



Green Horizons: Exploring Hotel Managers' Perspectives on Sustainable Practices in Amritsar's Hospitality Industry

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to explore the awareness and attitudes of hotel managers in Amritsar towards green practices. The city, known for its rich cultural heritage and vibrant tourism industry, presents an ideal context for studying the adoption of eco-friendly initiatives. Survey was conducted among 58 hotel managers from seven branded hotels in Amritsar. The survey utilized a five-point Likert scale to gauge respondents' views on various green initiatives and their perceived importance. The findings of the study reveal a nuanced picture. While a majority of hotel managers acknowledge the positive impact of green initiatives on environmental management systems, there is a noticeable degree of reluctance in fully embracing these practices. Factors such as time constraints, cost considerations, and a lack of awareness emerge as key barriers to implementation. This research contributes offers practical insights for fostering environmentally responsible practices in the Indian hospitality sector.

Key Words:- Global Warming, Sustainability, Eco-friendly hotels, Green Measures, Opinion Survey, Management Personnel, Perception, Green Products

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's global scenario, pollution has been mounting continuously, global warming has been increasing regularly and world's natural resources are being depleting at such a pace that the nature may not be able to take burden of so-called development and may collapse under its burden (Shieh, 2012; Yu et al., 2020). As such the need to go green and protect ecological environment has become more important than ever before. So, in the world's endeavor to green, hotel industry also needs to contribute effectively and efficiently (Jones, Hillier and Comfort, 2014; Tang, 2015). Today, we are breathing in the world where firms are judged on their business principles, social accountability and socio-economic awareness including financial outcomes. (Han and Yoon, 2015; Chen et al., 2018) says the understanding of society increases about global warming and climate change, the public, including various stakeholders, employees and customers, expects hotels to act more in a eco-friendly manner. For years, mankind has been unaware of its relationship with the natural environment, but now it has recognized that resources are limited and their actions affect the environment both, in the short term as well as in the long-term (Soler, Gémard and Sánchez-Ollero, 2016; Nam et al., 2020). Hotel industries have also started changing their attitudes towards the environment and considerations for it have gained importance in recent years, thus, carrying out their business according to environmental principles (Han, Lee and Kim, 2018). And ultimately, this global trend gives the directions to hotels to move in a green direction.

(De Grosbois, 2012; Göğüş, Karakadılar and Apak, 2013; González-Rodríguez, Díaz-Fernández and Font, 2020) says various businesses, enterprises and organizations are also becoming more and more committed to environmental issues due to tougher environmental legislations, economic and other influences as well as

an increasing concern about the environment among the general public. In a competitive and global setting, companies need to understand the caring for the environment as part of their operations (Pavia, Stipanovi and Flori, 2013; Tiwari, Dambhare and Tripathi, 2020)

Thus, the importance of Eco-friendly hotels has been increasing day-by-day. Now, the issues have changed from local problems to more global questions, due to an imbalance in the ecological system caused by excessive human consumption and adverse human behavior towards natural resources. (Kang et al., 2012; Chen et al., 2018). In the recent past, environmental management in the hospitality industry had been considered of secondary importance, since most of the primary operations caused relatively minor environmental impact. With the passage of time, expectations of guests have increased manifold, hence impacting the environment considerably, which ultimately initiated hotel industry to integrate environmental management systems into a broader framework while enhancing the competitive position of the hotel. (Bohdanowicz, 2006)

Environmental management and sustainability have been issues of recent importance in the hospitality industry (Leonidou et al., 2015). The hotel industry, as one of the major and important ingredient of the hospitality industry, has been benefited a lot from environmental initiatives through improving corporate image and increasing resource and energy competence. The hotel industry should keep promoting green initiatives to reduce negative impacts on the precious natural environment. In order to promote environmental management in the hotel industry, related organizations, governments, and stakeholders also need to focus on raising hotel managers' environmental awareness as well as providing information on thriving cases of ecological management" (Wyngaard and De Lange, 2013)

So, a green hotel is one that works in environmental friendly manner and it has least detrimental effect on the natural environment. It continuously makes effort to improve its environmental relations. Many of the world's hotels are making efforts to improve its environmental relations. (Mishra, 2016) Many of the world's hotels are making efforts to become greener. Today, many hotels are coming up to demonstrate the hotel's commitment to environmental responsibility, which helps to establish trust among guests as they identify that the hotel is not only concerned with making profits, but is also involved in lessening the detrimental effect of its operations on the environment with its greening efforts such as reducing energy, effective waste management and conservation of water use.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

(Choi et al., 2019) have examined the environmental initiatives of selected resorts in Malaysia to get insights of the different environmental practices implemented. They have concluded that even though most of the resorts surveyed in this study are concerned about the environment, but the implementation of environmental initiatives has been still minimal due to unattractive benefits as compared to costs and also the lack of knowledge in this area. The most popular practices are those that lead to a reduction in operational costs or are not too costly to be put in place. On the same lines (Abdel-Maksoud, Kamel and Elbanna, 2016) have analyzed the green practices of American hotels. As such, his study has examined how eco-friendly or green hotels in the United States are in relation to no-cost or low-cost practices. Findings of the study have shown that chain hotels are stronger adopters of green practices in the country than independent hotels. In addition, hotels in the Midwest are found to be the most environment-friendly in terms of their use of no-cost or low-cost green practices. Further, it has been revealed that hotels are making an effort to manage energy consumption with little regard to hotel size. Similarly (Abaeian et al., 2019; Chen, Bernard and Rahman, 2019) have identified the awareness and responsiveness actions implemented by the hotel business in Phuket to climate change. The findings of the study have shown that for some hotels the implementation of activities or the change of processes that would reduce the CO₂ emissions are viewed mostly as the expenses. It has also shown that the implementation of pro-environment activities reduces hotel operational costs and marketing expenses and thus increases the hotel profitability. Furthermore, this study has shown that the lack of information, government support and other causes as factors impeding the implementation of environmental-friendly procedures in the hotel business in Phuket. Likewise (Mensah, 2006; María del Rosario, Patricia S. and René, 2017) have concluded that despite the great environmental and operational issues faced by Croatia's hoteliers, very little is known about hotel managers' awareness regarding various emerging environmental issues across the world. To fill this gap, this study has examined the awareness of Croatian hoteliers of important environmental issues, i.e. the need to use natural resources efficiently, to preserve the cultural heritage, etc. Specifically, this study has reported on the attitudes of Croatian hoteliers towards the environment, and tests whether various hotel characteristics determine such attitudes. The article has concluded that hoteliers tend to favour environmental issues, and that these attitudes are generally independent of hotel characteristics.

3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Today, many environment-friendly hotels have started following the basic principles of environmental management, which have been based on maximizing social benefits and minimizing costs. The rationale of

this research paper has been to analyze the views of various hotel managers with regard to importance attached towards various eco-friendly initiatives that could be taken to ensure eco-friendly environment in the Amritsar.

4. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To analyze the awareness about eco-friendly initiatives in the hotel industry among personnel working at various managerial positions in the Amritsar hotel industry.

5. RESEARCH METHDOLOGY

5.1 Universe of the study

• The sample unit consists of personnel working at managerial positions in seven selected 'branded hotels' in the Amritsar city. Sample size is above 30 which is the basic requirement for applying one sample T-Test. Number of respondents in our sample is not much big as we have studied the awareness of managers in only branded hotels of the Amritsar city.

List of hotels and number of respondents who contributed in present study are given below in tabular form:

Sr.no	Name of the Hotel	No. of hotel Mangers'
1.	Radisson Blu	9
2.	Hyatt Regency	9
3.	Country Inn and Suites	8
4.	H K Clarks Inn	8
5.	Golden Tulip	9
6.	Best Western Merrion	8
7.	Holiday Inn	7
Total		58

5.2 Nature of the study

The present study is mainly based on empirical data.

Sample size: 71 Respondents as hotel managers' had been given the questionnaire of which 60 have responded and 58 questionnaires have been found in order for the purpose of the study.

5.3 Statistical Techniques for Analysis of Data Collected

A questionnaire has been designed using variables short-listed for the purpose of research study. For this survey based study, questionnaire has been prepared which contained questions based on Likert scale. The structured questionnaire has been pre-tested and suitably amended. Each response item has five response categories ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The collected data has been analyzed in the light of the objective of the study, using simple percentages, averages, weighted averages and one sample T-Test as tools of analysis. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS, Version 18.0) has been used for all quantitative data analysis. One sample T-Test has been used to compare a sample mean to a known value of the population. The basic idea of the test has been to compare the weighted average scores of the sample and the population. Therefore, test value/hypothesized value has been set at '3' for the purpose of comparing it with calculated mean value in each individual case while conducting one-sample T-Test. Where '3' means respondents have been neither aware nor unaware about various eco-friendly initiatives in hotel industry.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data has been analyzed in the light of the given objective of the study. The analysis of the data shows:

Table 1. Awareness of Hotel Managers about various Eco-friendly Initiatives in the Amritsar hotel industry

Variables Label	Dimensions	Mean Scores (MS)
Environmental Management Systems (EMS)		
A1		3.79
A2		3.91
A3		3.82
A4		3.81
A5		2.55
A6		3.77
A7		2.48
Total		24.13
Waste Management (WM)		
A8		3.77
A9		3.82

A10		3.75
A11		4.13
A12		3.94
A13		3.77
A14		2.44
Total		25.62
Ecology friendly Products and Materials(EFPM)		
A15		3.89
A16		2.48
A17		3.84
A18		3.96
A19		2.32
A20		3.75
Total		20.24
Energy Management (EM)		
A21		3.89
A22		4.05
A23		4.15
A24		4.17
A25		4.08
A26		4.08
A27		3.22
Total		27.64
Water Conservation (WC)		
A28		3.82
A29		3.20
A30		4.13
A31		3.98
A32		3.84
A33		3.87
A34		3.89
Total		26.73
Air Refinement Programme (ARP)		
A35		2.50
A36		3.96
A37		3.93
A38		3.75
Total		14.14
Eco-friendly Buildings and Structures (EFBS)		
A39		3.86
A40		2.81
A41		3.89
A42		3.86
A43		3.93
A44		4.17
Total		22.52
Guests Awareness Initiatives (GAI)		
A45		4.03
A46		3.72
A47		4.03
A48		3.86
A49		3.67
A50		3.77
Total		23.08
Source: primary data Statements marked A1 to A50 above are given in Annexure I		

The above table depicts the views of various hotel managers working in different branded hotels of the Amritsar city, reflecting their awareness about various eco-friendly initiatives in the hotel industry. In first dimension, i.e. Environmental Management System (EMS), majority of respondents have been of the view that adhering to various green initiatives like regularly reviewing all aspects of the hotel, including its waste, energy, water, air quality, buildings and green areas will positively affect EMS in hotels, except variables A5 (MS=2.55) and A7 (MS=2.48), i.e. searching environmentally aware or educated personnel under ones job requirements and attending the green hotel programme or any other such environmental programmes on regular basis respectively, according to which majority of them do not opine that these variables will effect EMS in hotels considerably as depicted by low mean scores.

Talking about the second factor i.e. Waste Management (WM), most of the hotel managers have supported several of eco-friendly initiatives like conducting of waste audit or identifying ways in order to reduce different types of waste in the hotel industry. But with regard to variable A14 (MS=2.44), i.e. serving meals on fewer larger plates, majority of respondents under study did not support the Eco-friendly initiative, probably because they are not ready to risk the comfort of their guests for the sake of implementation of green practices.

In the third dimension which is related to Ecology-Friendly Products and Materials (EFPM); most of the managers have agreed to the bulk of Eco-friendly initiatives, like looking for products that are environmentally certified or eliminating all toxic chemicals and items from hotel property, which can positively impact the EFPM in the hotel industry. But some of the respondents have not agreed with the variables A16 (MS=2.48) and A19 (MS=2.32), i.e. buying locally whenever possible and purchase of used furniture respectively, again depicting that they do not wish to experiment with the comfort of the guests for the sake of implementing green practices.

Fourth dimension deals with Energy Management System (EMS) in the hotel industry. In this factor majority of hotel managers have been of the view that bulk of eco-friendly initiatives like coordinating with hotel staff to ensure that everyone understands how they can lower their energy use or performing an energy audit regularly, can have positive impact on EMS program in the hotel industry. But the scrutiny of variable A27 (MS=3.22), i.e. opening windows and doors to provide good airflow and cool the area, hotel managers have not been found of the view that the said green practice can significantly affect EMS program in the hotel industry.

With regard to fifth factor that dealt with Water Conservation System (WCS) majority of hotel managers have been of the view that almost all of the green initiatives depicted under WCS can have sizeable impact while implementing green practices in the hotel industry. But scrutiny of variable A29 (MS=3.20), which is related to installation of drip irrigation rather than using sprinklers to reduce evaporation, depicts that clear demarcation has not been made by respondents whether it will have any significant impact on WCS or not.

The sixth factor, which is related to Air Refinement Program (ARP) in the hotel industry, considerable number of respondents has supported various initiatives like switching to non-toxic cleaning products that will not degrade indoor air quality or providing well-ventilated smoking areas that can establish eco-friendly environment in the hotel industry. But in case of variable A35 (MS=2.50) i.e. encouraging staff to walk, bicycle, and use public transportation in order to prevent or reduce pollution within the hotel premises, majority of hotel managers have not attached significant importance to such practices while implementing green practices in the hotel industry.

Talking about seventh factor, which has been related to Eco-friendly Buildings and Structures (EFBS), most of the respondents have perceived that various eco-initiatives like avoiding new buildings unless there is no other choice or using non-toxic, natural materials in constructing and renovating facilities can have extensive impact on EFBS in hotel industry. Further, in variable A40 (MS=2.81) that is related to use of brownfield or already degraded site when new construction is needed, many of respondents could not clearly differentiate if this variable can effect EFBS in significant manner or not.

In eighth factor that deals with Guest Awareness Initiatives (GAI) in the hotel industry, most of the hotel managers' have been of the view that almost all of the eco-initiatives depicted under the dimension like providing guests with ideas on ways in which they can contribute to the hotel's greening success or raising the energy awareness of guests so that they too understand their role in reducing energy use can have noteworthy effect on the Guest Awareness Program in the hotel industry.

Table 2 Weighted Mean Scores of Factors Measuring Awareness of Hotel Managers about Green Initiatives

Sr.No	Dimensions	No. of Variables	Weighted Mean Scores (WMS)
1.	EMS	07	3.44
2.	WM	07	3.66
3.	EFPM	06	3.37
4.	EM	07	3.94
5.	WC	07	3.81
6.	ARP	04	3.53
7.	EFBS	06	3.75
8.	GAI	06	3.84
Source: primary data			

The above table shows the weighted average scores vis-à-vis various dimensions under reference. The WAS of various dimensions under study depicts the level of awareness of hotel managers with regard to various Eco-friendly practices attached to the hotel industry of Amritsar city. Analysis of the above table revealed that not much difference has been found in the views of various hotel managers with regard to various factors under study. Weighted average scores of dimensions ranged between 3.37 to 3.94, which have been found closer to the value of '4'. Hence, it can be reasonably interpreted that most of the respondents are significantly aware about the importance of various Eco-friendly dimensions related to the hotel industry. Further, scrutiny of the table revealed that, majority of the hotel managers have been found significantly aware about the dimension of "Energy Management Programme" (WAS=3.94) and the managers have been found least

concerned about “Eco-Friendly Product and Materials Programme” (WAS=3.37) in hotel industry as compared to the weighted mean scores of the rest of the dimensions under study.

Table 3. Awareness of Hotel Managers’ -A Comparative Analysis of Assumed mean and Weighted Averages

One-Sample Test					
Test Value = 3					
t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
				Lower	Upper
9.270	7	.000*	.66750	.4972	.8378

Source: primary data
Null hypothesis: H₀: There is no significant difference between hypothesized mean (3) and population mean related to various eco-friendly dimensions.
***Significant at 5%**

The above table compares the weighted mean values attached to various green dimensions with the assumed value of ‘3’, according to which respondents neither agree nor disagree with regard to awareness related to various green initiatives under reference. Weighted mean scores related to various dimensions under study as depicted in Table 2 have revealed the varying opinions of the respondents vis-à-vis various eco-friendly initiatives which can be/have been undertaken in the hotel industry for protecting our natural environment. However, to find out whether there is any statistically significant differences between the views of various hotel managers in the Amritsar city, their awareness about various eco-initiatives have been analyzed using statistical technique (One sample T-test), where hypothesized value has been assigned (3) as value, which assumes that the hotel managers are neither aware nor unaware about various eco-friendly initiatives which can be undertaken in the hotel industry to save the ecological environment. From the thorough scrutiny of the above table, it has been found that null hypothesis may not be accepted at 5% level of significance. Hence, it can be interpreted that significant differences has been found while analyzing the importance attached to various eco-friendly initiatives by the respondents working as hotel managers in the Amritsar city. As such from the study of present data, we can considerably reach to a conclusion that hotel managers are significantly aware about the importance various eco-friendly initiatives related to the hotel industry.

7. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- The study findings indicate that a significant majority of hotel managers in Amritsar perceive adherence to green initiatives as beneficial for enhancing overall green management systems within the hotel industry. This underscores a widespread recognition among managers of the positive impact that eco-friendly practices can have on the sustainability and efficiency of hotel operations.
- Further analysis of the weighted mean values assigned to factors related to green management systems suggests a notable consensus among hotel managers regarding their awareness of various aspects under study. This uniformity in views across different managerial roles highlights a shared understanding of the importance of environmental considerations in hotel management.
- Moreover, when comparing the weighted mean values reflecting views on eco-initiatives among hotel managers with hypothesized values, a statistically significant difference emerges. This indicates that there are distinct variations in perspectives among managers within the Amritsar hotel industry, reinforcing the notion of considerable awareness among them regarding the implementation of eco-friendly dimensions examined in the study.
- Overall, these findings underscore the positive disposition of hotel managers towards green initiatives and their awareness of the importance of environmental sustainability in hotel operations. This suggests a promising foundation for further advancing eco-friendly practices within the hospitality sector in Amritsar and beyond.

8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it is evident that while most hotel managers possess a basic awareness of various eco-friendly initiatives within the hospitality industry, there exists a notable reluctance in their execution. Particularly, significant hesitancy is observed in key areas such as the recruitment of environmentally conscious personnel and the promotion of alternative modes of transportation for staff. Instead of actively pursuing meaningful sustainability measures, many hotel managers appear to prioritize superficial "green window dressing," expressing concerns about potential negative impacts on business profitability and clientele satisfaction.

The reluctance to fully embrace eco-friendly practices can be attributed to several factors, including perceived time constraints and skepticism regarding the receptiveness of clientele towards environmentally conscious measures. This highlights the need for a paradigm shift in hotel management attitudes towards sustainability, moving beyond mere token gestures towards genuine, impactful initiatives.

In light of these findings, it is recommended that efforts be intensified to educate and empower hotel managers with comprehensive knowledge about the benefits and feasibility of green practices. This can be achieved through ongoing training programs, seminars, conferences, and workshops dedicated to sustainability in the hospitality industry. By equipping hotel managers with the necessary tools and understanding, they can serve as catalysts for the adoption and implementation of green initiatives within their establishments.

Furthermore, there is a call for further research in this area to delve deeper into the motivations and barriers surrounding the adoption of eco-friendly practices in the hotel industry. This includes exploring innovative strategies for overcoming resistance, identifying best practices, and providing evidence-based recommendations to policymakers, legislators, and industry stakeholders.

In essence, this study underscores the importance of fostering a culture of sustainability within the hospitality sector, with hotel managers playing a pivotal role in driving meaningful change towards a more environmentally responsible future.

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