Customers' Awareness of Eco-friendly Practices: An Empirical Study of Hotels of Udaipur

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Abstract

The green movement has been spreading in the hospitality industry, with the rise of environmentally friendly practices. Hotels are now using better lighting and recyclable materials, having programs for recycling and encouraging guests to reuse towels, instead of changing them every day. These days' customers are also looking for the eco-friendly hotels so the objective of this paper is to study the customers' awareness of eco-friendly practices adopted by the hotels of Udaipur. The data has been collected with the help of semi structured questionnaire and it has been concluded that customers are moderately aware of the eco-friendly practices adopted by the hotels.

Keywords: Hotel, Eco-friendly practices, Green hotel, Udaipur

Introduction:

Hospitality industry is one of the fastest growing sectors in the global era. It is growing in an exceedingly sturdy manner and become one of the key drivers of development of any country in the world. In hospitality sector the tourism and hotel industry is growing globally at an awfully quick pace that creates wide opportunities for employment and economic growth. It alone is a multi- billion dollar enterprise and it is experiencing the rare growth trend. The Indian tourism and hotel industry is getting approval because of constant transportation, improving standards and functional growth. And the latest development in the hospitality industry is the adoption of eco-friendly practices.

Making eco-friendly hotel is the technique of incorporating socially and environmentally accountable decision making into the planning, employer and implementation of, and participation in, a hotel. It includes such as sustainable development standards and practices in all ranges of lodge organisation, and ambitions to make definite that a hotel is hosted responsibly. It represents the full bundle of interventions at a resort, and requires to be performed in an integrated way. But all these efforts does not make any sense of the client base of hotels is not aware of it. Keeping this in view the major objective of this research to identify the customers' awareness of eco-friendly practices adopted by the hotels of Udaipur

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Literature Review:

Due to the increasing awareness of customers about the environmental problems the hoteliers are continuously implementing the eco-friendly practices at their hotels. The study of **Moise, M. S., Gil-Saura, I., & Ruiz Molina, M. E. (2021)** aimed to study the role of eco-friendly practices in building positive hotel image and in increasing customers' satisfaction. The gender was taken as moderating variable. The study consists of the 302 tourists who have visited the 3 or 4 star hotels of Bogota. It was found that the implementation of eco-friendly practices not only builds the positive hotel image but it also increases the customers' satisfaction. The gender wise differences among the perception were observed.

Kim, D., & Roseman, M. G. (2020) indicated that now day's hotels are using non-optional green practices like avoiding the use of plastic bottles and straws, replacing single use mini toiletries in bathrooms etc. The authors tried to identify that whether these acts of hotels are affecting the purchase and repurchase intentions of customers. The results indicated that these practices do not have any negative impact on the intentions of the customers.

Khatter, A., McGrath, M., Pyke, J., White, L., & Lockstone-Binney, L. (2019) conducted the study to compare the extent of eco-friendly practices adopted by the independent hotels and chain hotels. A sample of 220 hotels of Melbourne, Australia was taken and secondary data was collected for content analysis. In the results it was found that chain hotels are prominently adopting the eco-friendly practices and they are also displaying it. However on the other side the adoption of eco-friendly practices by the independent hotels is still not satisfactory.

The study conducted by **Chan, S. (2018)** aimed to "observe the effect of concern environment, physical and social environment as an independent variable that affects revisit intention with customer satisfaction as a mediating variable. Questionnaires distributed in eco-friendly resort in Sabang Zone, Indonesia, which is a recreational diving center in western part of Indonesia, using probability sampling techniques. Data were collected and then be analyzed using covariance Based SEM, AMOS. Hypothesis test results proved that there

were positive and significant influence among five variables examined in the study, both directly and indirectly."

Chand, M., & Garge, S. (2017) aimed at "exploring the eco friendly practices prevailing in the Indian hotel industry. A structured questionnaire was development to collect the information from hotels. Usable responses were (N=265), the data were analysed by applying the factor analysis. The results indicate that there are certain eco friendly practices which prevail in Indian hotel industry and out of those practices there is a specific set of practices which emerged as most important for the future growth of the organisation."

Objective:

The purpose of this research paper is to study the customers' awareness of eco-friendly practices of hotels of Udaipur.

Hypothesis:

H_0: Customers' are significantly not aware about the eco-friendly practices of hotels

H_1: Customers' are significantly aware about the eco-friendly practices of hotels.

Research Methodology

(a) Research Design: - To have a better understanding about the issue descriptive research design was used. To get the primary data close ended questionnaire was administrated.

(b) Sample Design: - 300 respondents were selected through stratified purposive sampling. In a sample 117 customers were from luxury hotels and 183 customers were from budget hotels.

**(c) Analysis: -** The data collected was analyzed with the help of Arithmetic mean and t-test.

Analysis & Interpretations

To study the customers' awareness of eco-friendly practices, they were asked to indicate their awareness of eco-friendly practices on 5 point scale ranging from 1 (Not at all Aware) to 5 (Extremely Aware). Final ranking is obtained with the help of weighted arithmetic mean.

The table 1 shows the awareness of Hotel customers about the Eco-friendly practices. Results shows that customers are extremely aware of lush greenery in premises with a weighted mean score of 3.86 followed by 100% cotton bed sheets, towels, mattresses, napkins, tablecloth, soft furnishings, curtains etc (Weighted Mean score= 3.68). Fire system ranked 3rd with a Weighted Mean score of 3.64, followed by Noiseless diesel generator that ranked fourth with a weighted mean score of 3.56. Respondents were moderately aware of Bamboo & cane furniture with weighted mean score of 3.45 tailed by Sewage Treatment Plant at 6th rank with a weighted mean score of 3.40.

Recycled paper bags, envelops, stationery ranked at seventh place with a weighted mean score of 3.27, trailed by Chemical dispenser instead of cane or bottle at eighth rank as a mean score of 3.22. Organic, biodegradable soap and shampoo, cleaning agents ranked at 9th place with a weighted mean score of 2.92. The weighted mean score of Water saving taps & flush / W.C. in bathrooms was 2.90 and placed at 10th position followed by Rain water harvesting system (Rank=11) with a weighted mean score of 2.88.

The respondents were slightly aware of the eco-friendly practices ranked from 12th to 15th positions were Water treatment plant (Weighted Mean score=2.68), Double paned/ glazed window panes for better insulation (Weighted Mean score=2.67), Occupancy/ motion sensors (Weighted Mean score=2.61), and Thermal bridges and wall insulation (Weighted Mean score= 2.28) respectively.
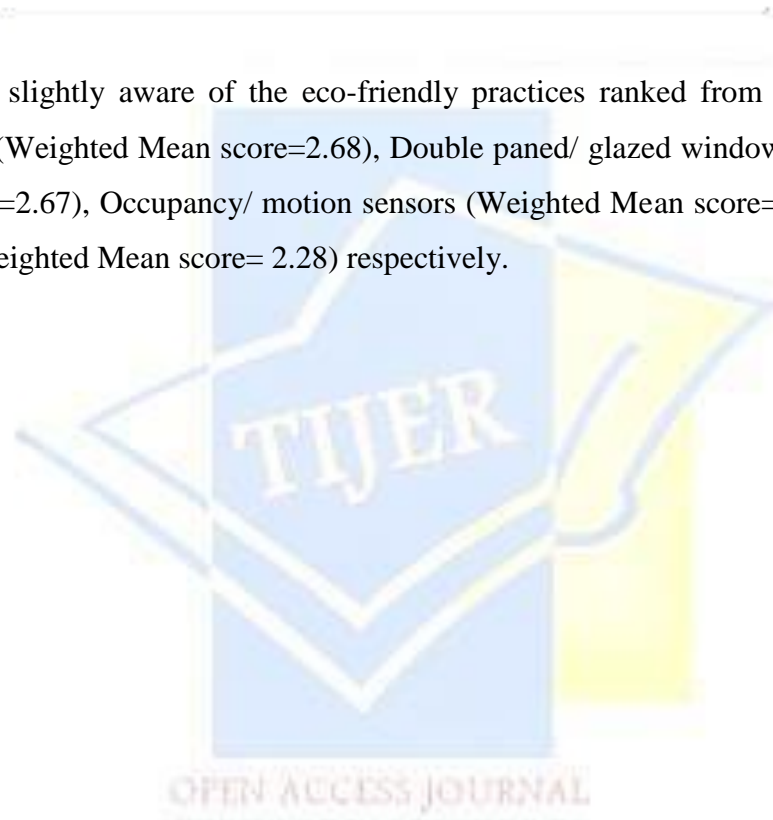
Table 1: Customers' Awareness of Eco-friendly practices

Weights	1	2	3	4	5				
Level of Awareness									
Eco-Friendly Practices	Not at all Aware	Slightly Aware	Somewhat Aware	Moderately Aware	Extremely Aware	Total	Weighted Total	Weighted Avg.	Rank
Rain water harvesting system	57	54	86	74	29	300	864	2.88	11
Bamboo & cane furniture	14	66	61	90	69	300	1034	3.45	5
Recycled paper bags, envelops, stationery	33	71	60	54	82	300	981	3.27	7
Water treatment plant	91	61	53	46	49	300	801	2.68	12
Noiseless diesel generator	22	33	83	78	84	300	1069	3.56	4
Occupancy/ motion sensors	88	73	50	46	43	300	783	2.61	14
Thermal bridges and wall insulation	127	66	33	45	29	300	683	2.28	15
Lush greenery in Premises	9	18	85	83	105	300	1157	3.86	1
Sewage Treatment Plant	26	56	64	81	73	300	1019	3.40	6
Chemical dispenser instead of cane or bottle	21	70	74	93	42	300	965	3.22	8
Fire system	21	25	74	102	78	300	1091	3.64	3
Organic, biodegradable soap and shampoo, cleaning agents	57	66	61	76	40	300	876	2.92	9
Double paned/ glazed window panes for better insulation	86	50	75	56	33	300	800	2.67	13
Water saving taps & flush / W.C. in bathrooms	62	61	67	64	46	300	871	2.90	10
100% cotton bed sheets, towels, mattresses, napkins, tablecloth, soft furnishings, curtains etc	15	30	82	83	90	300	1103	3.68	2

The table 2 is showing Hotel customers' overall awareness about the eco-friendly practices. As per the results majority of Hotel customers are moderately aware (N=71, Percentage=23.80) of the eco-friendly practices followed by somewhat aware (N=37, Percentage=22.40) and extremely aware (N=59, Percentage=19.82). It was found that 17.78% customers (N=53) were slightly aware of the eco-friendly practices and 16.20% customers (N=49) were not at all aware of the eco-friendly practices. From the mean score it can be concluded that Hotel customers were somewhat aware of the eco-friendly practices.

Table 2: Overall Awareness of Hotel Customers' about Eco-friendly Practices

Overall Awareness	N	Percentage
Not at all Aware	10	8.89
Slightly Aware	11	9.80
Somewhat Aware	19	16.18
Moderately Aware	39	33.22
Extremely Aware	37	31.91
Total	**117**	**100**
Mean Score	52.99	
Result	**Moderately Aware**	

It has been observed that hotel customers are aware of the eco-friendly practices adopted by the budget and luxury hotels of Udaipur District. Still to measure the significance of awareness following hypothesis has been taken:-

H0: Customers' are significantly not aware about the eco-friendly practices of hotels.

H1: Customers' are significantly aware about the eco-friendly practices of hotels

To test this hypothesis one sample t-test is applied against the theoretical mean=45, and results received are presented in table 3.

Table 3: One Sample t-test result to Measure Customers' Awareness of Eco-friendly Practices

Variable	Test Value = 45				Result
	Mean	t-value	degree of freedom	p-value	
Customers' Awareness of Eco-friendly Practices	47.19	2.31	299	0.021	**Significant**

Level of Significance = 5%

At 5% level of the t-statistic is significant which leads to the rejection of null hypothesis. The observed mean is above to the theoretical mean which signify that Customers' are significantly aware about the eco-friendly practices of hotels.

Conclusion:

From this research it has been concluded customers are moderately aware of the eco-friendly practices adopted by the hotels of Udaipur. It was found that customers are extremely aware of the lush greenery in premises and 100% cotton bed sheets, towels, mattresses, napkins, tablecloth, soft furnishings, curtains etc. However they were not at all aware of the Thermal bridges and wall insulation.

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