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AN EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTS OF DECORATION ON PATRONAGE OF HOTELS IN ABEOKUTA METROPOLIS, OGUN STATE, NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

The study evaluated the effects of decoration on patronage of hotels in the Abeokuta metropolis. The specific objectives are to assess the socio economic characteristics of the hotel staff in the area of study. The types of interior and exterior decoration used by the hotels as well as the services provided, infrastructure and furnishing materials, including the maintenance capability and the attitude of staff (respondent) towards the pattern of decoration of the hotels were also examined. A total of 200 questionnaires were administered on 38 hotels purposively selected for the study. Findings revealed that majority of the hotel customer were within the active age of between 31-50 years. The findings also showed that most of the respondents were male (65%) and had formal education (100%). Chi-square tests showed significant relationship between the effects of hotel decoration and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. X^2 cal = 81.189 was greater than X^2 tab = 9.488 at the 5% significant level and d.f = 4, suggesting that patronage had a significant relationship with the effect of hotel decoration. There was also a significant relationship between the effects of decoration and services provided by the hotels as X^2 calculate was 289.72 which was greater than X^2 from the table X^2 = 3.841 at 5% level of significant and d.f = 1. Correlational analysis showed that there were positive correlation (r = 0.1416) between hotel decoration and patronage; this implies that a better decoration will bring higher patronage. This project concludes that the use of good interior decoration, sound renovations and general cleaning of the hotel surroundings encouraged patronage and contributed well to the success and development of the hotels, thereby increasing patronage and income.

Key words: Color, Fabric, Flower Arrangement, Hotel, Interior Decoration, Soft Furnishes.

INTRODUCTION

Interior decoration is defined as the art of beautifying a given space, making it attractive, welcoming and functioning well within an existing architecture. (Charlotte, 2010). It encompasses selecting different types of soft furnishes such as curtains, loose covers, wall paintings, furniture and fittings, such as light fixtures and other decorations for the area. (Charlotte, 2010). Interior decoration can also be defined as the art of selecting colours, patterns and textures to match and blend with the décor of the hotel interior based on the flooring, wall coverings, mirrors, curtains, ceiling, furniture fitting and other furnishes that may contribute to the creation of an interior that is beautiful (Anyakaoha, 2000).

According to the hotel proprietor's act of 1956, hotel is defined as "an establishment held out by the proprietor as offering food, drinks and if so required, sleeping accommodation to any traveler presenting himself or herself, able and willing to pay a reasonable amount for services and facilities rendered and who is in a fit state to be received" (Medlik, 1985).

In the past, it was thought that rooms in a hotel should as far as possible, give the appearance of home from home but it is now realized that guests, though want to feel at home, expect something different in the way of decoration, colour and designs suitable for homes often

have a cold and unfriendly look in the impersonal atmosphere of a hotel. (Joan et al, 1980).

The role of interior decoration in a hotel establishment serves as a marketing tool for the realization of loyal customers. It also helps in bringing about good will from patrons which definitely helps in the generation of targeted profits to the hotel establishment.

Hotel establishments not only serve excellent cuisines, deliver a clean rooms, it also provide an atmosphere for entertainment, relaxation, business transaction, leisure, meetings, conferences and recreation. In as much as hotel management provides hospitable functions, the need for its beautification should not be left aside as this plays an important role because it makes the customers feel relaxed and obtain a memorable stay.

Cummings (2007), observes that some hotels strive to build a loyal following of patrons that return again and again by making their décor to match the room that they are selling to their guests. When most guests enter a hotel they want to sense the beauty of the place before they even taste the food or enter the rooms.

Exterior decoration is the style in which the outside of a building is decorated (Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary, 2000). The exterior of a hotel usually generates the first impression and this impression could

affect guest opinion about a hotel's service quality and patronage.

Patronage is the support that a customer (guest) gives a hotel by spending money there (Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary, 2000). Engel et al (1990) suggests that customer patronage of hotels may result in interaction between a customer's pre-purchase expectation and post purchase evaluation. A customer is considered to be satisfied when his or her total experiences indicate a feeling of pleasure when compared with his or her expectation.

The present study is designed to evaluate the effect of decoration (internal and external) on customer patronage of some selected hotels in Abeokuta metropolis. This work will clearly show the need, if any to invest in exterior and interior decoration in hotel business.

METHODOLOGY
AREA OF STUDY

This study was carried out in Abeokuta metropolis which located in one of the twenty Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria. Abeokuta the capital city of Ogun state, created in 1976, located within the rainforest belt of tropical region of Nigeria.

The population for this study consisted of all Hotel Staff.

Purposive sampling method was used to select hotels for survey. These recognized the number of hotels in the study area but because most of them were no more in operation only few percentages (50%) were selected. Abeokuta was divided into five kingdoms namely Owu, Oshile, Gbagura and Ibara. Proportional sampling of respondents was made based on size of the Hotels and level of patronage. 25 percentage (25 %) of the staff in each hotels were also selected. The respondents range from four to eight to give two hundred respondents. Table 1

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

data collected for analysis in this study were categorized by letters A,B,C and D. The number of respondents in each category were recorded and the Chi-

Square statistical test were carried out. The statistical analysis carried out were in two forms viz:

(a)   The chi-square analysis and
(b)   The test of strength of relationship or correlational analysis

4.2   Socio – economic characteristics of the respondents.

The socio – economic characteristics of staffs were studied with the following variables age, sex, and level of education.

Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents according to age. As evident from the table 40 % of the respondents are between ages 31-40 years while 10 % are between ages 51 – 60 years.

This implies that young people were more actively involved in the patronage hotels.

The table shows that majority of the respondents had some form of formal education. 35 % had NCE, 25 % had HND while 10 % had B.Sc and MSc respectively. This implies that hotel were more educated.

TEST OF HYPOTHESIS

Three Hypothesis were tested in this study as follows:

Hypothesis 1:

Ho: There is no significant relationship between hotel decoration and socio- economic characteristics of respondents.

H1: There is significant relationship between hotel decoration and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents.

The row and column total were obtained as shown above, the expected values are calculated as below.

For a11 = 21 = $\dfrac{200 \times 60}{400}$ = 30

For a12 = a22 = $\dfrac{200 \times 140}{400}$ = 70

Fir a13 = a23 = $\dfrac{200 \times 90}{400}$ = 45

For a14 = a24 = $\dfrac{200 \times 80}{400}$ = 40

For a15 = a25 = $\dfrac{200 \times 30}{400}$ = 15

The chi-square statistics is carried out as follows

$$\dfrac{(0-30)^2}{30} + \dfrac{(80-70)^2}{70} + \dfrac{(60-45)^2}{45} + \dfrac{(50+40)^2}{40} + \dfrac{(10-15)^2}{15} + \dfrac{(60-30)^2}{30}$$

$$+ \dfrac{(60+70)^2}{70} + \dfrac{(30-45)^2}{45} + \dfrac{(20-15)^2}{15}$$

= 30 +1 429 + 5 + 2.5 + 1.67 +30 + 1 429 +5 +2.5 + 1.67

+ = 81.198

X^2 cal = 81.198

X^2- (r – 1)(c-1) 5% =X^2 (5-1) (2-1)

5% = X^2_4 (5%) = 9. 488

X^2 tab = 9.488

From table 5, chi-square calculated is X^2 81.198, which were greater than chi-square tabulated. X^2 tab = 9.488 at 5% significance level with degree of freedom 4. hence we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant relationship between the effect of hotel decoration and socio-economic characteristics of respondents.

Hypothesis2:

HO: There is no significant relationship between hotel decoration and types of décor used.

H2: There is significant relationship between hotel decoration and the types of décor used.

From the table, the chi-square calculated X^2 cal = which were greater than the chi-square tabulated, X^2 tab = 12.592, at 5%. Significance level with degree of freedom 6 hence reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant relationship between the effect of hotels and the types of decoration used.

This finding is in agreement with the opinion of Joan. et al (1980) who said that there are many different styles that can be use for the interior decoration of a hotel and he decor that is used often reflect the type of staffs expected on the premises and with the opinion of Anyakaoha (2000) who exported that hotel interiors require a lot of attention, there is a look that goes with every hotel the interior are planned accordingly.

Hypothesis 3:

Ho: There is no significant relationship between decoration and services provided by the hotels.

H3: There is significant relationship between decoration and services provided by the hotels.

From the table, the chi-square calculated is X^2cal = 289.72, which were greater than the chi-square tabulated X^2tab = 3,841 at 5% level of significant with degree of freedom 1. hence, we reject the null hypothesis ad conclude that there is significant relationship between the effects of decoration and services provided by the hotels.

This findings agrees with the opinion Callan (1996), and Hunt (1975), who said that: A guest is considered to be satisfied when his/her total experiences indicate a feeling of pleasure when compared with his/her expectation. As guest, satisfaction is influenced by the availability of guest services because of the intangibility, inseparability, variability and perishability of service and with the opinion of Salen and Ryan (1992) who reported that the determining factors for guests selection of hotels were found to be clean, spacious room, comfortable bed, the availability and food value of restaurant, friendly staff and efficient service, convenient parking as well as interior decoration and exterior aesthetics.

The second test carries out was the correctional analysis as follows from the data we obtained,

With this result, it implies that there is positive correlation between decoration and staffs. A better decoration will bring high patronage loyalty and goodwill of prospective and potential customer. In addition, it increases guest satisfaction, affect repeat business and improve public image. It also helps to improve or trigger the emotions of customers psychologically.

CONCLUSION

From the foregoing analysis of the effects of decoration on patronage of hotels, the following can be concluded:

1. General cleaning of the surroundings and renovation of the hotels, use of good textural materials encourage patronage and contributes well to the success and development of hotels.

2. Good hotel interior décor stimulates the feeling of satisfaction on the part of the hotel guest. The more comfortable the guest feels inside his or her hotel room, the more he or she will be able to appreciate the quality of the service provided by the hotel and the higher the probability that he/she will return again.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the above it is recommended as follows:-

1. Adequate security should be provided to encourage customer patronage.

2. The interior decorations used in hotels should reflect the cultural back grounds of the area of the hotel.

3. Staff should be trained and enlightened with the basic decorations and the effect of regular and efficient handling and practices of good maintenance culture on the available decorative items provided in the establishment.

4. Adequate care, cleaning and attention should be given to the decorative items within their jurisdiction in order to promote their life expectancy, durability, appearance and ease of cleaning

5. The room should be well balanced and the interior accessories well placed. The hotel rooms and public places in the hotel should be thoroughly scrutinized virtually every day by the house-keeping supervisors in order to keep fixtures and other items literally shinning and in good state.

6. A few exceptionally high quality items should be gotten instead of lots of low-quality goods which takes up less space and makes the hotel feel luxurious unnecessarily.

7. Expert in hotel interior decoration should be awarded with the contract of decorating the hotel interior decors in order to achieve a good service.

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