
GREEN HOTELS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is recognized as one of the world's largest industries and continues to expand at a rapid rate. Hotel and Catering is the industries employing lakhs of people. The hotel industry constitutes a large part of the tourism industry and if not managed properly, it has the potential to be detrimental to the social and natural environments within which it functions. A modern hotel is one of the largest single-user of water. Further, this water with dirt and chemicals are disposed into sewerage and to eco-system. In 1987, Brundtland commission outlined holistic concept of sustainable development in its report. The goal of Sustainable Development is to secure economic development, social equity, and environmental protection. Eco-development, now sustainable development, is terms addressing complexity with people becoming more conscious about environment. Hotels are resource intensive and to face up the challenge, it is implementing "go green concept!". Green or environment friendly hotels are getting ISO14001:2004 certification. These hotels are using bio-degradable products which are a good sign for hotel and the mankind.

KEY WORDS: Tourism, Sustainable Hotel, Ecotel, ISO14001:2004, Carrying capacity.

Introduction

Tourism is recognized as one of the world's largest industries and continues to expand at a rapid rate (UNWTO 2006). Over 922 million people travelled in 2008 and it is estimated international tourism will increase to 1.1 billion by 2020 (UNWTO 2008).

Hotel and Catering is one of the largest industries employing lakhs of people. Holiday makers, business travelers, overseas tourists, visitors to theme parks and leisure centers, week end breakers, all travel away from home and create demand for food, accommodation and

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hospitality. Industrial catering, fast food centers, theme restaurants Clubs, Catering and Hotel Management establishment, self-entrepreneurship and off shore catering in food products are other sectors in the catering industry which covers such large operations as health and education and airline and cruises operation. The Hospitality sector in India, therefore, has fared quite well. Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEE) from tourism in India during 2011 were \$16.56 billion as compared to \$ 14.19 billion in 2010, showing a growth of 16.7%. The growth rate of 8.9% in tourist arrivals in India was almost double the growth of 4.4% in tourist arrivals worldwide (Annual Tourism Report, 2011-12). Hospitality and Tourism plays a key role in socio-economic progress through creation of jobs, enterprise, infrastructure and revenue earnings. Even, the Planning Commission has identified it as the second largest sector in the country in providing employment opportunities for low-skilled workers in its 12th plan. Hotels have long been important element in the economies of many countries. The enormous increase in tourism of 20th century has caused the hotel business to outgrow national boundaries and become global in character. Hotels are directly linked to and are integral part of many other economic activities. In particular the relationship between tourism and hotels is very crucial in a proper understanding of the role of hotels in the process of economic development of a state. Hotel industry is indispensable for the success of tourism. It is said, “No hotels no tourism” (Mohanty Pragati, 2008).

AIMS AND OBJECTIVE: The aim is to study on sustainable aspects of Hotel which include concept of Green hotels.

METHODOLOGY: This research is exploratory in nature and based secondary data. The research will be carried forward and will be used as base for finding out status of Environmental accountability of NCR hotels.

Review of Literature

The hotel industry forms a large part of the tourism industry and if not managed properly, it has the potential to be detrimental to the social and natural environments within which it functions. Hotels are also resource intensive and in order to reduce their impact, it is imperative to go “green!” The consumers using hotel services are conscious about environmentally friendly practices in India. They patronize the hotels that have adapted green practices though not compromising on service quality. The consumers would prefer to use lodging that follows these practices but are not willing to pay extra for these services. Indian hotels have the competitive advantage over similar products if they follow green practices. The hotels would have to invest in environmentally friendly practices and look at long-term gains. The government needs to acknowledge and institutionalize the practice by instituting rewards and offering benefits in taxes (Manaktola K. & Jauhari V.2007).

Tourism is primarily a business. As the WTO states: “It is important to ensure that ecotourism is a good, economically sustainable business and that profits are generated from it.

If there are no prospects for profit, then private entrepreneurs will not invest and there will be no benefits to distribute for local communities or conservation purposes” (Vereczi 2002).

Carrying Capacity

All conception of capacity entails the notion of limits or thresholds beyond which development, use, growth or change cannot or should not occur. Tourism carrying capacity is the physical, biological, social and psychological capacity of the tourist environment to support tourist development and activity without diminishing environmental quality or visitor satisfaction, Pearce and Kirk (1986:3). Romeril (1990) defines tourism carrying capacity as the threshold level of tourist use beyond which impacts exceed levels specified by evaluative standards, assuming a fixed and known relationship between levels of use and patterns of use on the one hand, and their impacts on the other with special regard to ecological and cultural compatibility of development, keeping in mind use over long period of time (Weiler, 1993).

Eco-development, now sustainable development, are terms addressing complexity with special regard to ecological and cultural compatibility of development, keeping in mind use over long period of time. Sustainable tourism was defined by the globe’90 conference on Environment and industry as ‘the management of tourism resources in such way that fulfills economic, social and aesthetic needs while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological process, biological diversity and life support system(Inskeep, 1992: 31)

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 (Greenhotelier, 2004). Approximately 54 percent of a hotel’s solid waste can either be recycled or reused (Alexander 2002). 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.”

Sustainable Development

Sustainable Development is a holistic concept based on a simple principle. As outlined in the 1987 Brundtland report, the concept involves “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. The sustainability idea originated in the 1970s (WCED 1987). “Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems” (WTTC 1998).

The first international meeting that tackled the impact of human activities on the environment and eventually their impact on the human race was the 1972 UN Stockholm

Conference on the Human Environment. In 1987, the Un-sponsored Brundtland Commission released *Our Common Future*, a report that captured widespread concerns about the environment and poverty in many parts of the world. The Brundtland report said, in part: “Economic development cannot stop, but it must change course to fit within the planet’s ecological limits”. It also popularized the term Sustainable Development (SD). The 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (also known as Earth Summit 1992 or the Rio Summit) again brought environment and development issues to the forefront.

ISO 14001:2004 Certification: Benefits for Hospitality Industry

ISO14001 results in increasing a hotel’s competitive edge and bringing significant benefits to the hotel and its clients, partners and contractors. As more and more hotels are seeking to implement environmentally-friendly practices, many are looking to certifications to help them achieve their goals. The ISO 14001 certification, which is applicable to business across many industries, provides a valuable management system and standards for an organization looking to implement environmental practices.

Certification gives hotel competitive edge in the tourism market and does not go unnoticed by guests. Guests are smart, sophisticated and appreciative. Many travelers select hotels, and even destinations based on the environmental merits and programs in place. With the ISO 14001 certification attached to a hotel, guests know that they are staying in a resort that is committed to the environment and can feel less guilty about the carbon footprint they leave. Many hotels claim to be green, but the ISO 14001 standard can help distinguish true green resorts from those who are simply “green washing” customers. Money is saved as a result of ISO 14001, but the impact on conservation is the most important. While there is a large initial investment, it takes six to 18 months for the payback of such programs. Hundreds of thousands of dollars is saved every year. Garbage disposal costs are reduced by 60 percent as a result of resort-wide recycling programs. 30 percent is saved on its utilities bill. Some of the energy saving practices implemented include equipping guestrooms with automatic air conditioner sensors that shut off when doors are open longer than 40 seconds; flowing wastewater from the toilets to the government treatment plant for re-use by businesses and the golf courses on the; and collecting all water used in showers, sinks and baths in our grey water recycling system, irradiating it by powerful ultra violet lamps to eliminate bacteria, and then reusing it to irrigate the grounds. ISO 14001 is supporting the local economy and back to local society in every way possible (KSPC).

“ECOTEL”—A Complete Environment Friendly Hotel

Water is the simplest cleaning agent and some forms of dirt will be dissolved by it, so it is randomly used in hotel’s housekeeping department for cleaning as well as in laundry. Hotel guest uses water for drinking, bathing and cleaning in toilet. So, modern hotel is one of the

largest single-user of water. Further, this water with dirt and chemicals are disposed into sewerage and to eco-system. This polluted water in huge quantum is posing serious threat to not only to water conservation but to the entire eco-system. But the saddest point is that this issue is still going un-noticed. With awareness to save our planet, hotels have come up with new concept “*ECOTEL*”. If we talk of this concept in Indian context, we have to discuss – The Orchid, Mumbai. This hotel has been designed and constructed keeping eco-concept in mind (www.orchidhotel.com). The steps have been taken to make orchid ‘zero garbage’ hotel. To reinforce this project of ‘vermi-culture’ is taken at the hotel site itself. The Orchid believes in the three “R” theory of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Water being one of the earth’s most precious resources and vital to life they have tried to put this theory in practice by taking special care to conserve this resource by employing carefully planned techniques.

In India, The Taj Group of Hotel has strong corporate social responsibility history. It has developed many endeavors all the areas of sustainable development. It distributes 30% profit after for community development initiatives. Taj’s fundamental belief is based on saying from Mahatama Gandhi “The earth provides enough to satisfy every man needs, but not every man’s greed”. In 2008, Taj announced its program ‘EARTH’ (Environment Awareness and Renewal at Taj Hotels). This project is aimed at energy conservation and environmental management. EARTH has also received certification from Green Globe, the only worldwide environment protection certification program for travel and tourism (HerveHoudre, 2008). Hilton Hotel Corporation has announced in year June 2008 as short term and long term goal and objective towards building sustainability in to core fabric of its business worldwide

Result and Discussion

The interaction between hotels and environment should be viewed as an important consideration in designing conservation and protection of the delicate balance of the nature. People associated with this industry have felt some problem in the past, and many tourist studies have been conducted. Such studies have though highlighted the adverse consequence of hotel activities on the environment and a damage levels were recorded. But the process of which damage had occurred has been rarely rectified.

Some of the various activities carried in the hotel environment will clearly state out the impact on environment. As the major problem caused by the hotel operation is water disposal activities. No. of hotel in India has a tendency to release garbage, sewage and used oil in to lakes, reverse and seas which in turn spread contamination, health hazards. So the awareness to this activity of hotel is necessary and it must be rectified. In this project, we have stress on various methods of water conservation and water quality, management. The consumer society continues to generate waste in great quantity despite a trend towards recycling. The waste which the hotel produces effects their local environment in every way in terms of health,

quality of our environment and is a growing burden in business and national economy. Hence, the management minimization of waste should be a major agenda in the efficient running of any commercial organization. From the last two years it was observed in the survey that the environment impact of a product had much bearing on our decision to buy it. Value for money, quality, effectiveness extra have been of more urgent concern. This does not distract us from the fact that probably decision can make a great contribution to environmental protection. To reach the proper balance between the hotel industry and environment it is necessary to create an awareness between its staff by the means of following effective measures—bringing the employee, guest and business partners in to the environmental programmes will improve its effectiveness. In addition it will carry message of good will for the industry. For the environmental management programme the best measure for the hotel is to make and circulate the written company policy among its staff and clientele. Now since hotel industry is almost certain to become a major sector in international trade in the years to come, a central review of impact of tourism and its remedy is urgently required. Hence a proper categorically responsive planning and management is needed to take care of such unavoidable problems. Sensitization of the people related to hotel industry has to be the key component of the approach which needs to be incorporated at each and every level in hotel enterprise. If the hotels are conscious of the likely impact of their each and every activity in the environment then the safeguards measures will be automatically implemented without delay. Any beginning, even at a small scale, would only promote and spread to a global scale.

Despite of all the above, there is absence of comprehensive and intensive study touching on hoteliering as yet. However, in other field a lot of scientific and detailed studies have been undertaken by researchers and institutions. It has been unfortunate that hotel business has not been able to draw the attention of researchers to any noticeable extent in the country at University level. There are few studies are conducted by hotel association and institution to draw attention of government towards their problem. Complete vacuum and paucity of research in this field and at the same time immense scope of realistic and meaningful study on very aspects which will benefit various stake holders (industry, students and society) offer a very wide open field for innovative work in next five years or a decade.

Conclusion

Sustainable Development is a holistic concept based on a simple principle—“development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The challenges of present decade led to concept of sustainability by Brundtland commission in 1987. Eco-development, now sustainable development, are terms addressing complexity with people becoming more conscious about environment. This is leading to emergence of new challenges for housekeeping department, because it is using chemical agent. New techniques and bio-degradable products have come up. Some of the eco-

friendly hotels such as orchid have come up for facing the challenges. This hotel is using biodegradable products which are a good sign for hotel and the mankind (Express Hospitality, 2010).

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