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Abstract

The lack of competitive designs may result in a loss of attractiveness and potential customers. Therefore, this study sought to explore whether and how hotel designs may influence hotel facility competitiveness in 3-5 star hotels in Nairobi hotels, Kenya. The specific objectives were; to establish whether hotel lobby design affects the level of customer satisfaction, to determine the relationship between hotel ambiance and repeat visitation, and to develop design features that have the potential to enhance destination attractiveness. This study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive design utilizing qualitative and quantitative methods. The plan was preferred since data collection was at one point in time, and the target population was from one study area. The sample for the analysis consisted of general hotel managers, marketing managers, and guests selected from a list of three to five-star hotels in Nairobi using convenient sampling techniques. Questionnaires and oral interviews were administered and conducted with guests, hotel managers, marketing managers, and the facility, respectively. Factor analysis was used to identify the correlation among the independent variables. ANOVA was applied to determine the coefficient and the magnitude amongst the independent variables, which attained a 95% confidence level hence high reliability. In addition, single regression analysis was used for individual independent and dependent variables, i.e., hotel design and facility competitiveness. The findings show that the hotel lobby design contributed to guests' attachment in terms of satisfaction with the hotel to a great extent (91%). According to the findings temperature of the hotel and its ambiance affected customer satisfaction and repeat visitation to a large area (72%). The findings further show that external appearance (55%) and landscape design (54%) were hotel design features with the most significant potential to enhance destination attractiveness. The study hypothesis indicated no important relationship between hotel design and facility competitiveness, in which the model attained a p-value of 0.003, therefore rejecting the null hypothesis. Thus, the study recommended that hotel owners consider improving their lobby design and ensuring they are spacious and attractive to guests. The study revealed that ambiance in the hotel industry is significant as a variable of hotel design and facility competitiveness.

Keywords: *Hotel Design, Facility, Competitiveness, 3-5 Star Hotels, Nairobi County*

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1.1 Background of the Study

The Tremont House in Boston was one of the first hotel setups that established hotels as enduring monuments in the cityscape. Built in 1928 with Quincy granite, The Tremont was the costliest building in the US. It earned the title "The Adam and Eve" of the modern hotel industry. The Tremont house set the standards for deluxe innovations, including private locked rooms, bathrooms, and the introduction of ala carte menus. Since then, innovative designs began to flourish as each new hotel vied to outdo previous ones with amenities such as hot and cold running water (Penner, 2013). In the 21st century, most hotel designers reacted to the lack of creativity and warmth to develop more intimate and attractive interior spaces, high-quality materials, lighting, and artwork to realize a sense of grandeur (Penner et al., 2013). The value of hotel designs has evolved immensely over many years. With increasing customer knowledge and sophistication, designs have changed from simple to complex facilities that even change the face of a destination. According to Harrington and Ottenbacher (2011), growth in hotels and changes in design resulted from the increase in wealth, the opening of crucial travel routes, and the increasing population enough to service the hotel industry. The transition from inns to grand hotels saw an increase in demand for better accommodation facilities for the wealthy society (O'Gorman, 2010); therefore, this historical literature is essential as it adds to the pool of knowledge about the earlier hotel designs and practices which help in guiding hotel designs.

The academic field of hospitality is young, and the literature on the earlier hotel properties could be more extensive (O'Mahony & Clark, 2013). The limited literature on the pre-colonial hospitality facilities was from newspapers, traveler's eyewitness records, and public records (Harrington & Ottenbacher, 2011). Much has changed in the hotels and hospitality industry since 2001; technological advancement supports applying sustainable principles in design and operations (D'Aveni, 2010). Today there are more hotel brands than ever, each demanding a specific set of design and operational requirements that require an integrated effort among the developer, operator, and design team to achieve a successful outcome (Penner et al., 2013). Penne adds that the market has also become so sophisticated that the earlier hotel designs that were considered popular have become extinct, paving the way for extravagant architectural designs. Kenya's hospitality and tourism sector has experienced a tremendous decline over the last three years, with guests visiting Kenya dropping by 15% (Economic Survey of Kenya, 2014). In order to maintain Kenya's competitiveness, among other measures, the country's hospitality and tourism stakeholders need to identify and implement effective strategies that have been found to draw visitors to destinations, including architectural design of facilities (Payne & Perret, 2012).

Several definitions seek to explain the meaning of the design, with one of them suggesting that design entails decorations, shapes, sizes, and styles, all aspects that can impact 'soft' factors such as a building's ambiance, comfort, image and style, and 'hard' factors such as cost, noise, safety or space allocation (Ransley & Ingram, 2001). An extensive body of literature on design has emerged over the years, including in the hospitality and tourism industries, underlining the significance of the design dimension for operations and customers. For example, design is an essential tool in enhancing the building's attractive appeal, creating an atmosphere in public areas, such as lobbies, and attracting visitors (Ransley & Ingram, 2001). A hotel design reflects functional, technical, social, environmental, and aesthetic considerations (Informe Design, 2007). It requires the creative manipulation and coordination of material, technology, light, and shadow (Simpeh, 2011). The creativity that comes with the design of a hotel plays a crucial role in attracting customers to the

destination where this hotel is located. A hotel design includes the exterior design of the whole building, the lobby, and ambience (Fyall, 2008).

Concerning destination competitiveness, hotel design plays an essential role in increasing visitation. Hotel facilities like The Burj Al Arab Hotel (“The tower of Arabs”) in Dubai have changed the face of the desert city, elevating it to the most recommended high spenders’ tourist destination and an arena for glamorous hotel designs. Shaped like a sail the Burj opened its doors in the year 2000 as the tallest single-use hotel building in the world, then followed by other attractive hotels like the Jumeirah Beach Hotel which is shaped like a breaking wave at the shorefront, and Hotel Atlantis, the Palm Island hotel with a palm-like design. This indicates how a hotel design can have a lasting impression on the world and thus transform a city into the most sought-after tourist destination (Watson, 2005).

In his research Thapa (2007) found that designs have the potential to provide tangible cues that a customer can identify with, thus, positive returns to the hotel. Stipanuk (2006) articulates that hospitality facility designs are the key aspects that bring excellent customer satisfaction, thus, repeat business to the hotel. Further, Penner, Adams and Robson (2013) suggest that guests are interested in hotels that they can identify with and give them a great experience. According to tenner et al. (2013), the term identity refers to a hotel design and contributes to customer patronage as there is a direct link between hotel design and consumer satisfaction. Due to its importance, hotel designers and owners are working hard to incorporate unique features that create brand identity, enhance customer experience and make a hotel memorable (Strodel, 2004).

According to Penner et al. (2013), there has been a paradigm shift since 2001 in how hotels are constructed and designed. Technology and strategic plans of the industry have resulted in an upsurge of new hotels, which have brought in new designs (Watson, 2005). Generally, Hotel designs contribute to gaining ground in the market as they play a crucial role in the modern hospitality and tourism industry (Mossberg, 2007). Therefore, hotels have acquired unique design features, bringing stiff competition to the hospitality industry. One would therefore expect that in the future, more and more hotels within a destination will be designed explicitly as unique attractions.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Payne and Perret (2012) have reported that global hotel chains have expressed interest in entering the Kenyan market, particularly in the Nairobi region, which is expected to intensify competition in terms of design. This is since existing hotels in Nairobi are worn out and require restoration as the tourism market grows. However, according to Ongori, Iravo and Munene (2013) the hotel industry in Kenya has suffered from outdated properties that require refurbishment. As a result, potential customers may be deterred by the lack of attractiveness of these properties. Diesfeld and Hecklau (2013) suggest that the box-shaped steel and concrete structures built in Nairobi today may be causing Kenya to lose customers to competitors in the competitive hotel market. Although limited literature exists on the relationship between design and competitiveness, Stipanuk (2006) notes that studies have primarily focused on how other hotel services, such as service quality, human capital, and customer care, impact customers. There needs to be more literature on how hotel design impacts facility competitiveness. In contemporary research, various aspects of hotel design have received limited attention, such as the evolving hotel lobby, which has not been well-researched (Thapa, 2007).

1.3 Objectives of the Study

- i. To establish the influence of hotel lobby design on the level of customer satisfaction within Nairobi hotels.
- ii. To determine whether hotel ambience has a significant role on customer satisfaction and intention to revisit
- iii. To identify hotel design features that has the potential to enhance destination attractiveness.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The theory of expectancy-disconfirmation was utilized in this study to evaluate customer satisfaction. Per this theory, satisfaction is determined by cognitive confirmation (or disconfirmation) of an expected service (Danaher & Haddrell, 1996; Oliver, 2011). Bitner (1992) suggests that customers can display two forms of behaviour - approach or avoidance - in response to the physical environment of a hotel, which is influenced by their internal responses (cognitive, emotional, and physiological) to the environment. Thus, customers who exhibit approach behaviour spend more money, stay longer, and patronize the hotel. Conversely, customers who complain and exhibit unacceptance behaviors avoid the hotel and spread negative word-of-mouth. According to Thapa (2007), a hotel's design affects a customer's perception of the services offered by the hotel. Cognition, therefore, refers to the perception and knowledge about a hotel that decides whether to stay or not. However, different studies have challenged this theory, arguing that it only considers satisfaction and disregards customer emotions. They argue that the emotional component is significant in modelling behavior in a service setting, and a hotel's design can affect customers emotionally, which may lead to satisfaction or dissatisfaction. As per Cronin (2003), the theory should include a combination of satisfaction and emotion, termed "emotional satisfaction," to arouse a customer's feeling of satisfaction.

2.2 Empirical review

2.2.1 The Role of Hotel Lobby Design as an Attraction to Customers

As the first space guests will encounter and the first impression guests will form of the hotel based on the physical environment, the lobby plays a crucial role in branding and creating the hotel's desired atmosphere (Thapa, 2007). Customers spend long periods in hotels, then other facilities like banks, restaurants, and retail stores. The lobby portrays a sense of arrival socially and physically, providing a common area to relax and meet other visitors. It is the main circulation space, directing guests to other hotel sections. The hotel lobby is the first interactive space a guest encounters once they step inside a hotel. Among the many public areas in a hotel, the lobby has the single most significant impact on customers (Penner et al., 2013; Thapa, 2007). How guests interpret and experience the lobby space may have significant lasting effects. Hotel lobbies set the mood in the hotel as this space generates the single most significant impact on the guests. Items like furnishings, color, finishing, lighting, and decorations must carefully balance the lobby's visual impact with its functions. The hotel design utilizes the interior space based on the Feng Shui principle that the combination of space and personal feeling must balance. The principal assumes that the outside of the hotel is busy, crowded, and stressful. Therefore, the lobby should give guests an open, spacious, stress-free impression (Bramble & Cate, 2003).

Elements of the hotel lobby, such as facility aesthetics, layout accessibility, seating comfort, lighting, color, and interior scape, may help attract more customers. These elements could also

create a positive behavioral reaction among customers, Informe Design (2005), affecting their duration of stay, willingness to revisit, and potential to recommend the hotel to others (Thapa, 2007). According to Mucci (2005), the hotel lobby design has evolved from small, economically designed spaces to large attractive layouts. These designs have applied bold colors, high technology lighting, and sculptural furnishings and finishes typifying the latest trends in lobby designs. Based on their studies, Alonso & Ogle (2008) advises that managers and hotel operators should consider hotel design a significant area in strategic planning and not a subordinate in formulating marketing strategies. In their studies, they found out that hoteliers seem to perceive that they have no control over hotel design, therefore paying little attention to the appearance of the hotel lobby. Zemke & Shoemaker (2007) assert that studies on consumer products marketing strategies have overshadowed hotel design, leading to insufficient data on the role of hotel lobby as an attraction to customers.

Design is a crucial aspect of the hotel and tourism facilities that add value to both the owners and the customers (Alonso & Ogle, 2008). A hotel design portrays various factors, including attractiveness, customer delight, value for money, and a sense of security, which define customer satisfaction (Thapa, 2007). Among the many reasons customer's patronage a hotel is to seek essential food and accommodation services. However, for them to decide to return, there has to be an appealing physical surrounding environment, that is, an attractive hotel design, therefore an essential role of the service leisure manager is to create and maintain an enjoyable environment that lures customers to want to stay as long as they wish (Alonso & Ogle, 2008). According to Krishna (2008), hotels are in the "business of memories," so owners, architects, and interior designers must work carefully to ensure a good and lasting memory for hotel guests. Most frequently, a guest's first and last experience in a hotel happens in the lobby, during check-in and check-out (Thapa, 2007). A single negative experience can keep a guest from returning to a hotel. This will deprive the hotel of that person's future patronage and possibly the patronage of that person's friends and family.

All hotels are a balance of host, guest, and place, and over time this balance has shifted from one component to another. Several trends can be seen in hotels today due to the current state of that balance. These trends include technological increases, guest sophistication, and the emergence of cultural and green hotels (Heide et al., 2007). These trends all affect how new hotels are designed and built, including the lobby space. In Kenya, older hotels are redesigning their lobbies to become more attractive; for example, the Norfolk and the Panafric Hotels in Kenya have, over time, changed their lobbies to capture a more affluent clientele.

2.2.2 Hotel Ambiance and Customer Satisfaction

According to Heide, Laerdal, & Gronhaug (2007), the quality of the environment surrounding the customer enables them to have a satisfied experience. Ambiance as a customer experience has become a global key concern for tourism and hospitality stakeholders. "Guests do not just want a bed; they want an experience" this was stated by Straun McKenzie, director of development and asset management for Hard Rock Hotels & Casinos (Forsgen & Franchetti, 2004)—hedonic services such as hotels and Tourism offer experiences that can evoke a customer's emotions. The nature of these experiences is critical for the hotel industry because they are intangible (ambiance) and must be managed well to ensure customer satisfaction (Yuan & Wu, 2008). According to Bitner (1992), the ambiance will be more important for hotels and other service organizations than for tangible goods because services are produced and consumed simultaneously within the

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physical facility of the hotel. Customers will be exposed to the ambiance of the production facility, in this case, the hotel, which might influence customer satisfaction.

For example, Heide, Leadal, and Grenhaugh (2007) found that ambiance was essential for explaining customer satisfaction among hotel guests. Studies by Kokko (2005) found that ambiance is perceived both by guests and staff as the single most favorable characteristic of the hotel, more important than the food itself. The ambiance is also related to the emotional nature of a human being, and emotions are essential in the perception of ambiance (Krishna, 2010). Jysma (2012) argues that similar aspects of ambiance control are not all customers. Depending on their purpose of visit (Leisure, Business, Health, and Religious), customers will be influenced differently by the hotel's ambiance. Some will be satisfied, others dissatisfied; therefore, hotel managers and owners should consider ambiance as a critical area in designing a hotel since customers have diverse responses to the stimuli in the environment. Creating an appropriate ambiance for the target market and potential customers will also help cannibalize the intangible nature of hospitality services.

2.2.3 The Relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Re-Patronage Intentions

Research indicates that satisfied customers tend to establish loyalty, repeat patronage and spread positive word of mouth (WOM) to other potential customers. During the past few decades, customer satisfaction and service quality have become significant areas of attention for practitioners and academic researchers. Both concepts have a substantial impact on business performance and customer behavior, therefore having an impact on profitability (Chi & Qu, 2008). Several empirical studies indicate a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, as well as between customer satisfaction and positive word of mouth (Dimitriades, 2006). Therefore, one of the critical strategies for customer focus is to measure and monitor service quality and customer satisfaction. Several tools are available for measuring customer satisfaction; in hotels, one of the most popular is a guest comment card, they have the advantages of small size, easy distribution, and simplicity. When analyzing data gathered in such a way, managers can get information about the attributes that have an impact on guest satisfaction (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000).

Despite many attempts to measure and explain customer satisfaction, there still does not appear to be a consensus regarding its definition (Giese & Cote, 2000). Customer satisfaction could be defined as a post-consumption evaluative judgment process that contrasts repurchased expectations with perceptions of performance during and after the consumption experience (Oliver, 1980). The expectancy disconfirmation theory is the most widely accepted customer satisfaction concept. The theory was developed by Oliver (1980), who proposed that satisfaction level results from the difference between expected and perceived performance; therefore, satisfaction (positive disconfirmation) occurs when a product or service is better than expected. On the other hand, a performance worse than expected results in dissatisfaction (negative disconfirmation). Customer satisfaction has a vital role in customer loyalty, and it is not surprising that various research has been devoted to investigating the determinants of satisfaction (Bitner, 2003). Applying this to the hospitality industry, numerous studies have examined attributes that travelers may find necessary regarding customer satisfaction. Several contributing factors were cited by Choi & Chu (2001). Bitner (2003) found out that facility attractiveness was essential among other factors, including cleanliness, location, prompt service, security, and safety.

Customer satisfaction comes about due to a number of elements such as ambience of the hotel, services provided to the customer and value for the money spent. The richest sources of revenue for a hotel is repeat customers Malik, Ahlawat and Jyoti (2013), therefore hotel owners and managers should focus on developing hotel into an environment that enables visible customer value like attractive hotel designs since retaining customers has become of importance in the competitive hospitality industry (Sim, Mak & Jones, 2006).

3.0 Research design and Methodology

A cross-sectional, descriptive survey design, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative research methods was chosen. The design utilizes both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The study had a target population of 2525 respondents comprising hotel managers, marketing managers and guests in 3-5 star hotels. A stratified sampling procedure was used for the preliminary sampling of hotels, convenient sampling was used to select a sample from the guests' population and purposive sampling was used to select the managers in the hotels to obtain a sample size of 334 respondents. The main instruments that were used in the collection of data for the study were questionnaires and interview guides. Data analysis involved the use of a scientific package for social sciences (SPSS) in the analysis of quantitative data. Content analysis was done on qualitative data, where behavior trends or similar responses were coded, and then subjected to quantitative data analysis.

4.0 Findings and discussions

4.1 Influence of hotel lobby design on customer satisfaction

The study noted that hotel lobby design contributed to guests' attachment in terms of satisfaction to the hotel was 91% response while 9% indicated the contrary. Table 1 shows the descriptive analysis.

Table 1: Influence of hotel lobby design on customer satisfaction

Feature	Strongly Agree		Agree		Moderate		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Lighting	69	31	93	42	55	25	5	2	2	1
Lobby Size	47	21	67	30	91	40	18	8	1	1
Lobby Accessibility	31	14	28	13	126	56	28	13	11	5
Sitting Capacity	62	28	84	38	59	26	18	8	-	-
Artifacts	115	51	58	26	42	19	1	1	9	4

Table 4.7 shows that the majority (51%) of the guests were in agreement that artifacts in the lobby affected customer satisfaction, followed by lighting (42%) and sitting capacity (38%). It was; however, moderate the lobby size (49%) and lobby accessibility (45%) influence customer satisfaction; therefore, artifacts should be keenly selected to have a positive appeal to the guests, and in cases where guests cannot associate with them, then the hotel manager should find a better replacement. This points out that emotional constructs are essential when studying the lobby as they are important determinants of the hotel's perceived value. According to the managers, good lighting ensured customers' comfort and hence was crucial. They stressed that correct lighting provided guests could do their activities without straining.

On the lobby size managers indicated that it should be of reasonable size so as to ensure the comfort of customers. They also pointed out that lobby space allows customers to move around while waiting to be served and hence should be big enough to accommodate everyone waiting to be assisted. Managers indicated that sitting capacity is essential as guests standing in the lobby look weird. They cited that it should be adequate to eliminate instances of some customers waiting for seats and should not be squeezed. On the artifacts, managers indicated that it beautifies the lobby and serves as a welcome distraction for those seated there. It was noted that it is essential for the hotel's presentation for guests who appreciate art and thus find them fulfilling and they feel valued. Studies by Thapa (2007) argue that, on the contrary, artifacts are a customer's choice, whereby guests associate with sculptures and wall hangings that mean something to them, but not all artifacts appeal to any guest.

4.2 Hotel Ambience on Repeated Guest Visitation

In assessing relation to hotel ambience and its influence on customer satisfaction and repeat visitation, several areas were evaluated.

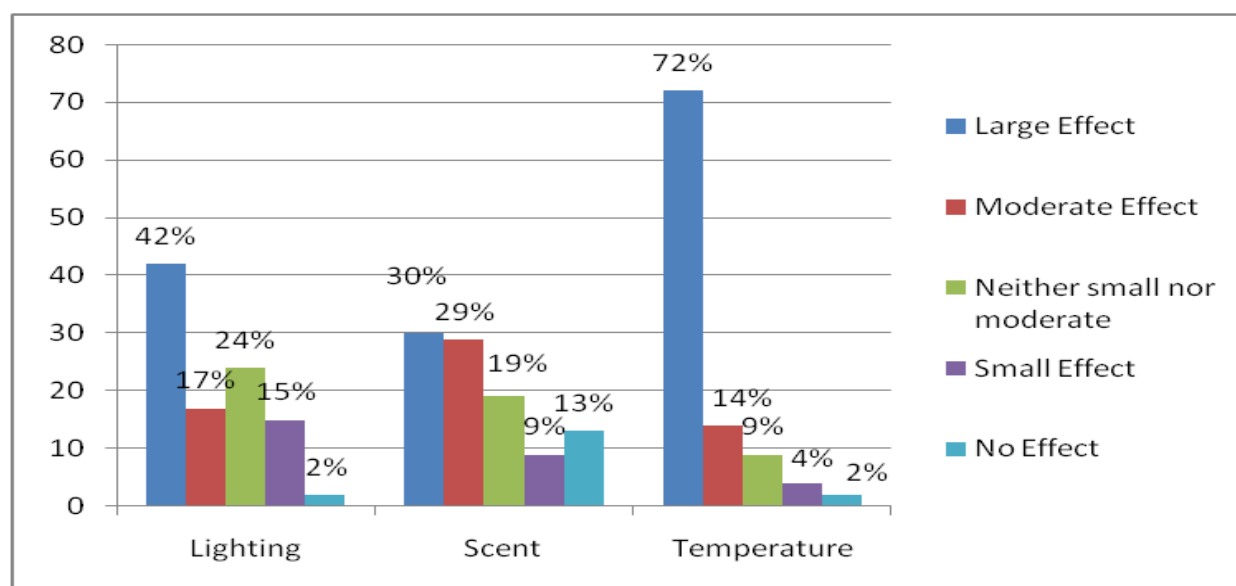


Figure 1: Hotel ambience on repeated guest visitation

Figure 1 shows that temperature of the hotel ambience affected customer satisfaction and repeat visitation to a large extent (72%) so was the lighting (42%) and the scent (30%). This shows that the overall service quality perceptions directly influence guest's behavioral intentions, including their tendency to say positive things to recommend the hotel, and to remain loyal to the hotel.

Guests were asked their likeliness of visiting the hotel again as a result of the ambience and the results are presented in figure 4.5.

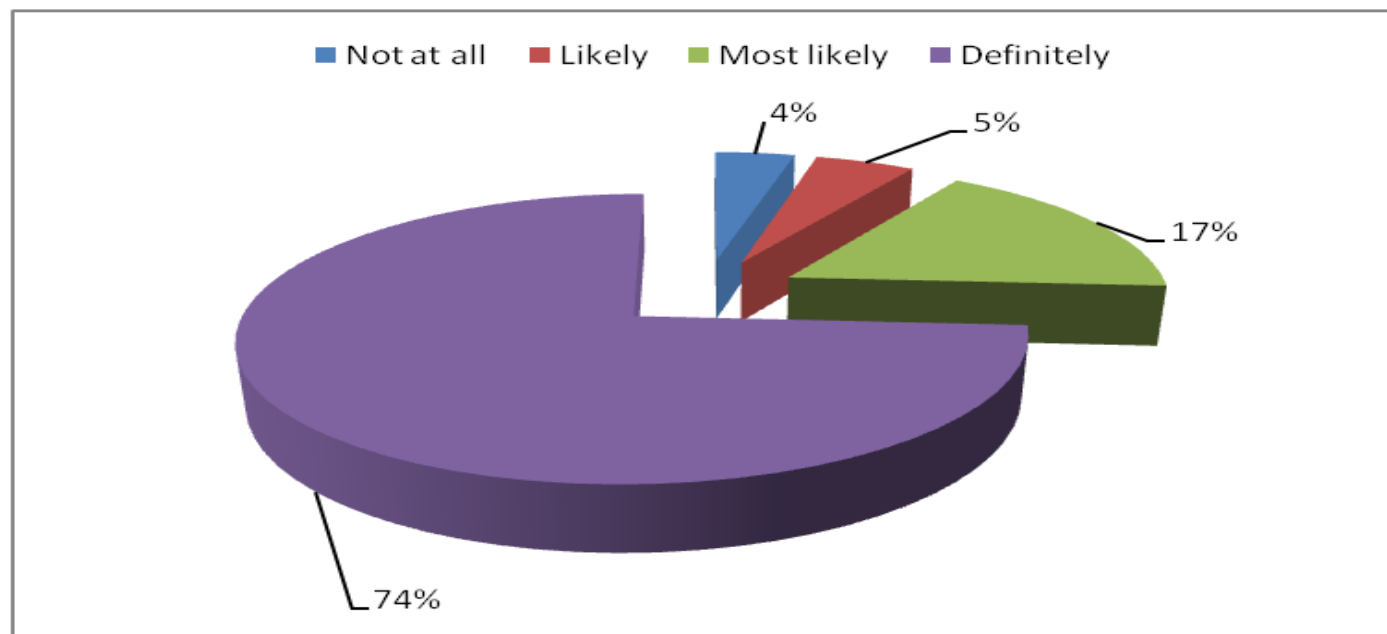


Figure 2: Guest revisiting the hotel out of its ambience

From figure 2, the hotel ambience greatly influenced guests come back to the hotel as indicated by an overwhelming majority (91%). Descriptively, majority of the respondents (74%) pointed out that definitely ambience influence on guests come back to the hotel, 17% of the surveyed guests pointed out that most likely guests were to come back to the hotel due to the ambience. Ambience relates to customer perception and experiences of the background conditions of the environment. The influence of guest satisfaction is related their urge to revisit the hotel, therefore the combination of lighting, scent and temperature as the three facets of ambience have a positive impact on customer experience (Thapa, 2007). According to the manager's ambience led to 70% to 90% customers repeat visitation as an outstanding ambience positively contribute to repeat hotel visitation. They noted that customers come more than twice to hold meetings or for accommodations and they recommended the hotels ambience. Therefore, the present study shows that the exterior design of a hotel including the decor and the furniture in the public spaces and rooms have their influence on the guest's loyalty. Moreover, the equipment found at the hotels and the conditions of the rooms and the public spaces in hotels influence guest's evaluation of the service quality.

4.3 Hotel Design Features That Influence Destination Attractiveness

Several hotel design features were evaluated to ascertain whether they influenced destination attractiveness.

Table 2: Hotel design features that influence destination attractiveness

	Very great extent	Great extent	Moderate extent	Little extent	No extent
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Interior design and decoration	83 (37)	97 (43)	40 (18)	2 (1)	1(1)
Surrounding environments	109 (49)	93 (42)	20 (9)	----	---
External appearance	124 (55)	80 (36)	18 (8)	1 (1)	1 (1)
Hotel size	89 (40)	70 (31)	33 (15)	26 (11)	6 (3)
Atrium / Entrance design	42 (19)	----	20 (9)	95 (43)	67 (30)
Hall	53 (23)	15 (7)	104 (46)	32 (14)	21 (9)
Landscape design	121 (54)	103 (46)	29 (13)	----	----
Age of the building	42 (19)	9 (4)	39 (17)	80 (36)	55 (25)
Rooms	94(42)	69(31)	53(23)	9(4)	----
Restaurant	125(56)	82(37)	13(6)	1(1)	2(1)
Bars	95(43)	67(30)	26(11)	16(7)	20(9)

Key: n = Frequency

Table 4.8, shows that to a very great extent; external appearance (55%), surrounding environments (49%) and hotel size (40%) influenced destination attractiveness. It was to a great extent that; landscape design (54%), interior design and decoration (43%), as well as rooms (42%), influenced destination attractiveness. To a moderate extent (47%) the hotel hall influenced destination attractiveness while it was to a little extent; restaurant (56%), bars (43%), atrium/ entrance design (43%) and age of the building (36%) influenced destination attractiveness. The findings show that the hotels deliberately did not hide their interiors from potential consumers. Moreover, the interiors tend to be the main promotional material in the development of the hotel's communications strategy with their guests. This implies that guests are attracted by the external design as it's the first encounter they have with the hotel and they are most likely to make their decision based on the same. Managers were asked to elaborate on the contribution of the general hotel design to the attractiveness of a destination. According to the responses given; hotel design in terms of size, and available facilities make guests feel value for their money the hotels also had disability-friendly rooms to accommodate all people. They also stressed that the general layout design is the face of a hotel and a well-designed hotel gives it a good market. They indicated that they ensured there

are frequent renovations on the gym, rooms and swimming pool to ensure they satisfy the guests with time.

The findings show that a hotel should be designed to create a comfortable environment for the guests and to provide them with several additional services. According to the findings, the major factors that must be taken into account while designing and constructing the hotel are: the hotel building should organically fit the environment, without compromising the features of urban, rural or natural landscapes. Several climatic factors should be considered, like temperature and humidity, proximity to the sea or other water bodies, direction and speed of the wind and such factors. The building must conform to the aesthetic, technical, sanitary and environmental standards and guidelines. The possibility of further reconstruction of the building should also be provided. The design of the building should also play an advertising role and the facades of the hotel should emphasize its prestige.

4.4 Ways of Improving Hotel Design Future to Attract More Guests

Guests were asked to suggest ways of improving the hotel design future that will attract more guests. According to their responses; 47% indicated that the hotel should add more lighting at the reception and improve the slope entrance. 23% indicated that there is a need for the addition of better wall hangings and offer thorough checking during guest checkout, offering better security techniques. 22% cited that the hotels should improve by proving dining venues with flexibility and flowing antique paintings and wall hangings. While 8% pointed out that the hotels should consider people with physical challenges, very little on children's entertainment, menus to be improved, more African cuisines and more African music.

According to one of the hotel manager,

“The existing high culture of the interior design in this hotel is linked to the achievement of the people involved in designing (interior designers) and caused not only by their desire of beauty and harmony, but also because of the positive emotions, which can be achieved through a high level of the interior quality perception. The style of the interior largely determines the mood of the visitors and working conditions of the employees” (HM3).

The managers felt there was need to add more seating capacity at the lobby and the hotel designs should consider all kinds of people the old, disabled and young. They further pointed out that for a hotel to be competitive other than the structural design service should be at its best.

One of the managers was quoted;

‘The hotel design has to be functional and beautiful at the same time, should create a sense of space, light, proportioning and symmetry. The main thing here is the ability of a designer to express his attitude towards the hotel clients through the design. Different cultures have their own vision of comfort and luxury, thus there is a big variety of directions in the design of the places of temporary stay’ (HM4).

4.5 Regression Analysis

A multivariate regression model was applied to determine the relative importance of each of the variables with respect to facility competitiveness. The regression model will show how each of the independent variables affect the dependent variable.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	0.843	0.742	0.724	0.4216

Predictors: (Constant), lobby design and ambience of the hotel.

Dependent variable: facility competitiveness

The R Square is the coefficient of determination and tells us how variations in facility competitiveness and exterior design, lobby design as well as ambience of the hotel. The two independent variables that were studied explain 74.2% of the factors affecting facility competitiveness as represented by R Squared (Coefficient of determinant). This therefore means that other factors not studied in this research contribute 25.8% of the factors affecting facility competitiveness.

Table 4: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.72	9	1.302	44.231	.000 (a)
	Residual	3.432	244	0.066		
	Total	15.152	253			

Predictors: (Constant), lobby design and ambience of the hotel

Dependent Variable: facility competitiveness

This study used ANOVA to establish the significance of the regression model from which an f-significance value of p less than 0.05 was established. The model is statistically significant in predicting how the lobby design and ambience of the hotel affect facility competitiveness. This shows that the regression model has a less than 0.05 likelihood (probability) of giving a wrong prediction. This, therefore, means that the regression model has a confidence level of above 95% hence the high reliability of the results.

Table 5: Coefficients Results

	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.116	.186		0.623	.035
Lobby design	0.157	.043	.257	3.676	.036
Ambience of the hotel	0.082	.042	.301	2.252	.020

The regression equation above has established that holding all factors (lobby design and ambience of the hotel) constant, factors affecting facility competitiveness will be 0.116. A unit increase in lobby design will lead to a 0.157 increase in facility competitiveness. On the other hand, a unit increase in the ambience of the hotel r will lead to a 0.082 increase in the scores of the facility competitiveness. This implies that lobby design influences the facility's competitiveness followed by the ambience of the hotel. This study also established a significant relationship between facility competitiveness and the independent variables; lobby design ($p=0.036<0.05$) and ambience of the hotel ($p= 0.20<0.05$) as shown by the p values. The study hypothesis indicated that there is no significant relationship between hotel design and facility competitiveness. The model had a p-value of 0.035 from the three constructs (.000, .036, .020) thus the null hypothesis should not be accepted. The study concluded that there is a positive relationship between hotel design and destination attractiveness. Onen and Yuko (2011) in their study concluded that if the sig (2-tailed) value ≥ 0.05 , the researcher rejects the alternative hypothesis, while if the sig (2-tailed) value < 0.05 the researcher accepts it.

5.0 Conclusion

The study concluded that ambience in the hotel industry is a significant explanatory variable of hotel design and facility competitiveness. These dimensions should be major areas of focus for hotel managers to increase customer loyalty in terms of repeat patronage. The study results showed that hotel lobby design influences the facility's competitiveness. This conclusion agrees with the findings of other studies that emphasized the role the physical environment plays in customers' loyalty and satisfaction process. This finding shows that hotel design influences the perceived facility competitiveness related to customer loyalty. This conclusion is in agreement with the results of other studies that emphasized the role the physical environment does play in customers' loyalty and satisfaction process.

6.0 Recommendations

This study emphasizes that the hotel lobby design is one of the best drives for facility competitiveness that leads to guest recommendations of hotels to their friends and relatives. Therefore, hotel owners should consider improving their lobby design and ensuring they are

deceptive and attractive to guests. The study showed that all hotel design features are essential for customers when evaluating which hotel to visit. The hotel management should implement all considerations, including all age groups. Besides, improving the services rendered in the facilities will be important. Therefore, paying attention to employees to provide prompt service, employees' ability to inspire trust and confidence, and the personal attention given to customers can increase the income of hotels and can also create loyal customers.

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