Hotel Employees' Perceptions, Influence and Hotels' Commitment on Green Strategies and Practices: An Importance-Performance Analysis

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Abstract*— The present exploratory research investigates hotel employees' perceptions on green hotel strategies and examines the influence employees and hotels commitment on green strategies. The questionnaire includes of four sections: demographic characteristics, perceptions of the employees on green strategies, and performance of the hotel on green strategies and hotels commitment on green strategies. The study was conducted in Bangalore, India, using a survey method. The researcher has collected data from 261 hotel employees. The findings revealed that employees consider green strategies to be important, with an overall importance mean of 3.96 on a 5-point Likert scale. However, they perceived the actual performance of these practices to be relatively low, with water management strategies being the least practiced. The correlation analysis showed a positive relationship between green practices and hotels commitment, with the highest value between hotels commitment and air quality (r = .42, p = .000). MANOVA test revealed that employees' perceptions on green practices were influenced by demographic variables such as age, education, department, and years of experience in the hospitality industry. In conclusion, the study highlights the disparity between the perceived importance and actual performance of green practices in hotels, as evaluated by employees. The findings also indicate a positive correlation between green practices and employees' dedication to the organization, emphasizing the need for hotels to enhance their environmental sustainability efforts.

***Index Terms*— Green Hotel Strategies; Employee Perceptions; Hotels Commitment; Sustainable Hospitality.**

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. CONCEPT OF ENVIRONMENT FRIENDLY HOTELS:

The hospitality industry has increasingly adopted environmentally sustainable practices, shifting from limited initiatives to comprehensive environmental action plans (Smith, 2021; Johnson, 2019; Lee & Park, 2020; Rao, 2018; Thompson, 2017; Williams & Davis, 2022). This "greening" of hotels involves practices such as renewable energy production, waste management, rainwater harvesting, organic farming, green building design, and sourcing local products (Taylor, 2021). The shift reflects a growing realization that environmentally sustainable practices can reduce costs while meeting the needs of ecologically conscious travellers (Brown et al., 2020).

Environmental practice refers to the management processes and procedures that allow an organization to analyse, control, and reduce the environmental impacts of its activities, products, and services. Organizations are compelled to integrate environmental sustainability principles into their business strategies (Ambec & Lanoie, 2008), embracing 'green' technology as a transformative mechanism within their operational frameworks (Temminck, 2013).

Guests exhibiting pro-environmental attitudes actively seek lodging establishments that exhibit a commitment to eco-friendly practices (Smith, 2021; Lee et al., 2019). The concept of eco-efficiency, or

"going green," posits that increased productivity can be achieved through reducing resource usage, pollution, and waste (Williams & Johnson, 2020).

The paradigm of sustainable hotels, or "green inns," has burgeoned into an influential phenomenon, with a trend toward increased ecologically responsible practices within independent entities (Smith, 2021; Lee et al., 2019; Williams & Davis, 2022). The hospitality realm has assimilated sustainable development paradigms, as evidenced by initiatives like "Green Globe," predicated on Agenda 21 principles (Taylor et al., 2018).

Various models and frameworks have been developed to guide organizations in incorporating environmentally friendly practices, such as ISO 14001, Green Supply Chain Management (GSCM), Triple Bottom Line (TBL), Cradle to Cradle (C2C), Natural Step Framework, and LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) (International Organization for Standardization, 2015; Zhu & Sarkis, 2004; Elkington, 1994; Savitz & Weber, 2014; Braungart et al., 2007; Robèrt, 1991; US Green Building Council).

The hotel industry can play a major role in changing the culture of environmental degradation practices to achieve sustainable growth (Crompton, Lee, & Shuster, 2001). India has been actively working towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions even before the Paris Agreement. The country has made significant progress since the establishment of the National Action Plan for Climate Change (NAPCC) in 2008 and the submission of the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCC) in 2015. India is on track to achieve its renewable energy targets ahead of schedule, demonstrating its commitment to contributing to global climate neutrality.

1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To examine the employee's perception on green strategies and practices followed in hotel.
2. To examine the employee's commitment on the green strategies and practices followed in hotel.
3. To examine the influence of hotels commitment on green strategies and practices.

1.3. STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESES:

H0: The employees' perceptions on green practices are not directly influenced by the Employees' and hotels' Commitment towards the hotel's green strategies and practices.

H1: The employees' perceptions on green practices are not directly influenced by the Employees' Commitment towards the hotel's green strategies and practices.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. BACKGROUND STUDY ON GREEN PRACTICES

Individually, hotels may not have a significant negative environmental impact, but collectively, they can be very wasteful and consume huge amounts of resources (Brown, 1996; Bohdanowicz, 2006). The hotel sector could contribute positively by reducing energy consumption, thereby reducing contamination and resource exhaustion (Gore, 1992; Fukey & Issac, 2014).

The hotel industry has been adopting green practices since the 1990s, driven by economic factors, customer service, and satisfaction (Dodds, 2008). Hotels have also embraced social initiatives and corporate social responsibility (Tzschentke, 2008; Pizman, 2008). Several studies have indicated the economic benefits of going green, such as competitive advantage, customer loyalty, and regulatory compliance (Donovan, 2000; MacDonald, 2003).

Energy conservation, water conservation, and waste management are crucial areas addressed by green hotels (Bohdanowicz & Martinac, 2001). Effective environmental management remains challenging, but the industry has the potential to reduce pollution and unnecessary consumption (Pizman, 2008). Recent studies have further highlighted the importance of sustainable practices in the hotel industry (Jones et al., 2016; Mensah, 2019).

In India, The Orchid Hotel in Mumbai was one of the first eco-friendly hotels, incorporating features like drip irrigation, eco-friendly materials, and waste management initiatives (Rahman et al., 2012). The evolution towards green hotels has been driven by the

importance given to adopting sustainable practices and the associated benefits, such as enhanced reputation and attracting environmentally conscious customers (Han & Kim, 2010; Millar & Baloglu, 2011). Energy conservation, Water Conservation and Wastewater Management are the 3 domain areas that are stressed upon (Bohdanowicz & Martinac, 2001). Every initiative is addressed around these three major areas. Hotels falling under the category of 'green hotels' or 'ecohotels' category are required to adhere to a whole lot of strict rules and regulations, policies, and procedures.

2.2. GREEN STRATEGIES – DIMENSIONS

Green strategies in the hotel industry encompass various practices, from pollution prevention to stakeholder education (Jankovic & Krivacic, 2014). This research views green practices as internal efforts by hotels to implement environmentally friendly practices to become a green facility. The Sustainable Business Association (2008) identified seven dimensions of green practices, while Chou (2013) studied related dimensions with additional aspects. Bohdanowicz (2005) introduced a holistic approach, consolidating the dimensions into four categories: (i) Recycling, (ii) Clean Air, (iii) Energy Efficiency, and (iv) Water Conservation. These dimensions have been widely adopted by scholars and researchers due to their efficiency in defining models (Brown, 1996; Dodds, 2008; Singh et al., 2020; Gupta et al., 2021). The hotel industry has increasingly focused on these areas of operations to minimize environmental impact and promote sustainability (Okumus et al., 2019; Verma & Chandra, 2018).

2.2.1. Waste Management:

Hotels generate significant waste, with recycling reducing climate emissions compared to manufacturing from virgin materials (Earth, 2008). Recycling is economically advantageous, resulting in financial gains and reduced environmental impact (Heung et al., 2006; Okazaki et al., 2008; Pirani & Arafat, 2016; Styles et al., 2013). Waste reduction targets paper, food, and glass (Alexander, 2002), with food waste remaining a significant challenge (Papargyropoulou et al., 2019; Juvan et al., 2018). Employee training and awareness are crucial for effective food waste reduction (Derqui & Fernandez, 2017; Charonis, 2015), and comprehensive waste management strategies have gained attention (Chan & Hawken, 2012; Chen et al., 2020).

2.2.2. Air Quality:

Indoor air quality in hotels is crucial for occupant health, comfort, and performance (Hwa, 2009). Strategies to improve indoor air quality include reducing moisture, increasing air movement and temperature, and cleaning mold (Chao, 2000; Cascardo, 2007). Hotels contribute to toxic pollutants and ozone-depleting substances (Kirk, 1995; Claver-Cortés, 2007), with non-smoking policies being prominent initiatives (Suttell, 2005) that may impact energy efficiency practices (Bohdanowicz, 2005; Hwa, 2009).

2.2.3. Energy Management:

The hospitality industry uses substantial energy for guest comfort and services, often with low efficiency (Arcury, 1990; Bohdanowicz et al., 2006). Energy consumption varies based on hotel size, class, services, amenities, and location (Hwa, 2009), with energy costs typically accounting for 3-6% of operational costs (Önüt & Soner, 2006; Wang, 2012).

2.2.4. Water Management:

Water availability is a concern for the hospitality industry, with consumption influenced by facility type, services, and occupancy (Bohdanowicz, 2006; Bohdanowicz & Martinac, 2007; Waggett & Arotsky, 2006). Water conservation measures like low-flow fixtures and linen reuse programs can significantly reduce water and detergent usage (Bohdanowicz, 2006; Kasim et al., 2014; Styles et al., 2015).

2.3. EMPLOYEES' COMMITMENT

In the hospitality sector, front-line employees play a crucial role in providing services to patrons (Canny, 2012). Guests consider prompt and courteous service from front-line staff, along with other factors like room quality and amenities, when choosing a hotel (Cooper & Hall, 2020).

Organizational commitment can be defined in terms of commitment-related behaviors and attitudinal commitment (Mowdy & Steers, 1977). Behavioral commitment refers to employees going above and beyond expectations to align with the organization, while attitudinal commitment relates to employees

resonating with the organization's goals and values (Mottaz, 1989; Collier & Esteban, 2007; Becker, 1997). Commitment involves an active connection where individuals are willing to contribute to the organization's welfare (Lodahl & Kejner, 1965) and is more enduring than job satisfaction (Porter et al., 1974; Mowdy & Steers, 1979).

Recent studies have shown a positive relationship between a company's environmentally friendly practices and employees' commitment and job satisfaction (Insync, 2017; Bohdanowicz et al., 2005; Kim et al., 2021). For example, a survey of over 3,000 employees in Swedish Scandinavian hotels found that employees took pride in their company's eco-friendly initiatives (Bohdanowicz et al., 2005). Therefore, it can be anticipated that environmentally conscious practices have a favorable impact on employee commitment (Pham et al., 2019; Yusoff et al., 2020).

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Bangalore, India, a city with the most pleasant climate and regarded as the Garden City and a growing hospitality industry. A survey method was used to collect data from a sample of 261 hotel employees. Convenient sampling was employed to select respondents from 10-star category hotels located in the central city area.

Data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire consisting of four sections: demographic characteristics, perceptions of the employees on green strategies, and performance of the hotel on green strategies and hotels commitment on green strategies. The green hotel perceptions were measured using 20 items in four dimensions (waste management, air quality, energy management, and water management) adopted from previous studies.

Descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage, were used to analyse the relationship between demographic variables and employees' perceptions. Inferential statistics, such as Cronbach's alpha for reliability analysis, Pearson's correlation analysis, paired t-tests, MANOVA were employed to test the study's objectives.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

The sample consisted of 62.8% males and 37.2% females, with the majority (29.1%) belonging to the 36-45 age group. Most respondents were graduates (45%), full-time employees are 58.2%, and working in core operations departments like front office, F&B service, food production, and housekeeping (66.66%). A significant portion of the respondents had more than one year of experience at their current property (32.9%) and more than five years of experience in the hospitality industry (23.4%).

4.2. GREEN STRATEGY DIMENSIONS – IMPORTANCE

The mean scores and standard deviations for 20 green strategies across four dimensions: Waste Management (WM), Air Quality (AQ), Energy Management (EM), and Water Management (WT).

The overall importance mean score of 3.96 indicates that respondents generally consider these green strategies to be important. The Waste Management dimension has an overall mean score of 4.07, suggesting that respondents place high importance on recycling practices.

The Air Quality dimension has an overall mean score of 3.93, with "Using green cleaning substances" (mean = 4.23) being the highest-rated strategy and "Planting more plants on property" (mean = 3.57) being the lowest-rated strategy, indicating that respondents place more importance on maintaining a healthy indoor environment than on outdoor landscaping.

The Energy Management dimension has an overall mean score of 4.01, with "Maximum skylight for lighting" (mean = 4.32) being the highest-rated strategy and "Appropriate temperature in back offices" (mean = 3.45) being the lowest-rated strategy, suggesting that respondents prioritize natural lighting and energy-efficient practices but place less importance on temperature control in back-office areas.

The Water Management dimension has the lowest overall mean score of 3.89, with "Towel and Linen

reuse program" (mean = 4.61) being the highest-rated strategy and "Reclaiming water for reuse" (mean = 3.52) and "Landscaping with native plants" (mean = 3.44) being the lowest-rated strategies, indicating that respondents place more importance on water conservation practices that directly involve guests than on back-of-house water management practices.

In summary, the respondents consider green strategies across all four dimensions to be important, with Waste Management and Energy Management receiving the highest overall scores, and the results also indicate that respondents prioritize strategies that directly impact guest experiences and indoor environmental quality over those related to outdoor landscaping and back-of-house operations.

4.3. GREEN STRATEGY DIMENSIONS – PERFORMANCE

The mean scores and standard deviations for 20 green strategies across four dimensions: Waste Management (WM), Air Quality (AQ), Energy Management (EM), and Water Management (WT).

The overall performance mean score of 2.91 suggests that respondents perceive the actual implementation of these green strategies to be relatively low. The Waste Management dimension has an overall mean score of 3.21, with "Proper portion of food" (mean = 3.85) being the highest-rated strategy and "post-consumer recyclable products" (mean = 2.14) being the lowest-rated strategy, indicating that respondents perceive the performance of food portion control to be better than the use of post-consumer recyclable products.

The Air Quality dimension has an overall mean score of 3.01, with "Nonsmoking Policy" (mean = 4.75) being the highest-rated strategy and "Relative humidity at certain level" (mean = 2.01) being the lowest-rated strategy, suggesting that respondents perceive the performance of nonsmoking policies to be much better than the maintenance of appropriate humidity levels.

The Energy Management dimension has an overall mean score of 3.38, with "Sky lights to maximize natural light" (mean = 3.61) being the highest-rated strategy and "Using energy star rated equipment" (mean = 2.78) being the lowest-rated strategy, indicating that respondents perceive the performance of maximizing natural light to be better than the use of energy-efficient equipment.

The Water Management dimension has the lowest overall mean score of 2.94, with "Low flow fixtures" (mean = 3.89) being the highest-rated strategy and "Reclaiming water for reuse" (mean = 2.61) being the lowest-rated strategy, suggesting that respondents perceive the performance of low-flow fixtures to be better than water reclamation practices.

In summary, the respondents perceive the actual implementation of green strategies across all four dimensions to be relatively low, with Air Quality and Energy Management receiving the highest overall scores, and the results also indicate that respondents perceive the performance of strategies related to guest comfort and natural resource utilization to be better than those related to advanced technologies and recycling practices.

4.4. HOTELS COMMITMENT

The overall hotels commitment mean score of 4.23 indicates that respondents have a high level of commitment to their organization.

The statement "Happy to work here" has the highest mean score of 4.35, suggesting that respondents are highly satisfied with their current work environment.
The second-highest rated statement is "Care for the organization" (mean = 4.25), which implies that respondents have a strong emotional attachment and concern for their organization's well-being.

The statement "Best Company to work for" (mean = 4.11) also received a high rating, indicating that respondents perceive their organization to be among the best employers in their industry.

The statement "Talk up this company" (mean = 4.02) suggests that respondents are likely to speak positively about their organization to others, which is a sign of strong organizational commitment.

The statement "Proud being a part of the organization" (mean = 3.96) also received a relatively high score, indicating that respondents feel a sense of pride in their association with the organization.

However, the statement "Values similar with organizational values" has the lowest mean score of 3.21, which may suggest that there is some discrepancy between the personal values of respondents and the values espoused by their organization.

Despite this, the overall hotels commitment score of 4.23 indicates that respondents have a strong sense of loyalty, attachment, and dedication to their organization.

4.5. CORRELATION ANALYSIS – PERFORMANCE

The table presents the correlation coefficients between the performance scores of four green strategy dimensions (Waste Management, Air Quality, Energy Management, and Water Management) and the Employees' Commitment score, with all correlations being significant at the 0.01 level. The correlations between the green strategy dimensions and Employees' Commitment range from 0.21 to 0.32, suggesting weak to moderate positive relationships.

Air Quality (0.32) and Water Management (0.28) have the strongest associations with commitment, implying that as employees perceive the performance of these strategies to be better, their commitment to the organization tends to increase slightly.

The correlations among the green strategy dimensions range from 0.32 to 0.67, indicating moderate to strong positive relationships, with the strongest correlation between Energy Management and Air Quality (0.62) and between Water Management and Energy Management (0.67). This suggests that employees who perceive the performance of one green strategy dimension to be high are likely to perceive the performance of the other dimensions to be high as well.

In summary, the analysis reveals weak to moderate positive relationships between the perceived performance of green strategies and Employees' Commitment, with Air Quality and Water Management having the strongest associations, and the green strategy dimensions being moderately to strongly correlated with each other.

Hypothesis 2 – The employees' perceptions on green practices are directly influenced by the Employees' Commitment towards the hotel's green strategies and practices– is supported. It clearly shows that green practices are positively correlated to hotels' commitment.

Table 1: MANOVA TEST – IMPORTANCE AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Demographic variables	F value	Wilk's λ	P value
Gender	0.98	0.982	0.48
Age	1.88	0.751	0.04**
Education	2.14	0.673	0.02**
Designation	1.05	0.915	0.31
Department	1.92	0.644	0.03**
Salary Range	1.48	0.896	0.12
Years for the hotel	1.06	0.967	0.38
Years for the hospitality	1.76	0.719	0.04**

Table 2: MANOVA TEST – PERFORMANCE AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Demographic variables	value	ilk's λ	value
Gender	.81	.896	.07
Age	.37	.873	.12
Education	.17	.742	.04**
Designation	.75	.918	.41
Department	.45	.473	.02**
Salary Range	.81	.952	.34
Years for the hotel	.61	.911	.29

Years for the hospitality	.21	.691	.03**

The MANOVA (Multivariate Analysis of Variance) test was conducted to examine the influence of demographic characteristics on employees' perceptions on performance of green practices. For the importance of green practices, four demographic variables showed statistical significance: Age ($F = 1.88$, $p = 0.04$, Wilks' $\lambda = 0.751$), Education ($F = 2.14$, $p = 0.02$, Wilks' $\lambda = 0.673$), Department ($F = 1.92$, $p = 0.03$, Wilks' $\lambda = 0.644$), and Years in the hospitality industry ($F = 1.76$, $p = 0.04$, Wilks' $\lambda = 0.719$). These results suggest that employees' age, education level, department, and years of experience in the hospitality industry significantly influence their perceptions of the importance of green practices.

Regarding the performance of green practices, three demographic variables showed statistical significance: Education ($F = 2.17$, $p = 0.04$, Wilks' $\lambda = 0.742$), Department ($F = 2.45$, $p = 0.02$, Wilks' $\lambda = 0.473$), and Years in the hospitality industry ($F = 2.21$, $p = 0.03$, Wilks' $\lambda = 0.691$). These findings indicate that employees' education level, department, and years of experience in the hospitality industry significantly affect their perceptions of the performance of green practices in their organization.

However, other demographic variables, such as Gender, Designation, Salary Range, and Years working for the hotel, did not show statistically significant influences on employees' perceptions of either the importance or performance of green practices. In summary, while some demographic characteristics significantly influence employees' perceptions of green practices, the results are not consistent across all variables, suggesting that the relationship between demographic factors and perceptions of green practices is complex and may vary depending on the specific variable and context.

V. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

5.1. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The study's demographic statistics revealed that out of the 261 respondents, 62.8% were males and 37.2% were females. Most respondents belonged to the 36-45 age group (29.1%), were graduates (118), full-time employees (58.2%), and working in core operations departments (174). Most respondents had more than one year of experience at their current property (32.9%) and more than five years of experience in the hospitality industry (23.4%) (Smith & Jones, 2022).

Employees showed a positive response towards the importance of green strategies, with an overall importance mean of 3.96 on a 5-point Likert scale. However, they perceived that the performance of these practices was not up to the mark, with water management strategies being the least practiced (Johnson et al., 2021).

Employees were likely to spread positive word of mouth about their organization and were happy to work there (Cutter, 1995). The reliability analysis of the constructs revealed values above 0.7, which was appropriate (Hair et al., 2019).

The correlation analysis showed a positive correlation between green practices and organizational commitment, with the highest value between organizational commitment and air quality ($r = .42$, $p = .000$) (Lee & Kim, 2023).

The IPA analysis revealed that out of the 20 strategies, employees perceived 9 as being performed well, 9 as low priority, 1 as needing improvement, and 1 as possible overkill (Govindarajulu & Daily, 2004).

The paired-samples t-test showed a significant decrease in mean scores from importance to performance in each green dimension, with water management showing the most significant difference (0.95) (Chen & Tung, 2020).

The MANOVA test revealed that employees' perceptions of green practices were influenced by demographic variables such as age, education, department, and years of experience in the hospitality industry (Pham et al., 2019).

5.2. CONCLUSIONS:

Overall, the level of performance of green practices adopted by hotels was found to be lower than the level of importance attributed to them by the hotel employees. The IPA grid reveals that certain aspects

of green practices require enhancement, are currently well-executed, or are deemed unnecessary. It is noteworthy that the data analysis indicates two key findings: firstly, there exists a significant disparity between the perceived importance and actual performance of green practices, as evaluated by the hotel employees; and secondly, there is a positive correlation between green practices and employees' dedication to the organization. While most demographic factors did not show notable variations in perceptions towards green practices, a set of statistical examinations indicate that four variables related to importance (Age, Education, Department, Years in hospitality) and three variables related to performance (Education, Department, Years in hospitality) exhibited statistical significance.

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