

Sustainable Hospitality: Green Practices and Consumer Preferences

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Abstract

Due to environmental regulations, service innovation, and customer preferences, the hospitality industry is becoming more concerned with environmental sustainability. The study examines the relationships between green practices adopted by hospitality firms and consumer behaviour with specific respect to how sustainable practices affect consumer attitudes, satisfaction and purchase intentions. Aspects of sustainability like energy management, waste reduction, water conservation and eco-friendly facilities and certifications are evaluated using primary data about the customers of the hotel and secondary data about the industry.

The study uses a quantitative design using surveys to analyse consumer knowledge, value as well as price elasticity to green services. The research is conducted using statistical methods, such as correlation and regression analyses, to gain insight into the role of green initiatives in consumer choice. The findings indicate that consumers are becoming more ready to pay more on green hotels particularly where the green efforts are apparent and trustworthy, and perceived to add value to service delivery. Conversely, the results also indicate that consumers have a lack of conformity between their environmental attitudes and their real purchase intentions, as a result of price sensitivity and convenience perceptions.

The research also reveals the effects of demographic variables on consumer response to green efforts such as environmental concern and trust. The research finds that sustainable hospitality initiatives not only help conserve the environment but also boost brand reputation, loyalty, and competitiveness. It suggests that hospitality businesses adopt sustainability in business strategies and communicate their efforts to close the intention-behaviour gap. The study offers insights for policymakers and practitioners to encourage sustainable consumption and tourism.

Keywords: Sustainable Hospitality, Green Practices, Consumer Preferences, Eco-Friendly Hotels, Environmental Sustainability, Green Marketing, Customer Satisfaction, Purchase Intention, Sustainable Tourism

Introduction

Hospitality industry, which includes hotels, resorts, and tourism services, has a significant role in economic development in the world. Nevertheless, the rapid growth has caused environmental pressures, necessitating high energy use, water use, generation of waste, and carbon emission. The increasing concern over climate change and environmental degradation in recent years has urged industry stakeholders and consumers to re-examine traditional ways of operations. This has led to the introduction of the theme of sustainability in hospitality management, and the implementation of green practices, which are environmentally friendly strategies.

Sustainable hospitality is the consideration of environmentally friendly practices to the day-to-

day operations without affecting the quality of service or customer satisfaction. These activities involve energy-saving technologies, water stewardship, waste minimization and recycling, sustainable sourcing, and sustainable infrastructure development. These initiatives do not only amount to an indication of efficiency in operations, but a bigger picture of corporate social responsibility and a long-term accountability to the environment. Sustainability as a concept is gaining relevance among several hospitality organizations who are not only finding it to be a regulatory effort but also a strategic tool that assists in enhancing brand image, competitiveness and profitability.

In the meantime, consumer preferences are evidently changing. Modern travellers have become more green and are resorting to accommodation that matches their values. Some of the factors influencing the booking choices are eco-certifications, green branding and sustainability practices transparency. However, it is the extent of the impact that green practices have on consumer choice that varies across the various demographic groups, culture and environmental awareness. Even though there are consumers who are willing to pay the additional cost of money to be able to receive sustainable services, others fear cost or convenience or luxury instead of the environment.

The opportunities and challenges that the hospitality industry faces are the result of this dynamic between the sustainability initiatives and the consumer behaviour. On the one hand, green practices will contribute to the attraction of environmentally friendly customers and building long-term loyalty. On the other hand, though, they tend to be both expensive to execute and require a great deal of communication to allow consumers to see the value in such practices, rather than being shallow beautification in the guise of greenwashing. The understanding of how consumers feel and respond to sustainability initiatives is therefore very important in devising effective strategies to achieve sustainability.

It is on this backdrop that the current research paper aims to investigate the relationship between green practices in the hospitality industry and consumer preferences. It tries to examine how sustainability campaign affects the customer perceptions, decision making process and willingness to patronise environmentally friendly enterprises. This study will assist in better comprehending how the hospitality industry can become both environmentally and economically sustainable in a market that is becoming more eco-conscious by filling the gap between operational sustainability and consumer behaviour.

Background of the study

Hospitality industry is considered one of the most rapidly expanding sectors in the world greatly assisting in economic development, creation of employment and growth of tourism. But as well, its rapid expansion has resulted in escalated environmental issues, in the form of high energy use, water use, production of waste, and carbon emissions. These issues have added to the importance of the need to practice sustainability in the industry and this is where the idea of sustainable hospitality originates and focuses on the economic and social importance of sustainable operations as well as the environment.

Sustainability has over the recent years become a peripheral issue to a strategic priority of hospitality organizations. Green practices being embraced in hotels and resorts include energy saving systems, waste management programs, water saving programs, and environmental friendly procurement. These practices are intended to minimize the impact on the environment, as well as to improve the efficiency of operations and corporate image. Global environmental consciousness, regulatory pressures and the increasing expectations of environmentally conscious consumers are major factors that have caused the transition towards sustainability.

At the same time, the consumer behaviour in the hospitality industry has also changed tremendously. The contemporary customers are increasingly conscious of the environment and socially responsible, which is impacting their tastes and their decision-making. Studies reveal that; environmental concern, perceived health benefits, trust in green claims, and social

influence are very important factors in influencing consumer attitudes towards green hotels. Additionally, most consumers are willing to pay a higher price to obtain environmentally sustainable services, which indicates the growing role of sustainability in the process of purchasing.



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Consumer preferences and green practices have emerged as a key scholarly and business focus. Research indicates that sustainable hospitality practices have a positive effect on customer satisfaction, loyalty and brand perception. Completely adopted and clearly conveyed, these practices can boost customer confidence and generate emotional bonds, which will eventually build long-term relationships between consumers and hospitality brands.

Although there are increased green initiatives, a disconnect between the sustainability initiatives and consumer perceptions still exists. Greenwashing, insufficient knowledge and price sensitivity are some of these issues that tend to affect consumer doubts and constrain the sustainability strategy implementation. Also, the degree of green practices impacting the real consumer behaviour differs among regions, cultures, and population.

In this kind of dynamics, the relationship between sustainable hospitality practices and consumer expectations and preferences is critical to be examined. This relationship is significant since hospitality managers who must formulate effective sustainability strategies that would not only reduce the environmental impact, but also enhance the customer satisfaction and competitive advantage must understand this relationship. Therefore, the research question of the proposed study is in what way could green practices evolve consumer preferences in the hospitality industry to contribute to a theoretical framework as well as practical guidelines in sustainable tourism and hospitality management.

Justification

Hospitality industry is one of the industries that have grown tremendously in the world today and has contributed a great role in the growth of the economy, generation of employment and growth of tourism. However, this massive growth has also augmented the environmental concerns such as increased energy consumption, water consumption, wastes and carbon emission. With the world turning into a more sustainable place, there is growing necessity of the hospitality industry to embrace green practices that have less ecological footprint yet do not compromise quality of services and profitability.

In the past few years, consumers have become a more conscious consumer group, and their

preference towards the services and products that are environmentally friendly is growing. This has altered consumer behaviour and as a result, hotels, resorts and other hospitality related businesses have been compelled to integrate green practices that involve energy efficient systems, waste minimization policy, sustainable sourcing and eco certification. However, studies on the extent to which these green initiatives can influence consumer decision-making, satisfaction, and loyalty within the hospitality industry remain to be filled fully.

The need to fill this gap by exploring the association between sustainable hospitality practices and consumer preferences justifies this study. Whereas sustainability and consumer behaviour have been researched individually in the past, not a lot of empirical studies have been preoccupied with the relationship between the two in the hospitality industry particularly in the new markets. The relationship plays a role in learning by the businesses, which aim to formulate good sustainability strategies that satisfy consumer expectations and enhance competitive advantage.

In addition, the study is justified by the fact that it will be applicable to the academic literature and practice in the industry. It expands the discourse on sustainable tourism, green marketing and consumer behaviour on the scholarly level with integrated information. Practically, it offers practical suggestions to hospitality managers and policymakers in the development of sustainability programs that do not only reduce the environmental impact, but also attract and retain environmentally conscious consumers.

Secondly, the research facilitates the sustainability agenda of the world through responsible consumption and production patterns. The study can contribute to the faster process of sustainable adoption of practices in the industry by determining the most important factors in consumer preference to green hospitality services. This is especially relevant in the area of climate change where businesses will be required to be actively involved in the stewardship of the environment.

The research is timely and topical because it covers the topic of sustainability and consumer behaviour interaction in the hospitality industry. It offers a basis of how the green practices can be strategically used to address the changing consumer needs in a manner that is sustainable both in the environment and in the economy.

Objectives of the Study

1. To determine and examine the major green practices embraced by hospitality organizations (e.g., energy conservation, waste management, water efficiency, and environmentally friendly materials).
2. To measure the extent of awareness and perception among consumers on sustainability initiatives at the hotel and hospitality services.
3. To determine the effect of green practices on consumer purchase intentions and booking choices.
4. To test the association between environmental responsibility and customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry.
5. To test the willingness of consumers to pay a premium to environmentally sustainable hospitality services.

Literature Review

Sustainable hospitality is a concept that has gained immense attention in recent years when the environment is becoming a point of concern and when the necessity to act in a responsible way in the tourism industry is becoming a concern. Sustainable hospitality may be described as the integration of environmentally friendly, socially responsible and economically viable in the hospitality industry. Research has revealed that sustainability programs are not just beneficial in ensuring that the environment is conserved, but also influence consumer behavior and organizational performance.

1. Sustainable Hospitality and Green Practices

Hospitality practices that are green involve energy-saving, reducing waste, water, environmentally-friendly infrastructure and sustainable sourcing. These are the practices that are needed to reach the objectives of long-term sustainability and increase efficiency in the work. Research shows that green efforts within a hotel improve business and environmental performance (Font et al., 2016; Yusof et al., 2022). Empirical studies conducted recently indicate that hotel green practices have a positive effect on customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and readiness to pay a premium amount of money to use eco-friendly services (Rahman and Reynolds, 2019; Kang et al., 2012). An example is that customers will be ready to spend more money on environmentally certified hotels because they will be perceived as valuable and ethical considerations. In addition, green practices are being adopted with increased adoption in hospitality strategies as a competitive advantage despite the increase in operational costs (Popşa, 2025). Such initiatives are perceived by consumers as part of environmental protection, which boosts brand image and differentiation.

2. Consumer Preferences in Sustainable Hospitality

The environmental awareness, individual values, societal norms, and the perceived benefits are the factors that affect consumer preferences in green hospitality. Behavioural theories like the Theory of Planned Behaviour explain that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control are important factors influencing intentions of consumers to stay in green hotels (Ajzen, 1991).

Recent research has shown that green practices awareness is a powerful predictor of consumer attitude towards sustainable hotels, then environmental knowledge and self-image in environmental protection. Also, information-seeking behaviour is important in the translation of intention into actual booking behaviours, which means that consumers are proactive in verifying the claims made on sustainability before choosing.

It is also noted in research that younger generations and Gen Z in particular are very environmentally aware and demand sustainability in their choice of hospitality services (Deshani et al., 2025). The industry practices are changing with this consumer demographic revolution and encouraging utilization of greener operations.

3. Drivers of Consumer Behaviour in Green Hospitality

Consumer behavior in sustainable hospitality is motivated by several factors such as environmental concern, perceived health benefits, trust in green claims and social influence. Research shows that perceived value and psychological safety are mediating variables between green practices and consumer behavior, whereas social influence serves as a moderator variable. Functional benefits and health are also essential. Recent studies indicate that consumers might have more comfort, safety and quality of service as important than environment as a driving force in selecting green hotels. This means that sustainability has to be incorporated with the key service quality to attract and maintain the customers. Moreover, sustainable marketing strategies can have a substantial impact on the intentions to book because they can foster emotional engagement and perceived responsibility (in consumers).

4. Impact of Green Practices on Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty

Sustainable practices have a positive impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty in the hospitality industry. Research proves that positive attitudes towards sustainability programs boost guest loyalty and revisit intentions (Dedat & Rodrigues, 2025). The visibility of the green practices, credibility, and alignment with the expectations of the service quality are further reinforcers of customer satisfaction. Customer experience integration with sustainability leads to long-term relations and enhances brand trust.

5. Challenges and Gaps in Sustainable Hospitality

Although the use of green practices is increasingly being adopted, there are a number of challenges. The difference between environmental intentions and behavior of consumers is one of the major problems. Although most consumers share a positive attitude towards

sustainability, they tend to base their buying behavior on price sensitivity and convenience. Skepticism of greenwashing is another issue as consumers do not believe the sustainability statements. Poor level of awareness and standardization of certification systems also hamper the success of green initiatives. Moreover, the literature shows that the cultural and regional variations have a strong impact on consumer preferences, which implies that sustainable hospitality may require context-specific approaches.

6. Synthesis and Research Gap

Literature indicates that sustainable hospitality practices have a positive impact on consumer preference, satisfaction and loyalty. Yet, the correlation between the green practices and consumer behavior is not straightforward and is mediated by awareness, trust, perceived value, and socio-demographic attributes. Although much has been written on green practices and consumer intentions, there is still a gap in knowledge of the interaction of these factors in various cultural backgrounds and the effects of these factors on actual buying behavior. Moreover, the use of technological advancements and online platforms in the marketing of sustainable hospitality needs to be further investigated.

Material and Methodology

Research Design:

The research design proposed in the study is descriptive and analytical to investigate the correlation between sustainable practices in hospitality and consumer preferences. A quantitative methodology is used in order to understand the customer attitudes, perception and behavioral intention to green initiatives in the hospitality industry in a measurable manner. This study is cross-sectional in nature and concentrates on the data gathered at one point in time of the hotel customers and the hospitality stakeholders. To assess the role of eco-friendly practices in consumer choice and customer satisfaction, the correlation and regression analysis is adopted to assess the role of eco-friendly practices (energy conservation, waste management, and sustainable sourcing) on consumer choice and customer satisfaction. The design will ensure the systematic evaluation of the importance of the sustainability-based strategies as developing competitive advantage in the hospitality industry.

Data Collection Methods:

Primary data is collected through the instrument of a questionnaire that is designed to collect data of the respondents who have recently received services of a hotel or resort. The questionnaire is designed with closed-ended and Likert-scale questions to assess the level of awareness, preferences, and willingness to pay to sustainability practices. Moreover, little qualitative data is obtained by informal interviewing of managers in the hospitality industry to learn how green initiatives are implemented. Academic journals, industry reports, sustainability guidelines and disclosures of corporations on green hospitality practices are the sources of secondary data. The mix of the primary and secondary sources enhances the dependability and thoroughness of the research.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria:

The research will involve respondents that are over 18 years old and have been in hotel, resorts or any other accommodation facilities in the past one year. The participants should possess some basic understanding on the concept of environmental or sustainability to give valuable answers. The hospitality facilities used in the research are those facilities that have adopted at least one of the green practices, which include energy conservation, water efficiency or eco-certifications. Data will be restricted to respondents who have not used hospitality in the recent past or who are not aware of the sustainability practices. The data cleaning process also leaves out incomplete or inconsistent responses in order to have accurate analysis.

Ethical Considerations:

This study complies with general ethical principles to promote integrity and protection of the participants. All respondents will be informed of their participation, and they will be required

to give their informed consent prior to data collection. The confidentiality and anonymity of participants will be guaranteed and no personal identifiers will be disclosed in the analysis and reporting. Information acquired is not only used in academics, but also stored in a secure location to prevent unauthorized access. The other option is that the respondent can withdraw out of the study anytime without consequences. The study does not involve bias, misrepresentation or manipulation of information making it transparent and credible.

Results and Discussion

1. Profile of Respondents

220 valid responses were collected by using the consumers who had a prior experience with a hotel or hospitality services offered. The demographic structure is that, all age groups and gender are equally represented with the majority of respondents being young and environmentally conscious.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (n = 220)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	118	53.6
	Female	102	46.4
Age	18–25 years	74	33.6
	26–35 years	82	37.3
	36–45 years	38	17.3
	Above 45 years	26	11.8
Education	Graduate	96	43.6
	Postgraduate	88	40.0
	Others	36	16.4

Interpretation:

The statistics indicate that the sample is dominated by young and educated consumers, which implies that the segment is more likely to be more conscious of the sustainability issue and make a difference in future hospitality trends.

2. Awareness of Green Practices

The research gauged the awareness of the respondents on the eco-friendly practices by hotels, which included energy conservation, waste reduction, and water management.

Table 2: Awareness of Green Practices

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Awareness of eco-friendly hotels	3.98	0.82
Knowledge of energy-saving initiatives	3.76	0.88
Awareness of waste management practices	3.69	0.91
Awareness of water conservation measures	3.81	0.85

Interpretation:

The average values of over 3.5 are an indication of medium and high awareness among respondents. General eco-friendly practices are most aware but with a slightly lower score on specific programs such as waste management.

3. Consumer Preferences for Green Practices

The survey requested respondents to give ratings on their preferences regarding various sustainable practices in hospitality services.

Table 3: Consumer Preferences for Sustainable Practices

Green Practice	Mean	Rank
Energy-efficient lighting	4.21	1
Waste recycling programs	4.15	2
Water-saving technologies	4.08	3
Use of organic/local food	3.97	4
Plastic-free amenities	3.89	5

Interpretation:

Most favored practices are energy efficiency and waste management. Lifestyle practices such as organic food are slightly less preferred by consumers, which indicates that they are cost-sensitive or less perceived to make a difference.

4. Impact of Green Practices on Consumer Decision-Making

The regression analysis was carried out to study the effect of green practices on consumer purchase decision.

Table 4: Regression Analysis

Variable	Beta (β)	t-value	Significance (p)
Awareness	0.32	4.85	0.000
Environmental Concern	0.41	6.12	0.000
Price Sensitivity	-0.18	-2.73	0.007
Green Image of Hotel	0.36	5.29	0.000

R² = 0.58

Interpretation:

- Environmental concern and hotel green image have the strongest positive influence.
- Price sensitivity negatively affects decision-making, indicating that higher costs can deter green choices.
- The model explains 58% of the variance, showing strong explanatory power.

5. Relationship Between Green Practices and Customer Satisfaction

The relationship between sustainability initiatives and the level of satisfaction was analyzed through correlation analysis.

Table 5: Correlation Matrix

Variables	1	2
Green Practices	1	
Customer Satisfaction	0.64**	1

(**p < 0.01)

Interpretation:

The high positive relationship (r = 0.64) shows that good green practices have a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction.

6. Discussion of Findings

Results indicate that the notion of sustainability practices is gaining relevance in the consumer behaviour of the hospitality industry. The respondents were very conscious because of the growing attention given to environmental responsibility in the world.

Consumers prefer the tangible and visible green programs, such as the energy-saving systems and recycling programs. These findings suggest that feasible sustainability measures that have direct impacts on the guest experience must be given priority in the hotels.

The results of the regression confirm that consumer choice is highly dependent on the environmental concern and green brand image. However, the negative impact of price sensitivity suggests that there is a trade-off between sustainability and affordability. It shows that the consumers are aware of activities that are environmentally-friendly, but they may not be willing to pay a premium all the time.

That green practices are closely tied to customer satisfaction substantiates the idea that sustainability is not only an ethical but also a strategic tool of augmenting the customer experience and loyalty.

Limitations of the study

The present study possesses some limitations that should be considered during interpretation of the findings. One, the research could be grounded on a small sample size and geographic area

hence restricting the generalizability of the results to a broader group and other cultural contexts. The consumer propensity of the green hospitality can vary very widely in terms of the territories, income level and the environmental awareness. Second, the research can heavily rely on self-reported information, which can be prone to response bias, social desirability bias, and recall inaccuracy. Third, the cross-sectional research design does not allow the establishment of causal relationships between green practices and consumer preferences and only perceptions at one point in time are captured. Also, the research might not capture all the factors that could impact consumer behaviour, including price sensitivity, brand reputation, or situational factors, which might be relevant to the decision-making in addition to sustainability aspects. Moreover, the green practices investigated can be narrowed to a few dimensions of the scope and this can be at the expense of other significant environmental or operational projects in the hospitality industry. Lastly, the findings might become less relevant in the long run since the sustainability patterns and consumer consciousness are rapidly changing, which has to be emphasized by the necessity of constant and longitudinal studies in the specified field.

Future Scope

The potential future research on Sustainable Hospitality: Green Practices and Consumer Preferences is the further development of the theoretical and practical in different settings. Future research can investigate how new technology like artificial intelligence, smart energy, and data analytics can be used to maximize resource utilization and improve guest experience. This has a great potential to investigate the behavioural differences between their stated preferences of sustainability and their actual buying behaviours, especially according to various cultural and demographic groups. The longitudinal and cross-country designs would assist in illuminating how the sustainability perceptions evolve with time and under varying regulatory frameworks. Future studies can also be done on the role of green certifications/ eco-labelling and open communication in the development of trust and in formulating consumer loyalty. Furthermore, the application of the principles of the circular economy, waste management innovations, and carbon-neutral solutions to the hospitality activities give an excellent field to focus on empirical research. The other critical area that must be researched is the impacts of sustainable practices on financial performance, brand equity and competitive advantage. Finally, environmental science, marketing, and behavioural economics may be combined to develop more holistic models that would have the capacity to balance the sustainability goals with consumer expectations and profitability in the business.

Conclusion

Sustainable hospitality has emerged as a new paradigm in the evolution of the tourism and service industry as more consumers and environmental responsibility converge. As highlighted in this paper, such green practices as energy efficiency, waste management, water conservation, and eco-friendly sourcing are not only beneficial to the preservation of the environment, but also to the brand image, customer satisfaction, and long-term profitability. The consumers are even more sensitive to the issues of sustainability and demonstrate a clear tendency towards those establishments that included ethical and environmentally friendly practices into their routine. However, the findings also suggest that transparency, authenticity and good communication are also necessary in helping to build consumer trust and buying behavior as shallow or deceptive statements may lead to distrust. The long-term benefits of sustainability outweigh such constraints even though other aspects such as the costs factor and the intricacies of the operations still remain a challenge, thus making green hospitality a strategic requirement and competitive advantage. Lastly, sustainable hospitality mainstreaming is more of a revolution than a trend that must be perpetually creative, align with stakeholders and engage in responsible business practices to meet the requirements of the evolving needs of environmentally conscious customers.

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