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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between systematic risk and debt leverage. In particular, it investigates the systematic risk of hotel REITs and the impact of their debt leverage on their systematic risk. Through a series of regression analyses, the authors found that 80% of the systematic risk of hotel REITs is explained by their debt leverage. In particular, it was found that the systematic risk of hotel REITs is positively correlated with debt leverage and growth but negatively with firm size. These findings suggest that growth via mergers and acquisitions and less reliance on debt financing may help lower systematic risk and enhance hotel REITs' value.

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1. Perfect capital markets are characterized by (1) all buyers and sellers, individually, [being] price-takers, (2) no external drains on wealth (e.g., no taxes), (3) equal and costless availability of extant information, (4) infinite divisibility of all assets, and (5) unlimited borrowing and lending at the risk-free interest rate. (Bowman, 1979, p. 618)

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