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A Study on Customer Preference Towards Eco-Friendly Hotel on Sustainable Hospitality

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ABSTRACT: This study explores customer preferences towards eco-friendly hotels within the framework of sustainable hospitality. With growing environmental awareness, travellers are increasingly considering the ecological impact of their lodging choices. The research investigates key factors influencing customer decisions, including green certifications, waste reduction practices, energy efficiency, and use of sustainable materials. Data was collected through surveys targeting both domestic and international travellers. Findings reveal that a majority of customers value eco-friendly practices, especially when communicated clearly and paired with quality service. The study also identifies a willingness to pay a premium for sustainable accommodations. However, awareness and education remain crucial to drive broader acceptance. The research highlights the need for hotels to balance sustainability with comfort and convenience. Ultimately, it provides strategic insights for hospitality businesses aiming to align with consumer expectations and environmental goals.

KEYWORDS: Eco-friendly hotels, sustainable hospitality, customer preference, green practices, environmental awareness, renewable energy, green certification, sustainable tourism.

I. INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry is undergoing a significant transformation, driven by evolving customer preferences and a heightened awareness of environmental responsibility. Consumers are increasingly conscious of environmental issues and actively seek out businesses that align with their values. This shift has placed considerable pressure on hotels to adopt eco-friendly practices and minimize their environmental impact.

Sustainable hospitality has emerged as a crucial concept, with hotels now competing to offer environmentally responsible amenities and services. This transition reflects a broader societal move towards sustainability, where businesses are expected to integrate environmental considerations into their operations. However, despite the growing importance of sustainability within the hospitality sector, there remains a gap in understanding the specific drivers behind customer preferences for eco-friendly hotels.

The importance of sustainability in the hospitality industry cannot be overstated. Hotels have a significant environmental impact, from energy and water consumption to waste generation and greenhouse gas emissions. By adopting eco-friendly practices, hotels can reduce their environmental footprint and contribute to a more sustainable future. Moreover, sustainability is no longer a niche concern, but a mainstream expectation among consumers.

II. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

- "A Study on Customer Preference Towards Eco-Friendly Hotel On Sustainable Hospitality" is focused on understanding the various aspects of sustainable hospitality offered by various eco-friendly hotels in Coimbatore city.
- The growing global emphasis on environmental preservation has significantly influenced various sectors, including the hospitality industry.

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- This study aims to explore and understand customer preferences towards eco-friendly hotels, positioning the research within the broader framework of sustainable hospitality.

III. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

- There is insufficient research on the specific factors that influence customer preferences for eco-friendly hotels.
- Many hotels are not fully implementing sustainable practices, which can negatively impact the environment and customer satisfaction.
- Hotels often struggle to effectively communicate their sustainability efforts to customers. This lack of communication can result in a lack of awareness and appreciation for eco-friendly practices, potentially diminishing their value in the eyes of customers.
- Hotels that fail to adopt sustainable practices risk facing a competitive disadvantage. Environmentally conscious customers are increasingly seeking out eco-friendly accommodations, and hotels that do not meet this demand may lose market share.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyze eco-friendly design's impact on customer experience.
- To examine eco-friendly design's effect on customer satisfaction.
- To identify barriers to eco-friendly hotel design.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Survey Research: A carefully designed questionnaire will be distributed to customers who have stayed in eco-friendly hotels to gather data on their preferences, experiences, and satisfaction levels.

Interviews: In-depth interviews will be conducted with hotel managers and sustainability experts to gain valuable insights into the implementation and effectiveness of eco-friendly hotel practices.

Secondary Research: A thorough review of existing literature on sustainable hospitality and customer preference will be conducted to provide a strong theoretical foundation for the study and to identify relevant research gaps.

VI. SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

The sampling technique used for the study is Convenience Sampling.

Sample Size:
A sample size of around 124 customers will be targeted to ensure sufficient statistical power for data analysis. The sample size will be determined using standard formulas for survey-based research, considering a margin of error of 5% and a confidence level of 95%.

Data Analysis:
It is based on the quantitative methods will be employed to analyse the collected data. Statistical tools such as percentages, charts, and graphs will be used for quantitative data.

Research methodology:
Research methodology is the specific procedures or techniques used to identify, select, process, and analyse information about a topic. In a research paper the methodology section allows the reader to critically evaluate a study overall validity and reliability.

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VII. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Sustainable Hospitality Practices – Smith et al. (2020):

- This study examines how various eco-friendly hotel practices influence customer satisfaction. It highlights key sustainability initiatives, including energy-efficient lighting, renewable energy sources, and water conservation programs

2. Green Hotel Certifications – Jones & Taylor (2019):

- The research focuses on the impact of internationally recognized eco-certifications (e.g., LEED, Green Key) on customer trust. It finds that travelers are more inclined to choose hotels with certifications, as they perceive them as credible indicators of sustainability.

3. Customer Awareness of Sustainability – Brown & Greenfield (2018):

- This study explores how customer education and awareness shape their preference for green hotels. It suggests that travelers who actively seek eco-friendly options tend to be well-informed about sustainability issues.

4. Perceived Value of Green Hotels – Kim & Han (2017):

- The study investigates how perceived value affects customer preference for green hotels. It identifies factors such as environmental impact, cost savings, and personal benefits (e.g., health) as key drivers.

5. Eco-Friendly Amenities and Customer Loyalty – Johnson et al. (2021):

- This research examines how specific green amenities (e.g., biodegradable toiletries, recycling bins, organic bedding) influence customer loyalty. The study finds that customers who appreciate these amenities are more likely to return and recommend the hotel to others.

VIII. ANALYSES AND INTERPRETATION OF THE STUDY

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS:

TABLE 1:

S.No	Factors	No.	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	How important is a hotel's sustainability reputation to customers	124	1	5	**3.93**	1.17
2	What role does certification (e.g., LEED, Green Globe) play in influencing customer preference	124	1	5	**4.11**	1.06
3	How does the availability of eco-friendly amenities influence customer preference	124	1	5	**4.07**	1.13

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION:

The results indicate that customers generally value sustainability in the hotel industry. The mean score of 4.11 for certification (Q9) suggests that customers find eco-certifications influential when choosing hotels. Similarly, eco-

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friendly amenities (Q10) received a high mean of 4.07, showing their strong impact on customer preference. The presence of eco-friendly features (Q19) had the mean 3.93.

INFERENCE:

The findings highlight that eco-friendly practices significantly influence customer choices and satisfaction. Certifications like LEED and Green Globe serve as strong trust indicators, while eco-friendly amenities and sustainability features play a crucial role in enhancing customer experiences.

CHI-SQUARE:

TABLE 2:

S.No	Comparison	Chi-Square Value	P-value	Statistical Significance
1	Q16 vs Q18 (Satisfaction vs Exceeding Expectations)	19.43	0.0218	Significant ($p < 0.05$)
2	Q18 vs Q20 (Exceeding Expectations vs Customer Loyalty)	18.86	0.0264	Significant ($p < 0.05$)
3	Q16 vs Q20 (Satisfaction vs Customer Loyalty)	7.86	0.5488	Not Significant

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

The Chi-Square test between Q16 (Impact on Satisfaction) and Q18 (Exceeding Expectations) is significant ($p = 0.0218$), indicating that eco-friendly features that influence customer satisfaction are likely to exceed their expectations. Similarly, the association between Q18 (Exceeding Expectations) and Q20 (Customer Loyalty) is also significant ($p = 0.0264$), meaning customers who find eco-friendly features exceeding expectations are more likely to be loyal.
However, the relationship between Q16 (Satisfaction) and Q20 (Loyalty) is not statistically significant ($p = 0.5488$), suggesting that while eco-friendly features may increase satisfaction, satisfaction alone does not directly lead to customer loyalty.

Inference:

Hotels should focus on implementing eco-friendly features that not only satisfy customers but also exceed their expectations, as this directly contributes to customer loyalty.
The lack of a strong link between satisfaction and loyalty suggests that satisfaction alone is not enough to retain customers—businesses must go beyond expectations to build strong long-term commitment.
Hotels should highlight certifications, energy efficiency, sustainable materials, and water conservation efforts in their marketing strategies to enhance both customer satisfaction and loyalty.

FINDINGS

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS:

The results indicate that customers generally value sustainability in the hotel industry. The mean score of 4.11 for certification (Q9) suggests that customers find eco-certifications influential when choosing hotels. Similarly, eco-friendly amenities (Q10) received a high mean of 4.07, showing their strong impact on customer preference. The presence of eco-friendly features (Q19) had the mean 3.93.

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS

The Chi-Square test between Impact on Satisfaction and Exceeding Expectations is significant $p = 0.0218$, indicating that eco-friendly features that influence customer satisfaction are likely to exceed their expectations. Similarly, the association between Exceeding Expectations and Customer Loyalty is also significant $p = 0.0264$, meaning customers

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SUGGESTIONS

- Enhance User Interface and Experience by ensuring a seamless, engaging, and intuitive platform to improve customer satisfaction.
- Optimize the Recommendation Algorithm to provide more accurate and personalized content suggestions, increasing user engagement.
- Expand Multi-Device Accessibility by ensuring compatibility across various devices, including smart TVs, mobile phones, and tablets.

IX. CONCLUSION

- In conclusion, the findings of this study highlight the growing interest in eco-friendly hotels, with a clear preference for responsible, environmentally friendly options and sustainable materials.
- A significant portion of respondents, particularly students and individuals from rural areas, show a strong inclination towards low-priced, eco-friendly accommodations.
- The study also reveals that social media plays a key role in motivating consumers, and certification influences their decisions.

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