

An Analysis of Factors Influencing Choice of Service Points: A Survey of Bars, Kisii Town's Central Business District, Kenya.

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ABSTRACT

The ever changing and competitive nature of bar services has led to flourishing of some bars and closure of others that are unable to cope with the competition in Kisii town's CBD. The main objective of the study was to identify and analyze the factors that influence consumer patronage for a bar. Other objectives included: ranking the identified factors in order of their importance, determining the categories of consumers who frequent the bars and to find out the services that the bars provided. This was a survey study of bars within the Kisii town's CBD. In order to achieve the study objectives, a sample of a hundred respondents in ten bars was selected. Systematic sampling was used in selecting the ten bars. Convenient sampling was used to draw 40% respondents from each target consumers of each bar. A sample of seven consumers was picked using the random sampling method from each bar while purposive sampling was used to pick, a manager, a bar maid and a cashier from each bar to represent the management respondents. Data was collected by administering a structural questionnaire to the bar consumers and the bar owners during repeated visits to each bar over the period of study. Assistants were incorporated in data collection procedure. They presented copies of the questionnaire to consumers to complete a few minutes after entry of consumers into the bars. The project incorporated descriptive data analysis tools and the Likert scale was used to determine the weight of each factor influencing consumer patronage. The research's main findings reflected that, patronage status exist in bars in Kisii town's CBD, many of the bars offered variety services and beer taking was the most commonly service sought for by consumers. The research revealed that there were six categories of consumers for bar services thus, the Government, private company, college students, self-employed, unemployed and the professional categories. The professional category formed the highest number of consumers, and then followed by the Government category, college student category, self-employed category, private company category and the unemployed category in that order.

KEY WORDS: Service points, Consumer Patronage, Consumer Behaviour

Background to the Study

Andrian (1998), observes that Consumption of services in the market by the consumers is influenced by buyers' characteristics and the buying behavior is influenced by cultural, social, personal and psychological factors. Other variables like price, availability, quantity and effectiveness of the promotion by the service providers also affect the consumption of a service in the market.

Van (1998), contends that in today's low growth and high competitive markets, retaining loyal customers is vital for survival. He says that keeping customers is a more efficient strategy than attracting new customers. Keeping customers loyal has been a hard task to achieve since modern consumers have become more informed, confident and demanding. They simply want products and services that satisfy them and have no time for the ones that do not. Barker (1992), says that today's customers are tougher and more informed, so sensitive to poor services that they often walk away and never come back. Despite the many variables that affect the consumption, there are a group of consumers who are loyal and therefore patrons to a particular service provider, those who will not be swayed by the many changing variables in the market, hence patronizing the service providers.

Patrons do not believe on any other service provider apart from their choice. They are so 'deep rooted' that even when new services get introduced by competitors, they do not even attempt to try them. They will 'stick' to the already established and the identified with service provider. Patronage is mostly a personal choice and not an influence from external pressures. Kisii is a rapidly growing, medium sized town, with twenty bars in the central business district as at April 2009. This forms the geographical scope of this study. There is no master plan to guide potential bar owners on what propels a consumer to become a patron in a particular bar. The town has

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suffered closure of some bars, even though others are coming up. The market is becoming segmented with each bar focusing on the need of particular consumers (consumer groups) thus, widening the consumer choice.

Assael (1998), observes that placing focus of business on the consumer should form the basis of marketing. Hence, consumer behavior should be studied because it affects decisions taken by organizations. Consumer behavior is defined as behavior that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing a product or services. It is concerned with learning the specific meanings that products hold for consumers. For any service entrepreneurship to be successful, profitable and ahead of its competitors, it should have regulars. There exist a number of factors that may not be present in any other bar that influence choice. Some of these factors include: bar image, effective customer care, sitting organization, position and structural design, availability of desirable services, costs, quality of services, convenient operational times and the social factor balance.

Ngahu (2002), asserts that, behind every successful enterprise are unswayed patrons. Gitomers (1993), also observes that, “the challenge of most organizations is not to produce satisfied customers; several competitors can do this, but the challenge is to produce regular customers. The key to customer retention is customer satisfaction”.

Since consumers’ decisions affect the choice of a bar, entrepreneurs give priority to those factors that influence the choice for a bar’s services and how to sustain them in the long run. It is on the view of such background; it was significant that a study is carried out to find out what factors influence consumers to patronize a particular bar.

Statement of the problem

With the growing number of bar business in Kisii Town’s CBD, increased competition for consumers follows naturally. There is wavering “patronage” and costly confrontations. Retention of consumers remains a great challenge to unmask for bar owners. This is reflected by the short life span of a number of bar enterprises in the Kisii Town’s CBD. There is no research that has been carried out, particularly on bar patronage in Kisii Town’s CBD. It was with this in mind, that the research was undertaken to survey the factors and then rank them on the basis of the degree to which each one of them contributes to bar patronage.

Objective of the study

To establish the factors in their order of preference for particular services by bar patrons.

Scope of the study

Although there are many bar businesses in the country, Kisii Town’s CBD was considered for the study. The study covered the factors influencing bar patronage, ten bars in operation within Kisii Town’s CBD, were covered. The ten bars were selected using systematic sampling from the twenty registered bars in the CBD, namely: Havanna, Lisbon, Obomo, Armstrong, The Twins Pub, Great Inn Wines, Jazz, Everest, The Winters, New Capital, Serengeti, Satellite, Fountain, Kanyimbo (K), Flamingo, Blue Inn, Courtyard, Green View, Backyard and Emonga Inn.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Patronage Behavior and Status

Patronage behavior deals with the process of identifying factors and attributes that consumers use in selecting product/service alternatives, Burnett (1996). A number of researchers have carried out studies on consumer patronage behavior.

Okwany (2005), investigated the influence of service assortment on the consumers preference in bar selection. In this research, it was found that a bar that had a variety of services had many customers. This study while enriching the knowledge on the bar patronage behavior, it fails short of providing a representative sample since it was based on one bar factor patronage.

Kottler (2007), suggests that consumers have varying degree of patronage to specific services, stores and other entities. Consumers can be divided into four groups according to patronage status.

- i) Hard core patrons – consumers who purchase services from one service provider all the time.
- ii) Split patrons – consumers who are loyal to two or three services providers.
- iii) Shifting patrons – consumers who shift from one service to the other.
- iv) Switchers – consumers who show no loyalty to any service provider.

Bar Patronage

Bar patronage is the degree to which a buying unit concentrates purchases over time to a particular bar within a service category; bar patronage develops through positive reinforcement and repetition of buying behavior, Oliver (1997). Successful bar service providers achieve higher customer patronage; unsuccessful bars have to attract customers. This affects the net margin because it is much more expensive in advertising promotion and selling to win customers than to hold existing ones.

Cross et al (1988), observes that it costs six times as much to win customers as to retain existing ones. Customer Patronage provides the basis for a stable and growing market share. Business week magazine (April 2001), indicates that consumers can avoid risks by remaining patrons to a bar service provider with which they are satisfied with, instead of purchasing from new and untried bar service providers. High-risk avoiders are more likely to be patrons to their 'old' bars and less likely to purchase from untried ones. It continues to say, bar patronage can be explained in a number of ways: habit, maximization value over price, perceived risk of alternatives are high past satisfaction with the bar, the frequency of usage, influence of media and the awareness of alternatives.

Barker (1989), argues, for obvious reasons the patron customer is the key importance to bar industry especially those patron customers who are higher spenders or provide long patronage. Oliver (1997), observes, 'improving customer satisfaction is a key to gaining customer patronage. Being a patron customer indicates that a customer will stay a patron, talk favorably about the bar and its services, pay less attention to competing bars and less sensitive to price and buy more as the bar introduces new services and upgrades existing services.

Influential Factors for a Bar's Services

Robin (2000), notes that a bar image can be defined as the set of associations linked to the bar that consumers hold in memory. Positive bar image is associated with consumer loyalty. It further helps the consumer to be favorably inclined towards future bar promotions and resist competitors marketing activities. Bar patrons tend not to change their buying pattern as a result of competitive promotion; advertising appears to be capable of deepening patronage. Consumers often hold a particular bar with designed reflections and are assured quality, dependability, performance and services. They feel they cannot be swayed away whether competitive bars are located adjacent to it. Thus, the attribute contends justification of consumer patronage.

Quality has been said to mean, meeting or exceeding the consumer's expectations. Quality also means anticipating the future needs of the consumer. Consumer satisfaction, not increasing profits, must be the primary goal of the organization, Deming (1986). It is the most important consideration, because satisfied consumers will lead to increased profits. Service quality is an activity; therefore, it can be improved. Organizations with higher quality services can charge up to 20% more and still retain consumers. Consumers tend to seek repeat of purchase if services are up to the expectations of the anticipated end result. Due to the varied satisfactions of clients to particular bar services, cliques tend to evolve. Many entrepreneurs in the service industry thus seek better ways to understand and segment their consumers to ensure delivery of quality services. This is meant to strengthen their position amidst a growing number of competitors.

Ainslie (1992), observes that virtually all human beings exhibit social stratification. A social class does not include income alone but also other indicators such as occupation, education and area of residence and this will also go along way affecting where a consumer will purchase. These groups tend to clique together and their social place tends to be the same. For instance teachers tend to be patrons of a particular social set-up, drivers, conductors and bankers among other people choose to become patrons of a particular service provider that articulates and accommodates their needs and status in the society. Conforming to a particular classes' needs by a particular bar tend to have associates with similar features and thus this becomes a common meeting point to deliberate matters concerning the social class in question. Patronage gets built at the long run within the bar.

Kuloba (2005), notes that today's customer is willing to pay a higher price to obtain value. Customers are constantly evaluating one's organization's products and services against those of its competitors to determine who provides the greatest value. However, in our highly competitive environment, each customer's concepts of value are continually changing. Bar entrepreneurs need to comprehensively analyze the cost of offering services. There has evolved a class of clients who have money to 'burn' and do appreciate quality, decor, excellent services and slightly pricier drinks. Thus, cost is dependant of customer needs and ability. The cost should be such that it benefits the bar enterprise. The setting and pricing for the various services tend to limit the customers seeking given services.

Reingold (1998), points out that most bars provide beer-selling services as their core service. However, others provide a variety of services, which include:

- a. Cafeteria services
- b. Pool games/darts/chess/scrabble e.t.c
- c. Sale of soft drinks
- d. Multi media services; TV/video/music services e.t.c
- e. Boarding services

Consumers visiting particular bars associate these with the additional services provided at one stop point where one can access virtually all the services required and in the most convenient way. For instance, consumers become patrons just on grounds on how available the services are; i.e. one would want to take beer, get cafeteria services and watch TV in a bar at the same time. The entrepreneur should therefore sample up as many services as possible in order to attract a wide range of customers who could wish to use two or more of the services in the same bar.

The geographical location of the bar tends to appeal to particular consumers. Scenery and accessibility to means of transport make a consumer to prefer a particular bar. Some need an environment that is different from the norm. One may need a bar where he/she can relax put up his feet without feeling like he/she has to fight for space with others, a position in which one feels at home, Gitomers (1993). The general appearance of the bar is very important and it creates a good image to the consumers who visit the bar. The structural design of the bar should be such that there is least disturbance and allows easy movement from one point to another. Strategic position and structural design enhances retention and regular consumers in a bar.

Adrian (1998), notes that an easy sitting atmosphere in a bar enhances patronage. It is not about how seats are positioned, but whether they are 'comfortable and luxurious'. The details in the décor colour scheme and carpeting propel the consumer to identify with a particular bar service's provider. Futuristic furniture, space between individual consumers' table and the others, need be enough to provide the privacy needed. The seats should be well positioned to avoid direct eye contact of the consumers. Some clients need a sitting that evokes the thought of reclining lazily on a chair and sipping a glass of wine (a beer), watching television or reading a book in an environment that is free from the daily anxiety.

A common desired circular sitting arrangement is shown below.

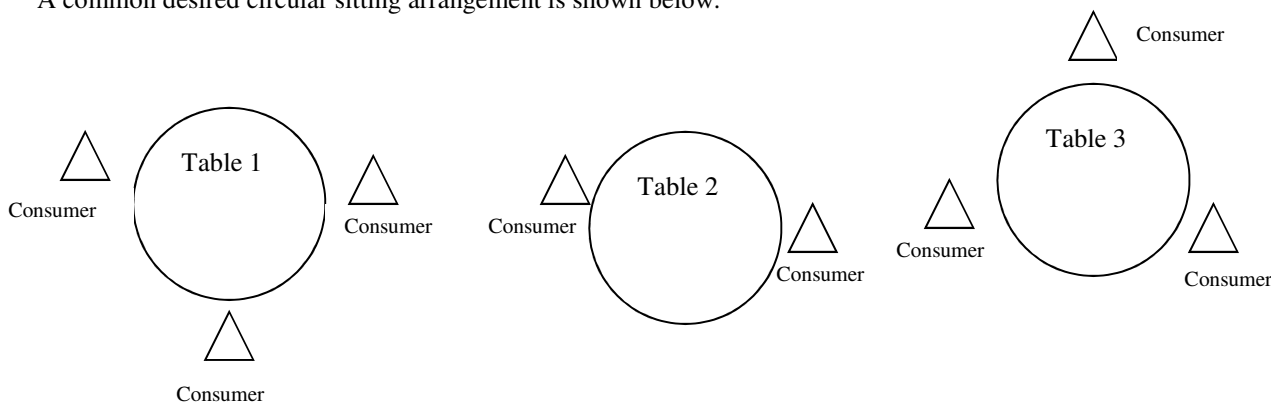


Fig I. circular sitting arrangements

(Source: Field Data, 2009)

The provision of a well ventilated and airy bar, with the 'appropriate' lighting system tends to create permanent beliefs of effectiveness on individual customers.

A successful entrepreneur should allocate convenient operational time to offer services to consumers. Gitomers (1993), observes that, many a time, different consumers have specific period to visit bars. Normally after work, during the weekend or for those not in any job, they also have their desired time of visiting bars. Time tend to dictate the particular clients available in a bar. Bars that operate after work sessions will have clients from a particular class of people or group. Weekend operations will also influence patronage. The entrepreneur should be sensitive, very informed and always keep time in order to retain customers.

The mode of reception in bars varies from one bar to another. Thus, attendants need be receptive to consumers and understand their needs. Bars must provide a service that respond to needs of potential consumers as their need or interest is triggered. Most bars do not have trained attendants. These influence a run away or retention of consumers. The fact that the bars are visited by all kinds of people and whose needs and requirement vary, consumers accommodate themselves in bars that provide consumer friendly receptions. There is need for the entrepreneur to furnish attendants on how to handle consumers courteously. Van (1998), notes that customers who make suggestions on improvement of services and are finally acted on, have confidence in the bar's management.

Hamish (2003), conducted a research on sustainability of consumers in business and concluded that most bar entrepreneurs operate in an ad- hoc environment which creates an enabling environment for the decline of the business. Hamish, recommended that further investigation be conducted in rural towns to ascertain influential factors of patronage.

Njue (2003), conducted a research on customer requirements for efficiency and profitability in organization. The Economic factor tended to be his area of concern as influencing customer patronage. However, he advocates that there is need to unearth the different salient factors other than the economic factor for each unique service in the market. Larger sample population spreading across towns of different cultures and levels of development would be necessary to draw more comprehensive conclusions capable of generalizations.

It is in light of this that this research focuses on bar industry as one of the many service providers required by consumers and unfolds in depth the factors that influence consumer patronage for a bar.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This was a survey study aimed at investigating factors that influence consumer patronage for a bar's services in Kisii Town's CBD. A survey study was adopted for the population involved a population of more than 30 and across a number of bars. Such a population requires diverse representation of the population. The survey focused on the bars that are within the Kisii town's central business district. The bars are not of the same class as we have different location where they are set up. There are those that are visited by low income earners situated at the periphery of the CBD. There are also bars that are in the heart of the CBD that serve high income earners. In both cases the designs, pricing, image and even perception are viewed differently by different consumers. Therefore, a survey was appropriate for this research as it had 100 respondents across the board. (Creswel 2003). The research involved sampling of management and consumers who used the bar services within the study setting. Information regarding the factors that influenced consumer choice for bar services was obtained via administering questionnaires to the respondents at the various bars. Assistants were engaged in presenting the questionnaire to the respondents shortly after the consumers entered the bars. Data collection was analyzed using descriptive methods and the Likert scale to give the weighted differential level of importance of the factors.

Research Setting

The research was based in Kisii Town's CBD. This is a rural town with a relative adult population of 52,408 residents (Central Bureau Of Statistics Census Report, 1999).

The District is in Nyanza Province of the Republic of Kenya. It borders; Nyamira, Gucha, Gucha South, Borabu, Masaba, Manga, Transmara, Homabay, Migori and Rachuonyo Districts.

Target Population

The Population of the study was drawn from Kisii Town's Central Business District. The population consisted of consumers and bar management in twenty registered bars in full operation in Kisii Town's CBD during the period of research.

Sampling Design and Sample Size

In order to carry out the research, there was need for a sample population to be identified to respond to the study. The researcher employed systematic sampling in selection of bars. A list of all the bars was prepared alphabetically and by using the formula $\frac{N}{n}$, selected every second bar included in the sample. The consumer respondents who participated in the research were selected using the random sampling procedure. Seven consumers were picked from each bar, totaling to seventy consumer respondents. The researcher considered convenient sampling to draw 40% respondents from each of the targeted consumers from the ten identified bars. It is hoped that the results obtained from a sample of respondents in ten bars is representative of the entire population. Purposive sampling was used to pick a manager, a bar maid and a cashier from each of the ten bars

to respond as the management staff. The table below shows targeted and sampled population framework for the consumer respondents.

Table 1: Population framework for consumer respondents

Name of Bar	Target population	Sample size
Armstrong	18	7
Blue In	17	7
Emonga	12	5
Flamingo	9	4
Great In	23	9
Havanna	42	17
Kanyimbo	9	4
New Capital	19	8
Satellite	15	6
The twin pub	8	3
Total	172	70

Source: Field Data, 2009

Data Collection

The data collected and used in the analysis was primary data. This was first hand information from the respondents.

Research Instruments

A questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire was used for it would give important information, where each item addressed a specific objective and it was the quickest and convenient way of collecting and analyzing the items of the respondents. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. Part A₁ consisted of close ended questions that were tabulated to capture information concerning the consumers' demographic characters and gave factors that consumers considered important in order to be patrons in a bar. Part A₂ used schedules and a 5-point-likert scale to find the degree of significance of factors that influence consumers' patronage for bar services. Part B consisted of close - ended questions that were tabulated to capture information from the management staff regarding various aspects of bar operations.

Validity and Reliability of Instruments

The researcher conducted a pilot test on the questionnaire to establish its validity. A sample of the questionnaires was given to persons who were not directly involved in the final study. The respondents were administered with the same instrument within a spell of one-week difference, and correlating the scores from both testing period, which corresponded effectively. The reliability was attested by designing the instrument with the involvement of the school of business experts and made it an all inclusive of all the domains of the indicators relevant to the bar patronage status and in line with the research objectives

Data Collection Procedure

Research was done by administering a questionnaire to the bar's consumers and the staff management during repeated visits to each bar during the data collection period. Supplementary information was obtained from management staff of the bars. Primary data collection involved the use of self-administered questionnaires for literate respondents and a researcher administered questionnaire to cater for those who would not easily interpret the questions due to their low level of literacy. The questionnaire was administered to respondents as they continued receiving the services .

Data Analysis and Presentation

The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and in line to the research objectives. The Likert scale was used to determine the degree of importance of each factor analyzed. The factors were then ranked according to their importance. The analyzed data was presented by use of frequency tables and pie charts.

DATA ANALYSIS

Commonly used Services

The study also sought to collect information regarding the commonly sought services by the consumers. Table 2 gives the response on the various services provided by bars and the outcome as collected from the field.

Table 2: Most commonly used Services

Services used		
Service	Frequency	%
Beer	16	53.3
Boarding	6	20
Soft drinks	2	6.7
Cafeteria services	2	6.7
Games	3	10
Others (specify)	1	3.3
Total	30	100

Source: Field Data, 2009

The results obtained showed that 20% inclined to boarding facilities, 53.3% went for beer, and 6.7% were for soft drinks, 6.7% consumed cafeteria services, 10% were for games and 3.3% preferred other services. Beer was found to be the highly sought service.

Consumers Weekly Repeat Turn-ups

The study sought to find out the consumers' weekly turn-ups. Table 3 enumerates the collective turn up of consumer revisiting the bars on a weekly basis as indicated by the management staff from the different bars.

Table 3: Number of consumers revisiting a bar on weekly basis

Consumers revisiting a bar on weekly basis		
Number of consumers	Frequency	%
Below 10	7	23.3
Between 10 -20	10	33.3
More than 20	13	43.4
Total	30	100

Source: Field Data, 2009

Table 3 shows that 23.3 % received below 10 consumers, 33.3% received between 10 consumers and 20 consumers, and 43.4% received more than 20 consumers revisiting their bars within a spell of a week.

Number of Services offered in a bar

The study sought to find out the number of services offered in a bar. Table 4.4 shows the number of available services in the different bars.

Table 4: Number of services offered in a bar

Number of services available in a bar		
Number of services	Frequency	%
One	0	0
Two	6	20
Three	12	40
Four	5	16.67
Others (specify)	7	23.33
Total	30	100

Source: Field Data, 2009

Table 4 shows that of the 30 respondents, 20% of bars offered two services, 40% offered three services while 16.67% offered four services and yet another 23.33% offered more than four services. This shows that majority of the bars have variety of services to offer. There is no bar offering one service thus, many consumers become patrons in bars offering a number of desired services.

Charges of Services Higher than the general Market Price

The study sought to find out the charges of services in the bars. Table 5 presents the results regarding the charges on the services offered in the bars.

Table 5: Charges of Services higher than the General Market Price

Charges of services higher than the general market price		
	Frequency	%
Yes	22	73.3
No	8	26.7
Total	30	100

Source: Field data, 2009

Table 5 reflects that, 73.3% of bars offered their services at a cost higher than the cost of that service in the general market price. Only 26.7% offered their services at their general market price.

Responses on Factors influencing Bar Patronage

The research undertook to evaluate the principle factors that influenced a consumer's patronage for a bar's services. Data was collected on responses from the various categories of respondents that included government, private company, college students, self-employed, unemployed and professionals. The field information revealed the following results as presented in table 6

Table 6: Factors influencing bar patronage

Factors	Frequency	%
Bar image	1	7.1
Quality services	5	35.7
Supportive system	2	14.29
Variety of services	2	14.29
Convenience	0	0
Cost of service	2	14.29
Social factor balance	2	14.29
Total	14	100

Source: Field Data, 2009

Patronage Factors' influence on Consumer Categories

The research undertook to analyze the principle factors that influenced each category of consumer's patronage for a bar's services. Data was collected from the various categories of respondents that included; Government, private company, college students, self-employed, unemployed and professionals.

Percentage response of Government Consumer Category

The study sought to find out the factors' percentage for patronage of Government consumer category. Table 7 below shows the findings.

Table 7: Percentage response of Government consumer category

INFLUENCING FACTORS									
RESPONSES									
CATEGORY	Support system	Quality services	Bar image	Cost of service	Social factor balance	Convenience	Variety of services	Others	TOTAL
Government	2	5	1	2	2	0	2	0	14
Private Co.	1	2	1	2	1	0	2	0	9
College Students	2	3	0	1	2	2	1	0	11
Self-Employed	3	3	0	0	1	1	2	0	10
Unemployed	0	1	0	0	1	3	0	1	6
Professional	3	4	2	3	3	0	5	0	20
TOTAL	11	18	4	8	10	6	12	1	70

Table 7 above illustrates that of the sampled Government category's consumers, 5(35.7 %) were influenced by quality services of a bar, 2(14.29%) for supportive systems, 2(14.29% variety of services, 2(14.29) for social factor balance, 2(14.29%) for cost of services, 1(7.1%) for bar image, while convenience had no influence. Quality of services was the most influential factor for the Government category of consumers.

Percentage response for the Professional Consumer Category

The study also sought to find out the factors' percentage of the professional category of consumers. The gathered field information revealed the following data,

The findings show that the professional category of consumers was influenced by a number of factors. 2(10%) were as a result of a bar's image, 4(20%) due to quality services, 3(15%) for supportive systems, 5(25%) due to variety of services, 3(15%) as a result of cost of service, and 3(15%) due to social factor balance whereas none was influenced by the convenience factor.

Reasons for using Bar Services

The study also evaluated the reasons for using bar services by various consumers interviewed. Table 8 illustrates the weighted average score for each reason. The reasons were then ranked according to their significance level from 1 to 8. From the results obtained, the researcher analyzed and categorized the reasons using the likert scale (5 most significant, 4 – significant, 3- neutral, 2- least significant and 1- insignificant) as follows:

Rank	Significance
1-4	Significant
5-7	Neutral
8	In significant

Table 8: Evaluation of factors for Bar Patronage

RA NK	FACTORS INFLUENCING BAR PATRONAGE	Most Signifi cant 5	Signi fican t 4	Neutr al 3	Least Signifi cant 2	Insignifi cant 1	Weigh ted Totals	Tot als	Weight ed Averag es
1	Quality and satisfactory services	39	21	5	2	3	301	70	4.300
2	Variety of services	41	16	7	4	2	300	70	4.286
3	Effective support system	34	16	14	3	3	285	70	4.071
4	Social factor balance	31	15	21	2	1	283	70	4.042
5	Cost of services	28	16	19	7	0	275	70	3.928
6	Convenient operational hours	28	17	14	9	2	270	70	3.857
7	Bar image	26	20	10	12	2	266	70	3.800
8	Others	1	5	3	33	28	128	70	1.357

Source: Field Data, 2009

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Findings

The study analyzed the factors that influenced the choice of service pints. It was based on the premise that the study could come up with conclusions and recommendations on how to retain and avoid swaying of bar services' consumers. The researcher on analyzing the research findings, the following findings were revealed as per the management's responses.

Many of the bars offered a variety of services and continued revisit of bars by consumes was evident. It was found out that the most commonly used service was beer taking. Most of the bars offered services at higher charges than the general market price. It was also found out that different categories of consumers had their convenient time of visiting bars.

The consumer data analysis revealed that there were six categories of consumers in a bar's services. They consisted of the Government, private company, college students, self-employed, unemployed and the professional categories. The professional category formed the highest number of consumers of bar services, then

followed by the Government category, college student category, self employed category, private company category and the unemployed category in that order.

It was found out that all respondents interviewed were patrons of a particular bar. The age of consumers was well spread across the respondents of the different categories. It was revealed that majority of the consumers were male. A higher percentage of the respondents were married, followed by consumers who were single. The research revealed that the consumer patrons had above college level of education.

Information sought on how each category of consumers was influenced by the different factors available in bars; it was observed that the most influential factor for the Government consumer category was quality of services, while on the private category, quality of services, variety of services and cost of services had the same and highest influence on consumers in this category. The college students' category preferred quality of services, the self employed greatly considered quality of services and supportive systems.

The unemployed patronage status were highly influenced by convenience, While for the professionals, patronage was greatly influenced by variety of services, quality services supportive systems, cost of service and the social factor balance.

The study's evaluation of factors for consumer's bar patronage on a likert scale measure based on weighted averages, revealed that quality of services was the most influential factor for bar patronage, with a weighted average of 4.300. Variety of services available in a bar had 4.286, effective support system had 4.071 and social factor balance had 4.042. All the four factors emerged as the most significant factors influencing consumers' patronage for a bar.

Other factors were neutral in influencing bar patronage and had the following weighted averages; cost of services 3.928, convenient operational hours 3.857 and bars image 3.800.

Conclusions

The study concluded that there are patrons of bar services in Kisii Town's CBD and that there exist influencing factors that builds consumer patrons for a bar's services. It was further revealed that the consumers broadly fall in defined categories. The factors identified revealed that they had different level of significance of influence; quality of services and variety of services were the main factors that led to consumer patronage of a bar's services. Effective support systems, social factor balance, cost of services, convenience and a bar's image did influence a consumer's patronage in that order of preference.

The study also revealed that majority of the consumers was a working class people, justifying the contention that the town's dwellers are working in various occupations.

Recommendations

From the study, the researcher came up with a number of recommendations, thus;

- i) Bar entrepreneurs should provide varieties of services in their business premises in order to retain consumers.
- ii) The bar industry should come up with niche premises to cater for the different categories of consumer groups.

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