



## Green Services in Hotel Industry: A Changing Behavior of Indian Youths

**KEYWORDS**

Green Hotels, Ecoliteracy, Consumer green acceptance behavior, Indian Consumers

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**ABSTRACT** The term 'Green' has become one of the most influential words in a developing country like India. The fast exploitation of the environment due to high consumption of non-green products has brought a major concern in the mind of consumers as well as hoteliers. The present study has examined that most of the Indian consumers are youths and their awareness towards the green products and services has shown positive behavior towards the acceptance of green services. 463 respondents has been examined and found out that there is no significant difference between the different age groups of consumers with respect to their awareness and green acceptance behavior.

**Introduction**

The term "green" has become one of the most popular symbolic colors for Indian people when it comes to environmental concern. Among the services sector in India the Indian tourism and hospitality industry is one of the key drivers of growth. Tourism in India is a potential game changer. It is a sun rise industry, an employment generator, a significant source of foreign exchange for the country and an economic activity that helps local and host communities.

Hospitality sector in India is showing a larger scope today as consumers have their changed tastes of goods and services. The tourism and hospitality industry have always been associated together where 'tourism' is the prime demand driver of the industry. Green hotels are those hotels that initiate and implements ecofriendly practices and programs which have a less impact on environment. A green hotel can be defined as the hotel that operates in a responsible way towards society, community, the local culture, and the surrounding environment. "According to Watkins (1994), green hotels are those that show concern for the environment." Hotels carries out certain common practices like saving energy, water conservation, managing solid wastes, recycling products etc which saves the environment. But generally it is seen that among the tourism sectors, the hotel sector has created an increasing amount of stress on the environment.

This growing concern towards the environment, the hotel industry is making green efforts to attract their customers. Going green for the hotel industry is not only a social responsibility but also a cost cutting tool for the business. The sustainability issue is the major challenge for the hotels. It does not only save the environment but also benefits hotel industry in terms of customer loyalty, goodwill of the company, employee retention and increased brand value. "The hotel industry has been engaging in green practices since the 1990s due to varying economic factors and a strong focus on customer relation & service (Claver-Cortes et al., 2007)." Hotels make themselves green by saving energy, water and other materials which in all save the environment. Literature Review

The following review of the past studies has identified various areas related to green attributes of hotel industry and consumers' action towards green purchase behavior, but many areas has not reviewed and examined where researcher can examine for the further study.

S. No.	Author	year	Findings
1.	Muñoz & Rivera	(2002)	53% of tourists in Mexico rate water conservation and reducing water pollution as the most important topic and nearly 2/5 of the tourists would be willing to pay a higher rate to stay at an environmentally friendly hotel.

2.	Kasim	(2004)	Tourists approved those room attributes that were environmentally friendly and were willing to accept rooms with water saving features, recycling bins, fire-safety features, energy saving features.
3.	Kasim	(2006)	Hotel sector is the major of tourism and the key area of hotel which majorly has environmental impact i.e. energy consumption, solid wastes and polluted water. These areas are prioritize and to be considered for sustainability of the industry.
4.	Manaktola & Jauhari	(2007)	22% of the respondents seek information and use it while taking decision regarding hotels. Also 55% pay attention towards the environmental initiatives and 23% do not bother about the any information related to ecofriendly practices.
5.	Saxena & Khandelwal	(2008)	90% of the consumers were aware for environment protection and 76.63% of the consumers have preference for green products. It implied that the consumers have positive attitude towards the green products.
6.	Tsai & Tsai	(2008)	Taiwanese consumers are willing to support environmental protection and resource recycling policies of green hotels but few of them only convert their thoughts into action towards green buying.
7.	W.Young et.al.,	(2009)	Consumer were ready to buy the green products which are eco friendly like product made up of recycled material, energy efficiency, durability etc but barriers like high prices, lack of information, non availability etc, stopped them to buy green products.
8.	Kim et.al.,	(2011)	The findings of the study were that, females in generation Y seem to be more concerned about environmental consequences than males are specially the hygiene factor plays important role in this.
9.	Bhatia & Jain	(2013)	People were aware about the green products and practices, but most of the respondents were not aware about the green initiatives taken by central/state government, NGOs and business houses in India. Green products costs higher which were still a major concern for the marketers to attract their consumers.

**Objectives**

**Following are the objectives of the current study:**

- To identify the difference between the awareness level and green

acceptance behavior of Indian consumers w.r.t. different age group towards green services of hotel industry.

**Hypothesis**

- 1) H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between age and ecoliteracy of consumers towards green attributes of hotels
- 2) There is no significant difference between age and consumer green acceptance behavior towards green attributes of hotels

**Research Methodology**

To collect data for the present study standardized questionnaire were distributed online as well as offline to 700 domestic tourists. Questionnaires were distributed to 400 online consumers and 300 to offline consumers where overall responses came out to be 463. The database of the consumers was Indian Tourists who visited within the states of India can be either business or leisure travelers. These consumers were not restricted to any particular state and this study tried to make the sample a true representative of pan Indian consumers. Random sampling was used where the sample were chosen out of those population who are Domestic tourists. Once the data was collected, appropriate statistical tool like ANOVA has been used.

**Data Analysis and Results**

According to the current study, 68% respondents were males and 32% respondents were females. Respondents of the age group of 29 or younger years were 57%, 26% of the respondents between the age group of 30-39 year, 10% respondents between the age group of 40-49 year and 7% respondents between the age group of above 50 or older years.

**Table.1**

Relationship of Age among variables							
			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Eco-literacy	Between Groups	(Combined)	.057	3	.019	.984	.400
	Within Groups		8.862	459	.019		
	Total		8.919	462			
Consumer green acceptance behaviour	Between Groups	(Combined)	.654	3	.218	.639	.590
	Within Groups		156.550	459	.341		
	Total		157.204	462			

From the above Table.1, the *p value (sig. value)* of ecoliteracy and consumer green acceptance behaviour *are .400 and .590 respectively which is more than .05 (p>0.05)* which means that null hypothesis is accepted and study proves that there is no significant difference of age with ecoliteracy and consumer green acceptance behavior.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

From the analysis of current study, there is no difference among age and ecoliteracy, consumer perception towards green attributes of hotel, consumer preference towards green attributes while choosing hotel and consumer green acceptance behavior towards green attributes of the hotel industry. It implies that age of consumers do not have any impact on ecoliteracy, consumer perception, consumer preference and consumer green acceptance behavior towards green attributes of the hotel industry which contradicts from the study by Rezai et.al., (2013), who concluded that, consumers above 31 years old have a more positive perception towards the green movement. "Sahu (2013) also revealed that behavior of consumer changes with age i.e. the younger generation was more into saving the environment then their older counterparts." We could see that due to increase in the usage of social media nowadays, the people would definitely be aware about the environmental issue. It was also revealed from the study by Almassawi. M (2014) that the environmental behavior of the youth can be boosted through increasing

their environmental knowledge, attitudes, and concern" and this knowledge and concern could be enhanced by using various campaigns, advertisements, by using media etc. The current study has identified different perspective of Indian consumers which showed that changing time has brought a big moderation in the mentality of Indian consumers towards the environmental issues. It has been seen that youths in the present study were aware and also the population between 40-49 yrs and 50 or older were aware with the fact that changing environment is sending message to everyone to save earth by using eco friendly products and services. In India, this is the perception that the older people are more inclined to save the things rather than wasting it unnecessarily which can help to prove that along with the youths , older people are not behind the scenes and their perception, preference and their behavior are not different from the youths. According to *The Times of India* (Jan 2016), half the population in India is in the 20-59 age group while 9 percent is above the age of 60. With the growing youths in India, they will have more awareness, will have their own perception and preferences and behavior towards the environmental issues, green products and services, due to increasingly use of social media, internet and advanced technology. Hence the youths, are more updated towards the several environmental issues due to increase in the usage of internet and social media.

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