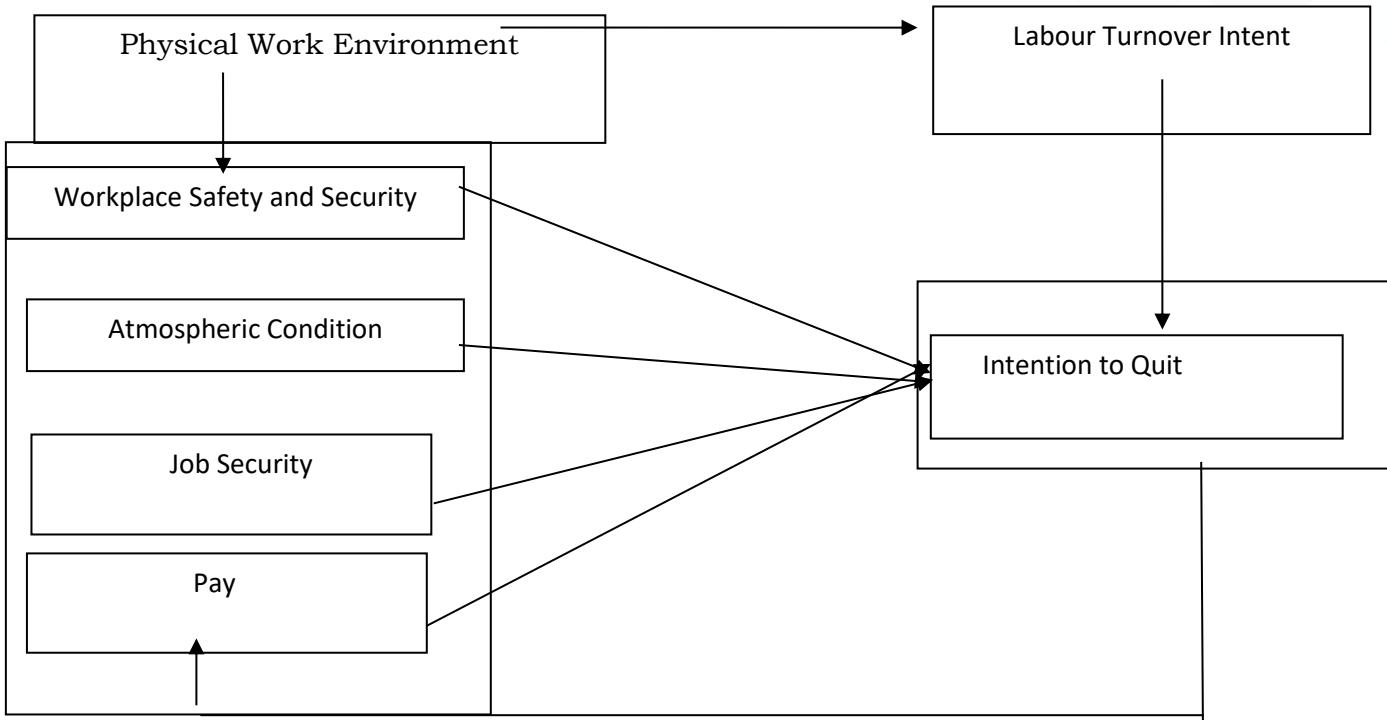
H3: Job insecurity is correlated with employees' turnover intent in small-sized hotels in Diobu, Port Harcourt.

Pay and Labour Turnover According to the study conducted by Ajala (2012) in the Nigerian construction industry, high rate of labour mobility among workers was to a large extent caused by poor salary. This was believable because it represented the views of 90% of senior workers and 86% of junior staff and was verified by hypothesis testing. The linkage between poor salary and low morale has been ably demonstrated by Awases et al (2006) in which they found that emigration in many organizations was among other things a consequence of poor pay. In fact, studies conducted by scholars in other African countries including Zimbabwe, Namibia and Nigeria as reported by Awases et al (2006) showed a strong correlation between low remuneration and high labour mobility. An important study by Ademola (2015) also found a high rate of labour turnover among young workers in manufacturing firms in Lagos State. Therefore, our fourth hypothesis is stated thus:

H4: Pay is correlated with employees' turnover intent in small-sized hotels in Diobu, Port Harcourt. The link between the two constructs formed the basis for our hypotheses development as depicted in the diagram below.



Fig 1 : Conceptual/Operational Framework showing the link between hospitality Work Environment and Labour Turnover Intent



3. Methodology:

Research Design: The cross-sectional survey research design was adopted for this study to enable the researchers to collect data from representative population and analyze same in order to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses of the study.

Population and Sampling: The population of this study comprised 132 employees drawn from 12 small-sized hotels in Diobu area (a suburb of Port Harcourt metropolis), Rivers State. What informed the choice of the study location was its commercial status, large population, presence of small/medium hotels and other hospitality establishments. The 10 hotels were considered based on their popularity and guests-drawing power in the area in terms of patronage.

Given the nature of this study, the purposive convenience sampling technique was adopted to draw the sample from the population of the study based on the criticality of the units. Employees that constituted the sample were drawn from such units as front office, Kitchen/restaurant, maintenance, security, Housekeeping, Laundry, accounts and administration who had been in the service of the organization for at least three years. In the context of this study, small-sized hotels were those between 20-50 rooms with a least 20 employees. However, actual sample elements selection was based on accessibility, convenience and willingness to participate in the study.



Instrumentation and Measures: The questionnaire was used to obtain primary data because of its time-saving and cost effectiveness. Secondary data were obtained from largely from reputable academic journals. The questionnaire design comprised three segments. Section A contains respondents' demographics data such as gender, age, marital status etc. Section B on the other hand consists of items relating to the independent variable while section C has to do with items representing the dependent variable. The questionnaire was structured on a five (5) point likert scale with weights assigned as follows: 5 = Strongly agree (SA), 4 = Agreed (A), Undecided =3 , 2 = Disagreed (D), 1 = Strongly disagreed (SD).

The variables investigated in this study were hospitality work environment (independent variable) and labour turnover (dependent variable). Hospitality work environment was operationalized along the dimensions of workplace safety/hygiene, atmospheric condition, job security and pay. Labour turnover was measured using intention to quit. The two variables were measured at interval scale.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument: In order to ascertain the face and content validity of this work, academics and professionals in the field of tourism and hospitality management were given copies of the questionnaire for evaluation and inputs. Their observations and suggestions were used to modify and improve the survey instrument. The questionnaire was ascertained with the use of the test-retest reliability technique. The instrument was administered to 35 respondents in hotels of similar characteristics not involved in the study. After two weeks, the test was carried out again on the respondents. The findings were correlated and only items that met Cronbach's (1951) alpha values of 0.70 thresholds or above were acceptable according to Gay and Diehl (1992) and therefore considered reliable.

Data Analysis Technique: For the purpose of analyzing the research data for this study, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation technique used with aid of the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) computer software (version 21). The PPMC analytical statistical tool is adopted because it measures the strength of relationship between the independent and dependent variables of the study.

4. Analysis and Result

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

| Age of Respondents | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------|------------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | 18-30YEARS | 44 | 36.1 | 36.1 |
| | 31-40YEARS | 40 | 32.8 | 68.9 |
| | 41-50YEARS | 20 | 16.4 | 85.2 |
| | ABOVE | 18 | 14.8 | 100.0 |
| | 50YEARS | | | |
| | Total | 122 | 100.0 | |



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| Gender | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| MALE | 66 | 54.1 | 54.1 | 54.1 |
| Valid FEMALE | 56 | 45.9 | 45.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | 122 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| Marital Status | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| SINGLE | 50 | 41.0 | 41.0 | 41.0 |
| Valid MARRIED | 47 | 38.5 | 38.5 | 79.5 |
| OTHERS | 25 | 20.5 | 20.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 122 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| Educational Qualification | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| WASSCE/NEC O/GCE | 40 | 32.8 | 32.8 | 32.8 |
| NCE/OND | 43 | 35.2 | 35.2 | 68.0 |
| HND | 21 | 17.2 | 17.2 | 85.2 |
| BSC | 13 | 10.7 | 10.7 | 95.9 |
| MBA/M. Sc. | 5 | 4.1 | 4.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 122 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| Official Rank | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---------------|-----------|----------------|
| Junior staff | 77 | 63 |
| Senior staff | 45 | 37 |
| Total | 122 | 100 |

| Years of Service | | Percentage (%) |
|------------------|-----|----------------|
| 1-5yrs | 69 | 56 |
| 6-10yrs | 43 | 35 |
| 11-15yrs | 10 | 0.9 |
| 16-20yrs | - | - |
| Total | 122 | 100% |



The Table 1 above indicates that 44 respondents were below the age of 18-30years corresponding to 36.1% of the total respondents, 40 respondents were within the age bracket of 31-40years representing 32.8% of the respondents, 20 respondents were within the age range of 41-50 years corresponding to 16.4%, while 18 respondents fell above 50years representing 14.8% of the total respondents.

The table above shows that sixty six (66) respondents were male which represents 54.1%, while fifty six (56) respondents were female which represent 45.9% of the total respondents.

The table above shows that 50 respondents were single corresponding to 41.0%, 47 of the respondents were married corresponding to 38.5% while 25 of the respondents belonged to other categories representing 20.5% of the total respondents.

Table 1 also shows that 40 of the respondents representing 32.8% have WASSCE/NECO/GCE, 43 of the respondents corresponding to 35.2% have NCE/OND, 21 of the respondents representing 17.2% have HND, 13 of the respondents corresponding to 10.7% have B.SC while 5 of the respondents corresponding to 4.1% have MBA/M.Sc.

Table 1 shows that 63% of the employees were junior staff and 37% of senior staff. Finally, the table shows that 56% of the total respondents had spent 1-5yrs in the hotels. 35% had spent between 6-10yrs in the organizations while a dismal 0.9% of them had spent 11-15years.

Univariate Analysis

Table 2: Descriptive statistics on items of workplace safety/Hygiene

| | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--|-----|--------|----------------|
| Adequacy of CCTV coverage | 122 | 4.0187 | 1.81170 |
| Staff and Guests Compliance with all COVID-19 safety protocols | 122 | 4.1919 | 0.14109 |
| Staffs routine security checks for prevention of theft /Injuries | 122 | 4.1163 | 1.8639 |
| Staff feel safe and secured working in the hotel | 122 | 4.0325 | 0.48311 |
| Valid N (list wise) | 122 | | |

Criterion mean = 3.9

Information on Table 2 above shows the result of descriptive statistics on items of workplace safety and security. The mean scores on all items of workplace safety and security were more than the criterion mean, 3.9 as regards acceptability on Likert 5-point scale. This shows that majority of the respondents indicated that their hotels had adequate safety/hygiene measures in place for staff.



Table 3: Descriptive statistics on items of atmospheric condition

| Items | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--|-----|--------|----------------|
| Office temperature good for staff productivity | 122 | 4.0261 | 1.10631 |
| Large windows in your office space | 122 | 4.1080 | 0.04792 |
| Air conditioners and fans in most of the offices | 122 | 4.0583 | 0.974485 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 122 | | |

As Table 3 shows, all the mean values on all the three items of atmospheric condition were less than the criterion, 3.9. This implies that respondents agreed that their workplace temperature was good for their comfort and productivity.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics on items of Job Security

| | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|-------------------------------------|-----|--------|----------------|
| Sure of keeping job for a long time | 122 | 2.1061 | 1.37061 |
| Certainty of job environment | 122 | 2.0538 | 0.08417 |
| Possibility of becoming unemployed | 122 | 2.0649 | 1.30759 |
| Fear of getting fired | 122 | 1.6493 | 1.29438 |
| There is pension for all staff | 122 | 2.4724 | 0.88510 |

As Table 4 indicates, all the mean values of all the items of job security were less than 3.9 criterion mean as regards acceptability on likert 5-point scale. The implication is that respondents disagreed on all the items of job security meaning that there was no job security in the hotels.

Table 5: Descriptive statistics on items of Pay

| Items | N | Mean | Std. Dev. |
|---|-----|------------------|--------------------|
| Staff earn good salary working for this hotel | 122 | 1.7201 | 1.40827 |
| Full salary despite the impact of COVID-19 | 122 | 2.1883 | 1.03921 |
| Regular salary despite COVID-19 | 122 | 2.2053 | 1.00684 |
| Housing and transport allowance | 122 | 2.0296 2.0104 | 0.81830 1.66294 |

Table 5 indicates that all the mean values of all the items of pay were less than 3.9 criterion mean as regards acceptability on the likert 5-point scale. The implication is that respondents disagreed on all the items of pay, meaning that they were not earning good pay.

Table 6: Descriptive statistics on employees' Intention to Quit



| Items | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|-----|--------|----------------|
| Felt compelled to quit present job | 122 | 2.3448 | 1.36821 |
| Likelihood of quitting current in a year or less. | 122 | 4.0286 | 1.07110 |
| Currently considering leaving for another job. | 122 | 4.1053 | 0.15931 |
| Likelihood of leaving if conditions get worse. | 122 | 4.0962 | 1.93712 |
| Valid N (list wise) | 122 | | |

Table 6 shows the result of descriptive statistics on items of employees' intention to quit. As the table shows, the mean values on 3 items were greater than the threshold of 3.9 on likert 5-point scale. The implication is that except for one item, respondents agreed on all the items of turnover intention, meaning that they were likely to quit their current hotel jobs in the future.

Bivariate Analysis

Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was conducted to determine the strength of the relationship between hospitality work environment and labour turnover

Table 7: Summary of PPMC Results

| Predictor Variables | Criterion Variable | Rho Value | P-Value | Level of Sig. | Decision |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|---------|-------------------|-----------|
| Poor workplace safety/hygiene. | Intention to quit | .851 | ..000 | $p = .000 < 0.05$ | Supported |
| Atmospheric condition | Intention to quit | .806 | .001 | $p = .001 < 0.05$ | Supported |
| Job insecurity | Intention to quit | .839 | .002 | $p = .001 < 0.05$ | Supported |
| Poor Pay | Intention to quit | .795 | .000 | $p = .000 < 0.05$ | Supported |

As Table 7 shows that all the dimensions of hospitality work environment (workplace safety/hygiene, atmospheric condition, job security and pay correlated positively and significantly with turnover intention. Consequently, the null hypotheses were rejected.

5. Discussion

Workplace Safety/Hygiene and Employees Intention to Quit

For hypothesis one, the Pearson correlation result showed a positive and statistically significant relationship between poor pay and intention to quit jobs in the small-sized hotels surveyed in Port Harcourt ($r = .851$) with a probability value of $.000 < 0.05$). The finding is consistent with Leather et al (2010). When employees are prone to attacks and injuries, it affects their morale, productivity, and satisfaction negatively and can lead to labour turnover. Therefore, a hotel physical work environment



characterized by poor safety standards and security lapses cannot assure employees safety, hence increase in labour turnover, especially in the face of growing global COVID-19 pandemic.

Poor Atmospheric conditions and Employees Intention to Quit

For hypothesis two, the Pearson correlation result showed a positive and statistically significant relationship between poor atmospheric conditions and employees intention to quit their jobs in small-scale hotels in Port Harcourt ($r=.806$) with a probability value of $.001 < 0.05$). The result corroborates previous studies such as Edmans, Alex, Lucius, and Chendi, 2014) that proper temperature level are all essential factors that induce satisfaction, improve productivity and reduce the rate labour turnover.

Job Insecurity and Intention to Quit

The Pearson correlation result for hypothesis three shows a positive and significant relationship between job insecurity and employee intention to quit their jobs in the small-sized hotels in Port Harcourt ($r=.839$) with a probability value of $.002 < 0.05$). The finding is consistent with previous studies such as Eze (2005) which established a strong correlation between perceived job insecurity and intention to quit. It has been shown that jobs in many small hotels are not pensionable hence the likelihood of a high rate of labour turnover as employees may look for more sustainable jobs in other organizations and sectors.

Poor Pay and Intention to Quit

For hypothesis four, the Pearson correlation result showed a positive and statistically significant relationship between poor pay and employees' intention to quit their jobs in the small-sized hotels in Port Harcourt($r=.795$) with a probability value of $.000 < 0.05$). The result of this study is consistent with the finding of Ruchi and Surindr, (2014) which indicated that pay (salary and fringe benefits) are veritable motivational factors in work environment especially in poor, developing economies where emphasis is on meeting the basic physiological needs of shelter, food and clothing (survival). Pay in many small business organizations, including small hotels in Nigeria, is low and can hardly meet employees' needs. Consequently, employee retention is difficult to achieve.

6. Conclusion/Implications/ Recommendations

The study investigated hospitality work environment and labour turnover in small-sized hotels in Diobu, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. Our findings have shown that although workplace safety /hygiene and atmospheric condition of the hotels surveyed were favourably perceived by the employees, the other work environment elements (job security and pay) were not well perceived, meaning that there was job security and their pay was poor, hence their intention to quit the establishments. However, it should be noted that employees' indication of intention to quit their present jobs because of perceived job insecurity and poor pay does not necessarily amount to leaving the company in the meantime. Actual disengagement happens when more promising and rewarding opportunities come up.



Nevertheless, the implication of our study is that work environment can play an important role in employees' satisfaction and productivity within the workplace or their intention to leave. Based on the employees' perceptions of the physical work environment elements (safety/security, temperature, job security and pay, the study concludes that job insecurity and poor pay that characterize the work environment of small-sized hotels cannot support employees' retention. We suspect that poor work environment elements have negative effects on employees' satisfaction which informs their intention to quit the hotels which in turns may generate unpalatable organizational outcomes such as declining productivity and the costs associated with hiring and training new employees.

On the bases of the findings and conclusions of the study, the study recommends that managers of the small-sized hotels should maintain the safety and workplace safety/hygiene standard to guarantee employees satisfaction, productivity and retention. The hotel managers should also seek a feedback from their employees by making surveys and focus group discussions. This will help employees to gain trust and report any element, which hinders employees' productivity. Finally, job security and good pay based on productivity should be considered by management of those hotels good incentive system can promote employee commitment and support retention.

7. Suggestion for Further Research

This study examined hospitality work environment and labour turnover intent only in small-sized hotels in the Diobu area of Port Harcourt. Further research can enlarge the sample size to investigate the impact of physical work environment on employees' satisfaction and productivity on other hotel categories like 3-star hotels, four-star, 5-star hotels or make comparison between small-sized and big-sized hotels.

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