CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

6.1. To summarize

6.2. Hotel and Travel agencies view on management of green practices

6.3. Guest view on green practices followed in hotels

6.1. TO SUMMARIZE

After carrying out this research, the researcher has summarized the following findings based on hotel and travel agency views as well as guest views as mentioned below. These conclusions are in the context of the research based in Pune region, though these may be applicable in Maharashtra, and then India as well on a broader scale as the hotel industry is doing well and is one of the important contributors to the GDP.

6.2. HOTEL AND TRAVEL AGENCIES VIEW ON MANAGEMENT OF GREEN PRACTICES

1. Most of the hotels surveyed in this research said that they were aware of green practices that are carried out in the hotel industry. 94% of the 51 hotels surveyed knew of these practices. All hotels that commenced operations after the year 2000 were found to be aware of green practices and their implementation.

An overwhelming number of hotels out of these i.e. 86% said that they were implementing green practices in their daily operations, while 14% said that they did not follow any green practices.

However, it was seen that majority of the hotels i.e. 41% said that they were following very few or bare essential green practices. 39% of the hotels said that green practices that are easy to implement without too many adjustments and investments are followed.
Only 6% of the hotels said that they make noticeable efforts to completely follow green practices in their daily operations.

2. Less than half the hotels surveyed (43%) said that they had a specific programme for the implementation of these practices.

3. Most of the hotels i.e. 51% said that there was not much management involvement in the implementation of green practices in their property. We can see complete involvement of the Management in the implementation of these practices in only 33% of the hotels. However, 16% of the hotels surveyed said that there was no Management involvement at all in the implementation of these practices, while the remaining hotels said that the management was superficially involved.

4. Less than half the hotels surveyed (37%) had a written policy document by the Management, for the implementation of these practices. Also, it was found that more of the chain hotels had a written policy document regarding implementation of green practices as compared to independent hotels. This could be because hotel chains have to have uniform policies across all their properties, and these are best defined by putting them on record, to avoid any ambiguity.

5. More than half the hotels surveyed (63%) said that they had a specially designated staff member who is in-charge of implementing these practices in the hotel.

6. The various green practices that are implemented in Pune hotels include the following measures, segregated as per the department-
   
   i. Front Office
      ✓ Recycling of paper
      ✓ Taking minimum print outs of records
   
   ii. Housekeeping department
      ✓ Linen reuse programme
      ✓ Water Sprinklers
      ✓ No water wastage
      ✓ Low pressure flush in bathrooms
✓ No cut flowers
✓ Eco friendly cleaning agents
✓ Supplies like jute bags, paper coasters & laundry bags etc.

iii. Kitchen
✓ Segregation of Garbage
✓ Growing herbs & vegetables in own garden

iv. Food and Beverage Service
✓ No fruit basket in rooms
✓ Shuttle service for banquet functions
✓ No disposable crockery
✓ Use of recyclable products

v. Engineering and Maintenance
✓ Vermi composting
✓ Recycling treated water for irrigation
✓ Sewage treatment plant
✓ Bio gas plant
✓ Solar panels
✓ Electronic key card
✓ Energy efficient lights
✓ Motion sensor lighting system
✓ Maximum use of natural lighting
✓ Treatment of kitchen, laundry, toilet exhausts

7. Although majority of the hotels surveyed i.e. 84% thought that it was necessary to have training on green practice implementation for the staff members, only 47% said that they actually give specific training inputs to their staff members for the implementation of green practices.

8. Implementing these practices does not involve too many costs, as most of the things can be done with less investment. Most of the hotels do not incur expenses, as they only implement those green practices that are feasible without investments or major adjustments.
9. Less than half the hotels surveyed have made initial investments in their property at the time of construction to ensure implementation of green practices. Solar panels, Sewage Treatment Plant and Rainwater harvesting are among the major facilities that were planned from the time of commencing operations of these properties, with investment made.

10. More than half the total respondents surveyed said that there is improvement in the overall hotel performance in terms of reduction of operating costs. Electricity and water costs are the main heads under which savings are seen. This improvement was found in more chain hotels as compared to independent ones. Most of the respondent hotels also said that they had installed energy efficient lighting in more than half the areas.

10. All the respondent hotels and travel agencies unanimously agreed that there is no government support for the implementation of green practices.

11. Most of the hotels surveyed were aware of the various certifications that are available for hotels to go green. However very few hotels surveyed, less than one-fourth the total number were certified under any of these. This could be due to the costs involved in certification. However, less than half the travel agencies surveyed were found to be aware of these practices.

12. Hotels said that only one-third of the total number of guests who visit these hotels for rooms, food or banquet functions actually give importance to green practices followed. Travel agencies who make bookings for guests said that there were negligible enquiries for eco-friendly hotels from their clients.

13. Majority of the hotels surveyed said that in their experience very few guests were ready to pay extra in order to be able to stay in hotels following green practices. Also, only those guests who were very particular about specifically using green hotels were found to be ready to pay extra.
6.3 GUEST VIEW ON GREEN PRACTICES FOLLOWED IN HOTELS

1. Maximum number of guests in the 30 to 50 years age group were found to be aware of green practices followed in hotels and Ecotels, as compared to the others.

2. Frequent travellers i.e. those that travelled once a week/once a month and once in three months participate more in green initiatives as compared to those that travelled once in six months or a year. Frequent travellers are used to staying in hotels, and have experienced the facilities regularly, whereas those who travel rarely want to get maximum out of the hotel stay and experience everything the hotel offers. Hence they will not be so keen to make adjustments like increasing the air-conditioning temperature.

3. Frequent travellers are more willing to pay extra charges in order to be able to stay in green hotels as compared to those who travel very less, consequently get an opportunity to stay in hotels may be once a year or so

4. Business travellers are more likely to have stayed in a hotel which follows green practices as compared to leisure travellers. That could be the reason why they find green hotels more expensive as compared to the other hotels.

Also, business travellers participate more in green practices carried out in hotels, as compared to leisure travellers. This is because when guests travel for leisure, they usually prefer not to make any adjustments like reusing linen or not using the bath tub, they want to completely utilize all the facilities offered by the hotel. For leisure travellers, the hotel stay is a very important part of the travel experience, one that they may not be willing to compromise on.

5. Most of the guests were found to have participated in energy-saving green practices carried out in the hotels that they were staying in. This was the practice that showed frequent participation from guests amongst all the other practices like water conservation, participation in tree plantation etc.

6. Most of the guests who are aware of hotels following green practices and Ecotels are the highly educated ones. This may be because they have access to more sources of information. It was found that more of the highly qualified guests were likely to have participated in implementing green practices at the hotel they had stayed in. An
exception here was in case of the undergraduate guests, some of whom were students, with the desire to do something for the environment.

Finally, we can say that green hotels today are a tangible component of the hotel industry. These practices help in the conservation of natural resources thus are beneficial for the ecology and the environment in the long run. Eventually, it also results in saving of money thus adding to the hotel’s profit. However, during the course of the survey it was seen that though most hotels in the region surveyed i.e. Pune are aware of these practices, they are not completely implementing these practices. Most of the times, it is just superficial implementation. Guests too are not very keen to participate in these practices. This needs to change.

Hotels must come forward and try and implement as many green practices as they can. It does not have to be a mega project in the beginning; initially they can start with little things to show their support for the environment and then go on to bigger arrangements. Then we can truly say that the hotel industry in Pune region, and on a larger scale in India is going the green way!