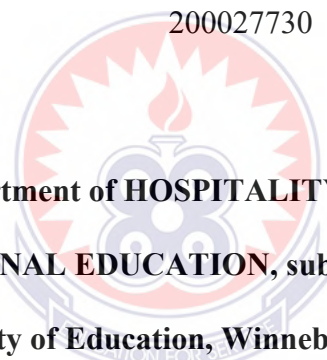


UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES OF HOTELS IN GHANA AND THE
INFLUENCE OF CUSTOMER INTEREST AND PARTICIPATION

SYLVIA NAYIRI GAARIKOR

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**A Thesis in the Department of HOSPITALITY and TOURISM EDUCATION,
Faculty of VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, submitted to the School of Graduate
Studies, University of Education, Winneba, in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the Award of the Master of Philosophy (Hospitality
Management) degree**

DECEMBER, 2020

DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, SYLVIA NAYIRI GAARIKOR, declare that this Thesis except for quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE:

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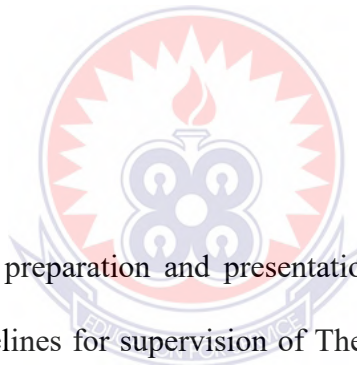
Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of Thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to Rev. Fr. Francis Bomansa and my mother Madam Bernice Samwine and my daughter Fiona Gaarikor



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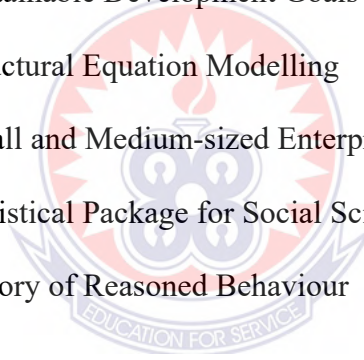
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ABBREVIATIONS

ADR	Average Daily Rate
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
EMAS	Eco-Management and Audit Scheme
GIPC	Ghana Investment Promotion Centre
GTA	Ghana Tourism Authority
LED	Light-Emitting Diode
PwC	PricewaterhouseCoopers
RevPAR	Revenue Per Available Room
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TRA	Theory of Reasoned Behaviour



ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to examine how customer interest and participation in environmental sustainability activities influence the uptake of sustainability initiatives by hotels in Ghana. The study was a descriptive survey research and employed the quantitative approach to research for the purposes of data collection and analysis. The sample was made up of 219 respondents comprising one key hotel staff responsible for sustainability issues, and two hotel guests selected from the 73 sampled hotels. Questionnaire was employed as the main instrument of data collection and data were analysed using means and standard deviation which was facilitated by SPSS (version 26). The findings show that the environmental sustainability initiatives undertaken by hotels in Accra focus mainly on water conservation, energy conservation, waste management and control, and cost reduction. Also, the results show that guests who engaged in sustainability activities at home tend to show more interest in the sustainability programmes of hotels when they lodge in a hotel. Besides, the guests had their own expectations and views about the nature of sustainability initiatives that hotels should engage in. Among the expectations were that, hotels must be concerned about how their operations affect the environment, majority of the respondents agreed that hotels should engage in recycling and reuse of products were necessary, hotels should help with conserving water, energy, and natural resources, Moreover, it was found that management of hotels are influenced to pursue sustainability programmes when they receive positive responses from hotel guests with regard their level of compliance with sustainability policies and regulations of the hotels, customers willingness to pay a price premium for green hotels, and growing customer demand for sustainability practices by hotels. It was deduced from the findings that while some hotels voluntarily undertake sustainability initiatives as a way of contributing to the global sustainability agenda, the uptake of sustainability initiatives by majority of hotels in Accra is mostly influenced by customer interest and level of participation in sustainability activities. It is recommended that customer interests and expectations of the nature of sustainability practices hotels, should be taken into consideration by hotels when designing their sustainability programmes.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In recent times, sustainability continues to attract global attention and interest due to increasing concerns of climate change, global warming, depletion of natural resources, environmental pollution, unsafe environmental practices, among other issues (Mbarese, Plesis, Saayman, & Kruger, 2016). Customers of hotels are becoming more conscious about environmental sustainability and are engaging in green behaviours and practices at home and the workplace (Verma & Chandra, 2016). Also, the concept of green hotels continues to receive global attention with many hotels making efforts to go green or incorporate environmental sustainability into their operations (Chong & Verma, 2013).

Bohdanowicz (2005) argues that the environmental impact of the hotel sector cannot be overemphasized. He claims that activities of the hotel sector negatively affect the natural environment through destruction of habitat, overconsumption of water and energy, water and land pollution. For this reason, the growing environmental campaigns and debates have created some level of environmental sustainability awareness among customers in the hotel sector such that they are now demanding that products and services they patronised should be provided in an eco-friendly and ethically correct manner (Prud'homme & Raymond, 2013).

Customer concerns about climate change, global warming, environmental pollution, and unsafe environmental practices of businesses influence their hotel selection and revisit decisions (Hsiao, Chuang, Kuo, & Yu, 2014). Hence, customers involvement in

environmental sustainability activities and the demand for businesses to operate in an eco-friendly and ethically responsible manner could be a significant stimulus for the campaign against environmental pollution and the adoption of sustainability practices by hotels. In this regard, it is not far-fetched to assume that customer orientation about sustainability and their level of participation in sustainability activities, could influence the adoption of sustainability programmes and practices by hotels (Baker, Davis, & Weaver, 2013; Hsiao et al., 2014). Thus, all things being equal, sustainability-conscious customers would patronise green hotels over non-green hotels. Therefore, in responding to the shift in customer buying decisions towards green hotels, it is becoming a standard business practice that hotels would adopt strategies to satisfy their sustainability-conscious customers by engaging sustainable programmes and practices.

There have been deliberate efforts by some groups and agencies to promote environmental sustainability in the global hotel industry. This agenda is championed through continental and country-specific award scheme for green hotels to promote and encourage hotels to adopt eco-friendly and socially-responsible practices in their operations. Europe's Green Hotel Award, Africa's Eco-Lodge Award, and the ASEAN Green Hotel Award are but a few of the awards schemes that aim at promoting sustainability in the global hotel industry. All these attests to the fact that the essence of hotels adopting sustainability programmes and practices in their operations cannot be overemphasised. More so, in an era where customer awareness of sustainably, and demand for hotels to engage in environmentally friendly and ethical correct practices is growing more than ever, hotels who ignore these signs and calls may do so at their own peril mindful of the fact that sustainability-conscious customers could punish them.

However, empirical studies on customer motivations to participate in environmental sustainability programmes of hotels; customer environmental sustainability behaviours and practices in the hotels; and the extent of customer participation in hotel environmental sustainability activities are lacking especially in the Ghanaian context. At best, studies that are somewhat related to these issues rather examined customer perceptions of green hotels (Cometa, 2013); customer satisfaction with green hotels (Robinot & Giannelloni, 2010); customer attitude and barriers to customer participation (Baker et al. 2013). These studies did not specifically examine customer environmental sustainability interest and participation in sustainability activities of hotels and these influence the environmental sustainability initiatives of hotels.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

While the role of the hotel sector in environment pollution, depletion of natural resources, and climate change, may not be as profound as that of the extractive and manufacturing industries, notwithstanding, its environment impact cannot be overemphasized. The hotel sector consumes more water and energy, and generate more solid and liquid waste (Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007). This raises environmental sustainability concerns. Molina-Azorin, Claver-Cortes, Lopez-Gamero, & Tari (2009) argue that management of hotels is confronted with an increasing pressure from customers, civil societies and international agencies, among others to adopt environmental sustainability in their operations. Thus, the essence of adopting environmental sustainability initiatives and practices in the hotel sector cannot be overemphasised especially in the face of growing concerns of climate change, global warming, and increasing environmental pollution (Moreo, 2008). The call for environmental sustainability by is essential and makes it imperative for hotels to

incorporate green practices into their operations to reduce their environmental impact and contribute to the global sustainability agenda (Okeiyi, Okrah, Okeiyi, & Bryant, 2005).

Again, it appears the concept of green hotels in Ghana is new and has received the needed recognition in the hotel industry. Moreover, there is no strong customer group that have made a case for the adoption of environmentally-friendly practices and green initiatives of hotels in Ghana. Likewise, the environmental concerns of individual hotels customers seem not to be very loud to raise to attention of hotels to the need to address their growing environmental impact. Therefore, the study seeks to bridge this gap by examining the environmental practices of hotels in Ghana and how customer environmental concerns influence the environmental sustainability initiatives of hotels.

1.3 Main Objective

The study sought to examine customer interest in environmental sustainability activities and the influence of customer environment concerns on environmental sustainability initiatives of hotels in Ghana.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

- i. To identify the environmental sustainability practices of hotels
- ii. To examine the environmental sustainability practices of customers
- iii. To examine customers' expectations of how hotels should address environmental concerns
- iv. To analyse how customers' environmental concerns influence the environmental sustainability initiatives of hotels

1.4 Research Questions

The following pertinent research questions were formulated to guide the researcher in achieving the specific objectives of the study:

- i. What are the environmental sustainability practices of hotels?
- ii. What are the environmental sustainability practices of customers?
- iii. How do customers expect hotels to address their environmental concerns?
- iv. How do customers environmental concerns influence environmental sustainability initiatives of hotels?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Understanding the nexus between sustainable practices of hotels and customer hotel selection decision is crucial in the face of increasing global concerns about climate change, ozone depletion, environmental pollution, high consumption of resources, and increasing amounts of solid waste. While hotels may not fall under the category of highly hazardous pollutant industries, the impact of their activities on the environment cannot be underestimated. Therefore, the current study is very relevant as it will have meaningful implications for research, practice, and policy formulation. The study will contribute to enriching the growing literature on the concept of environmental sustainability and its application in the hotel industry. It makes a novel contribution to the existing literature by examining the influence of customers' interest and participation in sustainability on hotels uptake of sustainability initiatives.

Concerning the study's contribution to practice, the study will make a case for the integrating environmental sustainability into the operations of hotels in Ghana. Moreover,

it will provide hotel managers with insight into the need to design efficient and effective sustainability programmes and practices for their hotels. The findings will provide hoteliers in Ghana insight into the relevant sustainability standards and best principles in the global hotel industry and the need to adopt such standards and practices in Ghana towards contributing to the global sustainability agenda as enshrined in the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It appears that up till now, there is no comprehensive policy document or set of sustainability principles and standards guiding the operations of hotels in Ghana. This implies that hotels are not required by any law and legislative instrument to adhere to any specific set of sustainability principles and standards, neither are they guided by any industry regulatory framework and guidelines on sustainability practices of hotels. Therefore, at best, the adoption of sustainability initiatives by hotels in Ghana is voluntary and largely depends on the sustainability orientation of management of hotels. In this regard, the study will provide insight to policymakers on the need to formulate policies towards promoting environmental sustainability in the hospitality industry. The study will provide insight to the Ministry of Tourism, Creative Arts, and Culture; Ministry of Environment, Science, and Technology; the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA), and other relevant stakeholders in the hotel industry on the need to promote the concept of green hotels in the hospitality industry of Ghana.

1.6 Delimitation of the Study

Sustainability is a relatively broad concept that encompasses several dimensions, such as environmental, economic, governance, and social issues. However, for the purposes of this study, the concept of sustainability was limited to only one dimension –

environmental sustainability. There are a vast number of hotels of various categories across the country, which makes it very difficult to cover all of them in the study. Hence, the focus of the study in terms of geographic scope was hotels in the Greater Accra Region. This is on the basis that the majority of hotels in Ghana are located in this region. In terms of the categories of hotels, the study focused on only three-star to five-star hotels. Thus, the study did not cover budget hotels and guest houses as these categories of hotels mostly do not have a dedicated sustainability framework with an assigned hotel staff in-charge of sustainability issues.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

Also, very characteristic of the survey design, the study is likely to be affected by the challenge of non-response as some respondents may not complete the questionnaire thereby limiting the sample size which will affect the generalisation of the findings. Furthermore, as mostly associated with the questionnaire method, the study may suffer from respondents' bias which tended to affect the reliability of the results, albeit the researcher is unable to determine the extent and direction of the respondents' bias be it negative or positive.

1.8 Organisation of the Study

The study was organised in five chapters. Chapter One is the introduction to the study. It presents the background of the study, the problem statement, the purpose of the study, the research questions, the significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitations of the study, and the chapter disposition. The next chapter presents a review of relevant related literature on the topic and discusses the key concepts in the study. Chapter Three present the methodology that guides that researcher in achieving the objectives of the

study. Specifically, the chapter discusses the research paradigm, research approach, and research design for the study. It also describes the population for the study, sample and sampling technique, as well as the data collection instruments. Other sections of the chapter cover issues relating to the validity and reliability of research instruments, ethical considerations, and methods adopted for analysing the result of the study. The results of the study are presented and analysed in Chapter Four. Also, the discussion of key findings is presented in this chapter. Lastly, Chapter Five provides a summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further research are presented.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of related literature on the topic under study. The review is presented in two strands - theoretical review and empirical review. The first section comprises a discussion of the relevant concepts related to the topic, the theoretical framework underpinning the study, and the conceptual framework that shows the relationships between the key variables or concepts of the study. The empirical review section comprises a review of related prior studies on the topic to identify the gaps thereof. The empirical review section presents an overview of the literature on sustainability principles and practices of hotels, customer beliefs, attitude, behaviours relating to sustainability and the extent of their participation sustainability programmes of hotels.

2.2 Theoretical Framework of the Study

The study draws on the Theory of Reasoned Behaviour (TRA) propounded by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) to explain how customers' sustainability orientation influence their hotel selection decisions in Ghana. The TRA proposes that a person's conduct is dictated by his intention to act and that this intention is, in effect, a function of his behavioural attitude and subjective norms. In this regard, the theory postulates that the best predictor of a person's actions is intention or instrumentality (a belief that the action will contribute to the desired outcome). Instrumentality is defined by three things: their attitude toward particular behaviour, social standards, and perceived regulation of behaviour. The more

favourable the attitude and social norms, the higher the perceived power, and the stronger the intention of the individual to conduct the behaviour.

The study employed the TRA as the underlying theory on the premise that customers hotel selection decision and sustainable behaviour in hotels is influenced by their intention to lodge in sustainability friendly hotels, and their sustainability orientations influence this intention. Hence, they tend to engage in behaviours that aim at conserving water and energy, reducing waste, reusing of sheets and towels, using bio-degradable products among others when they lodge in hotels with the hope that this will influence the sustainability culture of hotels in Ghana. Besides, several studies (see Aman, Harun, & Hussein, 2012; Chen & Tung, 2014; Ramayah et al. 2010; Memar & Ahmed, 2012; Mohamad, Arifin, Samsuri, & Munir, 2014) have employed the TRA in explaining the behavioural intention of customers on environmental issues in the hospitality industry.

2.3 Overview of Hotel Industry in Ghana

Over time, Ghana has seen massive investment in its hotel industry by both domestic and foreign investors. This could be attributed to the country's political stability, macroeconomic growth, improvement in physical infrastructure, general peace and security in the country, and the efforts of the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC) and Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) in projecting the country as a good investment destination and a tourism hub respectively. Moreover, the growth of the middle-income class in Ghana in recent times has led to the development of domestic tourism.

According to PricewaterhouseCoopers's (PwC, 2017) hotels outlook report for the period, 2017 – 2021, the total number of licenced hotels in Ghana as of 2017 was 2,723.

This number comprised star-rated hotels, budget hotels, and guest houses. However, most of these have medium-to-low star ratings given their amenities, size of the property and general quality of services offered. The Greater Accra Region appears to be the hub for top-rated hotels as the majority of the three-star, four-star, and five-star hotels are located in this region. However, the quality of regional hotel supply is improving as Cape Coast, Takoradi, and Kumasi have seen the opening of new higher category hotels. In addition to the star-rated hotels, there are 137 guesthouses and 1176 budget hotels around the country. Hotel occupancy rates, especially in star-rated hotels, have been relatively high during the past decade. Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) statistics show that roughly 80 per cent occupancy rates on average for 4-star rated hotels.

Over the last few decades, several hotel chains such as Kempinski, Marriott International, Mövenpick, Accor (Novotel) and Ibis Styles have set up subsidiaries in Accra. The influx of hotels has also been seen in other regions, especially in the Western region (e.g. Best Western Atlantic Hotel) and Northern regions (e.g. Zaina Lodge). In 2015, Accra attracted 897 000 visitors and achieved 67% occupancy, average daily rate (ADR) of US\$201 and revenue per available room (RevPAR) of US\$134 (one of the highest in the region) according to STR Global. However, there was a decrease in RevPAR of 44.5% in 2016 due to the launch of Kempinski and the ibis Styles properties. The improving economic situation and political stability in the country have the potential to boost the hotel industry. Considering the investment by foreign investors in the industry through the establishment of high-rated hotels, and an increasing number of tourists and business travellers, it is expected that there would be continuous growth in the industry.

2.4 The Concept of Sustainability

The World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) declared a sustainable society to be one that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Caldwell (1998) contends that in the absence of realistic, achievable goals, the concept of sustainability offers the prospect of a continuing expansion of present economic and technological systems without serious regard to ultimate limitations to the quality of life or costs of maintenance. He argues that the sustainability of human society is the willingness and ability of human beings to engage in behaviours that would enhance, preserve, and protect the integrity of the ecosystem and make the earth a better place for current generation and posterity. This emphasises the importance of environmental sustainability to human survival, and society's future growth and development.

Though a relatively old concept, sustainability has not learned itself to an all-embracing or universally accepted definition. The concept of sustainability has been defined from different perspectives; which such definitions motivated by the overriding agenda that necessitates the conceptualisation of sustainability as an emerging phenomenon. However, Caldwell (1998) has long argued that without an understanding of its several meanings, their differences, and implications, the word risks becoming vacuous. Wilson et al. (2007) define sustainability as a multifaceted concept that is made of several components as follows: environmental factors, social factors, economic factors, and organisational factors. Prud'homme and Raymond (2013) define sustainability as a concept that is premised on the principles of intergenerational solidarity, equity, ethics, and precaution, promotes responsibility for the actions of each, to avoid risks to others

and the community, and requires a review of organisational values and beliefs of individual members.

Since its inception, sustainability has been conceptualised from the perspectives of growth, development and protection of the natural environment. It has become a very key issue in the global debate for the need to protect the earth (Aziz, Siddiq, & Ishak, 2018). Interestingly, the hotel industry has not been left out in this debate as sustainability continues to feature in high-level discussions in the international hotel industry (Upadhyay, Vadam, & Mohan, 2016). However, the application of the concept in the hospitality industry and the hotel sector for that matter has centred much on the adoption of behaviours and practices that ensures judicious use of resources and protection of the environment from harm and pollution (Ayuso, 2007; Hu & Wall, 2005). This may be attributed to the fact that though the hospitality industry is a services industry, it is said to contribute significantly to environmental pollution.

2.5 The Concept of Green Hotels

Green hotels refer to hotels that incorporate sustainability practices such as water and energy conservation, proper waste management, and recycling and reusing durable products in order to reduce their impact on the environment (Green Hotels Association, 2014). They are pro-environmental lodging properties that implement various green practices such as saving water and energy, reducing the solid waste, and recycling and reusing the durable service items (e.g., bins, towels, etc.) to protect the earth. The initiative in promoting the green hotel is not only by providing eco-friendly facilities but also includes the marketing strategy.

According to Wilson et al. (2007), the environmental responsibility in hotel business covers sustainability of renewable energy with waste minimisation and recycling, energy efficiency (like an efficient use of wind power or solar energy to produce its own electricity or hot water), pollution prevention, and keep ecological environment while making facility investments.

2.6 Dimensions of Sustainability Initiatives in the Hotel Industry

Over time, hotels have been adopting various sustainability initiatives as a response to the global demand and customer pressures for the adoption of sustainability in the hotel industry. There is no single universally accepted set of sustainability practices and standards that hotels are required to adopt across the globe. Notwithstanding, there have been attempts by the hotel industry in the US and some countries in Europe and Asia, towards integrating sustainability in the operations of hotels, albeit, this is not comprehensive or mandatory (Bohdanowicz, 2005). Ayuso (2007) contends that some of these attempts have focused for the most part on the environmental dimension of sustainability, for example, the establishment of international eco-labels such as ISO 14001 and the European Regulation EMAS (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme).

Again, the literature on the dimensions of sustainability practices in the hotel industry shows that the focus of international eco-labels and certification programmes has been on energy and water conservation, that is, the environmental dimension of sustainability (Hobson & Essex, 2001). The economic and social dimensions of sustainability appear not to be of much importance to the hotels in their attempt to integrate sustainability into their operations.

2.7 The Motivation for the Adoption of Sustainability Initiatives by Hotels

Hotels have several incentives to expand their brand profile by giving critical attention to environmental concerns of customers and concentrating on the reduction of waste, and conservation of energy and water. Hoteliers recognize that environmentally sustainability initiatives, while benefiting staff, will improve customers' trust and the green brand image of the hotel, protect the environment and increase hotel revenues. Moreover, when hotels are able to address their customers' environmental concerns, they can be sure of sustainable long-term market growth and brand image. For example, Gupta (2017) contends that a growing consumer base exists for green hotels, and the adoption of environmental-friendly practices can be used as a marketing strategy by hotels. Therefore, the need for hotels to address customers' environmental concerns cannot be overemphasized. Hence, some researchers have found the need to investigate how hotels are responding to customers' environmental concerns.

Mohamad, Arifin, Samsuri, & Munir (2014) contend that in the face of growing global awareness of sustainability and the increasing demand from various stakeholders for businesses to adopt sustainability, hotels are beginning to recognise the essence of adopting sustainability principles and practices in their operations. Hotels undertake environmentally-friendly initiatives mostly to conserve water and energy as well as reduce solid waste (Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007). Apart from these reasons, hotels are encouraged to engage in environmentally-friendly initiatives as a way of addressing customers' environmental concerns or complying with government's and industry's environmental regulatory policies.

In their study on environmental practices of hotels, Mbarasa et al. (2016) examined the reasons why hotels undertake sustainable environmental initiatives. It was found that the key motives for the adoption of green initiatives by hotels were to conserve resources (energy, water, and other resources), reduce the cost of operation, protect the environment, encourage compliance with environmental safety policies and guidelines among staff and guests, and to use a green brand image as a marketing strategy. Cost savings were to be achieved through the efficient use of energy and water, reduction in waste of resources, and preventing environmental pollution. It can be deduced from the findings that the main motive for the implementation of green initiatives is cost reduction through the judicious use of resources especially water and energy. For example, it was reported by some of the hotel managers that the reason for the adoption of green initiatives in their hotels was not to reduce the negative environmental impact of their operations. This implies that the green initiatives of the hotels were not necessarily aimed at addressing customers' environmental concerns but where employed a cost reduction strategy of the hotels.

Adbou, Hassan, and El Mief (2020) examined the motives that influence star-rated hotels in Egypt to adopt green practices. The study revealed that the key reasons that motivate hotels to implement green initiatives and carried out green practices were: to create a green brand image for themselves to attract environmental sustainability-conscious customers, commitment towards environmental sustainability, cost savings, as a marketing strategy to increase market share and to address customers environmental concerns. The findings show that the underlying reasons for the implementation of green

initiatives by hotels is to reduce cost of operation, increase market share, and reduce negative environmental impact.

It is interesting to note that despite the increasing attention to sustainability, the level of adoption of sustainability practices by hotels remains modest. For example, Ayuso (2007) asserts that less than 1.5% of Spanish hotels possessed an environmental certification. In a survey done within six European regions, only 30% of tourism SMEs declared having a formal environmental policy (CAST, 2009). Moreover, in the Canadian hospitality industry, 14% of establishments were “Green Key” certified, a program offered by the Hotel Association of Canada (Green Key Global, 2010). Even with hotels that have acquired green certifications, Aziz et al. (2016) provide evidence that some do not have an environmental policy. They contend that majority of hotels in Malaysia had green certifications such as EarthCheck, ISO14001, ASEAN Green Hotel. However, they failed to comply with the requirement that certified hotels should have comprehensive environmental policy and management framework in place to guide their green hotel practices.

According to Hobson and Essex (2001), environmentally conscious hotel managers tend to adopt environmental-centred sustainability practices initiatives to contribute to the global sustainability agenda. Other hotels, as indicated by Paradas (2006), adopt sustainability practices unknowingly. Still, others adopt sustainability programmes as a marketing strategy to promote their green hotel marketing agenda (Barr et al., 2003). Furthermore, others adopt sustainability orientation is a strategy to minimise the negative

impacts of their activities on natural, cultural and social environments given its reliance on nature and culture to thrive.

The literature shows that hotels adopt sustainability programmes for various reasons other than just protecting the environment. At best, hotels will weigh the economic benefits of their sustainability programmes against the cost involved in undertaking such programmes. Again, since there is no adequate empirical evidence on the revenue gains accruing to green hotels beyond the mere indication by customers that they will pay a premium for lodging in green hotels, the monetary motivation for the adoption of sustainability programmes remains far-fetched.

2.8 Factors that Influence Consumer Hotel Selection Decision

Several factors influence the hotel selection decisions of customers. Some of the common factors, as revealed by extant literature, include product or service offering, location, price, brand name and reputation, security, service quality. For instance, concerning customer's satisfaction and hotel choice, hotel's location is more important for business travellers (Chan & Wong, 2006). In contrast, the cost of the room is a more important criterion for leisure travellers (Watkins, 2003). Also, other studies have shown that the customer's demographic characteristics (gender, age, income level, social status, and education level) and the purpose of the trip (business or leisure) influence their hotel selection decisions. Other determinants of customer intention to patronise a hotel include the serene environment, the comfort of rooms, customer service, security, reputation, physical structure, location, internet access, among other factors.

Similar study has been conducted by Liu, Hong, and Li (2016) who examined the factors that influence customers intention to lodge in a green hotel in Taiwan. Among the key factors that were examined, the results showed that brand image, perceived green value, and green trust had significant positive relationship with customers intention to patronize a green hotel. Also, brand image, perceived green value, and green trust had significant positive relationship with green consumption attitude. Moreover, it was found that green consumption attitude of customers has a significant positive relationship with customers intention to visit a green hotel. The results suggest that the key factors that influence a customer intention to patronize a green hotel are green brand image, perception of the value received from green hotels, and belief in relevance and importance of the green initiatives of the hotel.

A more recent study by Muniandy, Rahim, Ahmi, and Rahman (2019) investigated the factors that influence customers intention to lodge in green hotels in Malaysia. The results showed that customers intention to visit a green hotel is influenced by their attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, and environmental concern. Moreover, it was found that the attitude of customers towards environmentally-friendly practices of hotels mediate their subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. Furthermore, the results showed that perceived behavioural control influences customers environmental concern which influences their hotel selection decision and preference for green hotels.

Though extant literature has revealed that several factors influence customers hotel selection decision, it appears less attention has been given to the influence of the

sustainable orientation of customers on their hotel selection decision. While a serene hotel environment was mentioned as one of the factors that influence customers' hotel selection decisions, one should not confuse the appearance of the word "environment" with the environmental dimension of sustainability. It is important to state that the serenity of a hotel environment does not mean that a hotel engages in eco-friendly or sustainability practices.

2.9 Empirical Review

Customer interest and participation in environmental sustainability activities can be said to influence the attitude of hotels towards the adoption of environmental sustainability principles and standards in the hotel industry. This section presents a review relevant literature on environmental sustainability practices of hotels, customers interest and participation in environmental sustainability activities, customers' expectations of environmental sustainability practices of hotels, and the influence of customer environmental concerns on hotels uptake of environmental sustainability initiatives. Other issues that have been discussed in the review relate to motivations for the adoption of sustainability principles and practices in the hotel industry; the challenges that hinder hotels' adaptation of sustainability; and the factors that account for the differences in the attitude of hotels towards the concept of sustainability.

A study by Baker et al. (2013) examined the effects of customers interest and participation in sustainability activities on the uptake of sustainability programmes and practices by hotels in the United States. The study relied on primary data from a sample of 208 respondents recruited through an online survey, and the data were analysed using

the descriptive statistics and multiple regression techniques. It was found that the perceived importance of environmentally-friendliness and the inconvenience of being environmentally friendly had a significant positive impact on customers' intention to patronise green hotels. On the contrary, the severity of environmental problems and the level of corporate social responsibility of hotels were found to have no significant influence on customers' choice of green hotels. Besides, in terms of customers' willingness to pay a premium for a green hotel, it was found that customers would only pay a premium if they realise that hotels bear an opportunity cost by adopting sustainability. This appears to suggest that sustainability beliefs and attitude of customers have a significant influence on their hotel selection decisions. The authors suggested that hoteliers should actively educate individuals of the importance of being environmentally friendly through environmental campaigns and information tools such as brochures and placards, or hotel should educate the guest on the hotel's green programs to gain cooperation in participating in those programs.

Mohamad, Arifin, Samsuri, and Munir (2014) investigated the factors that influence customer intention to patronise green hotels. The theory of reasoned action and the marketing mix model was adopted as the underlying theories that underpin the study. The study employed the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) technique to analyse the effect of personal traits and marketing strategy on customers' intention to patronise green hotels using a sample of 200 hotel guests sourced from two hotels in Malaysia. The results show that customers' personal trait variables such as environmental knowledge, environmental attitude, self-image, and social influence had a significant influence on their intention to patronise a green hotel. Furthermore, the results showed that the marketing strategy of a

hotel in terms of product offering, price, location, promotion packages had a significant influence on purchase intention of customers. The findings appear to suggest that aside from the typical determinants of customer hotel selection decision, the sustainability orientation and awareness of customers have a strong influence on the decision to patronise a green hotel.

Prud'homme & Raymond (2013) examined the impact of sustainability practices of hotels on customer satisfaction and purchase intentions. The study involved a sample of 3200 respondents selected from among customers of 11 hotels in the Quebec Province of Canada. Data were collected through a self-administered questionnaire and analysed using mean scores and the SEM technique. The study found a significant positive relationship between sustainability practices of hotels and customer satisfaction. That is, customers indicated that they receive higher satisfaction from hotels that adopt sustainability practices in their service delivery. The findings show that the adoption of sustainability practices by hotels will minimise the negative effect of hotel operations on the environment. Moreover, factors such as demographic characteristics of customers, customer responsible behaviours (attitude towards consumption of natural resources, waste management, water and energy consumption, other sustainable practices), and characteristics of stay (purpose of stay and length of stay) had a significant influence on customer hotel selection decisions. However, the results showed that the level of customer satisfaction with the services of green hotels varies significantly according to hotel size and type of ownership (independent or chain of hotels).

Upadhyay, Vadam, and Mohan (2016) conducted a review of literature on sustainability practices of hotels with a focus on energy consumption. The review aimed to explore the potential of incorporating energy conservation techniques and measures in hotel operating agreements in order to monitor, control, and reduce energy usage within hotels. The review revealed that sustainability had become a burning issue in the hotel industry with an emphasis on energy efficiency. It was found that aside from employment cost, energy consumption is the next single most significant recurrent expenditure of hotels and accounts for about 3-6 percent of the cost of operations of hotels across the globe. Also, it emerged that energy consumption by hotels contributes about 60% of their total CO₂ emissions. The review shows that while energy consumption contributes significantly to the cost of operations of hotels, it is one of the sustainability issues that can be easily controlled and reduced. This implies that when hotels adopt efficient energy consumption mechanisms, it will help in reducing their cost of production and thereby increase their revenue.

Furthermore, Upadhyay et al. (2016) analysed the factors that contribute to energy consumption in hotels. The major factors that contribute to high energy consumption in hotels were found to include materials used in insulation and lightening of buildings, the type of electronic equipment and gadgets used in hotels, the size of a hotel building, hotel category and the kind of services provided. Others included the general climatic condition of hotels, the type of energy policies in terms of prices and tariffs, hotel's energy management policy, and the number of occupancy and energy used by guests. Also, it emerged that the temperature mainly determines energy consumption in hotels within the hotel as it contributes to 69 percent of the total energy consumption in hotels.

Thus, activities such as room heating and hot water, and air conditioning and fan are major activities that contribute significantly to the energy consumption of hotels.

Concerning energy conservation measures adopted by hotels, Upadhyay et al. (2016) found that hotels could reduce their energy consumption in these areas: room heating and air conditioning, lighting and use of television and radio, heating, cooling and use of electronic equipment in the kitchen, laundry, lighting, cooling, and gadgets in offices, use of solar energy and other renewable energy options such as wind and biofuel. Concerning the integration of sustainability into the hotel operations, it was recommended that regulators of the hotel industry should incorporate sustainability in hotel operating agreements and brand standards while sanctioning hotels that fail to comply with sustainability measures. Again, it was suggested that hotels should communicate their sustainability best practices and measures to their employees, guests, investors, and other stakeholders in the industry. Moreover, hotels should create awareness of their guests about sustainability and train their staff in sustainability practices. Lastly, the review suggests a sustainability certification system where every hotel is encouraged to be certified and recognised for its performance in sustainability through award schemes.

A study by Aziz, Siddiq, and Ishak (2018) examined the sustainability practices of hotels in Malaysia with a focus on the environmental dimension of sustainability. The study relied on data from interviews conducted with the key management staff of 35 hotels comprising five-star and four-star rated hotels only. The results show that top-rated hotels in Malaysia adopt various sustainability initiatives aimed at creating awareness of their guests and encouraging them to participate in the environmental sustainability

programmes of the hotels. It was found that the sustainability programmes of the hotels revolved around three critical environmental issues - water conservation, energy conservation, and waste control. Concerning support for sustainability in hotels, it was revealed that the hotels adopted sustainability friendly room design concepts as a way of promoting their sustainability agenda. However, it emerged that despite the adoption of rigorous environmental sustainability programmes by the hotels, the majority of them did not have a well-documented environmental policy though it is a major requirement for green certifications by recognised bodies.

In their study on green hotels, Singhal, Deepak, and Marwaha (2018) investigated the green initiatives and practices of hotels in India. The study revealed that hotels in India adopt various kinds of green technology programs such as WelcomEnviron, the EARTH program, and the George Fisher Concealed Cistern, to support their environmental sustainability agenda. It was found that the majority of hotels in India have acquired environmental and green certification from reputable agencies. Furthermore, it was revealed that as part of their corporate social responsibility, hotels now showcase their environmentally friendly practices. Also, hotels are continuously implementing strategies to ensure minimal harm to the environment.

Kim, Palakurthi, and Hancer (2012) analysed the influence of eco-friendly initiatives of green programmes of hotels on customers intention to lodge in a hotel. The study employed the web-based online survey approach in collecting data from customer sampled from 63 online travel communities. Data were analysed using the multiple regression technique. The results showed that eco-friendly initiatives such as energy

conservation programmes, waste management, proper housekeeping, and water conservation, and biodiversity programmes had a significant influence on customers intentions to patronise green hotels. Moreover, it was revealed that customer awareness of and demand for eco-friendly hotels were greatly influenced by the gender, age, and income levels of customers.

Verma and Chandra (2016) examined the factors that influence the guests' intention to lodge in green hotels and participate in green programmes of hotels. The study employed an online survey method and administered a questionnaire to 168 hotel guests lodging in four-star and five-star hotels in two cities (Varanasi and Uttar Pradesh) in India. Data was analysed using both descriptive statistics and analysis of variance. It was found that guests had favourable intentions to revisit hotels that had endorsed the green hotel concept. Specifically, it was revealed that guests exhibited a positive attitude towards green initiatives such as the use of LED light bulbs in guestrooms, provision of recycling bins in guestroom and hotel lobby, and green certification of hotels. On the contrary, it appears the guests were not very enthused with practices such as the reuse of towels, the use of refillable shampoo dispensers, the infrequent change of bedsheets.

In another development, a few studies have explored the underlying reasons why customers participate in sustainability programmes of hotels. For instance, At the individual consumer level, some studies have examined customer's attitudes toward environmental practices that have been adopted in the hospitality industry (Dalton et al., 2008). Dalton et al. (2008) found that customers' responsible behaviours at home related to natural resources consumption and waste management influence their hotel selection

decisions. To encourage customer participation in sustainability programmes of hotels, Tzschentke, Kirk, and Lynch (2008) suggested that hotels should create the awareness of guests of their sustainability initiatives by informing them of the rationale behind their initiatives and explaining ways guests can participate in such initiatives.

In a study by Suki and Suki (2014), they examined the relationship between consumers environmental behaviour and their intention to lodge in a green hotel in Malaysia. The study used a sample of 400 respondents who had visited a green hotel at least once during the year the study was carried out. The results showed that tourists' intention to lodge in a green hotel was significantly influenced by their perceived behavioural control and attitude. Perceived behavioural control was defined as a person's belief regarding the availability of and access to all necessary resources and opportunities to engage in a particular behaviour (environmentally-friendly behaviour) in a hotel. Attitude was defined as an individual's feelings toward performing a behaviour or taking an action (i.e. visiting a green hotel). On the other hand, the findings showed that there is no significant relationship between subjective norm and tourists' intention to lodge in a green hotel.

Another study on customer behaviour towards environmentally-friendly practices of hotels had been carried out by Gupta (2017) in India. The study found that customers expected hotels to train their employees in environmental performance, communicate the green practices of hotels to guests through brochures, leaflets, and other media, participate in environmental partnership programmes and green certification activities, conserve energy and water in hotel rooms, recycle materials, ensure proper waste management, adopt a towel and linen reuse policy, adopt green purchasing policy, and

usage of more organic products. The findings showed that customers have an interest in the green practices of hotels and will choose an environmentally-friendly hotel over a standard hotel of the same category when making their hotel selection decisions. Notwithstanding, the results showed that customers are not willing to pay an extra cost to lodge in green hotels despite their preference for eco-friendly hotels. That is, customers are not willing to pay for the green initiatives of hotels as they believe that the adoption of environmentally-friendly should translate into cost savings to the hotel.

A few studies have examined the factors that hinder the success of environmental sustainability initiatives of hotels. Mbarasa et al. (2016) identified the difficulty hotel managers encounter in the selection of the appropriate environmental sustainability practices for their hotels as one of the challenges that hinder the success of their green initiatives. Hence, they recommended that hotels managers should acquire training and awareness in the implementation of green hotel initiatives. Also, their study found that hotels while some hotels in South Africa comprehensive green management policy documents that guide them in the implementation of their green hotel initiatives, hotels in Zimbabwe did not have written green management policies. At best, the only policy that bore semblance of a green management document was waste management policy, albeit, hotels in both South Africa and Zimbabwe were found to engage in some forms of green initiatives that emphasize the conservation of water and energy as well as proper management of solid and liquid waste. The lack of green management policy was said to affect the quality and successful implementation of green initiatives as there were no standards, rules and guidelines to follow and documents to train hotel staff on green initiatives.

A careful review of existing literature on the topic, as discussed above, shows that the issue of environmental sustainability practices of hotels has been extensively researched. The literature has provided substantial and corroborated evidence on the examples of environmental sustainability practices of hotels across various countries in the world. The review revealed that the hospitality industry faces increasing pressure to operate in an eco-friendlier manner, given its negative effect on the natural environment. This pressure comes not only from externally imposed government regulations but also from stakeholder demands, which are becoming critical stimulators. Hence, it is not surprising that in recent times there have been increasing demands from customers, civil society groups, environmental protection agencies, and other stakeholders for the hospitality industry to engage in sustainability practices actively.

Also, the review shows that customers are gradually becoming conscious of the impact of hotels activities on the environment. In this regard, they are beginning to incorporate sustainability into their hotel selection decisions, albeit, the literature in this area is not extensive. However, the existing literature has not explored in-depth how customer prior interest and participation in sustainability affect their hotel selection decisions. The focus of existing studies has instead been from the side of hotels, i.e. how hotels sustainability practices influence customer satisfaction and purchase intention. However, is it not far-fetched to argue that customers environmental sustainability orientation in terms of their interest and participation in sustainability activities prior to making their intention to patronise a hotel strongly influence their decisions on the green hotels? Thus, ordinarily, customers will only assess the sustainability practices of hotels against their sustainability expectations when deciding the eco-friendliness or otherwise of a hotel. This implies that

using sustainability practices of hotels as the only set of variables for assessing customers intention to patronise a green hotel will be one-sided and misleading. Again, the existing studies failed to explore how customers sustainability orientation influence hotels uptake of sustainability initiatives or prompt hotels to modify their existing sustainability programmes.

2.10 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that explains the relationship between the key variables of the study is presented in Figure 2.1 as follows:

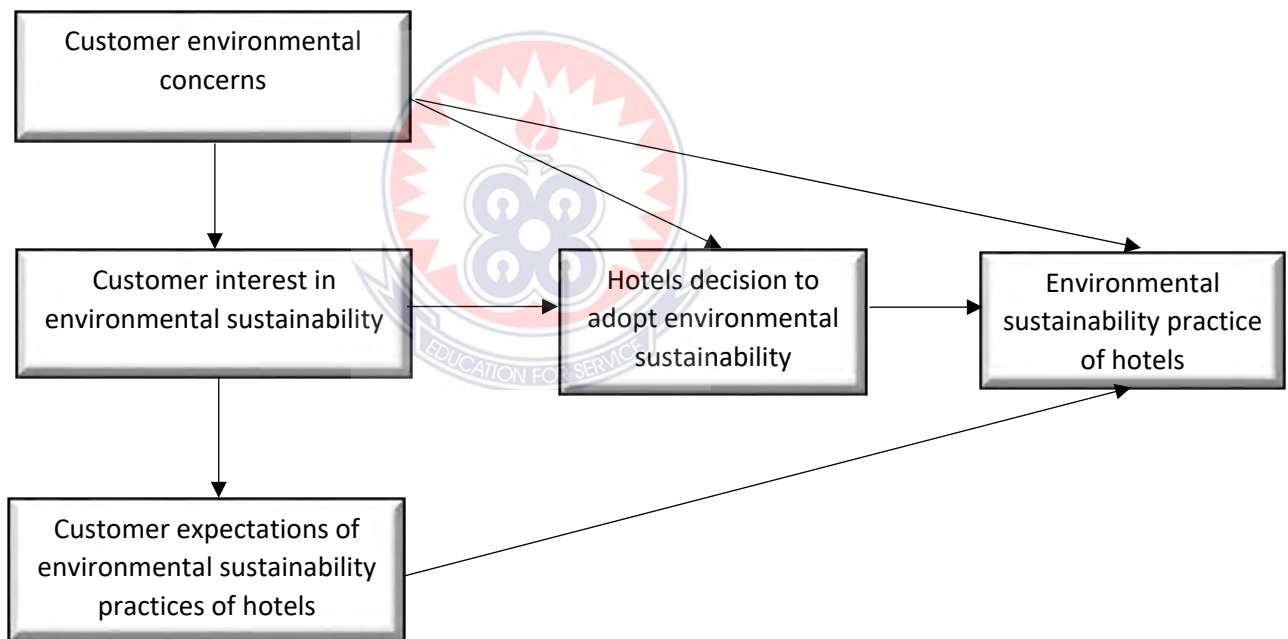
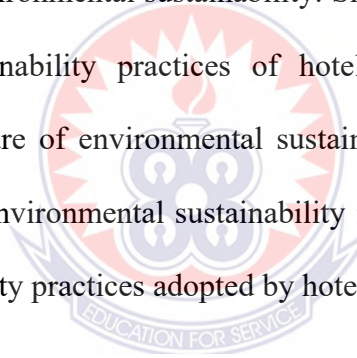


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher's Construct (2020)

The conceptual framework presented in Figure 2.1 was developed based on the proposition of the theory of reasoned action which states that a person's conduct is dictated by his intention to act and that this intention is, in effect, a function of his

behavioural attitude and subjective norms. In this framework, the researcher argues that customers environmental concerns influence their interest in issues of environmental sustainability while customer interest in environmental sustainability influences their expectations of environmental sustainability practices of hotels. Moreover, it is postulated that customer environmental concerns among other motives influence the decision of hotels to implement environmental sustainability initiatives. Again, it has been argued that environmental concerns expressed by customers while lodging in a hotel, influence the nature of environmental sustainability initiatives and practices of hotels. Besides, customer interest in environmental sustainability is shown to have a direct relationship with hotels' uptake of environmental sustainability. Similarly, customers' expectations of the environmental sustainability practices of hotels are deemed to have a direct relationship with the nature of environmental sustainability practices of hotels. Lastly, hotels decision to adopt environmental sustainability is shown to influence the nature of environmental sustainability practices adopted by hotels.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The survey research method was employed to aid the researcher in the collection and analysis of data. Survey research is a type of research in which the researcher collects numerical data from people about their characteristics, views, opinions, beliefs, attitudes, or experiences with a phenomenon by asking them a series of predefined questions to draw inferences about a population from the responses of the sample (Ormrod & Leedy, 2016). The survey research method was employed as it enables the researcher to collect numerical data from a large sample to generalise the findings of the study to the entire population. Moreover, the choice of the survey research design is in line with the quantitative approach to research that underpins the study.

3.2 Population

The population comprised hotel staff and customers of all the 472 star-rated (one-star to five-star) hotels in the Greater Region of Ghana. The population was limited to star-rated hotels because such hotels appear to show interest in environmental sustainability issues and are taking steps towards implementing green practices in line with the growing concept of green hotels in the global hotel industry.

3.3 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The total number of top star-rated (3-star, 4-star, 5-star) hotels in Accra at the time of the study was 90, however, the study selected 73 hotels as the sample size from which the respondents were solicited based on the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining

sample size (see table in Appendix 3). The selection of the 73 sampled hotels was based on the following reasons: Firstly, the Accra Metropolis was selected as the study area because the majority of the star-rated hotels in Ghana are located in this geographic area. Secondly, only top star-rated (3-star, 4-star, 5-star hotels) hotels were selected on the premise that, unlike lower star-rated and budget hotels, top star-rated hotels are under some amount of pressure to adhere to international hotel best practices such as the adoption of the green hotel concept due to the calibre and background of guests who visit such hotels.

The stratified sampling technique was employed in selecting the 73 hotels based on their star-rating classifications. Thus, using the sampling fraction or proportional allocation technique, the number of hotels from each of the star-rating categories to be included in the sample will be a proportion of the total number of star-rated hotels in the region to the total sample size. The sample distribution is shown in Table 3.1 as follows:

Table 3.1 Sample Distribution of Hotels according to Star Ratings

Category of Hotels	Number of Hotels	The proportion in the Sample
Five Star	3	2
Four Star	15	12
Three Star	72	59
Total	90	73

The study was carried out on a sample of 219 respondents selected from 73 hotels (3-star, 4-star, 5-star) in the Accra Metropolis. The respondents were made up of one hotel staff in charge of environmental management or sustainability and two hotel guests selected

from each of the 73 sampled hotels. The hotel staff were selected through the purposive sampling technique on the basis that those selected are well-versed in the issue been investigated and therefore are in a better position to provide beneficial and reliable responses. On the other hand, the guests were selected through the convenience sampling technique on the basis that those selected were those available, consented to participate in the study, and were ready at the time of data collection.

3.4 Data Collection Instrument

The questionnaire was structured as closed-ended questions which require the respondents to select only the options that best describe their position on a particular response item. The questionnaire was in two sets, one for the hotel staff and the other for hotel customers. The questionnaire for the hotel staff comprised three sections as follows: Section A comprised response items on the background information of the respondents. Section B comprised response items on the environmental sustainability practices of hotels while Section C was made up of response items on the influence of customers' environmental concerns on hotels uptake of environmental sustainability initiatives. The questionnaire for hotel guests comprised three sections as follows: Section A focused on the background characteristics of the respondents; Section B comprised response items on customers environmental sustainability activities; Section C focused on customers' expectations of environmental sustainability practices of hotels. The response items in Section A of both sets of questionnaires were designed as dichotomous response categories. On the other hand, the response items in the remaining sections of the two sets of questionnaires were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging between strongly disagree and strongly agree.

3.5 Validity and Reliability of Instrument

In using a self-developed questionnaire for the first time, it is imperative to test its validity and reliability before using it in any study. The validity of an instrument has to do with how to fit it is in terms of measuring what is designed to measure to help in achieving the study objectives. On the other hand, reliability has to do with how consistent the instrument is in terms of producing the same or similar results upon repeated trials (Saunders et al., 2016).

The validity of the questionnaire was ensured, first by making sure that it is designed based on the specific objectives of the study; every response items can be directly linked to a specific objective; relevant constructs from prior related literature are used as a guide in designing the instrument; a draft of the instrument is submitted to the thesis supervisor for perusal and academic advice; a draft of the instrument is submitted to academics and experts in sustainability and green practices. All these steps were taken to improve the content validity of the questionnaire.

Another issue worth considering and given critical attention to is the reliability of the question. To ensure that the questionnaire was reliable, a draft was pre-tested through a pilot study using 15 respondents. The results from the pilot study were analysed using Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient test in Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 26) to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire. The test produced an alpha coefficient of 0.78, which implied that the questionnaire was reliable. The researcher arrived at this conclusion based on the rule of thumb of Tavakol and

Dennick (2011) that an alpha coefficient that ranges 0.70 - 0.90 is right in determining the reliability of a research instrument.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

This study used human beings as respondents, and so there was the need to comply with the ethical principles of social science research as well as the ethical research guidelines issued by the School of Graduate Studies of the University of Education, Winneba. Therefore, during data collection, ethical issues relating to informed consent of respondents, the anonymity of respondents, and confidentiality of information, were taken into serious consideration.

3.7 Data Analysis

The analysis of quantitative data involves the use of mainly descriptive and inferential statistics. In survey research, the use of inferential statistics in analysing the results is deemed more appropriate as they allow sample results to be generalised to the population. For data analysis, numerical data obtained through the questionnaire were edited, coded, and entered in SPSS (version 26) and analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. For the descriptive statistical analysis part, the study employed frequencies, means, and standard deviations. In addition to these, the inferential statistical analysis involved the use of multiple regression technique. Finally, the results were presented in tables where necessary to enhance readability.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of results from the questionnaire in relation to the objectives of the study. The analysis covers the demographic characteristics of the respondents, sustainability practices of hotels, customers interest and participation in sustainability activities, customers' expectations of sustainability practices of hotels, and customers' sustainability orientation and hotels uptake of sustainability initiatives. It also presents a discussion of the results of the study and how they apply to the existing literature.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Out of the target respondents of 73 hotel staff, only 36 of them accepted to participate in the study and thoroughly answered the questionnaire administered to them. This represents a response rate of 49.31%. Besides, concerning the total sample of 219 respondents, the questionnaire was administered to only 108, which represents a response rate of 49.31%. The actual number of respondents appear to be low when compared to the total sample as the research was able to reach or have access to only 52 out of the 73 sampled hotels. Even with the 52 hotels that the researcher visited, 16 of them declined access; hence the data was collected from only 36 hotels. The demographic characteristics of the two groups of respondents are presented in Table 4.1 and Table 4.2 as follows:

Table 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (Hotel Customers)

Characteristics	Freq.	%
Gender		
Male	50	69.4
Female	22	30.6
Age Group		
Below 30 years	14	19.4
30 – 49	38	52.8
50 years and above	20	27.8
Level of Education		
Basic education	3	4.2
Secondary/Vocational education	21	29.2
Tertiary	48	66.7
Nationality		
Ghanaian	43	59.7
Foreign national	29	40.3
Length of Stay		
1 - 4 nights	4	5.6
5 - 9 nights	33	45.8
10 - 15 nights	24	33.3
More than 15 nights	11	15.3
Purpose of Stay		
Leisure	18	25.0
Business	37	51.4
Tour	17	23.6
Sustainability Consciousness		
Yes	54	75.0
No	18	25.0



The results shown in Table 4.1 represent the demographic characteristics of hotel customers who participated in the study. The gender distribution of the respondents was 69.4% and 30.6% for males and females respectively. This shows that majority of the customers of the top-rated hotels in Accra are males. In terms of the age group of the respondents, it emerged that slightly over half of them, representing 52.8% were adults between the ages of 30 – 49. Also, 27.8% of them were 50 years or above. This show that

nearly 80% of the sampled hotel customers were adults above the age of 30 and therefore had a fair idea of climate change and increasing environmental concerns over the last few decades. The results show that majority of the hotel customers had attained a minimum of secondary or vocational education with 66.7%, indicating that they have attained tertiary education. Thus, nearly 95% of the respondents had attained secondary/vocational education or tertiary education. This means that majority of them had attained some appreciable level of education and therefore could read and understand the questionnaire. Again, over half of the respondents were Ghanaian nationals, with 40.3% being foreign nationals.

Furthermore, it was revealed that over 90% of the hotel customers had stayed in their respective hotels for five nights or more. This means that most respondents had been in their hotels for several days and therefore better able to provide a fair assessment of the hotel's sustainability practices. Slightly over half of the representing 51.4% were people who had embarked on business trips in Accra and needed to lodge in hotels. In contrast, the remaining hotel customers were tourists or only visited the hotels for leisure. A significant result worth noting is that about three-quarter (75%) of the hotel customers indicated that they were concerned about sustainability issues. This implies that majority of the respondents were individuals with considerable interest in sustainability issues and therefore were willing to give a proper assessment of the sustainability practices of the hotels.

Table 4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (Hotel Staff)

Characteristics	Freq.	%
Gender		
Male	25	69.4
Female	11	30.6
Age Group		
Below 30 years	7	19.4
30 – 49	18	50.0
50 years and above	11	30.6
Highest Education Qualification		
Bachelor’s degree	20	55.6
Postgraduate degree	14	38.9
Professional qualification	2	5.6
Job Position		
General Manager	28	77.8
Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) Manager	4	11.1
Sustainability Officer	4	11.1
Years of Work Experience		
1 - 4 years	7	19.4
5 - 9 years	14	38.9
10 years and above	15	41.7

The demographic characteristics of the key hotel staff, as described in Table 4.2, indicate that 69.4% of the employees were males. This appears to suggest that majority of the key staff responsible for environmental management issues in the top hotels in Accra are males. This may well be a mere coincidence as sustainability issues know no gender, and there is no empirical evidence to show that men are better managers of sustainability programmes than women.

Concerning the age of the hotel staff, 50.0% were between 30 and 49 years old, with only 20.0% under 30 years old. This implies the majority of the hotel staff were adults who have experienced the changing climatic conditions and the increasing environmental concerns over the last few decades and therefore could appreciate the essence of

incorporating sustainability into the operations of hotels. Also, the minimum qualification of all the hotel staff was a bachelor's degree. However, about 38.9% of them indicated that they had acquired postgraduate degrees in addition to their bachelor's degree, while 5.6% had attained other professional qualifications. It appears that the majority of the top-rated hotels in Accra do not have a dedicated job position for sustainability and its related activities. However, it appears such area is usually under the role of the general manager as by 77.8% of the respondents. About 11.1% of the respondents stated that they were solely in charge of the sustainability activities of their hotels, and so had the job title "sustainability officer". Besides, health, safety and environmental officers have handled the sustainability issues of some of the hotels, as shown by 11.1% of the respondents. In terms of years of work experience, it was found that slightly over 80.0% of the hotel staff have been in charge of the sustainability issues in hotels for five years or more. This means that majority of the hotel staff selected as respondents had appreciable years of work experience in sustainability issues for that matter were well versed in the sustainability programmes and practices of their respective hotels. This was very important as by their long years of work experience; they were in a better position to contribute meaningfully in enriching the results of the study.

4.3 Environmental Sustainability Practices of Hotels

The results in Table 4.3 are in respect of the environmental sustainability practices of hotels from the perspective of key hotel staff responsible for sustainability issues.

Table 4.3 Environmental Sustainability Practices of Hotels

Environmental Sustainability Practices of Hotels	Mean	SD
Use of energy-efficient light bulbs	4.94	0.23
Create guests' awareness about sustainability policies of the hotel upon arrival	4.56	0.65
Encourage guests to switch off their room light, fan, air conditioner, sockets and other electronic gadgets when leaving the room	4.53	0.74
Implementation of towel reuse policy	4.42	0.87
Paste notices of the hotel's sustainability policies, regulations, and practices in the guest lobby and guestrooms	4.31	0.71
Use of energy-efficient electrical appliances	4.25	0.94
Adoption of proper waste management practices	4.22	0.83
Regular room check by hotel staff to ensure lights, fan and air conditioners, sockets and other electronic gadgets in unoccupied rooms have been turned off	4.14	0.93
Encourage judicious use of water	4.08	1.13
Provision of recycling bins in guestrooms, kitchens, offices, and other sitting spaces	3.89	1.35
Use of refillable amenity dispensers	3.83	1.21
Adoption of an energy-saving ventilation system	3.53	1.42
Ensure strict adherence to eco-friendly practices by both staff and guests	2.97	1.34
Three days bedsheets changing policy	2.56	1.34
Conversion of human waste into biogas for use in the hotel	2.22	1.33
Use of solar energy system	2.14	1.36
Use of organic foodstuffs as against inorganic foodstuffs where possible	2.03	1.32

It can be observed from Table 4.3 that hotels in the Accra Metropolis have put in place measures to ensure that both their staff and guests engage in laid down sustainability practices in line with the sustainability agenda of the respective hotels. The results show that the major sustainability practices enforced in the sampled hotels were as follows: the use of energy-efficient LED light bulbs in hotels rooms other spaces within the hotel ($\bar{x} = 4.94$), creating awareness of guests about sustainability policies and practices of the hotel upon arrival ($\bar{x} = 4.56$), encouraging guests to switch off their room lights, sockets, fans,

air conditioners and other electronic gadgets when leaving the room ($\bar{x} = 4.53$), washing and reusing of towels till they become quite worn-out ($\bar{x} = 4.42$), pasting of notices containing the sustainability policy and regulations of the hotel and the practices that guests must engage in while at the hotel ($\bar{x} = 4.31$), and the implementation of a deliberate policy on the use of energy-saving electronic gadgets in the hotel ($\bar{x} = 4.25$).

Also, the majority of the hotel staff responsible for sustainability issues of their hotels indicated that in addition to the sustainability practices as mentioned earlier, their hotels undertake other practices or measures such as the adoption of proper and safe waste management system ($\bar{x} = 4.22$), conducting regular checks in unoccupied hotel rooms to ensure that lights and other electronic gadgets are turned off ($\bar{x} = 4.14$), ensuring the judicious use of water ($\bar{x} = 4.08$), provision of recycling bins in guestrooms, kitchens, offices, and other sitting spaces ($\bar{x} = 3.89$), provision of refillable amenity dispensers in guestrooms ($\bar{x} = 3.83$), and adoption of an energy-saving ventilation system in hotel rooms ($\bar{x} = 3.53$).

It appears that in the implementation of their sustainability agenda, management of hotels in the Accra Metropolis does not attach much importance or seriousness to other practices and measures that may well have contributed towards the full achievement of their sustainability agenda. For example, some equally essential sustainability practices per the findings of prior related studies have somewhat been given less importance or ignored by the sampled hotels as indicated by the low mean scores of these practices based on the responses from the hotel staff. These include ensuring the strict adherence of both hotel staff and guests to eco-friendly practices, the implementation of a three-day

bedsheet change policy, the development of an infrastructure to convert human waste to biogas for generating electricity, and the use of solar energy systems as an alternative source of electricity, and the use of more organic foodstuffs as against inorganic foodstuffs at the kitchen of the hotels' restaurants.

The findings of the sustainability practices conducted by Accra Metropolis hotels indicate that star-rated hotels in Accra have adopted the concept of sustainability and demonstrate this in their hotel activities. In their attempt to project their hotels as sustainability or eco-friendly hotels, the hotels followed various forms of sustainability practices. Moreover, it can be inferred from the findings that the sustainability practices of the hotels centred on water conservation, energy conservation, waste management and control, and cost reduction.

The findings about the sustainability practices of hotels and the nature of these practices show that hotels the underlying objectives for undertaking such practices was to ensure efficient use of resources and operate in a way that minimises the negative impact of their activities on the environment. The findings are consistent with that of Ayuso (2007) and others such as Hu and Wall (2005) that hotel sustainability practices seek to encourage behaviours and practices that ensure that resources are used wisely and that the environment is protected from pollution. Also, the findings corroborate that of Aziz et al. (2018). They found that the sustainability programmes of the hotels revolved around three critical environmental issues - water conservation, energy conservation, and waste control.

Furthermore, the findings show that hotels adopt sustainability practices such as the use of energy-saving LED light bulbs, provision of recycling bins in hotel rooms, the implementation of towel reuse policy, and the use of refillable amenity dispensers in hotel rooms. These findings corroborate that of Verma and Chandra (2016). They reported that four-star and five-star hotels in two major cities in India adopt green practices such as the use of LED light bulbs in guestrooms, provision of recycling bins in guestroom and hotel lobby, reuse of towels, and the use of refillable shampoo dispensers.

4.4 Environmental Sustainability Practices of Customers

This section presents an analysis of results on the second objective of the study, which is in relation to environmental sustainability practices of customers, as shown in Table 4.4 as follows:

Table 4.4 Environmental Sustainability Practices of Customers

Environmental Sustainability Practices of Customers	Mean	SD
I turn off all the lights and switches before leaving the house	4.68	0.60
I buy energy-efficient LED light bulbs for my home in order to conserve energy	4.35	0.81
I avoid the consumption of products that negatively impact the environment	4.29	0.90
I avoid products made from endangered animals or plant species	4.01	0.68
I engage in proper waste management practices at home	3.85	1.15
I prefer buying organic products as against inorganic products	3.51	1.32
I reuse plastic containers and cans for other purposes rather than throwing them away	2.53	1.39
I use my shopping bag instead of a plastic carrier provided at the market or mall	2.44	1.39
I am concerned about whether the products I buy are wrapped with recycled materials	2.01	1.22
I engage in eco-friendly behaviours at home to help protect the environment	1.79	1.09

The results on the customers' interest and commitment to sustainability activities outside the hotel as shown in Table 4.4 indicate that most hotel customers are concerned about the issue of sustainability and prefer to participate in various environmentally-friendly

activities both at home and outside the home. For examples, many hotel guests were found to engage in activities such as turning off lights, fans, sockets, and other electronic devices when leaving their homes ($\bar{x} = 4.68$), the use of energy-saving LED light bulbs at home ($\bar{x} = 4.35$), avoiding or minimising the consumption of products whose production have a negative effect on the environment when possible ($\bar{x} = 4.29$), and avoiding the consumption of products made from endangered animals or plant species ($\bar{x} = 4.01$). Other of such practices in which show interest and participate in sustainability include the adoption of safe and proper waste management practices ($\bar{x} = 3.85$), and showing a preference for organic foodstuffs against inorganic foodstuffs ($\bar{x} = 3.51$).

It has been found, however, that consumers are less interested and more involved in activities such as reuse of plastic containers and cans for other uses rather than throw them off after use of the items in them, using their own shopping bags when visiting the market or mall, being concerned about the use of recycled materials for making the wrappers for products they buy, and engaging in eco-friendly behaviours at home aimed at protecting the environment. This is because the respondents rated these factors very low as their mean values ranged from 2.53 to 1.79, which indicates that the majority of respondents disagreed with the factors, as stated in the questionnaire.

The results show that ordinarily, hotel guests who are concerned about sustainability issues tend to engage in sustainability practices at home. It can be deduced from the findings that customers interest and participation in sustainability practices outside the hotels is a major determinant of their response to sustainability practices in hotels during their stay at the hotels. Moreover, the results show that customers sustainability activities

at home centred around energy conservation, proper waste management, consumption of products whose mode of production or disposal of packages and by-products do not have a negative impact on the environment. The findings corroborate that of Dalton et al. (2008). They found that hotel customers' responsible behaviours at home related to natural resources consumption and waste management influence their green hotel selection decisions. Again, the findings confirm the assertion of Verma and Chandra (2016) that hotel guests who are concerned about energy conservation would prefer using LED or energy-saving lightbulbs in order to save energy.

4.5 Customers' Expectations of Environmental Sustainability Practices of Hotels

This section presents an analysis of results on the third objective of the study, which is in relation to customer expectation of environmental sustainability practices of hotels, as shown in Table 4.5 as follows:

Table 4.5 Customers' Expectations of Environmental Sustainability Practices of Hotels

Customers' Expectations of Sustainability Practices of Hotels	Mean	SD
Hotels should be concerned about how their operations affect the environment	4.57	0.60
The focus of sustainability initiatives of hotels should not only be for the purposes of marketing strategy	4.49	0.79
Hotels should help with conserving water, energy, and natural resources	4.44	0.93
Hotels should engage in recycling, and reuse of products where necessary	4.35	0.75
I will be willing to pay a premium to lodge in a green hotel	4.33	0.77
The focus of sustainability initiatives of hotels should not just be to reduce cost	4.33	0.86
I prefer lodging in an environmentally responsible hotel than just a comfortable hotel	4.31	1.03
Hotels should have green certifications to show that indeed they engage in eco-friendly practices	2.82	1.53
I prefer to lodge in an eco-friendly hotel than just a service quality conscious hotel	1.97	1.03

It can be observed from the results in relation to customer expectations of sustainability practices of hotels as shown in Table 4.5 that hotel guests have their expectations of the sustainability practices should engage in and how they intend to respond to these practices. For example, it was found that customers expect hotels to show more commitment to environmental safety by conducting their operations in such a way that minimises their negative impact on the environment ($\bar{x} = 4.57$). Also, the customers indicated that they expect hotels to engage in sustainability activities as a sign of their commitment towards the fight against climate change and worsening environmental conditions rather than just adopting sustainability as a marketing strategy ($\bar{x} = 4.49$). Again, the customers expect hotels to adopt sustainability practices that aim at conserving water, energy, and natural resources ($\bar{x} = 4.44$). Hotel customers expect the hotels as part of their sustainability practices to incorporate the infrastructure needed for the recycling of certain used products, packaging and containers and reuse them for other purposes instead of disposing of them as waste ($\bar{x} = 4.35$). In terms of their response to sustainability practices of hotels, majority of the respondents indicated that they are willing to pay a premium to for green hotels is they are impressed by the sustainability practices of the hotels ($\bar{x} = 4.33$).

Besides, customers expect that though businesses can use sustainability as a cost reduction strategy, the overarching goal for the adoption of sustainability practices by hotels should not be to reduce cost as this may tend to affect the quality of the sustainability programmes of the hotels ($\bar{x} = 4.33$). Moreover, it can be noted that customers expect hotels to be eco-friendly while at the same time providing the needed

comfort ($\bar{x} = 4.31$). However, it appears the customers do not believe that the acquisition of a green certification by a hotel means that the hotel is engaging in any significant sustainability practices ($\bar{x} = 2.82$). This implies that in assessing the sustainability practices of hotels, customers do not place much emphasis on whether a green certification agency certifies the hotel or not but are more interested in the actual practices and measures implemented at the hotel. It is worthy to note that this view expressed by the customers may tend to undermine the importance of green certificates or the rigorousness of the process of assessing hotels before issuing them with green certifications. Furthermore, it has been noted that while customers expect hotels to incorporate sustainability into the operations by adopting eco-friendly practices, they indicate that the uptake of sustainability practices by hotels should not in any way compromise the quality of service delivery by the hotels ($\bar{x} = 1.97$).

The study revealed that before a customer patronises a hotel, they have their expectations and views of the nature of sustainability initiatives of hotels and why they adopt such initiatives. The customer expectations of the hotel's sustainability initiatives affect in no small measure how they react to these programmes and practices when patronising the hotel. Moreover, customers tend to evaluate the sustainability initiatives of hotels based on their expectations before lodging in the hotels and their level of satisfaction with initiatives after lodging. The result of their assessment of the experience be it negative or positive among other factors will likely influence their repurchase intentions. Besides, the findings revealed that the majority of the customers were interested in sustainability issues and would like hotels to adopt sustainability practices. However, they do not expect that hotels should adopt the concept of sustainability in their operations only as a

marketing strategy but must focus their sustainability activities on the global sustainability agenda.

The findings are consistent with the assertion of Mohamad et al. (2014) that the sustainability orientation and awareness of customers have a strong influence on the decision to patronise a green hotel. Also, the findings confirm that of Kim et al. (2012), who found that hotel customers are more interested in eco-friendly initiatives such as water and energy conservation, waste management, and biodiversity programmes. Moreover, the findings give credence to the fact that customer concerns about climate change, environmental pollution, and unsafe environmental practices of businesses influence their purchasing decisions posited by Hsiao et al. (2014); and Prud'homme and Raymond (2013). The results also contradict the importance of green certification as sufficient proof that hotels actually follow substantive sustainability practices and that hotel guests will be more interested in seeing or witnessing the sustainability activities when they lodge in the hotel rather than merely taking green hotel certificates on their facial value. This finding appears to downplay the perceived validity and importance attached to green certification from internationally recognised environmental and green initiative agencies as revealed in the study of Singhal et al. (2018) who found that the majority of hotels in India have acquired environmental and green certification from reputable agencies. The assertion that customers' are willing to pay a premium for lodging in a green hotel and that the sustainability initiatives of hotels not only focus on cost savings, reflects Baker et al.'s (2013) finding that customers would only pay a premium if hotels recognise that they have an opportunity cost through environmental sustainability.

4.6 Customers' Environmental Concerns and Hotels Uptake of Environmental Sustainability Initiatives

This section presents an analysis of results on the fourth objective of the study which is in relation to the influence of customers' sustainability orientation on the uptake of sustainability initiatives, as shown in Table 4.6 as follows:

Table 4.6 Customers' Environmental Concerns and Hotels Uptake of Sustainability

Customers' Environmental Concerns and Hotels Sustainability Practices	Mean	SD
Customers willingness to pay a price premium for green hotels	4.44	1.11
Customers exhibiting their sustainability practices when lodging in the hotel	4.11	1.09
Growing customer demand for sustainability practices by hotel	4.06	1.19
Customers willingness to comply with hotels' sustainability regulations	4.06	1.16
Customers suggestions on the type and form of sustainability practices hotels should adopt	3.94	1.24
Significant increase in the number of customers who patronise green hotels	2.17	1.16

The results presented in Table 4.6 show that the sustainability orientation of hotel customers somewhat influence the uptake of sustainability practices of hotels in the Accra Metropolis. For example, most hotel staff responsible for sustainability programs indicated that they were motivated to integrate sustainability into their operations and to pursue more sustainable practices if they were convinced that consumers were willing to pay a premium to cover the costs of these activities ($\bar{x} = 4.44$). The assertion that hotels will be motivated to engage in more sustainability practices when customers are willing to pay higher charges to lodge in such hotels stems from the fact that the adoption of sustainability practices sometimes come at a higher cost to the hotels. So, they tend to pass on the additional cost to customers. Also, it was indicated the hotel staff the growing interest of customers in sustainability issues and the demand for businesses to address the

sustainability concerns of customers put some sort of pressure on hotels to adopt sustainability practices ($\bar{x} = 4.06$). This means that hotels are realising the negative effect of their operations on the environment and take account of the increasing demand from hotels by customers, in order to minimise the environmental impact of their operations. Therefore, in response to the increasing customer sustainability concerns, they tend to engage in sustainability practices as a way of communicating to their customers that they are ready to address their concerns and serve better.

Furthermore, it was revealed that the management of hotels is encouraged to pursue more sustainability programmes when they receive positive responses from hotel guests with regard their level of compliance with sustainability policies and regulations of the hotels ($\bar{x} = 4.06$). Moreover, it was found that hotels take customer comments and suggestions on their sustainability issues into considerations when designing the sustainability programmes ($\bar{x} = 3.94$). However, it appears an increase in the number of customers who patronise green certified hotels do not have a significant influence on the decision of hotels to undertake sustainability activities ($\bar{x} = 2.17$).

The study revealed that customers sustainability orientation in terms of their interest and participation in sustainability activities when lodging in hotels influence hotels' uptake of sustainability initiatives. Thus, the level of customer interest and participation in sustainability activities is an indication that hotel customers are becoming sustainability-conscious and as such hotels must integrate sustainability programmes in their operations. More importantly, customers willingness to pay a premium for green hotels was seen as a

significant motivation for hotels to incorporate sustainability into their operation and adopt environmentally friendly practices.

A detailed analysis of the findings shows that customers are concerned about sustainability issues and how their sustainability orientations are conveyed when they lodge in hotels by engaging in the sustainability initiatives of hotels or calling for hotels to implement more sustainable practices to a large degree. Therefore, it can be concluded that the findings corroborate the earlier findings of Baker et al. (2013); and Hsiao et al. (2014) who reported that customer orientation about sustainability issues and their level of participation in sustainability activities, somewhat influence the adoption of sustainability programmes and practices by hotels.

Furthermore, the findings are consistent with that of Prud'homme & Raymond (2013) who reported a positive relationship between sustainability practices of hotels and customer satisfaction which implies that hotels would undertake sustainability initiatives in order to enhance customer satisfaction. Also, the findings corroborate the assertion of Aziz et al. (2018) that hotels adopt sustainability friendly concepts as a way of promoting their green hotel agenda in order to attract sustainability-conscious customers. Again, the findings support the position of Singhal et al. (2018) who found that hotels in India adopt various kinds of green technology programs as a way of promoting their green hotel agenda in order to attract customers who share in the global sustainability agenda. Besides, the findings confirm the assertion of Mohamad et al. (2014) that Malaysian hotels are beginning to respond to the growing global sustainable campaigns and the

increasing demand by stakeholders in particular for businesses to adopt the sustainability concept, by the integrating sustainable policies and practices into their operations.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

The purpose of the study was to examine how customers' interest and participation in sustainability activities influence the uptake of sustainability programmes by hotels in the Accra Metropolis. The study aims to achieve four specific objectives, namely defining sustainability practices of hotels, evaluating customer interest and participation in sustainability activities, analysing customers' expectations of hotel sustainability practices and analysing the influence of customer orientation on hotels' uptake of sustainable initiatives. Therefore, this section presents a summary of the key findings in relation to the objectives of the study.

The results in relation to environmental sustainability practices undertaken by hotels in the Accra Metropolis show that star-rated hotels in Accra have incorporated the concept of sustainability and exhibit this in their hotel activities. It was found that the hotels adopt various forms of sustainability practices in their quest to projecting their hotels as sustainability or eco-friendly hotels. Besides, it can be deduced from the findings that the majority of the sustainability practices of the hotels focused on water conservation, energy conservation, waste management and control, and cost reduction.

The results show that hotel customers are much interested in environmental sustainability issues and exhibit such interests in some of the activities they do at home. Many respondents indicated, for example, that they adopt sustainable practices such as turning off their lights when they leave the house, using energy-efficient bulbs in order to

conserve energy, avoiding consumption of products that have adverse effects on the environment, proper waste management in their household, prohibiting products from endangered animals or plant species.

The key expectations of customers and their views concerning the adoption of sustainability initiatives by hotels were found to include the following: hotels must be concerned about how their operations affect the environment, hotels should engage in recycling and reuse of products where necessary, hotels should help with conserving water, energy, and natural resources, hotels should embrace sustainability and the concept of green hotels, customer willingness to pay a premium to lodge in green hotels, hotels should not appear to be implementing sustainability initiatives only as a marketing tool, and hotels should not appear to be implementing sustainability initiatives only as a cost-saving strategy.

The study found that customers exhibit their environmental concerns and desire for hotels to adopt the concept of sustainability through the following ways: customers willingness to pay a price premium for green hotels, growing customer demand for sustainability practices by hotels, customers suggestions on the type and forms of sustainability practices hotels should adopt, customers willingness to comply with hotels' sustainability policies and rules, and customers adoption of their own set of sustainability practices.

5.2 Conclusions

It can be deduced from the findings that despite the absence of comprehensive or written environmental management policy in the hotel sector of Ghana, star-rated hotels in Accra adopt various forms of environmental sustainability practices relating to water and energy

conservation, proper waste management, and responsible green purchasing policy. These practices may be geared towards cost reduction, reduction in negative environmental impact, or a marketing strategy to attract environmentally-conscious customers.

While hotels may voluntarily pursue environmental sustainability initiatives as a way to contribute to the global sustainable development agenda, the study found that, the level of engagement and involvement in these activities is influenced by customers' interests in environmental sustainability and the extent to which they register their environmental concerns when lodging in hotels.

More importantly, the study provides evidence to suggest hotels may tend to respond to the shift in customer hotel selection decisions towards green hotels by engaging environmental sustainability initiatives in order to satisfy or meet the needs and expectations of sustainability-conscious customers. It is also clear from the findings that hotels are more likely to adopt environmental sustainability practices even if those initiatives are costly, given that they have the assurance that customers are ready to pay a premium for hotel sustainability initiatives. Finally, the study has shown that hotels in Ghana would adopt the concept of green hotels through more environmentally - friendly practices if such a decision would increase their customer patronage.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made to provide insights into how to improve the current practice of sustainability in the hotel industry of Ghana. The recommendations are expected to guide hotel management in the successful implementation of their sustainability programs and practices:

- i. In designing their sustainability programmes, hotels should take into consideration customers' concerns and suggestions about environmental issues observed in the hotel
- ii. Customer interest and expectations of the type and forms sustainability practices hotels should adopt, should be taken into consideration when designing sustainability programmes of hotels
- iii. Lastly, hotels should create awareness of their customers about their sustainability programmes and also train their staff in sustainability best practices
- iv. The Ministry of Tourism and the Ghana Tourist Authority should institute a National Green Hotels Award Scheme as a way of promoting the concept of green hotels in Ghana and encouraging hotels to adopt sustainability practices in their operations.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

The researcher makes the following suggestions for further research based on the findings and the limitations of the study:

- i. Examining the differences in the sustainability beliefs, attitudes and extent of participation of different customer groups of hotels
- ii. Examining guests' behaviours and participation in sustainability programmes of hotels from the perspective of hotel staff

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APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HOTEL STAFF

I am **Sylvia Nayiri Gaarikor**, a postgraduate student at the University of Education, Winneba. I am doing research on the topic “**Sustainability Practices of Hotels and the Influence of Customers’ Interest and Participation**”. If you were to spend some time answering this survey, I would be grateful. It is important to complete it on your own. You must remain anonymous with your responses. Besides, I should inform you that the collected data is for academic purposes only and would be handled with strict confidentiality.

Please tick (✓) the best option the explains your view and briefly explain overleaf where necessary.

Section A: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Characteristics	
Gender	
Male	
Female	
Age Group	
Below 30 years	
25 – 39	
40 - 59	
60 years or above	
Highest Education Qualification	
Diploma/HND	
Bachelor’s degree	
Postgraduate degree	
Professional qualification	
Job Position	
General Manager	
Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) Manager	
Sustainability Officer	
Years of Work Experience	
1 - 4 years	
5 - 9 years	
10 years or above	

Section B: Environmental Sustainability Practices of Hotels

1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following as environmental sustainability practices adopted by your hotel? Please, rank your responses on a scale of 1 – 5 using 1 – Strongly disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Not sure, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly agree.

Sustainability Practices in Hotels	1	2	3	4	5
Three days bedsheets changing policy					
Use of energy-efficient light bulbs					
Towel reuse policy					
Provision of recycling bins in the guestroom					
Provision of recycling bins in the lobby					
Use of refillable amenity dispensers					
Conversion of human waste into biogas for use in the hotel					
Adoption of proper waste management practices					
Adoption of an energy-saving ventilation system					
Judicious use of water					
Use of energy-efficient appliances					
Use of solar energy system					
Create awareness of guests about sustainability policies and practices of the hotel upon arrive at the hotel					
Paste notices of the hotel's sustainability policies and practices in the guest lobby and guestrooms					
Ensure strict adherence to environmentally friendly practices by both hotel staff and guests					
Encourage guests to switch off their room light, fan, air conditioner and other electronic gadgets when leaving the room					
Use of organic foodstuffs as against inorganic foodstuffs where possible					
Regular room check by hotel staff to ensure lights, fan and air					

conditioners, sockets and other electronic gadgets in unoccupied rooms are turned off					
Encourage guest to turn off room light, sockets and other electronic gadgets when not in use					

Section C: Influence of Customers’ Environmental Concerns on Hotels Uptake of Environmental Sustainability Initiatives

2. To what extent does customer environmental concerns influence the uptake of environmental sustainability initiatives by your hotel? Please, rank your responses on a scale of 1 – 5 using 1 – No influence, 2 – Somehow influence, 3 – Not sure, 4 – Influence, 5 - Strongly influence

Influence of Customers’ Sustainability Orientation on Hotels	1	2	3	4	5
Customers willingness to pay a price premium for green hotels					
Increasing customer demand for sustainability practices by hotel					
Fall in patronage by sustainability-conscious customers					
Sustainability practices of customers who patronise the hotel					
Customers willingness to voluntarily comply with hotels sustainability regulations					
Significant increase in the number of customers who patronise green hotels					
Customers suggestions to hotel staff on the need to adopt sustainability practices in the hotel					

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HOTEL GUESTS

I am **Sylvia Nayiri Gaarikor**, a postgraduate student at the University of Education, Winneba. I am doing research on the topic “**Sustainability Practices of Hotels and the Influence of Customers’ Interest and Participation**”. If you were to spend some time answering this survey, I would be grateful. It is important to complete it on your own. You must remain anonymous with your responses. Besides, I should inform you that the collected data is for academic purposes only and would be handled with strict confidentiality.

Please tick (✓) the best option that explains your view and briefly explain overleaf where necessary.

Section A: Demographic Characteristics of Hotel Guests

Characteristics	
Gender	
Male	
Female	
Age Group	
Below 30 years	
30 – 49	
50 years and above	
Level of Education	
Basic education	
Secondary/Vocational education	
Tertiary education	
Nationality	
Ghanaian	
Foreign national	
Length of Stay	
1 - 4 nights	
5 - 9 nights	
10 - 15 nights	
More than 15 nights	
Purpose of Stay	
Leisure	

Business	
Tour	
Sustainability Consciousness	
Yes	
No	

Section B: Customer Environmental Sustainability Practices

1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following as sustainability activities are interested and participate in at your own will? Please, rank your responses on a scale of 1 – 5 using 1 – Strongly disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Not sure, 4 – Agree, 5 - Strongly agree.

Customer Environmental Sustainability Practices	1	2	3	4	5
I turn off all the lights and switches before leaving the house					
I buy energy-efficient LED light bulbs for my home in order to conserve energy					
I avoid the consumption of products that negatively impact the environment					
I engage in proper waste management practices at home					
I avoid products made from endangered animals or plant species					
I prefer buying organic products as against inorganic products					
I have a shopping bag which I always use when going to the market or the mall					
I reuse plastic containers and cans for other purposes rather than throwing them away					
I am concerned about whether the products I buy are wrapped with recycled materials					
I engage in eco-friendly behaviours at home to help protect the environment					

Section C: Customer Expectations of Environmental Sustainability Practices in Hotels

2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following as the kind of sustainability practices to be undertaken by hotels in Ghana? Please, rank your responses on a scale of 1 – 5 using 1 – Strongly disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Not sure, 4 – Agree, 5 - Strongly agree.

Customer Expectations of Environmental Sustainability Practices of Hotels	1	2	3	4	5
Hotels should be concerned about how their operations affect the environment					
The focus of sustainability initiatives of hotels should not just be as a marketing strategy					
Hotels should help with conserving water, energy, and natural resources					
Hotels should embrace sustainability and the concept of green hotels					
Hotels should engage in recycling, and reuse of products where necessary					
I will be willing to pay a premium to lodge in a green hotel					
The focus of sustainability initiatives of hotels should not just be to reduce cost					
I prefer lodging in an environmentally responsible hotel than just a comfortable hotel					
Hotels should have green certifications to show that indeed they engage in eco-friendly practices					
I prefer to lodge in an eco-friendly hotel than just a service quality conscious hotel					

APPENDIX 3: TABLE FOR DETERMINING SAMPLE SIZE**Table for Determining Sample Size from a Given Population**

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	1000000	384

Note: *N* is population size. *S* is sample size

Source: Krejcie and Morgan (1970)

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2020