

Adult Education and Employee Training in the Hotel Industry in Nigeria

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Abstract

The hotel industry could be more lucrative and economy-boosting, if properly handled. Unfortunately, it is yet to take its pride of place in Nigeria. As a service industry, personnel training is very important. Attitude to training and its outcome forms the main focus of this study. It is a survey of the level and effect of personnel training in hotels in Lagos. Some 350 employees, employers and guests responded to questionnaire and interviews. Findings reveal that training was viewed differently and was not taken seriously enough. It was suggested that more international quality assurance processes be adopted to improve the industry.

Key words: Training, Hotel, Method, Adult Education

Introduction

The hospitality and tourism industry is a vast and comprehensive service industry encompassing lodging, food and event planning, among others. It is a vital potential contributor to the Nigerian economy by way of encouraging investment, diversifying the economy and boosting global unity. It is also at the forefront of creating first impressions and promoting the culture and people of the nation. By inference, the personnel who operate in the industry serve as ambassadors for image projection. Qualified and adequately trained personnel is therefore crucial to this dynamic and possibly under-rated industry. As a service industry, customer satisfaction in hotel management is measured through intangible or perceived quality of purchased product which is in turn measured by the service method in which it was received. This therefore shines the light more on the quality of the personnel. Human resource dictates a large percentage of any organization's output and more so in any service industry; appropriate training is thus always necessary to keep personnel abreast with current practices and how best to manage and maximize profit.

Background

This study is on the hospitality and tourism industry but will focus specifically on the hotel industry in Nigeria. Hotels, also a part of the service industry is a branch of the hospitality industry. Hospitality is a combination of the provision of physical and emotional comfort and security provided to a visiting guest. Hotel, specifically, is an enterprise that provides accommodation, with or without ancillary services, according to the World Tourism Organization. There are different classes of hotels, ranging from 5 star to 1 star and one expects commensurate services according to the rating - 5 being the most superior, there are also diamond ratings. The very few 5 star hotels in Nigeria usually belong to renowned international brands like the Hilton, Sheraton, etc, and it is expected that uniform services will be rendered, regardless of the location. The international rating scale is a bit complicated and are often commuted to local standards. There then arises a problem when expectations are not met or standards are different or lowered. No matter the rating of the hotel, a certain level of courtesy and engagement of the client is required from staff members, the major difference being a more limited number of services being provided by the lower rated hotels. However, all employees are still expected to be courteous, attentive etc. There are different types of hotels – budget, commercial, resort, motel etc, all catering to different

demands of clients and purse. The hotel industry has four key sectors, food and beverage, lodging, recreation, travel and tourism. This study is focusing on the lodging (hotel) which, incidentally, usually also includes an element of the other three. The provision of food and beverage is arguably the more popular of hotel offerings, apart from lodging. The hotel industry is particularly relevant as it caters to basic human needs like shelter and food. Service delivery is one of the key indices used to classify hotels and training will enhance its achievement.

Africans are traditionally noted for their level of hospitality to visitors and a typical Nigerian will usually feel offended if family members travelled to their area and decide to stay in a hotel rather than with them. Any customer in the hotel industry automatically expects a certain level of service for fees charged. The manner or quality and quantity of service provided in any hotel is therefore of importance and is usually dependent on the class of services paid for. If personnel are therefore not adequately trained to enhance their skills, or are not given the right orientation to present an accommodating attitude, it will seriously affect repeat clientele and reduce profit.

Nigeria has moved in leaps and bounds from the first hotel in 1942 - the Airport Hotel in Lagos, which began as a pub with rooms; through the Bristol Hotel, where the Nigerian Declaration of Independence was signed (indicating the hotel industry's strong link with Nigerian history), up to the present day proliferation of hotels. (Ward & Udabor, 2013). Prior to this, there were Rest and Guest Houses built in major cities with Sea and Rail ports and later Airports. Today, Nigeria boasts of thousands of hotels nation-wide of different classifications. Most of the earlier hotels were developed by the government and are mostly in the three largest and port cities – Lagos, Abuja and Port Harcourt, but today, all existing hotels are privately owned and run due to the government's privatization policy, except for a couple still with large state government interest. Whether private or public, the hospitality industry still requires highly trained members of staff who can manage the operations professionally. Unfortunately, Nigeria is yet to fully explore the potential contribution of hotels to the economy, not only as a job creator but also as a means of economic power. Adding to the problem is the dependence of the industry on national economy which predicts whether patronage will be slow or brisk. The fact that the oil boom era and the economically and politically stable periods in Nigeria affected the economy and increased hotel patronage and creation should be a strong indicator of the potential of this industry. Unfortunately, it still contributes less than 1% to the GDP of the economy (Ward & Udabor, 2013). However, the boom era also created an influx of privately owned and often lower standard hotels in the industry to compete with the branded hotels trying to maintain their standard. Incidentally, Nigeria's cultural background holds a dim view of people who work in hotels as they are not held in high esteem and therefore families will hardly encourage their wards to be in the industry, especially when they are female.

To increase guest patronage in the competitive and dynamic hospitality industry, staff training is of essence. Especially in the face of overwhelming technological advancement (employees need technological savvy, as most transactions are now online – booking and reservations, computerized keys, etc); reducing guest loyalty; lowered budgets as well as the general downturn in the economy. Training and re-training of staff is vital to improving guest quality service and staff performance. Training will improve the quality of customer engagement and help with brand-building. Training in the hotel industry must therefore consist of more than induction or orientation or formal training and certification but should include soft skills acquisition as well.

Training

Training is an important part of human resource management. It is an organized activity aimed at improving the necessary skills to render the recipient more suitable to the required level of expertise. "Training is the process that provides employees with the knowledge and the skills required to operate within the systems and standards set by management" (Sommerville, 2007:208). It is a method of helping employees obtain the needed skills to perform their given tasks and develop. Training must be seen as a

fundamental requirement for any employee whether it is the basics, to ease them into the new employment or the more comprehensive. In the hotel industry, training can be from the higher educational level and range to the lower level of staff who may not need academic qualification to function. It takes many forms but should also include soft skills. The right educational background is important but then so is the induction of new staff into the system to intimate them with the *modus operandi* of the establishment. Thus, training is still necessary and could be achieved through self-development courses and certification exams or non-formally. Training is usually a short-term, planned activity intended to develop the recipient's behavioural and technical skills so they can play a more active role in achieving the hotel's and their goals also (). Hotel occupancy and increased profit depends on more than being in a prime location or having well furnished rooms and high-tech amenities. It is the guest experience and customer satisfaction that can ensure repeat visit or increased patronage. This depends heavily on the quality of the personnel, which again relies on their level of training and expertise in guest management. Staff training is very important to the hotel industry (Yang, 2010, Ahammad, 2013). Training can be done formally or non-formally. Formal training is usually manifested in the level of relevant or appropriate certification in the field, or it can be non-formal with the induction or orientation given to employees as well as learning basic tasks. Training is a method in adult education that may or may not occur within the confines of academics or certificated exercise.

Considering that the market is presently inundated with similar products that can be easily substituted, the level of competition within the industry has currently escalated, which further exposes the need for staff empowerment through adequate training and orientation. Increased competition in the industry, even as occupancy rates are dropping drastically, resulting in reduced profit, is the driving force in the hospitality and tourism industry. The study is focusing on the hospitality aspect alone, particularly the hotel industry. Having a viable training program in place, as well as self-development programs for the personnel greatly increases the chances that they will provide the required customer service to meet with everyone's satisfaction – in the face of growing competition.

Training is one of the key pillars of methods in adult education. This is because one of the essential attributes of the adult is that he is a worker - whether as an employee or employer of labour. There are several beneficial methods of training that are suitable for employees in the hotel business - like On-the-job training, Job-Shadowing and Online certification, among others (Bakare, 2013). For the right manpower asset in the work place, training, whether initial or re-training is a necessary and continuous process in the work place. Initially, employees are required to have certain academic qualification to be employable. Training can then be used to augment any other deficiency; training can be done practically on-the-job or in other academic establishments. Many employers may also add induction training and orientation to ease new employees into their organization. For example, the assumption might be that anyone can clean or cook and staff may be employed based on this without any other credentials in the low-end hotels, but it is also necessary to teach even the cleaner what is actually expected, along with the right attitude and discipline to understand the moral aptitude necessary not to cut corners but deliver conscientiously. In a country where there is an economic downturn and unemployment is rife, opportunities abound in the hospitality industry that can help bridge the gap. Training will both improve the level of productivity and also boost the economy.

Training remains a core aspect of ensuring organizational development as well as customer satisfaction and personnel empowerment. It involves a short term process of acquisition of skills, attitude and knowledge that will help better employee performance. Lack of training could lead to employee dissatisfaction as well as frustration, if they are not equipped to provide the services required, this will influence their attitude and service rendered. Training is always necessary to upgrade and update knowledge. Training is essential in an industry that is basically about human relations. It is to equip trainees with the ability to handle a variety of tasks, and interact with clientele from diverse backgrounds

and needs. Customer service, care and safety are thus important. Training of work tasks is also essential to the mastery of principles of the work as well as professional knowledge and skills necessary to perform optimally, increasing self-confidence and improving personal abilities to match the work requirement and achieve organizational goals. Lack of training can result in high employee turnover, or at the very least, the delivery of substandard service. There are different training methods that are effective and suited to the hotel industry - Simulation, Job Shadowing, Cross training, Case study and Role play, among others. Benefits of training include motivation of employees and helping them perform better, reduced supervision, it boosts the morale and ensures safety, along with increased productivity; it encourages self-development & self-confidence and helps to sustain a positive attitude towards customer service. It further helps in introducing new technologies and innovative practices as well as in the reduction of accidents and safety violations in the work place, while ultimately encouraging organizational development. Training remains an investment in human beings in a bid to develop effective human resources who can deliver quality service for better organizational productivity.

Methods and techniques of training depend on whether it is in-house or outside the hotel premises. Off the job can also be done within the premises but at a different time from the work schedule. Off-the-job training techniques may be through Power-Point Presentation, Case Study, Lecture, Role Play, Internship, Discussion, Apprenticeship, In-tray exercises, etc. On the job techniques further include Demonstration/Practice, Simulation, Job Shadowing, Mentoring, Orientation, Coaching, Video, Conference and Workshop (Bakare, 2013). Other methods are Computer Based Training, University-based education, Distance Learning/Internet-based learning, and so on.

Problem of the study

Tourism is the more popular aspect of the hospitality industry and studies on hotels are few and fewer still on the aspect of how training can be seen as a contributor to the economy. Most training organizations are at the level of private outfits in Nigeria [./.././Nigeria](#) and it is not yet taken seriously at the university level as a course of study. The tourism and hospitality industry in Nigeria as a developing nation, seems to have its fair share of problems. It would appear however, that the crux of the issue is inextricably interwoven into the level of staff training available or required; if required levels of training are not strictly adhered to, standards will be lowered, the economy will be drastically affected and Nigeria will be selling herself short and stands to lose a lot in the global village we now live in. There is still a dearth of information on the hotel industry in Nigeria.

Training is an essential part of industry development where manpower drives the economy. If the hotel industry is to fulfil its potential in contributing to the economy, capacity building through adequate training must be addressed. If employees are to be empowered to carry out their duties and increase productivity and attractiveness of the industry, training must be focused on. Arising from these issues is the lack of interest in the industry as a viable field of study; lack of qualified trainers or hospitality schools lack of facilities, exacerbated by low patronage. The lack of appropriate training results in a big disadvantage to hotels in terms of low levels of service, which leads to less repeat customers, low income, employee frustration, among others.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed:

1. Do employees receive training from the hotel? If so when? and for how long?
2. How do employers and employees view training - general perception?
3. Which are the training methods/techniques popular in the industry?
4. What is the level of professional qualification or standard in the hotel industry in Nigeria?
5. What is the general view on the purpose of training?
6. How is training expectation of the respondents different from the actual training received?

7. What can be gained from training?
8. How can the situation be improved upon?

Hypotheses

1. The training method adopted will not significantly affect the training outcome
2. Training method used will not significantly affect employee satisfaction

Purpose of the study

This paper focuses on the need for personnel training in the hotel industry in Nigeria. Specifically, it will:

- Examine the training situation - the perception and attitude to training in the hotel industry in Nigeria
- Document the level of academic and professional qualification of existing personnel in the hotel industry
- Document the popular training methods
- Assess the effect of method on training gains
- Suggest ways to improve personnel training in the industry

Scope of the study and limitation

The Hospitality and Tourism Industries are often put together due to their inter-dependence. They concentrate on not only attracting clientele but also introducing them to the Nigerian people and culture. Since these industries are at the point of first contact, the image they display for visitors is vital to return business, which ultimately impacts the economy. This study is focusing on the hospitality part alone and specifically on the hotel industry in Nigeria. It will cover a major popular tourist destination - Lagos out of the three possible major cities Port Harcourt, Lagos and Abuja. The study will collect data from three key players in the industry – the customers, employees and the employers.

Significance of the study

The study will benefit hoteliers, employees, organizations and the government:

- Help the government revisit the potential of hotels as a contributor to the economy
- Help employers realize the importance of training to their productivity
- Help employees appreciate the dignity of the hotel as a service industry and as a viable career path
- ICHRIE can use the study and its statistics as a basis for literature on the Nigerian hotel industry and also use it to strengthen cooperation with the hotel industry in Nigeria as well as encourage global accountability and quality assurance.
- The unemployed can better appreciate the potential in the industry as an employment potential
- Help call the attention of policy makers, educationists and the government to the yawning gaps in the academic field
- Enhance cooperation and fellowship with bodies like AHLEI as potential partners in training in the industry

Methodology

The study is survey, using qualitative and quantitative approach. The study focused on the hospitality industry and personnel training, specifically in hotels. Relevant training will enable personnel acquire the needed skills, abilities, knowledge and attitude to professionally and effectively manage the hotel business. It will equip them to deal with challenges so that the industry can take the prominent position it should in boosting national economy.

Population: There are over 1449 hotels including at least 20 major hotels in Lagos alone, it is reckoned that over 9,600 rooms are available from the recognized hotels, excluding the independent and other lodgings (Ward & Udabor, 2013). There are 568 hotels with up to 22 major hotels inclusive in Abuja and up to 289 in Akwa Ibom state and 16 in Port Harcourt - support@hotels.com. The population of the study consisted of all hotel employees, employers and guests in Lagos State. This will apply to all major cities in all the states of Nigeria, especially those with key ports (air, rail and sea) like Port Harcourt, Lagos and Abuja. Recognized hotels will be used in the study and not Guest Houses, Inn, Bed and Breakfast, etc. The study examined hotels from 10 of the 20 Local Government Areas of Lagos State. There are about 197 hotels in Ikeja alone. It first stratified into the Mainland and the Island and tried to do a cross section with international and local brands. The hotels were either owned by local individual or groups and are run by international brands or are independently run. To ensure fairness low end and high end hotels were fully represented.

Sample – These three groups of people will be polled for their input. Guests - to talk of their experience; employers - to talk about the training programs they offer, and employees - for training received and the outcome. Respondents are from more than 50 hotels in Lagos professionally and privately run, including the branded hotels. This is because of the concentration of the hospitality industry in and out of Lagos city. They were stratified into professional brand managed or family owned/private managed concerns and only main hotels were used (no motel, resort etc) and hotel guests and management staff formed the interviewees. In all, 350 respondents were used from all categories of employees. For the sampling technique, respondents were selected using proportionate random sampling with each hotel covering management and front/back line employees.

Instrument: The questionnaire was the main tool used to collect data, tagged questionnaire for hotel workers (QHW). This was supported with face to face interview sessions dealing with experiences and challenges and also Observation. Quantitative research was done by distributing questionnaires personally and with the aid of assistants to the employees of the various hotels and a couple online; and qualitative research through personal interviews. Respondents in every hotel included management cadre, front line workers (those who often directly interact with guests regularly) and back line workers as well as guests selected randomly. The questionnaire was in two parts, the biography section followed with pertinent questions containing 24 items. It was administered on respondents who consisted of Assistant Manager (HRD) Training manager, Supervisor, Immediate boss or a more experienced worker, as well as front and back line employees. Content of training and method of training were also assessed through the questionnaire. The interview consisted of guests relaying their experiences in terms of their views to employee training, trainers as well as management.

Validity and Reliability: The questions were duly validated with the input of experts in the hospitality industry and reliability was established through test-retest spanning an interval of three weeks with 20 subjects who did not form part of the main study. A reliability quotient of .76 was obtained, deeming the instrument suitable for the study.

Administration: Several assistants helped with the data collection and all were retrieved.

Analysis: The research questions were treated using percentages and frequency counts while the hypotheses were subjected to the Chi-square test, Pearson Moment Correlation and Regression analysis and results graphically presented.

Findings and the discussion

More than 50 hotels were sampled with 2 to 7 respondents on the average from each, depending on employee availability. This consists of at least someone from management level and one each from front and back line employees. The typical hotel is privately owned by individuals or groups and independently managed 216(64%). Others are professionally managed (sometimes by expatriates) and

may be branded. There were also more male respondents 228 (67%), and the modal age of respondents were between 26-35 (168 – 49%). This paints a youthful image of employees generally. Majority had a university degree 108 (32%) - there is currently an influx of graduate job-seekers into the industry. Professional certification in the industry were scant – 64 (18.82%) claimed to be professionally certified. However, out of these, some had adjunct certification, mostly in Catering, Management and Accounting etc. Majority of the catering were earned locally from private institutions and Guild certification. Only a few of the respondents had certification in hotel management, these and other certifications were earned from internationally certified hospitality schools or other relevant institutions.

The hotel industry in Nigeria does not seem to conform to the global nomenclature. There are rather low, medium or high end hotels instead of the regular stars awarded for classification. The level of professionalism in the running as well as staff strength (and maybe number of rooms) may be used to categorize it as low, medium or high end. Nigerian hotels have more of low to medium end rather than the high end internationally branded ones run by professionals. The hotels in the low end are mostly owned by individuals as a business investment and may be self run with minimal staff. Many of the low end hotels are run by people who do not have the relevant professional certification in hotel management.

To answer research question 1 which asked whether the respondents received any training, the majority claimed they were trained when they started 221(65%). This is because training was viewed loosely as ranging from just ‘putting them through the basics’ (as in most of the low-end hotels) to those who underwent job shadowing, or through Workshop and other methods. The majority of the trainings were in-house and on-the-job, conducted by the immediate boss, supervisor or the training manager and lasted between 1 – 3 days and up to less than a month. Some claimed they were not trained because they were already qualified. This suggests that there is an attempt to, at least, do some form of orientation or induction for new employees and that is the extent of what most regard as training. This involves taking the employee through standard operating procedure (SOP), the intensity of which varies by the hotel classification. Only the high end hotels seemed to practice staff training with seriousness. For example, the front desk in most of the establishments polled used a specialized global software package (OPERA) for check-in etc. Front desk employees must be trained to become familiar with it. Thus generally, the impression is that although the hotel industry knows some form of training is necessary, there is no general gauge to determine what is ‘best practice’ standard on what should be the level of employee training across board in the field. This belies the belief in adult education that training should be a continuous process.

In response to research question 2 on respondents’ opinion of what constituted training, Majority 93(27.35%) felt training was a combination of ‘being taught specific tasks like laying a bed or being put through the basics. 67(19.71%) picked formalized education resulting in certification. The next frequency 81(23.82%) were those who chose the option ‘all of the above’. Incidentally, this would have been nearer the ideal of what training should be as it is more than pieces and rather a combination of formal and non-formal practical exercise. However it looks like this is the general opinion. Maybe this narrow perception of what training is about is partially responsible for the general lassitude towards training in the industry.

For research question 3, on the method/technique used for the training, for those who benefited, the most popular was the in-house on-the-job method. The Lecture 124(36%) Demonstration/Practice 52(15%) and Workshop/Conference/Seminar 64(19%) were the main techniques. The Job Shadowing and Role play techniques, were used sparingly and only in the high-end hotels where the international professionals operated and largely for the managerial positions. Employees also preferred face-to-face training culminating in an internationally branded certificate, which agrees with Spencerly and Rozga (2007). Because training is a situational process, several techniques must be used as appropriate.

Research question 4 sought to establish the professional qualifications, apart from the academic, of the respondents in the hotel industry. Most of the employees had at least a University or Polytechnic degree already and others had a Secondary School Leaving Certificate to begin with. However, in terms of relevant professional qualification in the hospitality field, only 12% had certificate in Hotel Management among the respondents polled, and the rest were in Catering; a couple had other adjunct qualifications in Accounting and a handful of MBA. Although the selection was random, it gives a birds-eye view of the general experience in the field. This is an eye-opener in the industry. It suggests that many wander into the industry, probably as a result of the lack of other employment. Incidentally, this again underpins the necessity for on-the-job training, along with the more appropriate certification.

Research Question 5 was to establish the purpose of the training given to employees. The next table shows the responses.

Table 1: Purpose of training

Description	Frequency	percentage
General intro to the hotel space/workers	59	17.35
To teach customer service and care	52	15.30
To help me perform my task better	80	23.53
Computer usage	43	12.65
All of the above	66	19.41
No training	40	11.76

On the respondents' general view on the purpose of training (research question 5), the purpose of most of the trainings were enumerated as to introduce the new employee to the hotel operations generally and to other co-workers especially in their specific Department. Majority 80(23.53%) felt that training was to make them perform their allotted tasks better only, while 66(19.41%) felt it was a combination of all of the options. 40(11.76%) said that no training took place. Most of the training did not entail teaching the new intakes the tasks, which supports the belief that training is not viewed with the importance necessary largely in the low end hotels. The polarity in the results was partly attributable to the dichotomy between the hotels managed by international professional and the local.

The 6th research questions states that training expectations of the employee will not significantly differ from the actual training received. The table below presents the response:

Table 2: Respondents' perspective of training

	Training	Expectation	Reality	Total
1	Being put through the basics	73	92	165
2	Being introduced to people in the Dept.	12	21	33
3	Being taught specific tasks	96	60	156
4	Having the appropriate certificate	69	63	132
5	All of the above	86	65	151
6	None of the above	4	39	43
	total	340	340	680

The difference is reflected in the chart below:

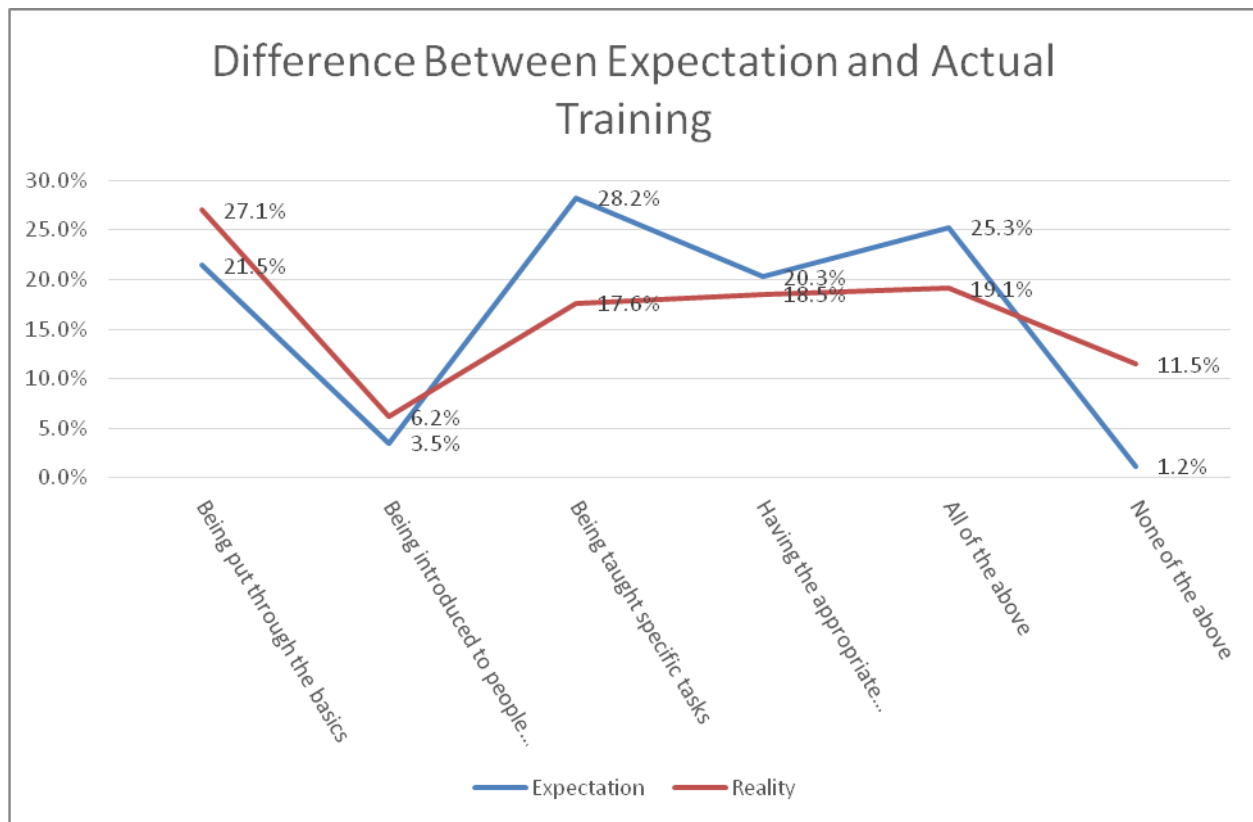


Fig. 1: Training expectation and actual training

A first glance at the chart above reveals in general that the level of training given to the respondents is lower than what is expected. This supports the notion that probably enough employee training is not occurring in the hotel industry.

Research question 7 asked what the respondents believed can be gained by training. The consensus was that it motivates employees 59(17.06%), encourages self-development and self-confidence 48(14.12%) but the majority picked ‘all of the options’. As a result of the training, most of the respondents were able to perform allotted tasks better 159(46.76%). However, 125(36.76%) saw little difference in their performance and others felt they did not need further training. Most trainings were held inside the hotel premises and only few were outside. 129(37.94%) were very satisfied with the training in the hotel. The research corroborates Spencerly & Rozga (2007) finding that employees preferred face to face type of training culminating in an internationally branded certificate.

The suggestions as to how the training situation can be improved upon in Nigeria ranged from using more practical methods for training, training more often, ploughing feedbacks in for better performance as well as instituting better policies.

A cursory look at the industry in Nigeria, particularly in Lagos where all these cases were reported will show a less than stellar attitude to training as shown by employees exhibiting no personal pride in the delivery of the job, lack of proper supervision, poor pay and an industry plagued with unqualified staff. Generally, the jobs available in the hotel business are looked down upon as being in the lower level of employment to the extent that not many people venture into it as a career and most stumble upon it or take it on as a last resort to other employment options. This is exacerbated by the cultural stigma or negative perception of the ‘type’ of people who work in hotels. The low staff strength of women in the hotel industry could also be a reflection of the cultural fear and negative perception of the

industry as being for people with low morals. The female respondents were largely represented in catering and housekeeping with fewer representations in management positions.

There is again probably an element of the traditional African hospitality mentality that is culturally promoted to assume that innate life skills like cooking and cleaning can be parlayed into or substituted for professional training in the industry. This is coupled with the finding that even employers of labour, who go into the hotel industry as private businesses, mostly do it for the investment and may not have any relevant qualification themselves. These groups of employers may therefore not value the need for professional certification or more professional training for their employees.

The first null hypothesis measured teaching method adopted against employee's level of satisfaction with the training. The results reveal:

Teaching method	Employee satisfaction				X2 calc	X2 crit	df	Decision
	Very satisfied	Averagely satisfied	Not satisfied	total				
Workshop/Seminar/Conf	16 (33)	22 (46)	10 (21)	48 (100)	10.95	14.45	6	Accept
Lecture	53 (33)	74 (45)	35 (22)	162 (100)				
Job shadowing	23 (39)	27 (46)	9 (15)	59 (100)				
Demonstration/practice	37 (52)	19 (27)	15 (21)	71 (100)				
Total	129	142	69	340				

Note figures in parentheses are percentages of the cell value

Table 1 shows that the X2 calculated (10.95) is lower than the X2 critical at 14.45, degree of freedom 6 and 0.05 level of confidence. The hypothesis was thus accepted. This suggests that the respondents were satisfied with the method of teaching.

Hypothesis 2 posited that the training method used will not significantly influence training outcome. The Chi square test shows:

Teaching method	Training outcome				X2 calc	X2 crit	df	Decision
	Able to work better	Little difference	No difference	total				
Workshop/Seminar/Conf.	19 (46)	16 (31)	6 (15)	41 (100)	12.61	14.45	6	Accept
Lecture	91 (48)	87 (46)	11 (6)	189 (100)				
Job shadowing	23 (55)	14 (33)	5 (12)	42 (100)				
Demonstration/practice	26 (68)	8 (21)	4 (11)	38 (100)				
Total	159	125	26	310				

Note figures in parentheses are percentages of the cell value

Hypothesis 2 assessed the effect of training method adopted on the training outcome of participants and the hypothesis was accepted as the chi-square critical (14.45) was higher than the calculated value of 10.95 at 0.05 level of confidence and df 6. This suggests that how employees expected to be trained is close to how they were trained. A closer look at the percentages will reveal that the Lecture method featured prominently. This also features highly in those who were not satisfied or were only averagely satisfied with the method. Attention must be paid to this aspect because the Lecture is not a particularly

suitable method for adult learners. By virtue of the field, Demonstration/Practice, Simulation, Job shadowing or any other more appropriately hands-on technique would have brought on a more favourable outcome.

Furthermore a typical organizational chart of major departments in a typical five star indicating several positions was shown for respondents to tick the positions that were available in their establishment. The responses show that the positions were not strictly adhered to. This means there are different posts open to job seekers who get invested in the industry when they are appropriately trained. In many of the hotels visited it was found that many of these positions were either not filled, are filled with unqualified people or roles are merged for individual employees, especially in the privately owned and low end hotels. Findings further reveal that employers do not put staff training on top of their priority lists which echoes Sheriff (2006) submission that an average hospitality stakeholder in Nigeria does not value training that will make them professionals. Training does not generally seem to feature prominently in the low end hotels and even the big ones do not seem that keen on investing in long term training. The fact that many hotels are privately owned as purely a business venture also means that many of the owners themselves merely use the hotel as an investment and may not be certified in the field. This may again contribute to their interest in the level of employee training that goes on in the industry. Another key emerging issue from the study is that there is scant provision for academic institutions dedicated to the study and award of certificates in Hotel Management in Nigeria. There are some dedicated to hospitality and tourism but not specifically to the hotel industry.

One of the cultural factors that influence employment in the industry is that most Nigerians are still mired in the belief that the hotel is not a dignified place for decent people to work, especially females. There is still the long-held belief that the word 'hotel' still vaguely connotes a den of iniquities or brothels. Several of the small hotels checked still practice actively by renting out rooms by the hour. There is little professionalism or training involved in these types of establishment as their departments are limited to bare necessities. It must be mentioned that most of the rather negative results on training were largely from the low-end hotels. They do not necessarily employ professionals and still maintain an air of what the general opinion of what a 'hotel' spells for the average Nigerian. Another cultural practice is that hotels are not usually used by visiting kin who will offend family members if they do not stay with them which will affect patronage.

It was also interesting to note that computer training did not feature prominently in the types of training given to many of the respondents. In this computerized age, this is a gross oversight that does not augur well for the industry. Continuous training should be the bedrock of any service industry in order to keep employees abreast with innovative developments, retain customers, boost sales along with employee confidence and satisfaction, among others. If training were to be given the attention it deserves, and more than lip service is paid, then it will definitely take place more often than the cursory attention it is presently being accorded.

Guests' comments were rather vague and ranged from 4 out of the 10 interviewed on their perception of employee training in the hotel industry as revealed in their interaction with hotel staff, believing that because they were paying for the service, they will verbalize when displeased. 3 had no comments while 3 felt training was poor. They were randomly and conveniently selected as available and mostly clients in the high end will ask for service for their money. Complaints were more from the low end hotels.

When management was asked to comment on training in the hotel industry, many were more concerned about more general issues as being more pertinent as a force for immediate concern than training. They listed:

- Low employee basic salaries.
- High energy costs (they may have to depend on generating their own alternative electricity supply and use water from self-constructed boreholes as well as taking responsibility for their own waste management, etc.
- High operating costs and taxation charges - often simultaneously from Federal, State and maybe Local Government, including VAT, License charges, among others.

Several other issues emerge - the hospitality industry in Nigeria is regarded as a low end level of employment; there is no standardized mode of training, thus the low end hotels do it their own way, as well as a dearth of appropriately trained staff, quality assurance is also not strictly adhered to.

Training is important to improving the competencies of the employee. The study agrees with Yang (2010) and Ahammad (2013) who emphasize the importance of staff training as a function of Human Resource Management. However the low end hotels may not value training as such. The question of whether training is actually important or optional for the smooth running of the hotel business may be raised. The resounding answer is YES and it should be all the forms of training – formal (for certification) and non-formal and should be on-the-job. Since hospitality is basically about handling people, certain business etiquette, personal presence and courtesy are required - Grooming, composure, attitude, communication, presentation, politeness, customer engagement and tolerance, among others. All these can be better served by a properly trained staff to boost customer and employee satisfaction. It is believed that if quality assurance process was more enforced, then there may be a more uniform standard operating procedure that must be adhered to by all in the industry, thereby elevating its status.

This study has further noted that there aren't many schools for professional certification in the hotel industry in Nigeria. There are many private or government run Vocational Centres, many of which are Catering Schools who teach basic skills like making snacks, etc. Spencerly and Rozga (2007) have also noted that scarcity of local trainers, no follow-up, low financing capability seem to plague training aspirations in the industry. Training is supposed to increase efficiency and improve performance to enable greater professionalism. It is basically to gain knowledge and skills to upgrade to international standards. If employees are professionally certified, they are more likely to provide better service and be professional about it.

Recommendations

- There is need to establish proper training schools specifically for Hotel Management and certification which will be of international repute
- There should be more qualified trainers and employees should be encouraged to get certified in the field so that there can be more professionals in the field (this will impact on customer care and satisfaction and be a boon to the industry)
- Training must be viewed with more enthusiasm. The idea of a uniform standard operating procedure as guide could emphasize the need for employee training and more supervision of the industry.
- The international bodies should also get more invested in the process of quality assurance in the field to draw more people in and engender the viability of hospitality and tourism as a field of study.
- More regularity in the quality assurance process and better cooperation.
- More awareness should be drawn to the field as a potential career path through frequent campaigns.

All these suggestions have also been noted by Ward & Udaboh (2013).

Conclusion

In spite of the challenges, the hotel industry in Nigeria, if well managed with an optimally trained personnel and excellent quality assurance practices, has a great potential of boosting the economy of the nation, giving her positive exposure and maximizing her potential. Training leads to improved performance, minimizing mistakes and this leads to employee, employer and customer satisfaction. Hotels in Nigeria must aspire to constantly meet global measures of standards. Not only should training be seen as important, but it must also be continuous - from employment to retirement in such a dynamic industry.

To attract and retain employees, there is a need for the organization to be more committed to investing in the training and development of their employees. Becoming more proficient in their job helps to foster loyalty, pride, it helps to lower attrition rate, improve staff/customer inter-personal relations, increase

productivity and engender competitiveness, among other benefits. While the society may favour formal certification, there is no doubt that much can be gained from non-formal training too, especially on-the-job.

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