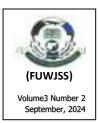
# DEPLOYMENT OF CLOSED-CIRCUIT TELEVISION (CCTV) AND SECURITY SURVEILLANCE IN HOTELS WITHIN SOUTH-WEST NIGERIA



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## Abstract

This study investigated the deployment and usage of closed-circuit television (CCTV) by selected hotels in Lagos and Ogun States, Nigeria and how this curbs crime in hotels in the region. Analyses in the study hinged on the technological determinism theory. Through the purposive sampling technique, in-depth interviews were conducted in five 5 hotels, one government security agency, and one government tourism-hospitality regulatory agency. The study findings revealed that the use of CCTV for security surveillance was considered paramount among hoteliers in South-West Nigeria. However, poor maintenance of CCTV was unravelled as one of the key challenges in most low-status hotels. The study concludes that hunt for customers and the fear of a reduction in patronage make the deployment and use of CCTV in hotels not a prioritized necessity in South-West Nigeria; this is as customers often consider CCTV as an intrusion on their privacy. The study recommends that the hotel regulatory body should make the use of CCTV mandatory, ensuring its enforcement, and educating hoteliers and the patronizers on why the use of CCTV is a necessity to secure of lives and properties.

Keywords: Camera, CCTV, crime, key informant, security surveillance

## Introduction

The geometrical increase in the number of reported cases of murder and other crimes occurring in Nigerian hotels raises a serious concern (Onwumere, 2022). These incessant crimes have increased fear, depression, insomnia, and anxiety among hoteliers, lodgers, hotel staff, regulatory bodies, law enforcement agencies, members of the public, and the government at various levels. The situation has resulted in financial loss, and physical harm to individuals and communities (Office for National Statistics, 2022). Due to the crime rate, hotels seem to have begun to attract attention as places of danger and insecurity. The law enforcers have on several occasions advised that the hospitality industry should employ modern information and communication technology to strengthen its security measures (Vanguard, 2017). Having realized the precarious incidents of crimes in hotels, the Nigerian police at a time called for legislation to support the use of surveillance cameras (Ukpong, 2022). Based on the aforesaid, this study was conducted on selected hotels in Lagos and Ogun States, South-West Nigeria. The study set out to meet four objectives. The write-up examines the concept of hotels, their uses, nature, and categories. It considers criminality (especially cases of murder) in Nigerian hotels, examines the closed-circuit television technology and its workings, and the technological determinism theory. The study is an empirical one, based on primary data. It presents the method, findings, limitations, and recommendations.

Many people patronize hotels, clubs, etc., to take time off life's troubles, enjoy themselves and reduce the stress of daily living, and experience quality lodging services (Bello & Majebi, 2018; Travel Destinations, 2018). Hotels offer lodging to travellers and sometimes, to permanent residents. They also offer many services such as the provision of space for parties, conferences, wedding ceremonies, church services, and fellowship meetings. Fun seekers can choose from various options like swimming, having food and drinks in restaurants and bars, purchasing artifacts and exclusive items, patronizing the gymnasia, basking in unimaginable luxury, or just enjoying the scenery. However, hotels in Nigeria are reported to have become notorious, serving as places for perpetrating crimes, such as murder and the sale and use of narcotics, as noted by police authorities (Onwumere, 2022; Vanguard, 2017). Again, cases of murder seem to be increasing in hotels along with the growth in the number of hospitality establishments in the country. This is despite the fact that the Lagos State police command mandated operators of the hospitality industry such as hotels, clubs, beaches, lounges, and bars to install internal security systems to stem crime (Vanguard, 2017), and the Nigeria police calling for legislation that would compel private citizens, government agencies and corporate organizations to install closed-circuit television (CCTV) systems and security sensors in their facilities (Ukpong, 2022). This position has provided the justification for this study, which set out to investigate the use of CCTV systems, for surveillance in selected hotels in Lagos and Ogun States of Nigeria.

#### Hotels and Criminality in Nigeria

Hotels are commercial establishments that offer lodging to travellers and sometimes permanent residents; and often provide additional services such as meeting rooms, restaurants, stores, (Dictionary.com), bars, swimming pools, healthcare, boardrooms, banquet halls, and space for parties (Tourism Notes), which are available to the public. Most modern hotels provide the basic facilities in a room such as a bed, a wardrobe, a small table and chair, weather control (air conditioner or heater), and a bathroom- along with other features like a telephone a television set with cable channel, broadband internet connectivity and a small refrigerator, many times with drinks which are meant to be paid for. Hotels are usually rated by the government and sometimes by the establishments themselves. Star classification is about the most accepted rating globally. However, hotels can also be classified on such bases as size, location, clients, duration of stay, level of services, and even ownership (Tourism Notes). The hotels in the location of study are of various categories; however, they are not officially rated but are licensed by the regulatory authorities.

In 1996, an 11-year-old hawker was murdered in a hotel in Owerri, triggering a riot and a protracted court case (Onwumere, 2022; Opinion Nigeria, 2022). In 2012, Cynthia Udoka Osokogu was lured from her home in Abuja under the guise of business to a hotel in Lagos where she was murdered(Onwumere, 2022); in August 2022, some "gunmen" were reported to have broken into the 16-Hour Hotel, Ilorin, Kwara State, killing its owner, Kayode Akinyemi, aged 45, leaving the manager, Emmanuel Olushila Ojo seriously injured and kidnapping another individual (Nairaland Forum, 2022; Onwumere,2022); also on the night of Thursday August 25, 2022, Chief Ogbonnaya Augustine Nwadibia, owner of Galaxy Hotel, Onicha, Ebonyi State, along with two other people were killed in the hotel by "yet to be identified gun men"

(Nairaland Forum, 2022; Onwumere, 2022; Sahara Reporters, 2022); in June 2021, chief executive officer of Super TV, Usifo Ataga, was murdered at a short let apartment in Lekki Peninsular, Lagos (Sahara Reporters, 2021). However, the owner of the apartment produced the CCTV footage which was deployed in arresting the prime suspect (Adelagun, 2022). On November 5, 2021, Timothy Adegoke, 37, a postgraduate student of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife Osun State who traveled from Abuja to Ile-Ife to write examinations in courses required for Master of Business Administration, lodged in Hilton Hotel, where he was said to have died (Agbor, 2022). CCTV footage obtained from the hotel was said to have revealed the hotel owner, his son, and another staff, walking into the room of the deceased at midnight, and later emerging with his corpse wrapped with the hotel's bedspread and fastened with a rope (Oyo Affairs, 2022). In July 2023, Miss Chinyere Awuda was said to have been beaten to death in the club of "a popular hotel" in Awka, Anambra State, by her fellow fun seekers (mainly men) during what was initially meant to be a dancing session with a birthday celebrator; she was accused of theft. Eyewitnesses were reported to have said that despite efforts to rescue her, the men, ignoring appeals, dragged her out of the club area, beating her up to death, and her body was later found in a swimming pool in the facility (Obianeri, 2023). Days later, the deceased's relatives were reported to have said that the hotel had declined their request to produce the CCTV footage of the occurrence that led to her demise (Punch Newspaper, 2023). On 8th August 2023, Omoniyi, Boluwatife, a nursing graduate made her way to Copacapana Club, Bodija, Ibadan to celebrate her induction into the nursing profession, but was found dead at a location other than that of the club, two days later. Authorities of the club denied that her demise occurred on their premises, saying that their establishment "is equipped with topnotch security systems, making it one of the most protected facilities in the city of Ibadan" (Adeyemo, 2023; Badru, 2023; Hassan, 2023; Ojo, 2023).

#### **Closed Circuit Television as a Crime Surveillance System**

Closed-circuit television (CCTV) is a video surveillance technology used in both public and private sectors to prevent crime. It is a system of video cameras, display devices, and data networks that are used to detect and discourage criminals and criminality. It is used in places such as schools, homes, hotels, or other public spaces for crime prevention purposes. (IFSEC Insider, 2021). It is a closed-circuit system

because unlike regular television (broadcasts of which can be accessed by members of a mass audience), broadcasts are closed or limited to a selected group of monitors. Places with closed-circuit television cameras tend to experience less crime as criminals would not want to be recorded. According to Boss Security (2022), the presence of CCTV cameras in a public place is a comfort to people as they feel safer, knowing someone can call for help if they are in trouble; closed circuit television systems provide video evidence which can serve as alibi proof for the innocent or refute the alibi of a criminal and which are more reliable than eyewitnesses; if someone is unfairly accused of wrongdoing, video evidence provided by the cameras will help determine whether or not the accused person committed the infraction. With CCTV cameras, chances of arresting offenders are higher as with advanced technology, such as facial recognition, allowing authorities to track them down; also, photographs and other data can be shared with the public to disseminate the news (Monomousumi, 2023).

# Technological Determinism Theory and CCTV Adoption in Nigerian Hotels

German philosopher and economist, Karl Max is credited with the first major elaboration of a technological determinist view of socioeconomic development. He contended that changes in technology are the primary influence on human social relations and organizational structure and that social relations and cultural practices ultimately revolve around the technological and economic base of a given society (Croteau & Hoynes, 2003). The term "technological determinism" was coined by Thorstein Veblen and the theory was further refined by Marshal McLuhan in 1964 (Asemah, Nwanmuo, & Nkwam-Uwaoma, 2017; Communication Theory, 2016) and the theory states that media technology shapes how members of the society think, feel and act, and how the society operates as it moves from one technological stage to another (Communications Capstone, 2001). Technology defines the nature of society; it is the driving force of society, and it defines its history; technology can drive human interaction and create social change. (Asemah et al., 2017; Communication Theory, 2016).

Explaining the theory from the ontological assumptions, Communication Capstone (2001) offers that it shows that individuals have little or no free will as they have to deploy the media used by society to meet their own communication needs (Adelakun, 2018). Technological determinism manifests itself in various ways, starting with the introduction of newer technologies that introduce new ways of doing things (Communication Theory, 2016). The invention of language; discovery of various metals (e.g., iron, bronze, copper, etc.); introduction of double entry book-keeping; the internet, and the emergence of general Artificial Intelligence are some examples of the demonstration of technological determinism offered by Singh (2023). Asemah et al. (2017) note that the theory focuses on the effects of technology on society. The deployment of closed-circuit television systems for security purposes is becoming common in hotels; as hotel operators, regulatory authorities and law enforcers attest to this. Hotel operators who use CCTV technology seek to upgrade their system, those who do not have the technology aspire to be able to afford its installation and maintenance and some of those who cannot afford to maintain an installed system continue to give the impression that they have it well operated.

#### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework adopted for this study is the technological determinism theory (see the preceding section) (Croteau and Hoynes, 2003). It is appropriate for the character of this study's research problem, the set objectives, and the questions that guided the field study. This is, given the fact that the entire investigation is based on the deployment of a modern technological product to transform society and handle some challenges posed by modern living. Although other studies (Azam et al., 2020; Dafoe, 2015; De la Cruz Paragas & Lin, 2016) adapted the theory for their research, this study seems to be the first to adapt the theory in the context of the deployment of Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) and security surveillance in hotels within the South-West region of Nigeria.

### **Research Methodology**

The qualitative method was adopted to meet the research objectives and provide answers to the research questions. In line with the observation of Donnelly et al. (2013) that sample selection for qualitative research is not calculated by means of mathematical stipulations and probability statistics are not applied, 14 organizations were selected for the study in the location. Again, heeding the counsel of Donnelly et al. (2013) to qualitative researchers to describe their sample in terms of characteristics and relevance to the wider population, the selection of the organizations was based on their relevance to the research and the role they play in the society as agents of the law, hospitality industry regulators and operators of hotels, which form the subject of the study.

The selected organizations were bifurcated into two categories, namely police authorities and licensing and regulatory authorities of the tourism and hospitality industry on the one hand and hotels on the other hand. Letters of introduction were delivered to these 14 relevant organizations and follow-up contacts were made through telephone calls and personal visits. Appointments were secured with organizations that exhibited interest in and support for the study, and face-to-face in-depth interviews were conducted with their representatives. Even though 14 organizations were selected for the study in the location, seven (7) organizations, comprising five hotels, the law enforcement agency, and the regulatory authority, supported and participated in the study. Representatives of these organizations served as key informants and respondents to in-depth interviews. Two interview guides served as research instruments for the two categories of respondents. Audio recording of the interviews was carried out for those who found such comfortable. However, some key informants were more comfortable with documentation. To ensure validity, a member check was carried out as suggested by Donnelly et al. (2013) and Ningi (2022); recorded interviews were played to the hearing of the key informants who were recorded while the written responses were read out to those who declined to have their responses recorded on tape. As observed by Mihas (2023), there is no single strategy agreed upon for determining themes, but researchers might create clusters of seemingly related codes and then name the conceptual glue that holds them together. Responses were thereupon transcribed and categorized into themes, based on the research objectives. Data are presented nonnumerically, as narrations and direct quotations used to substantiate the thematic categories. Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis method formed the basis for the analysis and interpretation of data.

### **Results and Discussion of Findings**

Data for this study is purely primary. Fourteen relevant organizations (comprising one law enforcement agency, one state tourism board, and twelve hotels) were purposively selected for the research but seven willingly supported the study and took part in it. The selected organizations were placed in two categories, namely police authorities and industry regulatory authorities as one category and hotels as the second category. Two interview guides served as research instruments.

# Deployment of CCTV and Crime Control with Hotels in South-West Nigeria

The representative of the law enforcers countered the news report credited to the police in which hotels were mandated to install CCTV for security surveillance. He explained that it was a misrepresentation by the journalist who reported it. Rather, it was a piece of "advice" from the police to owners of hotels, clubs and even homes to install surveillance equipment on their properties to prevent crime and to detect crime if it occurred. He was emphatic that the rate of compliance was high as many hotel operators have installed CCTV systems on their properties and many commence operations with the surveillance equipment. The representative of the regulatory body was aware of the "official order" by the police to hotels to install CCTV cameras in their facilities and was of the view that compliance rate was high, more so as most hotels commenced operations with the equipment. All the five key informants who were hotel operators were very much aware of the "order" to install the equipment in focus and they considered it very beneficial. However, one guest house with 90 rooms, affiliated with a private institution of higher learning had not installed the equipment in its facility but plans were under way to do so; one hotel with over 30 rooms had installed the cameras but as at the time of the study, they were said not to be functioning. "We installed CCTV cameras in the hotel right from inception, nine years ago", affirmed the key informant. The cameras were said to be in public areas, such as the bars, reception spaces, lobbies, car parks, gymnasia, restaurants and even kitchens. Another key informant who was operating a hotel with about 17 rooms said the organisation commenced operations with the CCTV equipment in place, 13 years prior to the study and the proprietor monitored the equipment on his cell phone. So important is the CCTV technology that one key informant, a general manger of a hotel referred to it as "the eye of the hotel". His organisation, according to him, "...sells serenity, security, peace and tranquillity". He said he could "not imagine a hotel without CCTV". The equipment was said to be a part of the 15-year-old facility. The 94-room hotel is an international hotel, a management franchise, and has its regional headquarters in Dubai and major headquarters in Brussels. The CCTV cameras were said to be virtually everywhere on the premises and staff were assigned to monitor them at the control room throughout the "24 hours of the day." According to the key informant, the surveillance equipment was,

...always in use and in check. If there is a suspicious movement, the staff in the CCTV room communicates with the security staff immediately and the necessary actions are taken to prevent crime. Apart from monitoring the surveillance equipment, staff are equipped with communication gadgets to provide the security staff with information. There are no 'blind spots' in the hotel as everywhere--- car park, lobby, restaurants, gymnasium, swimming pool, bar — except bedrooms, bathrooms, cloakrooms, conference rooms — is covered by the cameras. This helps to detect and to prevent crime. It also helps to monitor the activities of staff and prevents pilferage. (Security agent, personal communication, July 28, 2023, Lagos, Nigeria).

Of the hotels investigated, the only one which did not have the CCTV system said it was planning to install it. It is noteworthy that effort is being made toward the installation of CCTV as it can also help to boost the confidence of visitors and tourists, who are often risk averse at destinations they perceive as relatively unsafe (Majebi, 2023).

The security agent was of the view that many hotels of various categories had CCTV cameras in their facilities. He said hotels that receive governmental guests and foreign visitors ensure the equipment is available and functional; foreign organisations have a list of hotels where their staff or nationals can lodge, and in many cases, security experts visit hotels ahead of the guest's arrival, for inspection, to ensure their safety. If there are no CCTV cameras in any hotel on the list, guests would not be allowed to lodge there as it would "not have passed the security clearance".

Consequently, the security agent advised operators of the hotels, clubs, guest houses, and those in the hospitality industry to install CCTV surveillance equipment on their premises, to curb crime. Not only do many hotels have the CCTV system, but they also commence operations with the said technology. Those who do not have it are planning to install it in their establishments. This is very much a demonstration of the technology determinism theory which revolves around the notion that changes in technology are the primary influence on human social relations and organizational structure (Asemah et al., 2017; Communications Capstone, 2001; Communication Theory, 2016). It is also a preparedness measure aimed at identifying and averting the occurrence of a crisis (Majebi, 2020; Majebi, 2021) associated with criminality. The media technology in focus now shapes the way the hospitality industry operates; hotels that want to be taken seriously

should install the system in their facility. Not only can the establishment be monitored from the control room, but it can also be monitored from an individual's cell phone if it is so wired. Hotels of various categories in Lagos and Ogun States deploy the CCTV communication system to prevent and detect crime in their establishments and the equipment is effective, in that potential criminals stay away and crimes such as thefts are traceable. Use of the technology comes with challenges, such as the loss of staff who abhor constant monitoring, a situation which could lead to a seemingly endless hunt for hotel staff. Some patrons would rather not be captured by cameras, not even in the very open places in the hotels as they consider that an invasion of the privacy which they very much cherish. Some hotels are unable to fully maintain and upgrade the technology due to costs. Establishments that do not expand the system's memory space would be unable to properly trace a crime if it occurs. Those who limit their use of the technology to mare recording, leaving out monitoring are likely to be unable to prevent crime from occurring.

The interviewee representing the regulatory authority revealed that formal/official categorization and rating of hotels had not begun, but the concentration was on licensing. However, hotels were sometimes classed according to location (such as urban, suburban, and resorts), and profile (such as international hotels, which are in partnership with international organizations, national hotels, etc.). He however opined that many hotels had installed surveillance equipment in their facilities and many normally begin operations with the equipment. Of the hotels that participated in the study, all except one had CCTV cameras. Two of the proprietors were said to personally monitor the equipment on their cell phones. One general manager of a hotel with about 30 rooms said the monitor was in his office, which served as a control room, and on his desk (which was seen by the interviewer) but it was in a state of disrepair; the hotel management was not in a hurry to effect repairs due to costs and shortage of staff; moreover, the internal security staff was deployed to handle the few cases of theft that occurred and the police could be involved if that was considered necessary. Again, there were no serious issues with crime there. The operator of the guest house (a 90-roomed facility, in a suburban area) which did not own the surveillance equipment said plans were being made to install the equipment in the facility, more so as certain seeming mysteries would have been traced and solved through the surveillance equipment, had it been in use. He said it would enhance service delivery as staff would behave better, knowing they are under surveillance. The 17-roomed hotel in a sleepy rural neighbourhood had a functional CCTV, monitored, and controlled by the proprietor on his cell phone. This was said to be deployed along with the local neighborhood's security network to maintain security and check crime. The international hotel with 94 rooms had CCTV cameras in all the public spaces and staff monitored the cameras from the control room all through the day.

The key informant, a prominent agent of the law explained that "The cameras are very effective; they help to prevent crime and could help to detect crime in the event that it occurs". According to one key informant, "Hotels are home away from home and the CCTV has helped in arresting thieves. It helps in monitoring activities here. Our cameras cover everywhere — bars, swimming pool, corridors, open spaces - except bathrooms, changing rooms and bedrooms. The CCTV has helped in recovering missing items". He said if there was an unsavory occurrence in a room, movement in and out of the room would be easily determined, the culprit would be apprehended, and the police would be involved in such occurrences too. Groups were not allowed in the bedrooms, but they could hold meetings in the bars and halls. The cameras monitor their activities to ensure they are not secret. He checks "activities of interest" on his cell phone. According to him, patrons feel free and safe, and the availability of CCTV cameras attracts decent patronage. Even though there is a notice against drug use, the cameras monitor activities, a representative of the regulatory/licensing authority posited that CCTV is very effective which is why many hotels install it and even commence operations with it. The general manager of an international hotel affirmed that so effective is the CCTV system that the establishment does not require law enforcers to patrol the premises, displaying arms. The key informant who served as manager in the hotel where the equipment no longer functioned said it still served crime preventive purposes as patrons were not aware that it had ceased functioning. The operator of the 90roomed guest house who did not have the CCTV system said some guests ask for the equipment and there were times he regretted that the establishment had no CCTV cameras as some seeming mysteries would have been easily unravelled. Also, he believed it would enhance service delivery as staff would behave better if they realized, they are closely monitored. The key informant who manages a 94-roomed international hotel, said, "Our guests, including foreign visitors, are more than happy to find that we have CCTV that is properly operated. They are impressed by the number of cameras we have and by the fact that the control room is manned for the 24 hours of the day".

## Challenges of Deploying CCTV to Curb Crime In Hotels with South-West Nigeria

The law enforcer explained that "Even though many hotel operators have installed CCTV cameras in their establishments, maintenance costs discourage some of them from ensuring the equipment is functional. They use it halfway and not all the way", as messages recorded by the cameras take up memory space, which may need expansion, and which some hotels may consider unaffordable. Some hotel operators do not want to pay staff who would operate the control room, so they allow the cameras to simply record events. In the case of any occurrence of crime, they will check what the cameras recorded. However, someone operating the control room would help in crime prevention. Some establishments do not have enough storage for the messages captured by their cameras. Again, some need to connect their CCTV systems to solar electricity supply for the safety of their equipment. Two hotel operators offered that equipment failure triggered by high voltage electricity supply and power surge posed a great challenge as it caused retrogression and the cost of installing solar equipment was high. One key informant said there were times when staff resigned upon noticing their activities were captured by CCTV cameras; an example of which was the case of a stewardess who was said to have resigned earlier on the day of the interview, even though she commenced duties a few days prior. This sometimes made him constantly be on the hunt for staff. Some categories of patrons cut short their stay upon noticing that CCTV cameras are in use in the hotel. The key informant who managed the hotel situated in a sleepy rural community said the presence of CCTV cameras sometimes caused a loss of patronage as some people chose the secluded environment for their dire need for privacy and being captured by cameras would defeat their purpose. The key informant who ran a 15-year-old 90-roomed guest house confidently posited that acquiring CCTV equipment would result in an increase in charges as purchase, installation, operation, and maintenance would involve costs. The key informant who ran an international hotel said upgrading the surveillance equipment and increasing storage capacity was expensive. The organization had to upgrade cable (black and white) cameras to digital, network colour cameras with motion detectors, as they give clearer output, and operate in real-time. Some in some parts of the hotel detect voice as well. Increasing the storage capacity, to enable playback has been expensive. The establishment was said to be open to more upgrades as the

technology evolves. They are friendly and so positioned to avoid being invasive.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The security challenges in hotels and lodges in Nigeria have become a public agenda and compelled the attention of researchers for industryoriented solutions that are empirically substantiated. Having subjected related studies to discussions and delineated the focus of the study to theoretical deduction, the findings were related to the duo. Considering the limitation of the study as some hotels did not show willingness to participate in the study and some were suspicious enough to think that the research was a subterfuge to study the weakness in their security systems, the study recommends that the hotel regulatory body should promulgate the use CCTV mandatory, ensure its enforcement and educate the hoteliers and the patronisers on why the use of CCTV is a plus to security of lives and properties.

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