WAYFINDING DESIGN AS AN APPROACH FOR HOTELS AND RESORT AREAS DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Wayfinding, introduced in the late 70s, replaced the term "spatial orientation". It reflects a new approach to studying people's movement and their relationship to space. Even more importantly, this new approach opens up new ways to design for people's spatial behavior [1]. Wayfinding design becomes a consideration in its own right like HVAC, or emergency exit procedures. Efficient, accessible, safe and spatially attractive wayfinding environment can be designed only when principals of wafinding is understood and when this knowledge is translated into applicable form.

Wayfinding task is completed when the person concerned reaches a desired destination. The solution to the wayfinding problem posed task is the sequence of behavioral actions leading from origin to destination [2].

Development of hotels depends on the demand for direct types of accommodation; demands which may stem from tourism, recreation, business or other activities which are very much influenced by local attractions and political attitudes [3].

Signs and symbols are important aspect for merchandising but need to be carefully located and designed to create the correct impact and impressions. Signs and notices on property may be regulated in the interests of conservation and safety particularly to avoid confusion, distraction or obstruction of view to other road users. On the other hand, wayfinding is an important issue for spatial orientation; for instance, the points of entry to hotel must be clearly defined, convenient, free from hazards and appropriate for the purpose. Provision must be made for guests, staff, goods deliveries, refuse and garbage storage and removal, etc.

The difficulty of wayfinding task is affected by two major physical factors: the lay out of settings and the quality of the environmental communication. The layout is defined by its spatial content, its form, its organization and its circulation. Environmental communication includes all of architectural, audible, and graphic expressions that provide the essential information for wayfinding.

This paper addresses the concept of wayfinding design to develop the quality of hotels. In other words, how spatial orientation and environmental communication could be used to develop the quality of hotels. This will be coverd through the following items:

- Units and structure of wayfinding
- Decisions and spatial behavior
- Wayfinding processes

The concept of spatial problem solving will be illustrated by discussing the process of planning a layout and a topology and patterns of circulation system.

Graphic information forms such as typographic, pictographic, color, layout, and illumination will be pointed out. Also, how these forms could be used as an important tool for decision making and executing.

In view of wayfinding design, Case studies of hotels (entrances, exits, paths, circulation system) in Egypt and Saudi Arabia will be analyzed and discussed.

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