

THE IMPACT OF THE MONDAY SIT-AT-HOME ORDER OF IPOB ON THE GROWTH OF THE HOTEL BUSINESS IN AFIKPO LGA.

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Abstract

The study focused on the impact of Monday sit-at-home on business growth in Afikpo LGA with selected hotels as a case study. The main objective of the study is to assess the impact of the sit-at-home on the growth of the hotel business. The survey research design was employed to carry out this research. The population of the study is the 125 total number of registered hotels in the local government area. Four (4) hotels were purposively selected from which 136 respondents were randomly selected as sample size. The instruments for data collection were questionnaires and oral interviews. The data collected were analyzed using tables and simple percentages. One hypothesis was formulated and tested using X^2 chi-square to know the significant impact of Monday sit-at-home orders by IPOB on the growth of the hotel business. The findings showed that operational challenges, reduced occupant and revenue, cancellation, and loss of revenue, economic repercussions, cancellation of the event, bad reputation and industry perception, poor employee welfare, and job insecurity were the impacts of Monday's sit-at-home. Based on the findings, the study concluded that the impact is significant on the growth of the hotel business and it was recommended that engagement with government authorities, uniformed men, community leaders, IPOB leaders, and industry stakeholders is important in addressing the impact of every Monday sit-at-home protest on the hotel business in Afikpo LGA.

Keywords: Sit-at-home, Impact, Hotel Business.

INTRODUCTION

On July 30th, 2021, the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) proclaimed a weekly sit-at-home protest, dubbed "Ghost Monday," to express their dissatisfaction with the Nigerian government and demand the release of their leader, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu (Sahara Reporters, 2021). The mandate began on August 9th, 2021, and significantly impacted the hospitality industry in Nigeria's southeast region, including those in Afikpo Local Government Area. The weekly protest, observed every Monday, requires businesses, schools, hotels, markets, and transportation services to close, disrupting economic activities and demonstrating solidarity with the cause. However, this has sparked controversy, with some residents enthusiastically

participating to show support for Biafra's independence and others viewing it as destructive and detrimental to the local economy.

The hospitality business in the southeast region of Nigeria was affected negatively as a result of this pronouncement made by IPOB. The Afikpo Local Government is no exception. The hospitality business has witnessed remarkable shifts and challenges due to the mandated sit-at-home. The reason behind the sit-at-home protest is to demonstrate the group's dissatisfaction with the Nigerian government and to call the attention of the Federal Government to the release of their leader, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu. According to the group, the sit-at-home protest will be observed weekly to demand the freedom of its incarcerated leader, who has been in the custody of the Department of State Service (DSS) (Sahara Reporters 2021).

The decision to comply with a sit-at-home order is generally voluntary, but it is often a demonstration of the power of IPOB members and supporters. Businesses, schools, hotels, markets, and transport services in the area are typically closed every Monday, creating a big disruption in economic activities and sending a strong message of solidarity for the cause. The weekly Monday sit-at-home has become a source of controversy and division in the southern-east region of Nigeria. While some residents are enthusiastic about participating and see it as an opportunity to show support for Biafra independence and releasing of Mazi Nnamdi Kanu (Odinaka, 2023) others believe it is destructive and detrimental to the local economy (Busola, 2023).

The decision to comply with weekly sit-at-home orders is complex and impacts the local economy, social cohesion, and hospitality business. This reflects the deep-rooted grievance and aspirations of South Easterners and their ongoing struggle for self-determination. Since then, various prominent Igbo and various Igbo organizations have called for the end of weekly sit-at-home. Among them are Charles Soludo, Anambra State Governor, (Chinagrom, 2023), Peter Mbah, Ohanaeze Ndigbo Youth Council (OYC), MASSOB- Movement for the Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra, Arch Bishop of Enugu province (Anglican Communion, Most Rev. Emmanuel Chukwuma and his Catholic counterpart, Most Rev. Callistus Onaga (Lawrence, 2023) and Ohanaeze Ndigbo Worldwide (Cletus, 2023).

Mazi Nnamdi Kanu abolished sit-at-home in the South East and introduced Economic Empowerment Day (EED). According to Chimaobi (2023), EED connotes a day set aside for mass mobilization of Biafrans to devote the resources and means towards reversing the sharp and unprecedented decline in the economic, educational, and social needs of our people occasioned by the prolonged sit-at-home.

During the EED exercise, the South Easterners are asked to leverage their resources on a large scale for the empowerment of the underprivileged. With this in mind, the Igbos are still observing Monday's sit-at-home as a result of a lack of trust and confidence in the government and uniformed men. Therefore, it is worthwhile to research the impact of Monday's sit-at-home on the hotel business in the Afikpo Local Government Area.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- i. The main objective of the study is to assess the impact of Monday's sit-at-home on the hotel business in Afikpo Local Government.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- i. What are the impacts of Monday's sit-at-home hotels in Afikpo LGA?
- ii. Does Monday's sit-at-home have a significant impact on the hotel business in Afikpo LGA?

HYPOTHESIS

- I. Ho: Monday's sit-at-home does not have a significant impact on the hotel business in Afikpo North LGA.
- II. H1: Monday's sit-at-home has a significant impact on the hotel business in Afikpo LGA.

LITERATURE REVIEW

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Sit-At-Home Order

"Sit-at-home" refers to a strategic form of civil disobedience where individuals deliberately choose to stay at home, abstaining from work, school, and other public activities as a form of protest (Zuboff, 2019). This method is used to draw attention to specific political or social issues, leveraging the collective absence of participants to create noticeable disruptions in daily activities and economic functions. Sit-at-home protests are a form of nonviolent resistance, rooted in the idea that large-scale non-participation can effectively convey dissent without the need for physical confrontation as by staying at home, protesters demonstrate their solidarity and commitment to a cause, making their absence felt in workplaces, schools, and public spaces (Noble, 2018). This form of protest can be organized by various groups, including political movements, civil rights organizations, or social activists, aiming to highlight grievances, demand reforms, or commemorate significant events (Tufekci, 2017). A prominent example of sit-at-home protests is seen in Nigeria, where the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) have repeatedly called for such actions to advocate for the release of their leader, Nnamdi Kanu, and to push for the secession of the Biafran region (Cletus, 2023). These protests often lead to widespread shutdowns, particularly in the southeastern part of Nigeria, affecting businesses, transportation, and public services. Similarly, in Myanmar, following the military coup in February 2021, citizens engaged in sit-at-home protests as part of a broader civil disobedience movement against the military regime (Sahara Reporters, 2021). By refusing to work and participate in public life, they aimed to undermine the military government's authority and operations.

Impact of sit-at-home order on economic activities

The impact of a sit-at-home order on economic activities can be profound and multifaceted, affecting various sectors of the economy and society. Sit-at-home protests, by their nature, disrupt the regular flow of commerce, labor, and services, creating significant economic repercussions. One of the immediate impacts is the reduction in workforce availability because when a large number of individuals stay at home, businesses, particularly those reliant on daily labor, experience a shortage of workers (Noble, 2018). This can lead to reduced productivity, delays in service delivery, and some cases, complete shutdowns of operations. Small and medium-sized enterprises, which often lack the resources to absorb such shocks, are particularly vulnerable. For instance, retail businesses, restaurants, and service providers might see a significant drop in their daily revenues as both employees and customers participate in the protest by staying at home (Eubanks, 2018). In addition to labor shortages, Zuboff (2019) affirmed that sit-at-home orders disrupt the supply chain because transportation services are often paralyzed, making it difficult for goods to be transported from one place to another. This affects not just the retail sector but also industries dependent on the timely delivery of raw materials and finished products. Manufacturing units, for instance, may find it challenging to

maintain production schedules, leading to potential financial losses and contractual penalties (Zuboff, 2019). According to Wardle and Derakhshan (2017), the broader economic impact includes a decline in consumer spending. With individuals confined to their homes, spending on non-essential goods and services drops significantly and this reduction in consumer spending affects a wide array of businesses, from entertainment and hospitality to retail and transport. Economic activities centered around public gatherings, such as tourism and events, also suffer as people are discouraged from participating in public life (Odinaka, 2023).

The financial sector is not immune to the effects of sit-at-home protests as banks and financial institutions may face operational challenges as employees stay away from work (Milan, 2019). Additionally, uncertainty and instability triggered by prolonged protests can lead to decreased investor confidence, affecting stock markets and investment flows. In regions heavily dependent on external investment, this can have long-term implications for economic growth and stability.

Tufekci (2017) also stated that governments also experience a decline in revenue during sit-at-home protests because taxes collected from businesses, such as sales tax and corporate tax, are directly impacted by the reduction in economic activities and prolonged protests can strain public finances, especially in economies that are already fragile. Moreover, the informal sector, which constitutes a significant portion of the economy in many developing countries, faces severe impacts (Tufekci, 2017). Informal workers, who often live hand-to-mouth, suffer from the loss of daily income and this exacerbates poverty and inequality, as these workers typically lack social safety nets (Zuboff, 2019).

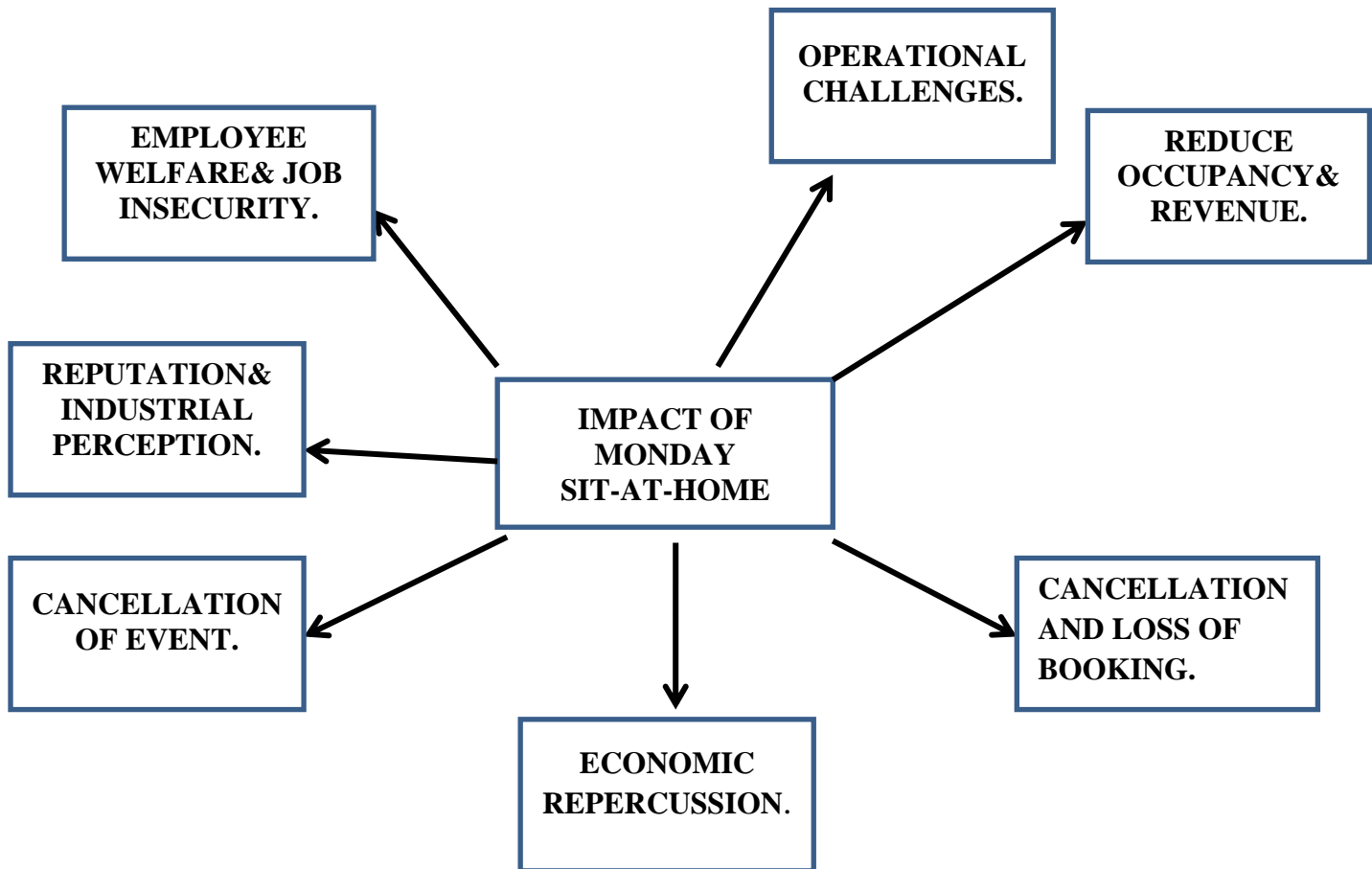
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The social movement theory

This theory emerged in the 1970s and was significantly advanced by sociologists John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald. Their work in the 1977 paper "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory" laid the foundation for understanding how social movements mobilize resources and support (Wardle and Derakhshan, 2017). This theory examines how groups mobilize to address grievances and achieve social or political change. Key components include resource mobilization, political opportunity structures, and framing processes.

In the context of sit-at-home protests, resource mobilization highlights how organizers gather and deploy resources like information, networks, and supporters to sustain the protest (Milan, 2019). Political opportunity structures are the broader political environment that may enable or constrain the movement's actions, such as government tolerance or repression. (Zuboff, 2019) Sit-at-home protests leverage collective inaction as a strategic, nonviolent tool to disrupt economic activities, thereby drawing attention to their cause and pressuring authorities to address their demands. The Social Movement Theory elucidates these dynamics, illustrating how protests can impact societal and economic structures.

IMPACT OF SIT-AT-HOME ORDER IN AFIKPO LGA



Impact of Every Monday Sit-at-Home

Source: field survey, 2024

Reduce Occupancy and Revenue: the hotel business in the Afikpo LGA has seen a decline in occupancy rates and income due to the Monday sit-at-home protest; with business, office, bank, and transportation services closed during these protests, there has been a reduction in business and leisure travel to Afikpo from another part of Nigeria, this directly affects the demand for hotel accommodations leading to decreased occupancy rates and revenue for hotel establishment. In every hotel, the selling of rooms is a major source of revenue.

Cancellation and Loss of Booking: the ongoing sit-at-home protest have also caused cancellations and a loss of bookings for hotels in Afikpo LGA, travelers and tourists choose to avoid the Afikpo LGA during the period of sit-at-home protests because of safety, accessibility and the availability of service. This has led to a reduction in bookings or cancellation of the visitors who had booked in advance, Therefore, impacting the financial stability of the hotel businesses.

Economic Repercussions: the hotel business is interconnected with transportation, tourism, entertainment, and other auxiliary service like banking, a significant decline in hotel businesses

has a direct and indirect effect on these industries, leading to significant economic repercussions in the Afikpo LGA.

Cancellation of Event: Monday's sit-at-home orders disrupt planned events such as conferences, workshops, and business meetings resulting in the cancellation of such events and shifting the venues to Calabar in Cross River state. Hotels rely on such events for a significant portion of their revenue and cancellation can have a substantial financial impact on the hotel business in Afikpo LGA.

Employee Welfare & Job Security: Monday's sit-at-home may affect the staff welfare and job security, reduce business operations and revenue may lead to salary cuts, layoffs, and some allowances not being paid. This may cause economic hardship for staff and their families who depend on the hospitality sector for employment.

Operational Challenges: Monday's sit-at-home has caused operational challenges for hotels in Afikpo LGA. With limited staff available, disruption to supply chains, logistics, and banking operations, maintaining the flow of operation of hotels is difficult, and sourcing essential supplies during sit-at-home is a challenge.

Goodwill, Reputation, and Industrial Perception: Monday's sit-at-home in Afikpo LGA has also had an impact on the overall reputation and perception of the hospitality business in Afikpo LGA. Negative media coverage, perception of instability, and disruption can affect the goodwill and the long-term brand image of hotels in Afikpo North LGA; this may discourage future investors from investing in the hospitality business and other business opportunities in Afikpo North LGA.

METHODOLOGY

Survey research design was employed in this study. The design was used because it was easier to access a representative of the population than the entire population. The population of the study is the 125 registered hotels in the local government area. Four (4) hotels were purposively selected from which 136 staff were randomly selected as sample size. Questionnaires and oral interviews were used as instruments for data collection. The data were analyzed using tables and simple percentages, one hypothesis was formulated and tested using X^2 chi-square.

SAMPLE SIZE

Table 1: Sample size of the study

Name of the hotel	No. of staff	%
P. Noble hotels	42	31
Chujah Hotels	12	9
Focus Hotel & Resort	41	30
Supreme Hotel	41	30
Total	136	100

Source: field survey 2024

Table 1 shows the sample size for the study where four (4) hotels were purposively selected 136 staff were randomly selected as a sample size from the selected hotels.

PRESENTATION AND DATA ANALYSIS

Table 2 Questionnaire rate of responses

Name of the hotel	No. of questionnaire allotted	No. of questionnaires returned & valid	No. of questionnaire not returned/invalid	Percentage of questionnaires returned & valid	Percentage of questionnaires returned /invalid
P. Noble	42	40	2	29.4	1.4
Chujah	12	10	2	7	1.4
Focus Hotel	41	40	1	29.4	1
Supreme Hotel	41	40	1	29.4	1
Total	136	130	6	95.2	4.8

Source: Field Survey 2024

The above table shows that 136 questionnaires were distributed among the staff of four hotels, 130 (95.59%) questionnaires were returned and valid, while 6 (4.41%) were not returned/invalid. The implication of this is that respondents highly cooperated with the researcher.

Table 3 Analysis of Impacts of Monday Sit-At-Home

Hotels	P. Noble Hotel		Chujah Hotel		Focus Hotel		Supreme Hotel	
No. of Respondents	40		10		40		40	
Impacts	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Operational Challenge.	35 (87.5%)	5 (13.5%)	8 (80%)	2 (20%)	39 (97.5%)	1 (2.5%)	40 (100%)	0 (0%)
Reduce occupancy and revenue.	38 (95%)	2 (5%)	9 (90%)	1 (10%)	35 (87.5%)	5 (13.5%)	33(82.5%)	7(6.5%)
Cancellation and loss of booking.	37 (92.5%)	3(7.5%)	10 (100%)	0 (0%)	36 (90%)	4 (10%)	39 (97.5%)	1 (2.5%)
Economic repercussion.	34 (85%)	6 (15%)	8 (80%)	2 (20%)	34 (85%)	6 (15%)	38 (95%)	2 (5%)
Cancellation of event.	34 (85%)	6 (15%)	6 (60%)	4(40%)	35 (87.5%)	5 (13.5%)	37 (92.5%)	3(7.5%)

Bad reputation & industrial perception.	38 (95%)	2 (5%)	10 (100%)	0 (0%)	39 (97.5%)	1 (2.5%)	38 (95%)	2 (5%)
Poor employee welfare & job insecurity	31 (77.5%)	9 (22.5%)	7 (70%)	3 (30%)	35 (87.5%)	5 (13.5%)	36 (90%)	4 (10%)
Total	247 (88.2%)	33 (11.8%)	58 (82.9%)	12 (17.1)	253 (90.4%)	27 (9.6%)	261 (93.2%)	19 (6.8%)

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

From the table above, all the respondents believed that operational challenges, reduced occupancy and revenue, cancellation, and loss of booking, economic repercussions, cancellation of events, reputation & industrial perception, and employee welfare & job insecurity are the impacts of Monday's sit-at-home. This is evident from the total tab where out of a response of 280 in the P. Noble hotel, 247 (88.2%) believed that these problems impact the hotel, while for Focus Hotel 253 (90.4%) and Supreme Hotel 261 (93.2%) all affirmed to these impacts. While for Chujeh Hotel, out of the total responses, 58 (82.9%) believed these factors have impacted their business.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

Ho: Monday's sit-at-home does not have a significant impact on hotel business.

H1: Monday's sit-at-home does have a significant impact on hotel business.

Table 4: Hotel Names

RESPONSES	CHUJAH HOTEL	P. NOBLE HOTEL	FOCUS HOTEL	SUPREME HOTEL	TOTAL
Yes	1	29	40	20	90
No	5	0	0	14	19
I don't know	4	11	0	6	21
Total	10	40	40	40	130

Expected frequency = $\frac{\text{Total Row} \times \text{Total Column}}{\text{Grand Total}}$

$$C1 = \frac{90 \times 10}{130} = 6.9$$

$$C7 = \frac{19 \times 40}{130} = 5.84$$

$$C2 = \frac{90 \times 40}{130} = 27.7$$

$$C8 = \frac{19 \times 40}{130} = 5.84$$

$$sC3 = \frac{90 \times 40}{130} = 27.7$$

$$C9 = \frac{21 \times 10}{130} = 1.6$$

$$C4 = \frac{90 \times 40}{130} = 27.7$$

$$C10 = \frac{21 \times 40}{130} = 6.4$$

$$C5 = \frac{19 \times 40}{130} = 5.84$$

$$C11 = \frac{21 \times 40}{130} = 6.4$$

$$C6 = \frac{19 \times 40}{130} = 5.84$$

$$C12 = \frac{21 \times 40}{130} = 6.4$$

Cell	o _i	4 _i	o _i - 4 _i	(o _i - 4 _i) ²	(o _i - 4 _i) ²
1	1	6.9	-5.9	34.81	5.04
2	29	27.7	2.3	5.29	0.19
3	40	27.7	2.3	5.29	0.19
4	20	27.7	12.3	151.29	5.46
5	5	1.46	3.54	12.5	8.6
6	0	5.84	-5.84	34.1	5.8
7	0	5.84	-5.84	34.1	5.8
8	14	5.84	8.16	66.1	11.4
9	4	1.6	2.4	5.76	3.6
10	11	6.4	4.6	21.16	3.0
11	0	6.4	-6.4	40.96	6.4
12	6	6.4	-0.4	0.16	0.025
					X ² cal=58.05

Source: Field Survey 2024

X² Cal=58.05

Determine the degree of freedom

They are four columns and three rows

DF=(r-1) (c-1)

DF = r= number of rows

C = number of columns

DF= (3-1) (4-1)

2x3 =6

Significance or level of confidence 0.05

Therefore X^2 table= 12.592

Since the X^2 Cal > X^2 table, we, therefore, rejected null and accepted the alternative hypothesis and concluded that every Monday sit-at-home has a significant impact on the hotel business in Afikpo Local Government.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

In Table 3, all the respondents agreed that operational challenges, reduced occupancy and revenue, cancellation, and loss of revenue, economic repercussions, cancellation of events, bad reputation and industry perception, and poor employee welfare and job insecurity were the impacts of every-Monday-sit-at-home in Afikpo LGA. P. Noble Hotel, 247 (88.2%), Focus Hotel 253 (90.4%), Supreme Hotel 261 (93.2%) from a total of 280 responses while for Chujeh Hotel, out of the total responses, 58 (82.9%) believed these factors have impacted their business. By implication, it means that the impact of Monday's sit-at-home is significant for the growth of the hotel business in Afikpo LGA. This finding agreed with the result of the testing of the hypothesis that rejected null but accepted the alternative hypothesis that stated the impact of every Monday sit-at-home has a significant on the growth of the hotel business in Afikpo LGA.

CONCLUSION

It is crucial to note the impact of every Monday sit-at-home is significant on the growth of the hotel business. Therefore, Monday's sit-at-home should be stopped to prevent long-term effects on the growth of the hotel business in Afikpo North LGA. The impact of sit-at-home orders is multifaceted, significantly affecting economic activities and social dynamics. These orders, typically used as a form of civil disobedience, result in a noticeable reduction in workforce availability, disrupting business operations and productivity. Sectors dependent on daily labor and consumer spending, such as retail, hospitality, and transport, experience immediate financial losses. The disruption extends to supply chains, causing delays and shortages that further strain economic activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Engagement with government authorities, industry stakeholders, uniformed men, community leaders, and IPOB leaders is important in addressing the impact of every Monday's sit-at-home protest on the hotel business.
2. Advocating for support measures such as financial assistance, security provision, and promotional initiatives can help hotels in Afikpo to navigate the challenges and demonstrate resilience in the face of the impact of every Monday sit-at-home.
3. Uniform men should build their trust and confidence in the hearts of people with their performances.

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