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Green Hotel: Practices and Effects on Customer Satisfaction in Takoradi, Ghana

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About Article

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ABSTRACT

The paper investigates the effects of green hotel practices on guest satisfaction, focusing on three 3-star hotels in Takoradi: Raybow Hotel, Hillcrest Hotel, and Kingstel Hotel. With a sample size of 83 respondents, which comprised eighty (80) hotel guests and three (3) hotel managers, the research assessed the sustainable practices implemented by these hotels, examined the factors that influenced guest perceptions, evaluated the impact of green practices on guest satisfaction, and explored guests' willingness to pay more for eco-friendly amenities. The study revealed that the most recognised practices of green hotels, as recognised by guests, include sustainability efforts such as waste reduction, water and energy conservation. Guests are likely to choose hotels that advertise their sustainable practices, highlighting the significance of green hoteling. However, the study revealed a significant percentage of customers' uncertainties about their impact, suggesting room for better communication and integration of sustainability efforts. Hotel managers implement sustainable measures, primarily for cost savings and to enhance their properties' reputation. Thus, the paper recommends that hotels continue to prioritise fundamental green hotel practices such as waste reduction, water and energy conservation, and increase communication of these efforts through signage, digital platforms, and staff interactions to boost guest awareness. Promoting sustainability activities in marketing materials and on booking platforms will attract eco-conscious visitors, while educational tools can increase involvement. Furthermore, establishing tiered packages that allow guests to select different degrees of sustainable services can boost involvement, emphasising both the environmental and economic benefits of these efforts.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Understanding and achieving client expectations is critical in today's continuously changing service environment (Malik *et al.*, 2020; Preko *et al.*, 2020). Customers are becoming more aware of the environmental impact of economic operations, and travellers are more aware of the necessity of green practices when travelling (Jayasinghe & Weerasekara, 2021). Consequently, many hotels have implemented sustainability initiatives to mitigate their operations' environmental impact (Miao & Wei, 2013). Towel reuse, water conservation, recycling, waste minimisation, and the use of energy-efficient lighting are all examples of sustainable hospitality practices (Han & Hyun, 2018).

However, in labour-intensive industries like the hotel sector, maintaining good service quality and customer satisfaction continues to be difficult (Ali *et al.*, 2015). The hospitality industry has adopted eco-friendly practices to conserve natural resources, where "green" encompasses environmentally sustainable actions aimed at reducing ecological impact (Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007). Popular green practices now include recycling, eco-purchasing, and repurposing goods and services. While these practices were initially regarded as corporate social responsibility efforts, they are now fundamental to the hospitality industry (Wolfe & Shanklin, 2001). Green consumption, services, and products have gained traction in marketing. In particular, green marketing practices influence customer loyalty and repurchase intention (Marin *et al.*, 2009; Wang *et al.*, 2017), making it a priority for companies to offer environmentally friendly products and services to increase customer return rates. The primary purpose of this study is to determine the influence of sustainable practices in the hotel business, particularly green initiatives, on customer satisfaction. This study aims to better understand how eco-friendly activities, such as trash reduction, energy conservation, and the use of sustainable materials, affect guests' experiences and satisfaction.

Many researchers, including Yi *et al.* (2018), have used customer surveys to examine the green practices of hospitality companies. Other studies (Okumus *et al.*, 2020) have examined the environmental implications of these practices by looking at hotel websites or reports. Social media and User-Generated Content (UGC), particularly reviews of green hotels, have also been used in a few studies (Arici *et al.*, 2023). However, research on green satisfaction and perceived green service quality, both of which are seen to be important components in attaining improved service quality, is still in its infancy. According to recent research on the topic by Kamboj *et al.* (2022) and a systematic literature review on the topic by Acampora *et al.* (2022), little is known about consumers' satisfaction and behaviours regarding adopting (or booking and staying at) green hotels, despite the market's potential.

Sustainable hotels can make a substantial contribution to addressing environmental challenges by offering affordable accommodations, optimising energy usage, reducing water consumption, and enhancing energy efficiency. The development of innovative methods for assessing hotel sustainability considering environmental, sociocultural, and economic factors depends on reliable data sources. Notably, many

hotels in developed nations are now pursuing certifications to demonstrate their commitment to green initiatives and their environmental responsibility. As a result, multiple assessment frameworks have been created at local, regional, and international levels to evaluate building sustainability and certify green hotel practices in the industry. The hotel industry is resource-intensive, relying on both human and natural resources to operate effectively.

Environmental issues are receiving more attention due to the deterioration in environmental quality. A significant rise in the number of travellers has been observed, both for business and pleasure, being conscious of environmental concerns in the locations they visit, that is, if the intended destination is an ecologically favourable environment (Nuong *et al.*, 2022). Visitors are becoming increasingly aware of the environmental destruction caused by excessive resource consumption, including commodities, energy, and water, and are showing a growing interest in staying at green hotels (Han *et al.*, 2010). Çop *et al.* (2021) suggested that the hotel industry is the one that most threatens the environment in the tourism sector. According to Graci and Kuehnelt (2011), implementing sustainability strategies in hotels through the adoption of green practices can assist in reducing adverse environmental effects. In response to the pressing need for climate safety awareness and sustainable growth, many hotels throughout the world are implementing a variety of green service methods. These efforts include following the guidelines set out by green legislators, buying locally made products, and implementing recycling procedures.

With environmental sustainability and climate change becoming increasingly significant concerns, the hospitality sector may drastically lessen its ecological impact by implementing green practices (Font *et al.*, 2015). By acknowledging the impact of these practices on guest satisfaction, more hotels will be inspired to implement eco-friendly policies, which will support larger environmental preservation initiatives. By reducing waste, optimising resources, and increasing energy efficiency, hotels can implement sustainable practices that save money. The study supports the economic benefits of sustainability by showing a favourable relationship between these practices and customer happiness, which will motivate more hotels to fund such initiatives. The study's findings on sustainable hotel measures, efficiency and guest satisfaction would guide the development of rules, rewards programs, and industry standards to increase sustainability across the hospitality industry.

The study is structured into five sections. Section One, the introductory section of the study, provides the background of the study and the objectives of the study. The next section is dedicated to reviewing relevant studies around the research topic. This is to allow for better understanding of the subject matter and to also explore existing gaps. The third section gives an overview and a detailed description of the approach and methodology adopted in carrying out this study. It highlights themes such as sampling technique and sample size, sample frame, sources of raw materials, data collection, and the instrument of data collection, as well as the overall research approach. The fourth section presents the detailed findings related to the study's objectives. Finally, the fifth and last



section is the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A critical literature review is essential as it synthesises existing research, identifies gaps, and highlights conflicting findings. It provides a solid foundation for understanding the context of a study, guiding future research directions, and justifying the significance of new investigations, ultimately enhancing the credibility and relevance of the research (Nyarko, 2024). The hotel industry, a significant player in the global economy, has experienced remarkable transformations in recent years. As our awareness of environmental concerns grows, so does the responsibility of hospitality providers to contribute meaningfully to sustainability. The shift towards greener practices is no longer just a trend; it is becoming a fundamental aspect of how hotels operate. Customers today are increasingly savvy and conscious of their choices, often seeking out accommodations that reflect their values, particularly in regard to environmental stewardship.

In our exploration of sustainable hospitality practices, it is essential to examine the various facets that define this concept. From energy efficiency initiatives to waste management strategies, the commitment to sustainability encompasses a wide range of practices aimed at minimising the carbon footprint of hotel operations. Additionally, these practices are not just beneficial for the planet they can significantly enhance the guest experience, resulting in higher levels of customer satisfaction. The paper examines the dual benefits of green practices, which not only benefit the environment but also provide a competitive advantage for hotels in a crowded market. By understanding the relationship between sustainable initiatives and guest perceptions, we can better appreciate how such practices influence overall satisfaction levels. This literature review will explore these themes, drawing on current research and case studies, to provide a comprehensive overview of the impact of sustainable practices on the hospitality industry and its guests.

2.1. Sustainable Hospitality Practices and Impact on the Environment

A sustainable hotel, sometimes referred to as an eco-friendly or green hotel, is a type of lodging that uses ecologically friendly measures to minimise its carbon footprint and its negative effects on the environment while offering high-quality services to visitors. Sustainable hotels incorporate a range of tactics and programmes to preserve the environment, reduce energy consumption, manage waste efficiently, and encourage staff and visitors to be environmentally conscious. (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Hunter & Green, 1995; Gossling, 2002). Utilising renewable energy sources, implementing energy-efficient technologies, conserving water with low-flow fixtures and other water-saving techniques, recycling and composting waste, locating locally made and organic products, and encouraging conservation and eco-tourism are a few examples of these initiatives.

Scholars have well-documented the history of environmental impacts on the hospitality industry (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Hunter & Green, 1995; Gossling, 2002). Since travellers'

accommodations make up the greatest segment of the hospitality sector, they undoubtedly have a wide range of environmental impacts, making green practices in the sector very important (Graci, 2010). Hotel-related environmental impacts include energy use, water use, solid and liquid waste production, chemical use, air pollution, and community displacement (Briguglio & Briguglio, 1996; Chan & Lam, 2001/2003; Bohanowicz, 2006). Excessive consumption of energy, water, and non-durable items, both domestically produced and imported, is thought to be responsible for 75% of the environmental effects of the hotel business (APAT, 2002). According to Briguglio and Briguglio (1996), the excessive amount of dust in Malta's environment is caused by the removal of older buildings and the construction of new ones for tourists. Graci and Dodds (2009) also discovered that a significant percentage of hotels in Toronto were involved in some form of environmental project. The excessive amount of dust in Malta's environment is caused by the removal of older buildings and the construction of new ones for tourists.

In the hotel industry, various environmental management practices are implemented to promote sustainability. These include the development of environmental policies, green purchasing, compliance with environmental laws and regulations, environmental auditing, and eco-labelling and certification. Additional strategies involve waste management and recycling, conservation initiatives, environmental education, pollution prevention, environmentally responsible marketing, and support for local communities (Bohdanowicz, 2006; Erdogan & Baris, 2007). However, the most prevalent techniques focus on cost-saving measures such as recycling, waste management, and conserving energy and water (Forte, 1994; Mensah, 2014).

2.2. Green Practices

"Green" hotel practices are eco-friendly hotels where the management is very concerned with the use of clean water, energy use and reuse, efforts to reduce waste, and other forms of saving the environment in order to maintain environmental sustainability," according to the Green Hotel Association (2018). Using products and methods in an environmentally friendly manner helps to stop pollution and the depletion of natural environmental resources, thereby reducing their negative impact on the environment (Perks, 2010). One way to conceptualise environmental management is as a continuous process carried out by managerial choices. It includes monitoring hotel operations and developing appropriate plans and measures to mitigate any adverse environmental impacts (Mensah, 2006). Hotels have a major environmental impact (Deri *et al.*, 2024). They are a major contributor to several global challenges, with climate change being the most significant. Hotel activities emit greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), which are harmful to the environment and human health (Frapin-Beaugé *et al.*, 2008). It has been shown that hotels have the most detrimental influence on the surroundings of every business building (Rogerson & Sims, 2012). A normal hotel produces between 160 and 200 kilos of carbon dioxide per square meter of room floor space annually. In contrast, a five-star hotel uses between 170 and 440 litres of water per guest per



night on average (Andrea, 2012).

In the context of hotels, “green practices” (ecologically friendly programs and tactics) used to reduce the industry’s environmental impact. In addition to encouraging conservation and responsible stewardship of natural resources, these strategies seek to lower resource use, waste production, and environmental contamination. Typical green initiatives that hotels have implemented include energy efficiency, water conservation, water management, sustainable sources, environmental education and awareness, and community involvement (Han *et al.*, 2010; Choi, 2019; Adongo *et al.*, 2024). Choe and Schuckert (2020) argue that using energy-saving techniques to lower energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, such as installing energy-efficient appliances, switching to LED lighting, and enhancing air conditioning, heating, and ventilation (HVA) systems, can be effective. To reduce water usage and promote water conservation, consider installing low-flow showerheads, faucets, and toilets. You may also install water reuse systems and rainwater harvesting. (Han *et al.*, 2010). According to Kesici, Ogretmenoglu, and Caliskan (2024), in recommending waste management strategies, they argue that such management practices should include composting organic waste and implementing recycling programs for paper, glass, plastic, and other recyclable items.

Also, Choe *et al.* (2020) argue that sustainable sourcing the practice of buying locally produced, ecologically friendly cleaning producted and recycled or biodegradable amenities help to lessen the carbon footprint of procurement and boost regional businesses. Roque and collegaues (2022), in espousing green building design as a green practice posit that green building design could be constructed or adapted to comply with guidelines such as the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), by utilising renewable energy technologies, sustainable materials, and energy-efficient design elements to reduce their negative environmental effects and improve indoor air quality and comfort.

In the aspects of environmental education and awareness, providing eco-tours and nature-based activities promotes awareness and cultivates a sustainable culture. Additionally, teaching staff and guests about environmental issues and encouraging sustainable practices through signage, guest communication, and eco-friendly initiatives like towel and linen reuse programs help in furthering sustainability culture and awareness (Lee & Hsu, 2016). Other practices include getting involved in the community and encouraging environmental conservation efforts through donations to environmental groups, volunteer opportunities, and alliances with neighbourhood organisations help to enhance the community’s ecological and social well-being (Gartner *et al.*, 2017). Hotels can reduce their environmental impact, lower operating costs, attract eco-conscious guests, and contribute to a more resilient and sustainable hospitality industry by adopting these green practices.

2.3. Customer Satisfaction

According to Solimun and Fernandes (2018), customer satisfaction is the joy they feel after using a product or service. Research conducted in various settings shows that green hotel

practices positively affect guests’ satisfaction (Moise *et al.*, 2019). This suggests that developing green hotel practices will initially enhance guest satisfaction. To gain insight into consumers’ thoughts, opinions, and preferences, surveys, feedback forms, reviews, and other assessment tools are commonly used to measure customer satisfaction. Repeat business is more likely to come from consumers who are satisfied, refer products or services to other people, and sustain long-term relationships with the business, making it a crucial sign of corporate success. On the other hand, unhappy clients could patronise rival businesses, provide unfavourable reviews, and harm the company’s reputation. For many theorists and practitioners, it has long been an accepted norm to assume that providing excellent service will guarantee visitors’ contentment and lead to their loyalty and eventual repeat business (Bowen & Chen, 2001). Many hotel firms struggle to retain their clientele due to increasing competition in the global market. According to a certain market study, most hotel corporations in the US and Europe will lose half of their clientele in five years (Ganesh *et al.*, 2000). They further added that companies gradually raise the expectations of their visitors by raising standards of quality or satisfaction; this makes it harder and more expensive to satisfy them. Retaining a repeat customer is crucial to a hotel since it lowers operating expenses over time. Returning customers are more knowledgeable about the product, require less explanation, purchase additional services, are more willing to pay extra for these initiatives, and are more likely to promote them to others. The quality of the product, pricing, location, and services are common indicators of guests’ satisfaction. According to studies (Ganesh *et al.*, 2000; Yüksel & Yüksel, 2003), the “people factor,” or service quality, may be the most significant of these attributes in predicting overall satisfaction and obtaining repeat business in the service industries.

In reference to green hotels, Martinez (2015) defines green satisfaction as “a pleasure level of consumption-related fulfilling to satisfy customers’ environmental desires, sustainable expectations, and green needs”. When assessing the impact of eco-friendly activities on visitor satisfaction, this factor must be considered (Merli *et al.*, 2019). According to research, visitor happiness is significantly impacted by visitors’ favourable opinions of hotels’ eco-friendly measures (Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007; Merli *et al.*, 2019; Secchi *et al.*, 2018).

3. METHODOLOGY

The study employed a quantitative approach, which allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the sustainable hotel practices, green initiatives, and customer satisfaction. Data for all hotels was collected from hotels in Takoradi, as our population and sample size consisted of 3-star Hotels in Takoradi, which are only three (3) registered under the Ghana Tourism Authority. Using Yamane’s formula,

$$n = N / (1 + N(e^2))$$

$$n = 100 / (1 + 100(5^2))$$

$$n = 100 / (1 + 100(0.0025))$$

$$n = 100 / (1 + 0.25)$$

$$n = 100 / 1.25$$

$$n = 80 \text{ Guests}$$

Eighty (80) guests were used as our sample size for the data



collection from the three hotels. Purposive non-probability sampling was employed to select hotel managers recognised for their environmentally friendly operations. This approach allowed for a conscious decision regarding the study's inclusion criteria, specifically focusing on managers of three-star hotels. Furthermore, a convenient sampling approach was employed to select a diverse group of visitors who had stayed at these hotels, were available during the visit, and were easily accessible.

A structured questionnaire was sent to collect data on the opinions of guests regarding the hotel's sustainable policies and their degree of satisfaction. To gather comprehensive data, the questionnaires included both open-ended and Likert-scale questions. An open-ended and closed-ended questionnaire was issued to hotel management and personnel to gain knowledge about the execution of sustainable initiatives, challenges encountered, and perceived impacts on customer satisfaction.

The instrument for the data collection was a structured questionnaire with both open ended. While closed-ended questions limit the respondent to the options that are offered, open-ended questions allow the respondent to express an opinion without being influenced by the researcher (Foddy, 1993). With regards to the Likert-scale questions, Nemoto and Beglar (2014) claim that because Likert-scale questionnaires make data collection easier, they are the most often used tool for assessing affective factors like motivation and self-efficacy. To improve data presentation and simplify the process, the collected data were organised using SPSS/Excel. Charts, graphs and appropriate data organisation figures were used to make the presentation. Data were grouped according to emerging themes and context, with consideration given to the study's objectives.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis centred on six crucial demographic variables: age, gender, level of education, occupation, country of residence and duration of stay. In total, there were 83 respondents, comprising 80 hotel guests and 3-star small-scale hotel managers in Takoradi. The sample participants included 42 males, representing 52.5% and 38 females, representing 47.5%. The demographic characteristics of 3-star hotel guest respondents offer valuable insights into the impact of sustainable hospitality practices and green hotel initiatives on their satisfaction. The sample consists of a fairly balanced gender distribution, with males making up 52.5% and females 47.5%. This balance suggests that men have higher expectations and greater satisfaction with eco-friendly hotel practices and respond to green practices in 3-star hotels in Takoradi.

Additionally, approximately 22.5% of respondents were aged 18-24 or 35-44. The majority of sampled respondents, constituting 42.5%, were aged 25-34 years, while the least sampled respondents, of 12.5%, were aged at least 45 years. The age distribution is skewed towards younger guests, with the majority (42.5%) in the 25-34 age group, followed by 22.5% in both the 18-24 and 35-44 brackets. Only 12.5% of guests are aged 45 and above, indicating that younger adults form a significant portion of the 3-star hotel's clientele in Takoradi. This is particularly important given that younger generations are generally more aware of environmental issues and hold higher

expectations for sustainability. These guests are more receptive to green practices and express higher levels of satisfaction.

In the area of education as a demographic variable, more than half of the respondents had an undergraduate degree as their highest educational qualification, representing 52.5% of the entire sample size. About 18% of respondents also had a Higher National Diploma (HND) as their highest educational qualification, with three-tenths of all respondents having either a diploma or a master's degree as their highest educational qualification. The relatively high level of education among the guests suggests that they understand the importance of sustainability and to scrutinise the hotel's environmental practices. Guests with higher education are typically more critical of businesses' eco-friendly efforts, and their satisfaction depends on the perceived authenticity and effectiveness of green initiatives.

Of the sample, close to thirty per cent (i.e., 27.5%) were professionals such as engineers and lawyers; approximately 24% were engaged in the informal sector and served as either farmers, drivers, among others; one-quarter of all sampled participants were either students or employed in the healthcare sector; about one-tenth employed in the educational sector (i.e., 8.8%) with fifteen per cent of the sample identifying as business people. This diversity in occupations provides a deeper understanding of how different professional groups perceive and respond to sustainable practices in the 3-star hotels in Takoradi. The wide range of fields represented enhances the analysis of guest satisfaction and how various occupational segments value eco-friendly initiatives differently.

Finally, of the 80 sampled guests, a large number, constituting 90% were Ghanaians by nationality; 5% were American citizens; 2.5% were Togolese, and 1.3% each were Nigerian or South African. The study further revealed that most guests stay in 3-star hotels in Takoradi occasionally (33%) and/or rarely (24%), with only a smaller proportion visiting frequently (25%) and regularly (15%). A very small number of guests stay infrequently (3%), indicating that the majority of guests do not visit hotels on a regular basis. This suggests that most 3-star hotels in Takoradi are driven by specific events or needs rather than habitual visits.

Among the managers interviewed, each represented Raybow Hotel, Hillcrest Hotel and Kingstel Hotel. Among the three hotel managers who hold the position of general manager, indicating that the data reflects the views of individuals at the top of decision-making. In terms of age, most managers fall between 26 and 45 years, with one aged 26-35 and the rest aged 36-45. This indicates a relatively younger and middle-aged management team, which suggests an openness to modern, innovative practices, including sustainability initiatives. The managers have varying levels, with each having 5, 10, or 15 years of experience. This diversity brings different perspectives regarding the feasibility and impact of sustainable hospitality. Guests were sampled on their awareness of resident-hotels engaged in sustainability practices. A little less than one-fifth (i.e., 16.3%) remarked that they were unaware, with close to 84% answering that they were aware of the resident-hotels practising sustainability strategies. This indicates that sustainability is a significant aspect of hotels today, which partially explains why



the sampled hotels are among the most-booked in the Takoradi Metropolis.

Regarding specific sustainable practices undertaken by the hotels, the respondent guests reported that the hotels implemented waste reduction/recycling, water and energy conservation, and locally sourced products and food. These aforementioned practices constituted 90% of the sustainable practices engaged in by hotels in Takoradi. The least considered sustainable practice by the hotels is the use of eco-friendly amenities, such as toiletries and linens. This suggests that the most visible or communicated green practices are related to waste management and resource conservation. Given that most guests are aware of these practices, it highlights that hotels have succeeded in promoting core sustainability initiatives.

According to Dejo *et al.* (2023), guests are informed about water-saving measures, non-smoking rooms, bedding, towels, and cutlery reuse, and energy-saving bulbs by hotel employees, other guests, websites, and print media. Additionally, visitors are often unaware of various environmental initiatives, including recycling kitchen and laundry water for landscaping, collecting grey water, reducing, reusing, and recycling waste, installing solar energy sources, planting trees and flowers to attract birds and butterflies for wildlife protection, using paper straws, and promoting photosynthesis.

Additionally, the study revealed that the key factors influencing visitors' perceptions of hotels' environmental responsibilities included a majority of respondents (71.3%) considering sustainable practices important or very important when choosing a hotel, demonstrating that a major consideration in their decision-making process is environmental stewardship. A significant proportion of respondents (i.e., 70%) strongly agree that hotels implementing sustainable practices contribute to a better environment, demonstrating that visitors recognise and appreciate efforts to reduce environmental impact.

In terms of choosing a hotel, 66.3% of respondents are likely or very likely to prefer a hotel that advertises its sustainable practices. This shows that promoting sustainability positively influences visitor perceptions and hotel preferences. Guest satisfaction rates were generally positive, with 45% reporting satisfaction and 16.3% reporting high satisfaction, further suggesting that sustainable practices are linked to an overall positive experience. This indicates that guests value hotels that take environmental responsibility seriously and integrate it into their services. Visitors' intentions to visit a hotel are positively correlated with their perceptions of its eco-friendly policies (Ham & Han, 2013; Baker *et al.*, 2014). This suggests that travellers who care about the environment are more likely to choose hotels that practice environmental responsibility.

Although a sizable portion (26.3%) of guests were unsure about the impact of these practices, suggesting room for better communication or integration of sustainability efforts into guest experiences, 57.5% felt that the hotel's sustainable practices improved their overall experience. They would be willing to pay more if necessary. 16.3% of the guests were unfamiliar with sustainable practices due to a lack of prior knowledge. According to Miller (2010), the majority of tourists aside from business travellers are unwilling to pay extra for eco-friendly hotel accommodations because they think these methods are

cost-effective and should not be subject to various rates. The majority of patrons prefer that the hotel bear the costs of the environmental measures that hotels enacted, and they were unwilling to pay more for them (Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007).

According to Susskind and Verma (2011), 45% of hotel guests were prepared to spend more for their stay. Half of consumers were willing to pay at least 10% more for environmentally friendly activities, according to Tierney, Hunt, and Latkova (2011). These conflicting results suggest that guests believe hotels should cover the expenses of green operations, as they think this will benefit the establishment financially in the long run. Among specific examples of how sustainable practices impacted their stay, the most frequently mentioned were maintaining a healthy environment (22.5%) and the use of refillable dispensers (22.5%), suggesting that guests appreciated the visible and practical efforts made by the hotel to support sustainability. Other notable impacts included energy efficiency (8.8%), water and energy conservation (11.3%), and good food preservation (10.0%).

A significant portion of guests i.e., 30% expressed interest in seeing additional eco-friendly practices implemented by the hotel. Water conservation (30%) and energy conservation (26.3%) were the most commonly mentioned suggestions, indicating that guests highly value resource efficiency. Other practices, such as providing eco-friendly toiletries (25%) and moving towards paperless operations (7.5%), were also highlighted, suggesting areas for further improvement. In terms of general feedback on the hotel's sustainable practices, 15% of guests encouraged the continuation of water and energy conservation efforts. In comparison, 11.3% suggested improvements to room air conditioners for better energy efficiency. Interestingly, 10% of guests proposed more active engagement in hotel sustainability efforts, which would enhance their overall satisfaction and participation in green initiatives. According to Millar & Baloglu (2011) and Han *et al.* (2018), hotel establishments can profit from promoting their eco-friendly initiatives and environmental awareness campaigns.

Furthermore, the study found that all managers surveyed have implemented sustainable practices in their hotels, showing a commitment to eco-friendly operations. The study highlights that surveyed managers are familiar with sustainable practices, reflecting a high level of awareness within the industry. When asked about the importance of sustainability for hotel success, managers considered it important, indicating a strong belief in the value of green practices for business success. Cost-saving measures and regulatory requirements primarily drove the adoption of sustainability. The study further illustrates that energy conservation is the most commonly implemented sustainable practice among hotel managers, yet methods like waste reduction and water conservation have not yet been implemented. The biggest challenge encountered is that guests often do not prioritise sustainability, making eco-friendly practices seem inconvenient to them.

In terms of measuring effectiveness, most managers find their sustainable practices to be effective. At the same time, a few consider them ineffective, indicating room for improvement. This suggests that although progress has been made, further efforts are required to overcome guest-related challenges



and enhance the impact of these initiatives. The study also examined guest satisfaction with green sustainability practices. The findings revealed that the majority of guests (66.7%) feel very happy about the sustainability practices implemented by 3-star hotel managers.

In comparison, 33.3% are happy with these practices. None of the guests expressed disappointment or dissatisfaction. The high satisfaction levels reflect a strong positive response to the sustainability efforts made by these hotel managers (Figure 1). The fact that no guests reported feeling disappointed suggests that the environmental initiatives being practised, such as energy conservation and eco-friendly amenities, align well with guest expectations.

Managers were asked about the feedback they received from customers in relation to sustainability practices. The feedback from guests indicates a positive reception of the hotel's sustainability initiatives, specifically energy-efficient practices and water conservation. This suggests that environmentally conscious guests recognise and value the hotel's efforts, which can contribute to improved overall guest satisfaction.

On the issue of managers' perceptions on the impact of highlighting sustainability practices on a hotel image, all hotel managers unanimously believe that promoting their sustainable practices significantly enhances the overall image and reputation of their hotels. This demonstrates that sustainability

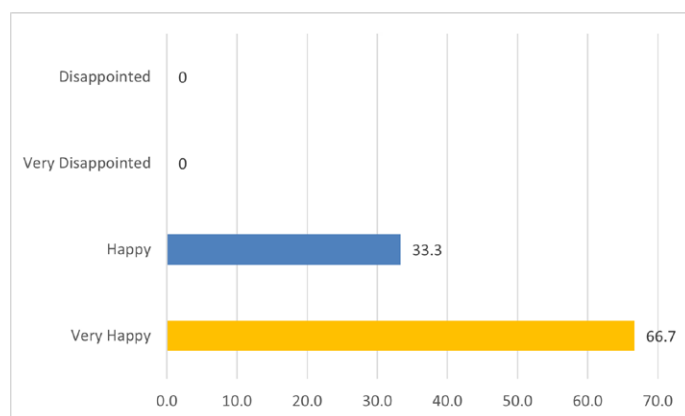


Figure 1. How guests feel about the sustainability practices of your hotel

is not only beneficial for environmental responsibility but also for improving brand perception and competitive advantage for hotel managers.

Finally, regarding hotel plans for future sustainability practices and promotional strategies, the sampled hotels intend to uphold their commitment to sustainability by utilising locally sourced cleaning supplies in the future. Promotion of these initiatives is mostly focused on digital and physical signage, with some hotels also planning to leverage social media to communicate their sustainability efforts. However, managers did not offer additional comments, possibly indicating that their focus is on current strategies.

According to the findings, 83.8% of guests were aware of the sustainable practices adopted by these hotels, including waste reduction, water conservation, and energy conservation. Waste

reduction and recycling (25%) and water conservation (23.8%) were the most commonly recognised practices, followed by energy conservation (21.3%). However, only 10% of guests acknowledged the use of eco-friendly amenities like toiletries and linens. This suggests that while hotels have successfully implemented core sustainability initiatives, eco-friendly amenities are less visible to guests.

Dejo *et al.* (2023) found that hotel guests, through staff interactions, websites, advertisements, and print media, are aware of several common sustainable practices in hotels. These include reusing towels and bedding, using energy-saving bulbs, offering nonsmoking rooms, and implementing water-saving fixtures like showers and flush tanks. Guests are also aware of the benefits of locally sourced food and the use of environmentally friendly products. However, they lack awareness of other important methods such as recycling laundry and kitchen water, collecting grey water, harnessing solar energy, reusing kitchen waste for fertiliser, managing waste like nylon and cartons, planting specific flora that attract pollinators such as birds and butterflies, implementing paper straws, and protecting wildlife within the hotel grounds. Omoogun *et al.* (2016) emphasise that environmental awareness is crucial for enabling individuals to recognise the importance of safeguarding the environment and coexisting harmoniously with other living beings.

In the matter of identifying the factors that influence visitors' perception of hotels' environmental responsibilities, the study found that 71.3% of guests considered sustainable practices to be important or very important when selecting a hotel. Additionally, 70% of respondents agreed that hotels implementing sustainable practices contribute to a better environment. Moreover, 66.3% of guests indicated they were likely to choose a hotel that advertises its green initiatives, demonstrating the influence of sustainability on guest decisions. While some guests remained neutral regarding eco-friendly initiatives, it is evident that effective communication from hotels could enhance guest perceptions and engagement with these efforts. Soni *et al.* (2022) argue that for hotels to successfully promote their green programs and practices, they must undertake genuine promotional activities. This includes utilising clear signage, employing recognisable symbols, and participating in certification programmes that demonstrate authentic environmental commitment. These tangible actions are crucial in conveying a hotel's sincere concern for sustainability rather than merely leveraging the green label as a marketing ploy. By implementing such strategies, hotels can effectively attract and resonate with environmentally conscious guests, solidifying their reputation as leaders in sustainable hospitality.

The paper examining how green hotel practices impacted guest satisfaction found that 45% of guests were satisfied, and 16.3% were highly satisfied with their stay, with sustainable practices such as refillable dispensers (22.5%) and maintaining a healthy environment (22.5%) influencing satisfaction. Furthermore, 57.5% of guests felt that the hotel's sustainable efforts positively influenced their overall experience. However, some guests were unsure of the impact of these practices, indicating that while green initiatives were appreciated, there is still room



for improvement in communicating their value to guests. Sophisticated green initiatives such as laws governing the reuse of linen and towels had a greater effect on customer satisfaction than simple green initiatives, while hotels' recycling policies produced the highest level of customer satisfaction (Millar & Rab, 2014; Yu *et al.*, 2017).

The analysis of guest opinions on eco-friendly amenities clearly indicates a strong desire for enhanced sustainable practices, particularly in water and energy conservation. Guests have expressed a demand for eco-friendly toiletries and paperless operations. However, responses regarding their willingness to pay more for these amenities have been mixed. While many guests appreciate sustainability efforts, a significant number prefer not to incur additional costs.

Most tourists, excluding business travellers, expect these eco-friendly accommodations to come without extra charges, believing that sustainability should be embedded in the overall cost of their stay. They believe hotels should cover the costs of green initiatives. Interestingly, a small segment of consumers is willing to pay at least 10% more for environmentally friendly practices, which illustrates that guests recognise the long-term financial benefits of sustainable operations for hotels (Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007; Tiernet *et al.*, 2011). This willingness to invest reflects a broader expectation that hotels should embrace and support eco-friendly measures to ensure their own financial viability while promoting environmental stewardship.

5. CONCLUSION

Takoradi's three-star hotels have effectively implemented fundamental sustainability measures, including energy, water, and waste minimisation. These practices are recognised by a majority of the guests, indicating a high level of awareness. These sustainability initiatives have made a positive contribution to the hotels' environmental responsibility. Guests highly value sustainable practices when choosing a hotel. The majority of guests believe that green practices positively contribute to environmental well-being and would rather book a room at a hotel that promotes its eco-friendly policies. This demonstrates that sustainability is a key factor in shaping guest decisions. However, some guests indicate that hotels should better highlight the benefits of these practices to enhance guest engagement and perception.

Sustainable methods significantly improve guest satisfaction, as guests report that green initiatives positively influence their overall experience, and they are willing to pay more for these initiatives. Specific practices, such as maintaining a healthy environment and using refillable dispensers, were particularly appreciated. Despite these positive outcomes, some guests were uncertain about the influence of these practices, arguing that visitors need to be properly informed about the advantages and efficacy of hotels' sustainability initiatives to fully understand their effects. Guests are generally supportive of eco-friendly amenities, while recommending additional sustainable practices such as improved water and energy conservation efforts. Guests expect eco-friendly services at no extra cost, posing a challenge for hotels seeking to balance sustainability with affordability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite the revelations, the paper recommends that hotels emphasise core sustainable practices, such as waste reduction, water and energy conservation, which are already recognised by a majority of guests. Hotels should enhance the communication of these practices through signage, digital platforms, and staff interaction to ensure guests are fully aware of all sustainability efforts. Additionally, incorporating more visible green practices, such as renewable energy use or visible recycling programs, can further strengthen their environmental image. Using a range of marketing and promotional tools (magazines, flyers, staff, website, etc.), hoteliers and other industry stakeholders can utilise the study as a roadmap to assist them in combining their strategies for teaching their guests about sustainable practices. By attracting new, environmentally conscious tourists, hotels can expand their market while simultaneously successfully retaining their current audience and enjoying high patronage. Since a large share of guests consider sustainable practices important in their hotel choices, hotels should also actively promote their environmental initiatives in marketing materials, websites, and booking platforms. Clear and transparent communication about how these practices benefit the environment and improve guest experiences will help engage more visitors. Hotels can also consider offering educational materials or brief guest engagement activities related to sustainability to deepen visitors' understanding and appreciation of their green initiatives. Hotels should focus on consistently implementing eco-friendly procedures, such as water-saving measures, energy efficiency, and refilling dispensers, across their operations. Offering personalised feedback options for guests to comment on sustainability efforts could help hotels identify specific areas for improvement. Hotels should consider offering tiered packages that allow guests to select enhanced sustainable services at various price points. This would allow guests to participate in green initiatives at a level that is comfortable for them. Additionally, hotels should continue to develop eco-friendly services, such as energy and water-saving programmes, and highlight their long-term financial and environmental advantages.

However, the study is limited in scope, as it examines the impact of green hotel practices on guest satisfaction at three selected 3-star hotels in Takoradi, Ghana: Raybow Hotel, Hillcrest Hotel, and Kingstel Hotel. Although the study aimed to obtain a representative sample, the selection process introduced biases, leading to overrepresentation and underrepresentation of certain small-scale hotels or individuals. This may have affected the overall findings. Additionally, the study relied on self-reported data collected through structured questionnaires, which could have introduced bias and inaccuracies. Since the research was conducted in Takoradi, the findings are specific to that context. They may not fully apply to small-scale hotels in other regions or countries with different socio-economic, cultural, or regulatory environments.

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