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**GREEN HOTELS CURRENT SCENARIO AND  
FUTURE IN INDIA: A CONCEPTUAL  
FRAMEWORK**

# Green Hotels Current Scenario and Future in India: A Conceptual Framework

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**Abstract – This conceptual paper focuses on the current scenario and the future of green hotels in India. Green hotels also known as Eco hotels are accommodation or hotel which are eco welcoming. For last few decades, green practices have been commonly embraced by hotels. Hotels are constantly becoming greener and environment friendly by adopting the green practices such as energy conservation, waste material management, water management, green building concept, etc. From the study it is revealed that the hotels are working more on the training part of the employees so that they must follow the green practices. The hotels will come up with the big change in the world of business by adopting the Green Marketing because green marketing is essential to save world from pollution.**

**Keywords: Green Practices, Hotels, Environmentally Friendly, Green Marketing.**

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## INTRODUCTION

It's always been known that factories caused lot of damage to environment due to the level of pollution they release. Other than factories, hotels are also giving enough damage to the environment. Hotels are known to operate on a 24 hour basis, some of the operations involved with-in a hotel wall is cooking & cleaning. Apart from cooking and cleaning, the regular use of electricity which end up affecting the environment in one way or another. This has become so severe that various initiatives have to be taken to save what is left. This is the time when Green Hotel came to existence. Green hotels also known as Eco hotels are accommodation or hotel which are eco welcoming. In one of the studies on Zero Waste Alliance, September 2002, Sarah Alexander & Carter Kennedy describe the term green hotels as, "hotels that strive to be more environmentally friendly through the efficient use of energy, water, and materials while providing quality services. Green hotels conserve and preserve by saving water, reducing energy use, and reducing solid waste." Hotels have made important ecofriendly improvement to its building in order to lessen the impact on the environment. Green Hotel takes the initiative and implements very important does and programs to reduce energy, water, and waste. Green Hotels are participating in recycling programs, linen changing programs, installing energy efficient lighting, and getting their message out to their guests and how they are doing their part in guarding the planet. They are environment responsible lodging and rigidly follow green practices. They also started using things which is offered by the nature to save the environment. They even put up various training programs of environmental studies that help raise awareness as well as workshops that teach others on

how to best converse their environment. Any Hotel cannot consider their property as Eco friendly hotel but, they have to take an accreditation from The Hotel & Restaurant Approval & Classification Committee (HRACC) who strictly inspects and assesses the hotels based on the various Eco-friendly Practices such as: (a) Sewage Treatment Plant (b) rain water harvesting (c) waste management (d) pollution control method for air, water and light (e) introduction of non CFC equipment for refrigeration and air conditioning and other Eco- friendly measures and initiatives. Additionally, the energy efficiency in hotels is not only an ecofriendly practice but it is also very cost effective and this one of the reason why many major chains are looking for the way to go green.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Green hotels run business by operating using standards that solve, rather than cause, environmental and social problems. O'Brien, (2002) stated that business usually utilize principles, policies and practices that helps to improve the quality for the customers, employees and as well for the community. This type of policies and practices are instituted as a means to reduce the production of greenhouse gases, conserve natural resources and cut cost to business owners. Bohdanowicz, 2006; Le et al., 2006 revealed that hotel operators attitude towards and adoption of, environmentally responsible practices has been the focus of some studies, with a common conclusion that a barrier to further adoption is the lack of hoteliers awareness and market research about consumer attitudes and behavior towards green practices.

Vieregge et al. (2007) profound that customers of the globally branded restaurant do appreciate the use of local products. He explored the consumer perceptions of eco-friendly behavior in a fast food restaurant chain in Switzerland. Further Choi and Parsa (2006) conducted a study of manager attitudes towards green practices in the US restaurant industry, and concluded that engaging in green practices can lead to strengthened customer relations and increased harmony with the community. In spite of the positive attitude or behaviour towards green practices, only 15 per cent of respondents were willing to pay extra for environmental creativities, while the remaining consumers felt that costs should either be paid for by the hotel or shared (Jauhari, 2007).

Harris & Crane (2002), stated that during the last few decades it has become a common phenomenon to focus on the environmental impact of the hotel industry with each hotel striving to achieve environmental sensitivity even though there is no universally agreed upon definition of a green hotel. Generally the term "green facility or hotel" can be used interchangeably with "an environment friendly hotel," "an eco-friendly hotel," or "a sustainable hotel." Kasim (2004) profound that tourists were knowledgeable and cared about the environment but they did not consider a hotel's environmental strategy as a foundation for their hotel choice. That is not to say that they would not approve of room attributes that were environmentally friendly. Now a days tourists were willing to accept rooms with water saving features, recycling bins, fire-safety features, energy saving features, and information on local ecotourism attractions. Green hotels are "environmentally-friendly properties whose managers are eager to institute programs that save water, save energy and reduce solid waste—while saving money—to help protect our one and only earth" (Green Hotel Association, 2007).

## GREEN PRACTICES ADOPTED BY HOTELS

One of the important aspects that should be understood about green practices is that the range of the term "green" is broad and varying based on perspective. Gupta (1995) defines "greening" as corporate environmental performance in meeting stockholders' expectations. Further, Gupta and Sharma (1996) define green practices as environmentally friendly management principles in which executive levels convert natural resources into better outputs or products. Hotels are constantly becoming greener and environment friendly. These days many big players of the world are adopting various green practices. Some of which are:

### GREEN BUILDING PRACTICES

This concept is emerging these days as green building practices are increasingly being used in new and retrofitted developments, mainly for energy and water efficiency and to reduce hazardous waste. Green buildings are not easily defined. It is usually known as

sustainable buildings, eco-hotels, etc. Generally, green buildings are structures that are sited, designed, renovated and operated to energy efficient guidelines and that they will have a positive environmental, economic and social impact over their life cycle. For example, the Orchid Hotel located in Mumbai, India, is a prime example of a "green" hotel that attracts up-scale clientele and provides state-of-the-art technology and luxury in an "environmental friendly context". Jones, (2002) stated that the hotel is made of re-usable wall panels made from fertilizer waste and environmentally friendly cement called "Portland Pozzolana Cement" and "autoclaved aerated concrete" to deplete the topsoil and provide thermal insulation, which both use a large percentage of fly ash. In terms of architecture, The Orchid Hotel has positioned some of their rooms to avoid facing external cements to prevent heat load, constructed ceilings to invite natural light into the building, in addition to a rooftop swimming pool to protect the building from heat. The hotel has also taken into consideration energy-savings and reducing their air pollution by installing a compact fluorescent light systems to reduce energy, wireless key card readers to turn off unnecessary lighting and CFC-free (chlorofluorocarbons) refrigerators. The hotel has also installed a modified tank to their air conditioners in order to store energy during off-peak hours and reduce overall use of energy, as well as installed scrubbers in their chimneys to reduce the fumes released in the air.

## WASTE AND MATERIAL MANAGEMENT

Waste management is not a burden anymore. According to green hotelier (2004) the hotel industry can reduce the amount of waste produced by implementing and following a waste management system that is modeled around the concepts of reduce, reuse and recycle. Further Alexander (2002) revealed that approximately 54 percent of a hotels solid waste can either be recycled or reused. According to Ray, A., (2012) waste management practice is adopted by big notch hotels. A study by Bohdanowicz (2005) identified that "a large proportion (50-60 percent) of the waste materials in an accommodation facility can be recycled or reused." For example, the **Hotel Lalit Ashok, Bangalore**, this five star hotel has started many a green initiative. Some of which are waste management, water treatment and energy management. Every day, the hotel separates the waste into biodegradable and non-biodegradable. The wet waste is composted in a vermi-compost unit within the premises with only the residues landing into BBMP trucks. The dry waste is segregated and recyclables are stored separately and sold as scrap. Half burnt candles are sent back to the supplier while remaining cooking oil is sold for reuse in machinery. The hotel uses biodegradable material everywhere possible, including for its floor mats. However The **Hotel ITC Gardenia, Bangalore**, this hotel is zero solid waste hotel, adopted well-organized solid material management practices since its commencement in 2009. The hotel has its own primary waste segregation

unit where dry and wet wastes are separated. An organic waste convertor generates manure from kitchen waste. The manure is then used as fertilizer in the hotel garden.

## **WATER MANAGEMENT**

Another very important practice being adopted by hotels i.e. water conservation. Water conservation encourages hotels to better manage how and when water is being used, addressing both the technical and human side of water management issues. According to an estimate by Alexander, S. and Kennedy, C., (2002), water use will increase to approximately 475 gallons per day for each room in high luxury facilities. There are lot of changes luxury facilities can do for water conservation. They can come up with Low-flow shower heads and faucet aerators which will help them to conserve water, and nowadays these are becoming common among hotel facilities. There are many hotels in India and abroad taking initiative to make their hotels greener because they know it will not only benefit the consumers but also benefit them as well. For example, to save water and also to accurately manage the water supply, ITC hotel has reduced water consumption by 50%. They have fixed Sensor operated fixtures, waterless urinals, dual flush water closets, flow restrictors which have reduced the water consumption. They try to recycle as much as water which can approximately capable of irrigating 65000 trees which will further aids in sequestering approximately 13,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.

## **ENERGY CONSERVATION**

The hotel industry constitutes one of the most energy and resource intensive branches of the tourism industry. Energy conservation is high in hotels because energy is consumed in providing comfort and services to guests. Tracking utility bills can help properties monitor the effectiveness of their energy conservation advantages. By installing energy-efficient technologies such as appliances, lighting and heating/cooling systems, hotels can produce cost savings on their monthly utilities bills. For example, the Fairmont Dallas has installed tinted windows and digital thermostats in their guest rooms to reduce the consumption of energy resulting in \$50,000 savings in electricity costs annually. According to Ernst and Young, 2008; The Otani Hotel in Japan installed a new air conditioning and kitchen system, through which it achieved a 14% savings in energy and a 30% carbon emissions reduction. From the report of Willard InterContinental Hotel Washington D.C., 2009 found that the hotel is now running on 100% wind energy power resulting in a 12% decline in energy consumption over the past five years. The hotel also offers hybrid cars to their guests. However in India as well many of the hotels are following these types of practices.

## **FUTURE OF GREEN HOTELS IN INDIA**

From the review it is revealed that the hotels are working more on the training part of the employees so that they must follow the green practices. The upcoming hotels in India will come up with the concept of green buildings. The hotels will come up with the big change in the world of business by adopting the Green Marketing because green marketing is essential to save world from pollution. The consulting firm Deloitte states that hotels must develop an environmentally responsible brand and embed a 360-degree view of sustainability within the business model. Price, quality, brand and convenience will continue to drive consumer spending, but sustainability will increasingly be part of the decision- making process. Deloitte also estimates that by 2015, sustainability will become business imperative, requiring companies to educate their organization on the changing consumer and regulatory environment and to derive strategies to maximize their market position. Green Hotels Association President, Patricia Griffin, sees a strong motivator for hotel managers. This is an absolutely fabulous thing that is happening. Soon hotels will be selling their food waste instead of having it sitting on their docks attracting roaches. This will be fantastic organic fertilizer, as well as a food source for livestock. Changing consumer patterns are providing promising export opportunities for sustainable tourism. As people become more environmentally and socially conscious, they are looking for a responsible alternative to traditional travel options. Thus, tourist choices have become increasingly influenced by sustainability considerations.

## **CONCLUSION AND LIMITATION**

The study focuses on the green hotels and its current scenario. For last few decades, green practices have been commonly embraced by hotels. Besides to the fact that there are several motivations to push the industry for going green, such practices are becoming a matter of policy not option. This study detects a few noticeable facts about the green practices and its performance on organisation. However, the study also highlighted the lack of information available to potential customers regarding the green practices they engage in. This study provides new insights into the practice of green activities in the hotel industry. The study point out the concept of green buildings which is usually known as sustainable buildings, eco-hotels, etc. Generally, green buildings are structures that are sited, designed, renovated and operated to energy efficient guidelines and that they will have a positive environmental, economic and social impact over their life cycle. Various scholars in the past focused on the green hotels and its practices such as Manaktola, K. and Jauhari, V. ( 2007 ); Bohdanowicz , P . ( 2006 ); Kasim, A. (2004); Alexander, S., 2002. For last few decades, green practices have been

commonly embraced by hotels. Besides to the fact that there are several motivations to push the industry for going green, such practices are becoming a matter of policy not option. The study has several limitations. Apart from the above mentioned practices there are some more practices that are not mentioned in this study. Further research may investigate the challenges faced by green hotels and the beyond conceptualization the research should be more empirical.

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