

Logistics management process in the main hotels of Luanda City¹

Processo de gestão da logística nos principais hotéis da Cidade de Luanda

Proceso de gestión logística en los principales hoteles de la Ciudad de Luanda

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ABSTRACT

Logistics has always been intrinsically linked to the processes of transport planning, procurement, and distribution within hotel management. The logistical operations that foster competitiveness in tourism enterprises stand as testament to this assertion. Given the paramount importance of logistics in hotel management, this article aims to analyse the logistics management process in the principal hotels of Luanda City. The study adopts a qualitative character, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. The qualitative dimension relied upon the subjective interpretation of respondents' answers, whilst the quantitative aspect employed data quantification supported by Excel™ software. The adoption of this mixed approach enabled a more comprehensive and rigorous analysis, making it possible to achieve the proposed objectives. The study is exploratory and descriptive in nature, employing an inductive reasoning approach. Supported by bibliographical research and fieldwork, it was possible to conclude that there are difficulties in the management process of the city's hotels, related to product supply, staff shortages, and working conditions. To counter these problems, logistics management in hotels must be based upon an integrated system, with reliable suppliers and committed internal teams, aiming towards a single objective: generating value for all stakeholders.

Keywords: Logistics Management; Supply Chain; Stock; Hotels.

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A logística sempre esteve relacionada com o processo de planeamento dos transportes, aprovisionamento e distribuição na gestão hoteleira. As operações logísticas que fomentam a competitividade dos empreendimentos turísticos são exemplos desta afirmação. Tendo em conta a importância da logística na gestão dos hotéis, o presente artigo visa analisar o processo de gestão da logística nos principais hotéis da Cidade de Luanda. O estudo é de carácter qualiquantitativo, pois combina abordagens qualitativa e quantitativa. A vertente qualitativa baseou-se na interpretação subjectiva das respostas dos inquiridos, enquanto a quantitativa utilizou a quantificação dos dados com apoio do software Excel™. A adoção dessa abordagem mista permitiu uma análise mais completa e rigorosa, tornando possível alcançar os objectivos propostos. O estudo é de carácter exploratório e descritivo, através de uma abordagem de raciocínio indutiva. Com o suporte da pesquisa bibliográfica e trabalho de campo, foi possível concluir que existem dificuldades no processo de gestão dos hotéis da cidade, relacionadas com o fornecimento de produtos, escassez de pessoal e condições de trabalho. Para contrapor a esses problemas, a gestão logística nos hotéis deve basear-se em um sistema integrado, com fornecedores confiáveis e equipas internas comprometidas, visando um único objectivo: gerar valor para todos os envolvidos.

Palavras-chave: Gestão logística; Cadeia de abastecimento; Stock; Hotéis.

Resumen

La logística siempre ha estado relacionada con el proceso de planificación, suministro y distribución del transporte en la gestión hotelera. Las operaciones logísticas que promueven la competitividad de las empresas turísticas son ejemplos de esta afirmación. Teniendo en cuenta la importancia de la logística en la gestión hotelera, este artículo tiene como objetivo analizar el proceso de gestión logística en los principales hoteles de la ciudad de Luanda. El estudio es de naturaleza cualitativa, ya que combina enfoques cualitativos y cuantitativos. El aspecto cualitativo se basó en la interpretación subjectiva de las respuestas de los encuestados, mientras que el aspecto cuantitativo utilizó la cuantificación de datos con apoyo del software Excel™. La adopción de este enfoque mixto permitió un análisis más completo y riguroso, permitiendo alcanzar los objetivos propuestos. El estudio es de naturaleza exploratoria y descriptiva, utilizando un enfoque de razonamiento inductivo. Con el apoyo de la investigación bibliográfica y el trabajo de campo, se pudo concluir que existen dificultades en el proceso de gestión de los hoteles de la ciudad, relacionadas con el abastecimiento de productos, escasez de personal y condiciones laborales. Para contrarrestar estos problemas, la gestión logística en los hoteles debe basarse en un sistema integrado, donde existan proveedores confiables y equipos internos comprometidos, buscando un único objetivo: generar valor para todos los involucrados.

Palabras clave: Gestión logística; Cadena de suministro; Existencias; Hoteles.

Introduction

Tourism is characterised primarily by the movement of people for various reasons, constituting a phenomenon that involves not only people but also material means, finance, and a set of natural and cultural resources of a given locality. For the effectiveness of tourist consumption, the logistics management process is determinant, particularly within the hotel subsector, which provides accommodation and catering conditions for tourists.

The difficulties associated with the logistics process, especially regarding the implementation of models linked to logistics management in tourism enterprises, are experienced daily and exacerbated by transversal problems related to transport, the regular supply of products, road conditions, telecommunications, electricity, the provision of drinking water, amongst others. This set of problems is manifested by several hotels in Luanda City (Pereira, 2023; Sarmento & PAHL Consulting, 2020; Tchalyongo, 2018). Thus, considering the concentration of tourism enterprises, specifically hotels situated in the down city (baixa), the following research question is proposed: how have the hotels of Luanda City overcome the difficulties in the logistics management process?

The general objective of the research is to analyze the logistics management process in the main hotels of Luanda City. This objective is broken down into the following specific objectives: to understand the importance of the logistics management process in hotels; to analyze the planning of transport, procurement, and distribution in hotel logistics management; to assess the reliability of the logistics management process in the hotels of Luanda City; and to identify the main challenges of the logistics management process in the hotels of Luanda City.

Considering the City of Luanda as the perimeter dominated by the urban territories of Ingombota and Maianga, it is observed that the main hotels are situated in the city center (lower zone of Luanda). Thus, the research was delimited to four and five-star hotels within the defined perimeter, with accommodation units exceeding one hundred rooms and a variety of services provided. The dimension and variety of services oblige these hotels to develop greater logistical effort, to possess a more demanding level of organization surrounding logistics, and they may serve as a reference to elucidate how Luanda's hotels have overcome difficulties in the logistics management process.

Literature Review

Hotels are the tourism enterprises of greatest visibility and preponderance within the hotel subsector, although their origin is more recent compared to other establishments (Fretas, 2022). Hotels are the result of the effects of the Industrial Revolution and the growth and multiplication of cities, unlike other establishments classified as tourism enterprises, such as guesthouses, inns, and hostels, which date back to antiquity.

According to Angolan legislation, a hotel is a tourism enterprise of the typology of hotel establishments, intended to provide temporary lodging services and other complementary services, mainly food and beverages, upon daily remuneration, possessing for this purpose a set of structures and equipment for its full operation (Presidential Decree 36, 2016). This concept, inspired by Portuguese legislation, is considered consensual internationally, save for minimal differences in details and semantics, as evidenced in the following thematic approach supported by various authors.

The Hotel and its Supply Area

The word hotel derives from two Latin words, *hospitalis*, meaning accommodated person, and *hospitium*, meaning hospitality. Its etymology has also been attributed to the French word *hôtel*, whose root comes from Latin, from which the word hospital is also derived. Therefore, the common origin conveys a meaning understood as a building that temporarily houses people with some frequency. The term hotel is currently universal, understood as an establishment whose main business is tourist accommodation (Abranja, Almeida & Almeida, 2019; Baroni et al., 2018; Sidónio, 2015).

A hotel is a public establishment with functions of accommodation, food and beverages, leisure, rest, events, congresses, colloquia, etc. (Abranja et al., 2019; Almeida et al., 2007; Burghardt, 2019; Yuniati, 2021). In Angola, the hotel must possess, amongst other obligations and requirements, at least one restaurant, a minimum of 26 accommodation units, and a category ranging between one and five luxury stars (Presidential Decree 36, 2016). According to its operations, the hotel combines productive elements and imperceptible services. It is a business organization that differs from others by its own characteristics related to the intangibility, inseparability, variability, and perishability of the products it provides to clients.

Hotel services always require an organizational structure, wherein the areas and constituent sections are detailed. This functional structure always varies from hotel to hotel due to differences in the dimension of establishments and the variety of services provided (Abranja et al., 2019), as well as by the burden of intangibility provided by staff in service and the specific organizational culture generated within each establishment.

Therefore, in the logistics management process of a hotel, one must always consider its dimension, the type and quantity of products and services it places at the disposal of clients, the number of employees, and the means it has to support its functioning. Henceforth, the larger the hotel's dimension, the greater its complexity in terms of logistics management and team structure, requiring greater effort to address client concerns with better quality in the services provided.

To guarantee a cohesive organizational structure that can respond to the consumption needs of guests and staff, the role played by the **economato** (stores/purchasing department), viewed as the hotel's "supermarket", is indispensable. Depending on the dimension and variety of services provided, the **economato** may be a body inserted into the hotel's organogram with the status of a section, sector, department, or even directorate. For a better perception of the indispensability of the **economato** in the logistics management process of a hotel, it is important to deepen the approach in the following paragraphs.

The Stores Area (Economato)

The **economato** is the supply area of any tourism enterprise, responsible for the reception, procurement, and distribution of all merchandise and raw materials to its different sections and departments. From the **economato**, orders and purchases of practically all goods and products a hotel needs are made, proceeding to control their entry by means of order notes, delivery notes, or supplier invoices, for subsequent internal distribution through the attendance of requisitions. In this sense, this area oversees the control of all existing goods and products bought and stored in the hotel.

The functions considered most relevant of the **economato** are, in the understanding of Abranja et al. (2019), the following:

- Purchasing and control of goods necessary for the good functioning of the hotel: equipment and office material, foodstuffs, hygiene products, textiles, amongst many others;
- Permanent contact and negotiation with suppliers, always establishing the relationship between the quality of products and the prices practiced;

- Quality control of products through a process that includes reception, verification, storage, conservation, and distribution;
- Stock (inventory) management and periodic inventories, particularly monthly ones, with a view to extracting maximum utility from the acquired goods and products and avoiding stock shortage or overabundance;
- Other functions: transport of rubbish and packaging, management of the staff canteen, support for the composition of banquet rooms, amongst others

The quality control of the product is particularly important, both at the act of purchase and upon reception of the product, considering the need to provide a service of excellence to clients. The reception of merchandise must follow a logic that involves checking the order delivered by the supplier, according to the invoice or order note. Immediately afterwards, observation of the products is made, such as the physical conditions of the packaging, expiry date, weighing and temperature measurement, in the case of fresh products. After observation, the products are arranged in different storage places, according to the nature and characteristics of the products, for subsequent distribution to the sections and departments of the hotel.

The Supply Chain

The logistics area developed from a restricted view, linked to the physical distribution of products, to a broader purpose, known as the supply chain, which incorporates production and marketing. Therefore, good supply chain management has positive implications for any business, because it guarantees the functioning of a network of companies composed, amongst others, by various producers and suppliers (Das & Hassan, 2021).

In the hotel subsector, Supply Chain Management (SCM) is quite comprehensive, as it relates to various fields of study, namely computer sciences, food sciences, environmental sciences, economics, social sciences, engineering, and much more, considering the diversity of relationships that SCM establishes with all stakeholders integral to the chain (Alreahi et al., 2023; Arifin et al., 2019). Strictly speaking, it appears appropriate to affirm that SCM translates into a network of analytical links that relate organizations and stakeholders, encompassing the inputs and outputs of each organization.

Stock Management in the Hotel Subsector

In its primary process, stock management was considered an alternative for improving processes, in order to reduce expenditure on less necessary operations, making the hotel increasingly competitive in the market (Meira & Anjos, 2012). Later, with logistics asserting itself as a preeminent activity of the economy, stock management came to be known not only for stock planning, but also for its control and feedback in relation to the set of activities linked to planning (Hupalo & Kazimarczah, 2022; Silva, 2010).

It is in this context that Platt (2012) considers stock management a cautious process, which must be managed always considering the balance between the quantities of goods to be produced and the potential demand for those goods and services.

The inability to systematically converge supply with demand naturally translates into an imbalance between the quantities produced and sought, whereby the creation of a stock and its rational management aims to reduce this inability, exercising an active influence on the competitiveness of companies. One of the frequently cited influences is the reduction of costs at the stores level, with repercussions on total costs (Amorim, 2020; Hupalo & Kazimarczah, 2022).

The authors cited in the previous paragraph argue that stock acts as a “lung” between supply and demand, guaranteeing the availability of high-turnover goods and, simultaneously, providing flexibility to the logistics area in seeking efficient models for the production and distribution of products. For tourism enterprises, this flexibility in stock management is of increased importance, considering the difficulties related to the particularities of production and consumption of hotel services.

In the hotel industry, it is not practicable to produce to guarantee future delivery deadlines of the good to the consumer. Production only happens with the presence of the latter. The tourism sector in general, and the hotel industry in particular, are very sensitive to internal and external externalities, both positive and negative, which make it unstable, often presenting considerable oscillations in terms of demand and guest arrivals. In this sense, efficient stock management in a hotel, based on flexible planning, allows for the improvement of the cost-benefit relationship, both for the establishment and for the guest.

In this framework, stock adds value to the hotel service (Nascimento, Cobuci, Assis, Pereira & Neto, 2019), because the high degree of unpredictability in the hotel industry in terms of demand and the cultural diversity of clients who avail themselves of hotel services obliges logistics to be functional, notwithstanding the high costs that may result from this uncertainty. For Silva (2010, p. 44-45), the reduction of unpredictability and the cost control of stock management in hotel stores passes through the observance of some basic principles:

- Determine what should be kept in stock, the replenishment periods, and the necessary quantities;
- Manage the supply chain observing all phases of the process: reception, verification, storage, and attendance according to needs;
- Keep inventories periodically for evaluation and planning purposes;
- Detect and separate from stock the anachronistic and damaged elements

To finalize this theoretical approach, it is important to refer that the determination of what should be kept in stock and the respective quantities has to do with the selection of products essential to the normal functioning of a hotel, taking into account the characteristics of each product. When the necessary procedures are fulfilled, through stock monitoring, the management of the *economato* becomes efficient and effective, responding satisfactorily to adverse situations that may arise from the elasticity of hotel demand. Therefore, complying with the basic principles of stock management implies assertively calculating the replenishment periods of the storage locations, without losing sight of the response capacity of suppliers.

Logistics Management Models Applied to the Hotel Industry: Relevance for the Luanda Case

The hotel subsector is recognized as one of the most dynamic and strategic areas of tourism in the world economy, playing an essential role in promoting tourism and creating employment (Meira & Anjos, 2012). This subsector contributes significantly to the economic and social development of the destination, being frequently used as an indicator of the level of competitiveness and attractiveness of a destination (Lunkes & Rosa, 2012, cited by Fontana et al., 2020). Therefore, in the current context of globalization and increasing market complexity, the application of logistics management models has become a fundamental strategic factor to guarantee operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and cost reduction.

Thus, the integration of logistics management models applied in the hotel industry represents not only a response to the demands of the contemporary market, but also an instrument of differentiation and innovation, promoting efficiency, sustainability, and customer satisfaction.

The Main Logistics Management Models Applied to the Hotel Industry

The adoption of logistics management models in the hotel industry represents a significant evolution in the way services are planned and executed. Initially developed for the industrial sector, these models were adapted to the specificities of tourism and hotel management in particular, with the objective of optimizing resources, reducing costs, and improving the quality of service to clients. According to the bibliography consulted, it is notable that many logistics management models are applied to the hotel industry. Amongst the most utilized, the following stand out: Lean Logistics Model; Just in Time (JIT) Model; Sustainable Logistics Model (Green Logistics); and Digital Logistics Management Model (Smart Logistics).

Lean Logistics Model

The results of the application of this model developed by Toyota evidenced it to be an innovative and highly efficient management model, characterised by the integration between production, product development, and relationships with clients and suppliers (Matos, 2012).

The Lean model in hotel management; its implementation allows for the alignment of organizational goals, optimization of workflows and resources, and the elimination of activities that do not add value to the client, reinforcing its orientation, while simultaneously promoting flexibility and business resilience (Matos, 2012).

Lean Management presents many valences, as it constitutes an integrated management system that articulates long-term strategic planning with the continuous improvement of operational processes. In this sense, the Lean model asserts itself as an essential instrument for the sustainable development of hotels, guaranteeing their response capacity in the face of competitive demands and future challenges. From a practical point of view, it is perceived that the Lean model in the hotel industry allows for the optimization of the supply and storage flow; reduction of food and cleaning material waste; and the standardization of service and maintenance processes.

Regarding its relevance for the hotels of Luanda, it is inferred that, given the high logistics costs and the need for efficiency, the use of the Lean model can allow the hotels under study to reduce operating expenses and increase competitiveness through the efficient use of available local resources.

Just in Time (JIT) Model

The Just in Time (JIT) model, widely associated with the Toyota Production System, developed within the context of the flexible production paradigm, represents a management model that focuses on the precise synchronization of productive flows. Its fundamental objective consists in guaranteeing the availability of the right part, in the necessary quantity, at the exact moment and place, avoiding the accumulation of stocks and minimizing waste. This model constitutes an essential pillar in the search for operational efficiency and sustainable competitiveness in contemporary industrial organizations (Matos, 2012).

However, the Just in Time (JIT) model constitutes a management approach oriented towards the optimization of productive performance, through the rationalization of processes and the elimination of activities that do not add value. Its implementation in hotel logistics management essentially aims at cost reduction, waste elimination, and the construction of more agile, flexible, and efficient productive systems.

The adoption of just-in-time logistics by a company represents the implementation of a productive rationalization strategy, which privileges supply and production upon immediate demand, and in the hotel industry it is no different.

From a practical point of view, it is understood that the just-in-time model in the hotel industry allows for planning deliveries with local suppliers; performing precise inventory management in kitchens and warehouses, reducing losses associated with the perishability of products.

Regarding its relevance for the hotels of Luanda, it is inferred that, considering the instability of some local logistical processes, JIT encourages efficient coordination between hotels and suppliers, strengthening supply chains

and reducing storage costs, but in the case of the hotels under study, this model encounters many difficulties for its implementation, because, due to the situation of the Angolan logistics system, especially in the hotel subsector, characterised by various challenges, the lack of adequate infrastructure such as roads and transport systems has hindered the flow of essential goods and services for tourism enterprises (Pereira, 2023; Sarmiento & PAHL Consulting, 2020; Tchalyongo, 2018).

In the Angolan context, it is easily perceived that the implementation of Just in Time in hotel management faces significant restrictions due to dependence on imported products. Such factors compromise the predictability and regularity of supply, making the JIT model economically and operationally unviable in logistical environments marked by instability and infrastructural fragility.

Sustainable Logistics Model (Green Logistics)

The Sustainable Logistics Management model represents a systemic approach that seeks to reconcile operational efficiency and environmental responsibility. It is founded upon the rational management of natural resources, with the purpose of reducing negative externalities and ensuring logistical practices compatible with the objectives of sustainable development (Santos et al., 2015; Silva & Moura, n.d.). Moreover, this model is closely related to reverse logistics, as it also constitutes a tool that can be used in the search for solutions to the problems with waste produced in the hotel subsector, as well as its destination for reuse or recycling, thus contributing to the assurance of logistical practices compatible with the objectives of sustainable development.

Sustainable logistics management applied to the hotel industry; this principle expresses itself in new environmentally correct technologies, as well as in the search for involvement with the local communities of the hotel establishment (Amazonas et al., 2018).

However, through the literature consulted, it is perceived that the sustainable logistics management model in the hotel industry constitutes a strategy that integrates ecological, economic, and social principles into the hotel supply chain and operation. This paradigm is based on the optimization of material, energy, and information flows, privileging environmentally efficient technologies such as intelligent energy management systems and circular economy practices that reduce environmental impacts and operational costs.

In parallel, logistical sustainability extends to involvement with receiving communities, promoting corporate social responsibility practices, appreciation of regional suppliers, and sustainable socio-economic development. Thus, sustainable hospitality not only mitigates negative externalities but also reinforces the competitiveness and environmental reputation of hotel enterprises.

From a practical point of view, it is perceived that the Sustainable Logistics Management model in the hotel industry allows for the acquisition of products and foods of local origin, with a view to guaranteeing the principles of sustainable development, attending to its 4 dimensions; implementation of recycling and reuse systems, that is, done in the need for resource rationalization, avoiding massive exploitation and waste of resources that are generally scarce, thus guaranteeing the sustainability of said resources for the present and for the future; on the other hand, the adoption of clean energy solutions, such as solar, geothermal, wind, hydroelectric, and biomass energy.

Regarding its relevance for the hotels of Luanda, it is inferred that the incorporation of sustainable logistics into the hotel subsector strengthens the environmental image of tourism enterprises and favors the urban sustainability of Luanda, in consonance with international dynamics of ecological tourism.

Digital Logistics Model (Smart Logistics)

With technological development, the digital logistics management model integrates information systems, artificial intelligence, data processing and analysis to optimize the supply chain; therefore, this model has much to do with Logistics 4.0, which is geared towards digital transformation and collaboration. It does not involve only the implementation of new tools, but a change of mindset in processes (Barbosa et al., 2024; Macêdo & Silva, 2025; Pacheco & Reis, 2019; Pinho & Gaspar, 2023).

Digitization is understood as the sociotechnical process of application of digitalized technologies and products in the organizational structure, enabling the creation of new procedures, management models, and value propositions (Pinho & Gaspar, 2023; Travessa, 2022). Such a process is not limited to technological adoption, but implies a paradigmatic change in forms of production, communication, and relationship between organizations and their publics.

The aforementioned authors further reinforce that contemporary technology constitutes itself as a strategic platform of communication and information management, playing an essential role in decision-making processes and in the structuring of the touristic offer. Through the obtaining and analysis of data, it is possible to understand consumer behavior and adapt services and tourist destinations to their preferences. In addition to acting as an informational repository, technology configures itself as a marketing and innovation instrument, contributing to the development of new products and tourist experiences.

"Each product or service can be analyzed and evaluated online by its consumers, and these evaluations are an increasingly important source of information for consumers and service providers" (Travessa, 2022, p. 25). In the hotel subsector, the systematic monitoring of client evaluations reveals itself essential for the strategic management of brand image. Attention to consumer trends and perceptions allows companies to adjust their services, strengthen guest satisfaction and loyalty, and, consequently, sustain their competitiveness in a dynamic market oriented by digital reputation.

Regarding its practical application, it is understood that the digital logistics management model in hotel management facilitates the implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) for integrated management; the use of IoT sensors to monitor stocks in warehouses and in distribution vehicles, monitoring in real time not only temperature and humidity, but even transport speed; another assignable valence is the automation of internal order and delivery processes using the Warehouse Management System (WMS) (Macêdo & Silva, 2025; Oliveira, 2024; Pacheco & Reis, 2019).

Regarding its valence for the hotels of Luanda, it is important to highlight that, with the incorporation of digital logistics into the hotel subsector in the current context of the country's growing digitalization, this model allows hotels to improve the control and traceability of operations, reducing human errors and increasing productivity.

Currently, everything is digital, from inventory management to order tracking. With digitization, information flows in real time, allowing decisions to be made quickly (Barbosa et al., 2024; Macêdo & Silva, 2025). Furthermore, it allows those responsible for the management of logistical processes to focus on more relevant, innovative, and creative strategies (Macêdo & Silva, 2025; Pinho & Gaspar, 2023).

The incorporation of digital transformation into the hotel industry reveals itself as a strategic vector that promotes the improvement of managerial competences, the optimization of operational processes, and the strengthening of organizational competitiveness (Pinho & Gaspar, 2023). Such integration contributes to the increase of market share and to the elevation of customer satisfaction levels, evidencing the role of technological innovation as a determinant element for the sustainability and efficiency of the hotel subsector.

Therefore, of the 4 models presented, they may indeed be applied in the management of the hotels of Luanda City, except the Just in Time model which, in the Angolan context, its implementation is not viable, mainly in logistical environments marked by instability and infrastructural fragility, compromising the predictability and regularity of the supply of essential products to hotels.

Methodology

Considering the need to understand logistics management in the hotels of Luanda City, the research model followed for the present study is of a mixed methodology, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques. The quantitative technique was utilized to obtain numerical and measurable data to obtain objective results with the application of statistics, which allowed for the elaboration of graphs and tables. Regarding the qualitative technique, it was applied in the subjective analysis and interpretation of textual information provided by respondents and of observations made in the study locations, with the intent of obtaining greater clarity of the contents presented (Canastra et al., 2015; Prodanov & Freitas, 2013; Severino, 2007).

From the point of view of its objectives, an exploratory and descriptive approach was opted for, with recourse to descriptive and multivariate statistical techniques, appropriate for data obtained by Likert scale and categorical variables, using frequencies and percentages, allowing for the contextualization and reinforcement of exploratory interpretations. All this aimed to identify patterns, associations, and latent dimensions regarding the logistics management of the main hotels of Luanda City in relation to other tourism enterprises located in this municipality and city (Prodanov & Freitas, 2013).

Regarding the means utilized, the research is classified as a multiple case study on a specific theme, as it consists of research focused on various hotels of Luanda City (Gil, 2002). A multiple case study was opted for because it provides clear notions, considering the number of hotels studied, enabling, in a certain way, the elaboration of a study with the greatest reliability.

The inductive approach method was considered most adequate for the study, as it consists of generalizations made from particular observations (Gil, 2008; Severino, 2007). Thus, from a practical point of view, it was opted to work with a sample of hotels that compose the urban perimeter of the city, with the greater dimension and diversity of services being the main criteria of the sample, as the demand is greater in terms of logistical effort and more demanding level of organization surrounding logistics, as referred to in the introduction. Regarding the methods of procedure, the observational and the statistical were opted for, considering the objectives presented (Marconi & Lakatos, 2003). To this effect, tables and graphs were elaborated for the statistical treatment of information collected through questionnaires applied to the managers of the **economatos** (stores) of the hotels object of the sample.

The questionnaires served to obtain relevant information on the reality of the hotels, having been applied after a pre-test to three tourism enterprise managers, for improvement and to solve eventual difficulties of interpretation and perceptibility. To guarantee control and solid information, the questionnaire was structured with closed, semi-closed, and open questions, and the collection of data was face-to-face, through scheduled meetings with the managers of the **economato** areas of the hotels. Through this route, opinions and parallel information were collected, about the respondents and their respective establishments, related to logistics management in particular and the hotel subsector in general.

Regarding the population, it was ascertained that the urban perimeter object of study (Luanda City, Capital of Angola) is composed of 18 hotels. Based on this number, a sample of eight hotels that fitted the selection criteria was ascertained, however, due to unavailability to participate in the survey, seven were surveyed, that is, five four-star hotels, one five-star hotel, and one three-star hotel. It is reiterated that the criteria defined for the sample focused on the dimension of the establishment above 100 accommodation units and the diversified provision of services. It

was assumed that these criteria demand from the hotels a greater logistical capacity, of acquisition, transport, and distribution management of products, which would allow for obtaining more content for the study. Finally, according to the sample, the type of sampling chosen is non-probabilistic by convenience, as the questionnaires were applied considering also the sense of opportunity and proximity with the surveyed establishments.

Analysis of data collected in the hotels

According to the statistical treatment of the sociobiographical data collected, it is noted that the seven managers of **economatos** surveyed are of the male gender (this fact is due to it being an area that requires much effort, from handling machines, pallets, various loads that implies greater physical strength and availability for its exercise, therefore, it is predominantly male), three of whom are aged between 41 and 50 years. Regarding academic formation, four of the respondents are graduates in hotel management and two possess only completed secondary education.

Regarding the questions of professional activity related to the internal distribution of products, presented in **Table 1**, the seven respondents affirmed that the different areas and sections of the hotel fill specific requisition forms directed to the **economato**, with the frequency varying with which each requisition is received. Depending on the organization of the hotel, the filling of the requisition may be done daily, three times a week, or weekly. However, it was noted that the usual practice in hotels is for the **economatos** to send orders daily, for high-rotation products, and weekly for the remaining products. The total absolute frequency (FA) of 18 in the distribution of products that appears in the table results from the fact that the opportunity for multiple answers was given to respondents, according to the variability of procedures of each hotel.

Table 1.
Distribution of products in the different areas of the hotel

DISTRIBUTION OF PRODUCTS IN DIFFERENT AREAS	AF
Daily filling of requisition forms to the economato.	7
Filling of requisition forms to the economato 3x Week.	4
Filling of requisition forms to the economato Weekly	5
Weekly planning of the needs of each area	2
Total	18

Table 2 presents the main difficulties faced by hotels in daily logistics management. The results reveal similarities in the main difficulties, which are related to the lack of space in the different warehouses of the **economatos**, the constant lack of products due to supplier non-compliance, the lack of furniture for better storage and space management, the lack of appropriate stock management software, and adequate cold equipment (gloves and boots). In addition to the difficulties reported, the respondents presented other situations that hinder their activities, such as:

- Little response capacity of suppliers in the provision of specific goods and products;
- Few personnel working in the different warehouses of the **economato**;
- Deficit of working means, such as the lack of computers;
- Evaluation of suppliers in all their chain of product supply

Table 2.
Main difficulties in logistics management

DIFFICULTIES FACED IN LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT	AF
Lack of space.	2
Constant lack of products.	2
Lack of appropriate stock management software.	1
Lack of adequate cold equipment.	1
Lack of furniture.	2
Others.	5
Total	13

The respondents were also questioned about the degree of importance of the hotels' suppliers, as demonstrated in **Table 3**. The evaluation of importance had as its criterion the supplier's capacity to resolve the main needs of the hotels in terms of products. For this effect, a question was presented with answer options on the Likert scale, which includes points from of no importance, little important, more or less important, important, and very important. Six of the seven respondents consider supermarkets as "very important" suppliers (Max, Alimenta Angola, Descontão,

and Africana Desconto), and two of the respondents consider the informal market “importante”. For the question the option of response “specific distribution center” was also included, which, however, was not mentioned by any respondent due to the fact that no hotel has this supply option, unlike what happens in many countries, where there are logistics centers for the hotel industry.

The “others” option of response was considered by four respondents as “important”. This option is related to all those agents of the local market who are not usual suppliers of a given hotel, where one generally resorts to acquire a certain product that the supplier cannot supply. Examples of this option are organizations that supply certain types of fish and those that supply beverages, such as Cuca and Refriango

Table 3.
Suppliers and their degree of importance

SUPPLIERS AND THEIR DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE	SPECIFIC DISTRIBUTION CENTRE	SUPERMARKETS	INFORMAL MARKET	OTHERS
Very important	0	5	0	2
Important	0	1	2	4
More or less	0	1	0	0
Little important	0	0	0	0
Of no importance	0	0	1	0

Observing Table 4, regarding the actions for the prevention of stock rupture in the *ecomatos* of the hotels, it is verified that of the seven managers surveyed, three affirm that their actions are based on the knowledge they have of clients and potential consumers, five respondents affirm that the prevention of stock rupture passes through the need to establish contracts with credible suppliers, whilst four consider periodic inventory important to guarantee stock control.

As referred to before, the absolute frequency of 23 in the table, which is superior to the defined sample, results from the multiple answer options presented in the question. In this sense, the seven respondents coincide in the fact that the best action to avoid rupture is the timely provision of information to the purchasing area. Four of the respondents also point to the need for efficient stock replenishment as an important action.

Table 4.
Prevention actions to avoid stock rupture

PREVENTION ACTIONS FOR STOCK RUPTURE	AF
Know the clients and potential consumers	3
Establish contracts with credible suppliers	5
Stock inventory (Stock control by data)	4
Provide information to the purchasing area	7
Efficient stock replenishment	4
Total	23

Discussion of results

Following the results of the surveys presented, applied to the managers of the *ecomatos* of seven hotels in Luanda City, a critical approach to them is developed in this section.

The majority of the managers of the *ecomato* areas surveyed are in the age range of 41 to 50 years, with an average age of 46 years. From this result, it is inferred that, to reach the top of the *ecomato* management, the employee needs to accumulate many years of experience working in the section or department, according to the organic structure of the hotel. This condition is justifiable due to the fact that the *ecomato* is a strategic area for any hotel, as it represents the beginning of the supply chain within the establishment, guaranteeing the acquisition of all goods and products for the functioning of the other sections and departments of the hotel, as ascertained in the literature review (Abranja et al., 2019).

From the results, it is also perceived that hotels increasingly associate professional experience with academic formation in the specialty, insofar as four of the seven respondents possess higher education in hotel management, in addition to additional training and constant updates. This finding is relevant because, the greater the formation of a professional, the more competences are acquired for the satisfactory performance of the function. Given the specificities of the management process in logistics, as well as the complexity of the different phases referred to in the literature: planning, transport, procurement, and distribution (Ballou, 2006; Francisco, 2015; Santos & Villavicencio, 2018), higher education is fundamental for the manager of the *ecomato* of a large tourism enterprise. Formation

complemented by experience as a requirement for the top manager of the **ecomato** values the function to the level of its strategic dimension in a hotel.

Another sociographic datum that draws attention is the fact that all the managers of the **ecomatos** are of the male gender, although the existence of female employees was noted in two hotels. The interpretation to be drawn from this datum is that activities in the hotel industry that require greater physical effort have almost always been performed by men, since work in the **ecomatos** still implies the handling of machines, pallets, and various loads, associated with physical availability and resistance to fatigue.

However, with the advancement of technology, physical loading and unloading activities are being increasingly reduced, with management functions at the level of planning, control, and mobility standing out in the **ecomatos** (Almufleh & Alkhatib, 2023; Bawa, 2014; Platt, 2012; Silva, 2010). On the other hand, women have increasingly shown availability to perform any type of activity, including those of greater physical effort, whereby the internalization of the top function in the **ecomato** based exclusively on the male gender appears discriminatory, a situation that hotels and tourism enterprises in the country need to review.

Regarding the distribution of products in the different areas of the hotels, the results demonstrate the observance of conventional practices, namely the prior filling of requisitions periodically to be attended by the **ecomatos**, as underlined by Abranja et al. (2019). In many cases, this attendance is done daily, for products that register a higher stock rotation, such as raw materials linked to the kitchen, restaurant, and bar, as well as hygiene and cleaning products.

The surveyed hotels adopt distribution systems depending on factors such as product demand, supplier response capacity, and hotel storage capacity. However, as the observations made in the literature review (Amorim, 2020; Hupalo & Kaziemarczah, 2022) noted, the logistical flexibility of the **ecomatos** of most hotels is little efficient, especially in the distribution of products, due to the inability of response of some suppliers. On the other hand, this inefficiency is also related to internal conditionalities of storage space shortage in the warehouses, limiting stocks in periods of higher demand.

Regarding suppliers, it was ascertained that the most important for the surveyed hotels are large surface supermarkets and the beverage company Refriango. This datum reveals the dependence that hotels have on imported products, as the bulk of the merchandise and raw materials acquired in supermarkets that are appreciated by clients are not produced in the country. Furthermore, the hotels observe quality and standardization requirements that the majority of national suppliers have difficulty accompanying. In the case of Refriango, although it produces locally, the main raw materials for the production process are also imported, which contributes to the increased cost of products, in addition to contributing to increasing levels of uncertainty regarding delivery, quantities, and timings.

Another question addressed was regarding the actions adopted by the hotels to avoid stock rupture in the **ecomatos**. The respondents pointed as main actions the establishment of credible contracts with suppliers and the control of stock through the realization of periodic inventories. The respondents were unanimous in affirming that the control of products to avoid rupture implies the constitution of a minimum stock, considering the average consumption of the hotel. This action finds support in the literature, namely in the approach of Baroni et al. (2018). However, as ascertained in the literature, more than constituting stock, it is necessary to manage it correctly so as not to affect the quality of the product and the service to be offered to clients.

The quality of products can be affected if they are not stored at the appropriate temperature, a situation observed in certain **ecomatos** object of the study. For management that prizes quality, situations of this kind must be reviewed urgently, because, besides the possibility of cost elevation due to product wastage, it puts the health of clients and the staff themselves at stake. The respondents, as managers of the **ecomatos**, feel helpless many times when certain decisions regarding the physical needs and equipment of the warehouses are not taken by the hotel managements swiftly, in the sense of improving stock management and safeguarding wastage.

Finally, regarding the periodic realization of inventories, an action that has a direct relationship with the prevention of stock rupture, the respondents converge on the fact that this action, carried out with more depth at the end of each month, is the main instrument of support for stock management, due to the pertinent information it provides, not only regarding existences, but also regarding the rotation and consumption of products. However, the difficulties presented by the respondents in the exercise of their functions, such as the lack of appropriate software for stock management, the control of existences manually (in some cases), and the lack of human resources, compromise a logistics management process of the hotels that is intended to be efficient and reliable

Final considerations

- According to the theoretical approach carried out, logistics represents the set of actions geared towards the planning, transport, procurement, and distribution of products, added to the management of information throughout the productive process. Logistics is a process that occurs comprehensively, with the interlinking of various companies and sectors of activity. The support given by the consulted bibliography allowed for the analysis of the logistics management process in tourism enterprises in general and the understanding of the different phases of this process and the main Logistics Management Models Applied to the Hotel Industry.
- Throughout the research, it was possible to perceive that logistics is determinant in the management process of tourism enterprises. Of the different aspects of logistics management of the studied hotels, some difficulties in the relationship with suppliers stand out, characterised by non-compliance and uncertainty, obliging some **ecomato** managers to constitute stocks above the recommended level to avoid ruptures. The **ecomatos**

of the hotels tend to make more flexible the planning they carry out to minimise difficulties, seeking permanent contact with suppliers, to avoid wastage that may arise from excess orders. On the other hand, they frequently resort to other sources of proximity supply for urgent needs.

- Regarding the distribution of products in different areas of the hotels, highlight is given to the filling of requisition forms directed to the **economatos**, on a daily and weekly basis, depending on the demand for products in each department and section. For this, there is a planning of activities in the logistics management process of the hotels. In this particular, stock management stands out, fundamental to mitigate the high degree of unpredictability of demand and to guarantee the diversity of products and services to be provided to clients, with diverse tastes and cultural specificities. The studied hotels consider that logistics management has been effective, notwithstanding the difficulties invoked, related to product supply, working conditions, and the exiguous number of collaborators.
- As a final conclusion, it is important to consider that effective logistics management in hotels must be done on the basis of a system, with reliable suppliers upstream, and committed internal bodies downstream, taking into account the single objective of creating value for all people involved.
- The present study has limitations that must be acknowledged. The first relates to the scarcity of bibliography that addresses the theme at the level of the region and the country. The absence of bibliography and the non-existence of endogenous studies conditioned the articulation of arguments between the authors in the literature review, accentuating its descriptive and exploratory character. In equal manner, the fieldwork was carried out with considerable limitations, related to the recurrent unavailability of the hotels and with the restricted access to information and documents. For this reason, the study was delimited to the urban core of Luanda City and the specificities of each studied hotel were not explored.
- The theme of logistics management in tourism enterprises is not yet explored in Angola. The complexity and particularities of these enterprises provide a vast terrain for future investigations, which can translate into in-depth studies in each hotel, for example at the level of the dimension of national production in the stock of the **economatos**, of comparative analysis of the logistics management process between hotels of the center and the periphery, of the adaptation of hotel logistics to new technologies and artificial intelligence, etc. Therefore, research on logistics management must contribute substantially to the improvement of processes and the supply chain, with a view to the development of the country's tourism enterprise.

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