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Analysis of Tenant Selection Criteria in an Emerging Rental Market

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7 Abstract

The aim of this paper is to investigate tenant selection criteria adopted by the registered real estate firms and the relationship between the criteria and the firms? years of experience in property management practice, core areas of professional practice and size of the firms with a view to determining the important criteria required of prospective tenant(s) to secure a rental apartment in the developing property market of Metropolitan Ibadan. The study adopts a questionnaire survey. The instruments (Tenant Assessment Checklists) were administered on a sample of estate surveying and valuation firms (registered real estate firms). Data collected were analysed using discriptive statistics, factor analysis, cluster analysis and chi-square.

Index terms— tenant selection, criteria, real estate firm, profiles, ibadan.

1 Introduction

he high rate of urbanization, pooled effect of population upsurge and dwindling economy in Nigeria have necessitated the significance of rental properties in most cities. Younger and more mobile people in work are the main clients of the private rented sector. Many tenants choose to rent because it is convenient. It is often stated that private tenants have a broadly similar distribution of income to the population as a whole, with a somewhat higher share of middle and lower income groups and a markedly smaller share of those with the highest incomes (Ball, 2010). Based on the fact that the demand for rental housing overshoots the supply in the market, the lucrativeness of investing in it in virtually every city of Nigeria is justifiable.

It is important however to state that the success of investing in rental properties is determined partly by space consumers' (tenants') attributes. The cases of indiscrimate destruction of properties, breach of covenant and rental default are common in varied degrees and categories of lease. Gbadegesin and Ojo (2012) examine the menace of recalcitrant tenants in metropolitan Ibadan. It is found that the issue of recalcitrance is common even among the law enforcement agents. The remedy to curbing difficult tenants commences at the beginning of lease. Currently, in the market, the aspect of tenant selection suffers heavy set-backs, blamed upon the discretional criteria attached to tenant selection and the over-reliance on the years of property management practice, core professional specialization and the real estate firms' capacity. Amidst several prospective competitive tenants, it is pertinent to select the appropriate tenant to occupy a vacancy without any element of bias. Choosing a tenant not at "arm's length" transaction is tantamount to a wrong selection. Ethnic sentiment could also result to bias selection and consequently affect the aim of the investment which usually manifests in form of rental default (Gbadegesin and Ojo, 2013).

In Nigeria property market, investors (Landlords) traditionally consider real estate firms' years of practice in property management, core areas of professional practice and the size of the firms before entrusting their interest on the firm for proper caretaking. This is necessary as it is generally believed that in the event of litigation, a client (Landlord) in contract would comfortably argue his or her position effectively and legally in the law court or before the arbitration as the case may be.

It is also important to posit that the basis of tenant selection in the metropolis can be attributed to certain attributes peculiar to the real estate companies. The result of the pilot surveyindicates that the bulk of the market

fault is usually blamed on the profiles vis-a vis qualifications of the agents in Nigeria and hence generating these salient questions:

- ? What are the profiles of the registered estate surveying and valuation firms who statutorily engaged in real estate agency in the area?. ? What are the criteria for selecting tenants in the real estate industry?. ? Is there any significant relationship between the firms' years of practice in property management (agency) and the tenant selection criteria adopted?. ? Is there any significant relationship between the firms' core area of professional practice in real estate and the selection criteria adopted?.
- 4. Relationship between the firms' core area of professional practice and the selection criteria. 5. Relationship between the firms' size and the selection criteria adopted. Hence, the last three objectives postulate the following hypotheses: Hypothesis I: There is no significant relationship between the firm's year of experience in property management practice and tenant selection criteria adopted.

Hypothesis II: There is no significant relationship between the firms' core area of professional practice and tenant selection criteria adopted.

Hypothesis III: There is no significant relationship between the size of the real estate firms and the selection criteria adopted.

2 II. Tenant Selection Criteria In Nigeria

In Nigeria property market, there is no any legal instrument that outlines the criteria to adopt while selecting tenants in private rental market. Theoretically, scholars identify various methods or criteria that screen tenants. Oni (2011) opines that the main objective of investing in private rental property is to derive adequate returns which is only achievable through selection of suitable tenants. In the study, the author identifies some of the criteria commonly considered by estate surveyors and valuers (property managers) in Lagos metropolis which include income, advance rent payment, occupation/employment; job prospects, marital status, tribe, physical appearance, religion, sex and number of children. However, some of these criteria are not really applicable to most Nigerian property market for example, job prospects and physical appearance. It is rare at the first instance to grant an apartment to a space applicant without initial inquiry on his/her occupation. Also appearance assessment is not usually applicable.

In literature, affordability is one of the criteria considered while selecting tenants JCHSHU (2008) and Bello (2008) opine that rental affordability is a determinant factor of rental investment in most developing nations. This is partly related to the tenant reputation. In term oftenant income status, (Oni, 2010) refers to non-payment of rent as a fragrant breach of tenancy agreement. This is usually avoided through express demand for affordability evidence, criminality record/track record, police report and quality of reference/guarantorship. Criteria can also be based on the circumstances of the prospective tenant. Carter (1980) posits that lone parent (single parent) either by circumstance of death, divorce or separation, or low income status would be unable to afford rents for adequate accommodation in the private market and will lack financial resources to overcome barriers to entry that may exist (for example, bonds and rent in advance). Singling out lone parent families for particular attention in terms of housing access may be justified to the degree of the fact that they face special problems.

In the opinion of Sweet (1959), emphasis on planned or limited competition, protection, against undue competition from new tenants, and limitation of the introduction of new merchandise lines by existing tenants are also germane. According to the author, retailers who are too aggressive or unorthodox in their merchandising policies are not wanted. In other word, tenant selection is based on the history and proposal on the usage of the apartment or space requested for. However, this is particularly related to commercial lease as examined in Table ??

Other criteria considered include the public interest (impact), legal aspect and innovator which storically has been considered a disturbing element (Sweet, 1959). The type of tenant, in term of influence and prestige is also factor usually considered in selecting tenant (Brzowski, 2008;Ojo, 2003). This usually occurs in the form of age factor, community involvement record and potential impact to the building. Current tenancy status is one of the criteria identified by ??aaty (1991). This constitutes family size, current occupancy/needs and duration of the current lease.

In summary, it implies from literature that tenant selection criteria have to do with either current tenancy status, impact, proposed use or reputation. Consequently, this study identifies these criteria and empirically examins the basis for adopting each of them in the process of tenant selection. It is further examined against the three important profiles of the firms namely; years of experience in property management practicethe task under which tenant selection responsibility takes place, core areas of professional practice, and size of the firms sampled.

III.

4 Brief on the Study Area

Nigeria is one of the few countries in Africa which had many large pre-industrial cities before the colonial period. The largest concentration of such towns was in the south-western zone, which is by far the most urbanized area of its size in sub-Saharan Africa (NISER Against the foregoing questions, the study examines the following issues:

1. The profiles of the registered property firms in the metropolis. 2. Tenant selection criteria adopted in the area. ??FADU). A general higher price of building materials has also increased the property market in the 1990s. The building of the Ibadan-Lagos expressway has encouraged many Lagosian workers to live in Ibadan where accommodation was considered relatively cheaper. This new influx has had an important influence on Ibadan's property market as demand rises, giving estates agents and landlords opportunity to decide on rent. The general increase of the property market in the whole city led the urban poor to find rooms in the cheapest areas of Ibadan, the inner city and peripheral slums.

5 Africa and is located in the

6 IV. Policy Implication for Public Rental

and Social Housing System in Nigeria.

V.

Housing is highly interconnected and interdependent system. When this system is weak or incomplete, access to safe, affordable, and suitable housing is compromised; this in turn negatively impacts other sectors in a community (MacCashin, 2000). Part of government intervention in housing is the proposition to launch social housing in Nigeria. Social housing is more of non-profit housing scheme than private style that offers a valuable service to communities across state. A number of compounding problems are presumed as threats to the sustainability of housing sector as indicated by Land and housing committee at the floor of national assembly (Akeju, 2007;Mousseau, 2008). Meanwhile, parts of the new agenda that do exist now are highly targeted towards households requiring complex supports. The era ofgovernment and non-profit housing providers therefore need to find new and innovative ways of maintaining the viability and sustainability of rental and social housing for all once the challenges in the market are resolved. The challenges such as tenant selection problem, real estate companies' deficiencies, rental default etc have significant impact on any rental market policy and social housing scheme. This research presents an ideal opportunity for the built environment to explore strategies that will help maintain the existing stock of housing units and ensure long-term sector sustainability.

A lack of affordable rental units will strain emergency shelters and other subsidized forms of housing, just as a lack of supportive housing options for the elderly and disabled will lead to greater demand for more costly long-term care facilities and hospital beds (Federation of Canadian Municipalities 2008). The implication is that markets with an adequate supply of affordable housing of different types, tenures, and price points are able to attract and retain a broad labour force and ensure economic well-being. Housing is a key determinant of well-being of not just individuals or households, but of communities and regions as well. An effective housing system can therefore address more than simply the need for affordable housing -it can directly address the health and well-being of individuals, their communities, and the economy (Pomeroy 2004). Against the foregoing reasons, this study hence is considered a policy framework for decision making on both public rental housing and proposed social housing due to the following stance:

Tenant relationships are an important concern for the owner and the property manager of any property. Tenants are the revenue source for the property and therefore are a key element in the financial success of the property. Tenant relationships start before the signing of the lease and continue after the lease is in effect. The pre-lease phase of tenant relationships consists of themarketing program initiated for the property, the tenant selection criteria and process, and the fair housing implications of the tenant selection process. Tenant relationships after the signing of the lease include rent collection procedures, security deposits policies, move-in and move-out policies, and tenant relationships during the term of the lease (Mousseau, 2008).

Housing policies and markets have implications for the level of public expenditure, the labour market, the quality of the physical and social infrastructure, the In a scenario where social partners and government are attempting to formulate framework to guide the rental operation of financial markets and the financial and with incomes below the poverty line will be less likely to afford adequate housing at market prices without some state intervention. The state response to the need of the poor and those on lower incomes may itself exacerbate social exclusion in the way in which housing is structured and provided (MacCashin, 2000).

7 Research Method

The study adopts a questionnaire survey method. Structured questionnaires were administered on the intact sample of 62 practising estate surveyors' and valuers' firms out of the registered 67 firms. Out of which 44 (72%) of the instruments were returned complete and valid for the study. This study is limited to the licensed agents in one of the single largest city in West Africa. It is a purposive study, targeted to all the registered/licensed Estate Surveyors and Valuers in the metropolis. The respondents are the statutorily recognized professionals saddled with responsibility to formally carry out the property management duties (tenant selection inclusive) in the property market. However, this does not overrule the fact that there are quacks (unregistered agents) in the market. In this study, the professional opinion is considered superior to that of non-professional. The demographics or profiles of the sampled firms is presented in Table ??.

focuses excessively on encouraging owners to acquire accommodation in excess of their needs, tending to create a combination of "over housing" at one end of the system and "under housing" at the other households housing and prospective social housing, the role that selection criteria and real estate agents play in shaping the task of

effective tenancy management would be based on affordability. In the light of this, policy has to be reconsidered For instance where public policy

The discriptive analysis in Table ?? indicates the following items:

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Gender, Academic and Professional Qualifications Years of Experience and Professional Experience Size of the Firms

8 VI. Empirical Analysis and Discussion

To identify the criteria for tenant selection in residential and commercial property market, several conditions which respondents indicated that they consider in tenant selection for residential leases as indicated in section B of the questionnaire were subjected to Principal Component Analysis (PCA) starting with the original data matrix and extracting principal factors after interacting of communalities. Each factor with an eigenvalue greater than 1 was then retained for rotation. The procedure yielded four factors as presented in Table II It is also indicated that larger percentage, 17 (39%) possess 6-10 years of experience and 13 (30%) have above 20 years of experience. Also majority of the respondent property agents are well familiar with real estate professional services with 11 (25%) majorly devote to property management (agency) while 33 (75%) generally practise in all areas of the profession. This implies that the respondents possess the requisite qualifications and experience that qualify them suitable to supply the data required in respect of this study. It can therefore be concluded from the foregoing that the property managers (agents) base their tenancy selection in residential leases on four major criteria -tenant's personalities report, tenant's impact record, tenancy report and size of the current need. The responses were also subjected to hierarchical cluster analysis to determine the relative frequency of the respondents prevalent considerations in tenant selection in residential leases. Four clusters were obtained and the result is presented in Table ??V. Table ??V shows the distribution of the respondents across the prevalent tenant selection approaches. It can be seen from Table??V that most of the respondents (50%) consider tenants' report as the major criteria they consider in the process of tenant selection, 36% considertenants' reputation while only 9.1% consider tenants' impact record and 4.5% consider the size of the current need. This implies that the property managers in the area are much more concerned on the reputation than issues that bother on tenancy report which consequently might be the cause of irregularities that emanate in the metropolitan rental market.

Furthermore, conditions commonly considered in tenant selection in commercial leases as indicated in section B of the questionnaire were also subjected to Principal Component Analysis (PCA) starting with the original data matrix and extracting principal factors after interacting of communalities. Each factor (component) with an eigenvalue greater than 1 was again retained for rotation. This procedure yielded only 3 factors (components) as presented in Table V The Components were then identified by locating the central theme that connects the listed items and the result is again presented in Table ??I. It can therefore be concluded from the foregoing that the property managers (agents) base their tenancy selection in commercial leases on three major criteria -proposal consideration, tenant's affordability and tenant's reputation. Also, the responses were subjected to hierarchical cluster analysis to determine the relative frequency of the respondents prevalent considerations in tenenat selection in commercial leases. Three clusters were obtained and the result is presented in Table ??II consideration as the prevalent criteria they consider in course of tenant selection, 22.7% consider as prevalent the tenant's reputation while only 4.5% consider tenant's affordability. This implies that the property managers in the area are much more concerned on the proposal of the prospective tenants amidst the competitive space applicants, which perhaps might be the cause of irregularities that emanate in the rental market.

In the foregoing analyses, factor analysis is used to uncover the latent structure (dimension) of a set of variables. It creates a set of factors to be treated as uncorrelated variables as one approach to handling multicollinearity in such procedures as multiple regression. Factor loadings also called component loadings in PCA, are the corvariables (rows) and factors (columns). The data was firstly tested for suitability of factor analysis to extract distinct and reliable factors (components). The value of the determinant obtained was approximately 0.006 which is greater than the 0.00001 value recommended by Fields (2005) beyond which Multicollinearity can be said to set in and in which factorial validity will no longer be suitable for exploring the data for reliable and distinct factors. Further, the KMO value obtained in the suitability test was 0.612. Fields (2005) asserted that when the KMO value is close or equal to zero, the pattern of correlations are diffused and hence factor analysis would be inappropriate for exploring the data, but when it is close to or equal to 1 the patterns of correlation are relatively compact and factor analysis would yield a set of distinct and reliable factors. Kaiser (1974) recommended accepting values greater than 0.5 as acceptable. Since the KMO values is greater than 0.5, it is said to be acceptable. The value of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS) is 186.257 at p < 0.05. The significance values for BTS shows that the correlation matrix of the test was not identity matrices and hence from the foregoing it can be concluded that factorial validity would be appropriate for exploring the data and that the items are uniform enough to yield distinct factors. Again, it is also important to state that Bartlett's test of sphericity should be significant. At a minimum, there must be more scenarios as done in this study (instrument attached-appendix). Concerning adequate sample size, Garson (2012), posits that there is no scientific answer to this question, and methodologists differ. It is part of the universal agreement that at least ten cases in the instrument, this study has been conditionally stated to be limited to the licensed agents in one of the single largest city in West Africa, which is appropriate with that assertion. It is a purposive sample targeted to all the registered/licensed Estate

Surveyors and Valuers in the metropolis. The respondents are the statutorily recognized professionals to relation coefficients between theformally carry out the duties in the property market. However, this does not overrule the fact that there are quacks (unregistered agents) in the market. In this study, the professional opinion is superior to that of non-professional.

9 Housing

Table ??III shows the relationship between years of experience in property management, and criteria for tenant selection. It can be seen that the chi-square value obtained is 11.708 with p-value of 0.469. Since the pvalue is greater than 0.05, it canbe concluded that there is no significant relationship between years of experience in property management, and their criteria for tenant selection, such that any relationship observed can only be attributed to sampling error or mere chance. To test the second hypothesis, the company's area of professional practice was cross-tabulated with the criteria adopted by the companies during tenant selection. The chi-square statistics was also computed. The result is presented in Having ascertained the suitability of the methodology, the data were subjected to factor analysis. It began with the original data matrix followed by using multiple correlations as the estimates of communalities, principal factors were extracted after interacting of communalities. Factors with eigenvalue greater than 1 were retained for rotation. The eigenvalue (characteristic roots) for a given factor, measures the variance in all the variables which is accounted for by that factors Garson (2012). The ratio of eigenvalues is the ratio of explanatory importance of the factor with respect to the variables. If a factor has a low eigenvalue, then it is contributing little to the explanation of variances in the variables and may be ignored as redundant with more important factors.

To test the first hypothesis on the relationship between the real estate companies' years of property management practice and the selection criteria, the number of years of working experience of the property managers (agents) in property management was crosstabulated with the criteria adopted by the firm during tenant selection. The chi-square statistics was also computed. The result is presented in Table ??III.

Table IX shows the relationship between Company's core area of professional practice and the criteria for tenant selection. It can be seen that the chisquare value obtained is 8.848 with p-value of 0.031. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between company's area of professional practice and the criteria for tenant selection.

To test the third hypothesis, companys' size was cross tabulated with the criteria for selecting tenant. The chi-square statistics was also computed. The result is presented in Table X Table ?? shows that the chi-square value obtained is 9.937 at p=0.621. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the hypothesis cannot be rejected but accepted. It can therefore be concluded that there is no significant relationship between company size and criteria for tenants' selection.

This study examined the relationship between three major profiles of real estate companies' and tenant selection criteria adopted in selecting tenant to fill their VII.

10 Summary of Findings

vacancies in Ibadan private rental market. It there is significant relationship between the companies" profiles and the selection criteria.

In this study, it is found that the property managers (agents) base their tenancy selection in residential leases on four major criteria -tenant's personalities report, tenant's impact record, tenancy report and size of the current need. When the responses were subjected to hierarchical cluster analysis to determine the relative frequency of the respondents prevalent considerations in tenant selection in residential commenced with the investigation on the criteria adopted for selecting tenants, followed by determining if base their tenancy selection in commercial leases on three major criteria -proposal , tenant's affordability and tenant's reputation. Also, the responses were subjected leases, tenant reputation ranks first. In commercial leases, It is found that the property managers (agents) to hierarchical cluster analysis to determine the relative frequency of the agents prevalent considerations in tenant selection in commercial leases and ranked proposal consideration top of others.

It is further revealed that while there is no significant relationship between years of experience in property management, companys' size and the criteria for tenant selection, such that any relationship observed can only be attributed to sampling error or mere chance, there is a significant relationship between companys' core area of professional practice and the criteria for tenant selection. It can therefore be concluded that attributes of real estate companies cannot be wholly attached to the irregularities that emanate in Nigeria rental market, since Ibadan represents a single largest city in sub-Saharan Africa.

The findings from the study suggest that a uniform criteria for selecting tenant to fill private rental properties can help to monitor the quality of prospective tenants seeking accommodation. The selection should not be only based on one criteria such as rental affordability but in conjunction with others. Each of the criteria cannot stand in isolation. The assessment and emphasis on all the criteria can help to block any VIII.

11 Recommendation

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loophole. Yet on the formulation of effective tenancy law that outlines the modality of rental market operation is necessary in the emerging property market.

There is also a need for extension of ethics and code of practice on the profiles of real estate company in order to match the attributes with professional duties performed. Further research is recommended to investigate the effect of the criteria adopted by the practicing property managers on the performance of rental market in the emerging market. Finally, it is not an out-of-context of this study to posit that the proliferation of quack (non-professional agents) operate in Nigeria rental market is a major barrier to the goals of a sanitized rental market in Nigeria. Hence, the need for legal intervention in order to correct the already dented image of the profession in the area of property management/agency practice in the metropolis.



Figure 1: 3.

Agronomy
DevelopmentDepartment,
Research Institute, (NIHORT),

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Figure 2:

Figure 3:

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Frequency Percent

[Note: © 2013 Global Journals Inc. (US)]

Figure 4: Table 1:

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Firm	HEADQUARTER	31	70.5
Status			
	BRANCH	10	22.7
	No response	3	6.8
	Total	44	100.0
Location	CBD	11	25.0
	ALONG MAJOR ROAD	29	65.9
	OTHERS	3	6.8
	No response	1	2.3

[Note: a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations. The componentss were then identified by locating the central theme that connects the listed items and the result is again presented in Table III.]

Figure 5: Table 2:

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Gender MALE

Figure 6: Table 3:

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Approaches	Frequency	Percentage
Tenant's personalities/ reputation	16	36.4
Tenant impact record	4	9.1
Tenancy report	22	50.0
Size of the current need	2	4.5
Total	44	100.0

Figure 7: Table 4:

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Code

Figure 8: Table 5:

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S/N Components	Items involved	Component		
		identification		
1 Component	B103, B105, B106,	Proposal consideration		
1	B102			
2 Component	B101, B104	Tenant's affordability		
2				
3 Component	B107, B108	Tenant's		
3				
		reputation/personalities		

Figure 9: Table 6:

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Approaches	Frequer	nc Percentage
Proposal consideration	32	72.7
Tenant's affordability	2	4.5
Tenant's reputation	10	22.7
Total	44	100.0

Table VII shows the distribution of the agents

across the prevalent commercial tenant selection approaches. It can be seen from Table VII that most of the $$\operatorname{respondents}$$

(72.7%) sipher posal

Figure 10: Table 7:

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Criteria for Tenant Selection						$\mathrm{d}\mathrm{f}$? 2	p
EXPERIENCE				Size of				
		Tenant		the				
Tenant's		impact	Tenant	current				
reputation		record	neport	need	Total			
1-5 years -	0	0	1	0	1			
6-10 yrs	7	2	11	1	21			
11-15 yrs	1	1	4	0	6	12	11.70	080.469
16-20 yrs	2	0	0	1	3			
above 20 yrs	6	1	6	0	13			
Total	16	4	22	2	44			

Figure 11: Table 8:



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 $[Note:\ G\ 8]$

Figure 12: Table IX

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		Rental Hous	ing				
	Criteria for Tenants' Selection					df ?	P
						2	
Firm's area of professional	Tenant's	Tenant Im-	Tenant	Size of			
		pact		the			
practice	reputation	record	report	current	Tota	.1	
				need			
PROPERTY	8	0	3	0	11		
MANAGEMEN							
T/AGENCY							
GENERAL	8	4	19	2	33	8.8483	0.031
REAL ESTATE							
SERVICES							
Total	16	4	22	2	44		

Figure 13: Table 9 :

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SIZE		Criteria for tenant's sele	ection		df	? 2 P
	Tenant's	Tenant Impact	Tenant	Size of the		
	Reputation	Record	Report	current	Total	
				Need		
1-5	17	2	14	1	34	
6-10	3	2	1	1	7	
11-15	1	0	0	0	1	$12\;\; 9.937\; 0.621$
16-20	0	0	1	0	1	
ABOVE 20	1	0	0	0	1	
Total	22	4	16	2	44	

Figure 14: Table 10:

293 .1 Appendix: Tenant Assessment Checklists

- Indicate the level of importance of the following criteria for selecting tenants to fill vacancies in both commercial and residential leases: Extremely important (5), Very important (4), Just important (3), Less important (2), Not important (1)
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 the subjects of Tenant selection Criteria and Real Estate Company Pquestionnaire is strictly anonymous, and
 the information supplied is of great importance. Thanks. Gbadegesin and Oyewole. SECTION A: Profiles/
 Demographics: 1. Gender Status: (a) Male (b) Female 2. Academic Qualification: 3. (a)National Diploma
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11 RECOMMENDATION

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