CHAPTER – VII
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CONCLUSION, SUGGESTION & FUTURE RESEARCH

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, all the key findings supplemented by conclusions and suggestions are discussed that can provide useful inputs for practitioners of hospitality marketing and various advertising agencies involved in hospitality business. The conclusions drawn are based on the data analysis conducted and presented in earlier chapters.

7.2 ACHIEVEMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES

The following five objectives were set forth for the present research work. In the section below, we discuss how the objectives set forth were achieved.

Objective 1: To study the guest’s opinion regarding Green Image of the hotels under study.

The present study examines the effect of green image on guest patronage intention in the select ecotels. Although, the study of this objective is not the core purpose of this thesis, the reasons for incorporating this objective were to develop a background and logic for conducting the present study.

The guest’s opinion regarding green image has been studied with the help of mean scores and standard deviation. The overall factorial mean of all three factors i.e. value, quality attributes and affective image are more of same which means that the guest staying in these hotel properties have evaluated all three as important. The green image of the hotel properties under study is also studied on the basis of separate hotel properties. The hotel wise results have reconfirmed the above conclusion that the guest has rated all factors of green image as important. The findings suggest that to improve the hotel’s green image in the mind of the guests, the services offered should be at par with the value of those services. Small fringe benefits like a training session at gym, a free session at hotel spa or a complimentary drink at hotel’s bar / coffee shop could make guests realize the value for their money. Besides offering the value for money, the services offered
should be in sync with the category of the hotel property and its target market. For instance, a five star hotel targeting elite business guests should offer premium quality services to their guests so as to make their guest feel pleasant and excited.

**Objective 2: To explore the relationship between Green Image, Guest satisfaction & Guest loyalty in the select hotels.**

This objective was achieved with the help of multiple correlation and two linear regression equation results. From the correlation results, it could be concluded that there exist a positive relationship among the variables. This signifies that as one variable increases in value, the second variable also increase in value. All value of Pearson’s r for the correlation between the variables is close to 1 which validates that there is a strong relationship between variables. The regression results further approves the above objective.

**Objective 3: To find out the impact of Guest satisfaction & Guest Loyalty on Patronage intentions in the Eco Hotels.**

This objective was achieved by applying two regression equations between guest satisfaction and patronage intention; and between guest loyalty and patronage intentions. The results of two regression equations justify the significant impact of satisfaction and loyalty on patronage intention. To further strengthen the previous results, multiple regression is also applied on guest satisfaction, guest loyalty and patronage intentions. The findings of the regression equation justify the objective that there is an impact of guest satisfaction and guest loyalty on guest patronage.

**Objective 4: To evaluate the effect of Green image on Guest Patronage intentions.**

The regression equation is run to evaluate the effect of green image on patronage intention and its underlying factors i.e. word of mouth, willingness to pay premium, revisit intention. The regression results justify the significant impact of green image on overall guest patronage intentions. The individual regression results further justifies the same.
Objective 5: To suggest different strategies about Green Image of Eco hotels and their impact on guest revisit intentions.

On the basis of research findings and discussions, several initiatives are identified which are customized to the hotels under the preview of present study, which can be summed up as under.

7.3 SUGGESTIONS

- The results of this study may prove useful to the hotels in a number of different ways. It is revealed from the results that guest loyalty contributes maximum towards guest patronage, which implies that guests who are loyal to a hotel are more likely to develop patronage intentions. While green image has moderate direct impact on patronage intentions, yet it has significant impact on guest satisfaction and guest loyalty.

- As per the results, loyalty contributes maximum towards guest patronage. So to make guest loyal towards the hotel services, the hotels under study could also run loyalty programs like offering a free meal or spa session, complementary room upgrade, free wifi facilities or the use of business centre to their repeat visitors etc. However, as per the previous studies, it is important to satisfy a customers’ core needs first, before trying to delight customer with unrelated supporting services.

- The hotel should follow green practices or eco friendly practices to improve their overall image which will lead to better guest satisfaction, guest loyalty and ultimately to guest patronage, which is important for any organisation to survive in the competitive market.

- It is essential to mention here that few hotels tag themselves green for the marketing purpose without really practicing the same. In the present era of consumerism where customers are well appraised about market, it would be a futile exercise and instead of earning customer patronage, the hotel property would loose its market reputation.
With increasing customer awareness and escalating standards of service, satisfying a customer need becomes really critical. Satisfaction is an identified antecedent of customer patronage and a satisfied customer is more likely to indulge in spreading positive word, pay premium and revisiting the same property. From the results, it is suggested that in order to improve the satisfaction of the guests, the hotel properties should manage hygienic surrounding, offer fresh food and cleanliness in guest rooms.

All the efforts involved in implementing green initiatives would go futile if the hotel staff is not properly sensitized about the purpose and effect of these practices. Staff training must be centered on the hotel’s environmental impacts. For the training to be adequate, training and awareness must also be relevant to the target groups and be related to their daily activities. Employees should be invited and encouraged to respect the environmental measures that have been implemented. Practical demonstrations increase the effectiveness of the training. In addition, other media can be used in the departments, such as posters, information notes, brochures, bulletin boards, and films.

7.4 TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

Five separate hypotheses were set up to be tested. The data generated from the present research has been used to test the hypothesis and see whether they have been accepted or not.

**H1: Green image is positively associated with guest satisfaction.**

To test the first hypothesis, a regression analysis was used to determine whether the green image is positively associated with guest satisfaction, taking green image as an independent variable and guest satisfaction as dependent variable. The obtained regression model suggests that green image is positively associated with guest satisfaction which implies, that guest satisfaction increases with increase in green image. The R- Square value .794 signifies that 79.4 % of variation in guest satisfaction is explained by the green image of eco hotels. Also the β value, t- values and p value <.05 are statistically significant.
In addition, the same hypothesis is also measured with the help of SEM. SEM results indicate that green image has positive, significant and direct impact on ($\beta = .95, p = .000$) guest satisfaction. Thus, hypothesis 1 stands vindicated and accepted.

**H2: Green image is positively related to guest loyalty.**

A regression analysis was used to determine whether the green image is positively related with guest loyalty, taking green image as an independent variable and guest loyalty as dependent variable. The obtained regression model suggests that green image is positively related with guest loyalty which implies, that guest loyalty increases with increase in green image. The R$^2$ value .772 signifies that 77.2 % of variation in guest loyalty is explained by the green image of eco hotels. Also the $\beta$ value, t-values and p value <.05 are statistically significant.

The same hypothesis is also verified by applying SEM. SEM results indicate that green image has positive, significant and direct impact on ($\beta = .98, p = .000$) guest loyalty. Thus, hypothesis 2 stands vindicated and accepted.

**H3: Guest Satisfaction is positively related to the patronage intention.**

This hypothesis was tested using regression analysis. Regression analysis was run to determine whether guest satisfaction is positively related to the patronage intention, taking guest satisfaction as an independent variable and patronage intention as dependent variable. The R$^2$ value .686 signifies that 68.6 % of variation in patronage intention is explained by the guest satisfaction. Also the $\beta$ value, t-values and p value <.05 are statistically significant.

The same hypothesis is also verified by applying SEM. SEM results indicate that guest satisfaction is positively related to the ($\beta = .56, p = .000$) guest patronage intention. Thus, hypothesis 3 stands vindicated and accepted.

**H4: Guest loyalty is positively related to the patronage intention.**

Regression analysis was run to determine whether guest loyalty is positively related to the patronage intention, taking guest loyalty as an independent variable and
patronage intention as dependent variable. The R-Square value comes out to be .606 which signifies that 60.6% of variation in patronage intention is explained by the guest loyalty. Also the β value, t-values and p value <.05 are statistically significant.

The same hypothesis is also verified by applying SEM. SEM results indicate that guest loyalty has positive, significant and direct impact on (β = .75, p = .000) guest patronage intention. Thus, hypothesis 4 stands vindicated and accepted.

**H5: Green image of Eco Hotels affects the guest’s patronage intention.**

A regression analysis was used to determine whether the green image of eco hotels affects the guest’s patronage intention, taking green image as an independent variable and guest patronage intention as dependent variable. The obtained regression model suggests that green image has positive, significant and direct impact on guest patronage intention. The R-Square value .672 signifies that 67.2% of variation in guest patronage intention is explained by the green image of eco hotels. Also the β value, t-values and p value <.05 are statistically significant.

The same hypothesis is also verified by applying SEM. SEM results indicate that green image has positive, significant and direct affect on (ß = .61, p = .000), guest patronage intention. Thus, hypothesis 5 stands vindicated and accepted.

**H5(a): Eco Hotel’s image positively affects Word of mouth.**

Regression analysis was run to determine whether image of ecotels positively affects guest’s intention to spread positive word of mouth, taking image as an independent variable and word of mouth as dependent variable. The R-Square value .737 signifies that 73.7% of variation in guest’s word of mouth is explained by the eco hotel’s image. Also the β value, t-values and p value <.05 are statistically significant.

The same hypothesis is also verified by applying SEM. SEM results indicate that eco hotel’s image has positive, significant and direct affect on (β = .94, p = .000), Word of mouth. Thus, hypothesis 5(a) stands vindicated and accepted.
**H5(b): The image of Eco hotel has a positive influence on the willingness to pay a premium.**

Regression analysis was run to determine whether image of ecotels positively influence the guest’s willingness to pay a premium, taking image as an independent variable and guest’s willingness to pay a premium as a dependent variable. The R-Square value .331 signifies that 33.1 % of variation in guest’s willingness to pay a premium is explained by the eco hotel’s image. Also the β value, t-values and p value <.05 are statistically significant.

The same hypothesis is also verified by applying SEM. SEM results indicate that eco hotel’s image has positive, significant and direct affect on (β = .75, p = .000), Willingness to pay premium. Thus, **hypothesis 5(b) stands vindicated and accepted.**

**H5(c): Eco hotel’s green image positively affects guest’s revisit intention.**

Regression analysis was run to determine whether image of ecotels positively affects the guest’s revisit intention, taking image of ecotels as an independent variable and guest’s revisit intention as a dependent variable. The R-Square value .607 signifies that 60.7 % of variations in guest’s revisit intention is explained by the eco hotel’s image. Also the β value, t-values and p value <.05 are statistically significant.

The same hypothesis is also verified by applying SEM. SEM results indicate that eco hotel’s image has positive, significant and direct affect on (β = .88, p = .000), revisit intention. Thus, **hypothesis 5(c) stands vindicated and accepted.**

7.5 **MAJOR FINDINGS**

A. The demographic profile of the respondents of the study points out of 329 respondents 62% are male and 60 % belong to the age group 20-40 years. Most of the respondents 40% were graduates. Also, majority of the respondents 62% are married.

B. The descriptive analysis of all the dimensions was done, starting with green image. The findings suggest that in order to improve the green image, the hotels
should provide value for money, serve fresh and organic food, add more eco-friendly products in daily use etc to make the guest feel pleasant and excited.

C. Descriptive analysis of second dimension i.e. guest loyalty is conducted. In the light of the mean values, though the guest have showed their inclination to pay more for green hotels but the low mean value indicate that they could switch to other hotel property as well. It can also be said that there may be some other factors affecting the guests loyalty at these hotel properties.

D. Descriptive analysis of third dimension i.e. guest satisfaction is conducted. In the light of the mean values, it could be concluded that though the guest feel gratified by purchasing green product/service but probably guest are not much satisfied with the pro environmental activities carried on by the hotel properties.

E. Descriptive analysis of fourth dimension i.e. guest patronage intention is conducted. The mean scores signifies that the guests may pay a premium for an environment friendly accommodation which follow the pro environment approach but there may be some other factors affecting the guests do word of mouth publicity.

F. In the next stage correlation analysis is run to check the direction and strength of relationship between Green image, Guest satisfaction & Guest Loyalty. All the factors found to be positively and strongly related to each other. The correlation matrix between various factors measured in the present study reveals the correlation is maximum between green image and guest satisfaction (0.891) and correlation between guest loyalty and guest satisfaction is minimum (0.844).

G. Regression analysis is run to check the impact between various variables. The result of linear regression between green image, guest satisfaction and guest loyalty show the positive impact of green image on guest satisfaction and guest loyalty, which shows that green image have an positive effect on satisfaction and loyalty of guest. The regression is also run to check the impact of guest satisfaction and guest loyalty on patronage intention. The results revealed that guest satisfaction and loyalty has positive effect on patronage intention. The same
impact is verified with the help of multiple regression which further advocates the same results.

H. The linear regression is also run to evaluate the effect of green image on patronage intentions and its underlying factors. Although all the regression results showed positive effect of green image on patronage intention and its factors, out of which the effect of green image on word of mouth is the strongest of all.

I. Confirmatory factor analysis is run on the same variables to perform structural equation modeling. CFA model results show that among the fifteen items, “Staying at green hotel is pleasant” contributes highest to the main constructs with SRW 0.91. CFA model for guest loyalty conclude that the statement “I can accept the higher price of a green hotel even though the price of other general hotels is cheaper than that of green hotels” contributes highest to the main constructs with SRW 0.74. CFA model for guest satisfaction conclude that the statement “I believe that I do the right thing in booking the room in this hotel” contributes highest to the main constructs with SRW 0.91.

J. Structural equation modeling is run to validate the proposed model, to verify the regression results and to test the framed hypothesis. The β and p-value in all the cases were significant which further verified the regression results.

7.6 STRATEGIC IMPLICATION

The mutual collaboration between government bodies, hoteliers, and customers are the major factor in nurturing the success of environmental protection. The result is a ‘win-win’ situation that brings benefits to all.

A) Policy makers

Environmental problems should be attended equally with the efforts and attention of manufacturing and service sectors. Green certification can be awarded to those hotels that meet the requirement of sustainable practices in operating the hotel aligned with the environmental guidelines. Incentives, subsidies and various environmental programs
should be organized to encourage the adoption of eco friendly management approaches by hotel operators.

B) Business players

Hotel that are early movers to the green market segment like The Uppal, Kamat Group of Hotels and big hospitality brands like ITC gained a greater future competitive advantage as they have established their image in the public’s mind as pioneers in the pro-environment cause. Efforts can be made to communicate green practices to the community to foster the patronage of green hotels. Thus, it encourages people to actively participate in green consumption. By educating and enhancing people’s attitudes, green hotels will put themselves to a competitive position in the market, and will gain a greener and more socially responsible corporate image.

C) Society well-being

By developing more green hotels demand for tangible green products would also encourage, which in turn push the production and supply of environmental friendly products from the manufacturing sector, as well as providing the economic values to the farmers to produce organically and locally grown food, and to recycle the agricultural wastes and reproduce them into the usable products such as tableware items. The united efforts and cooperation from all stakeholders are needed to generate more sustainable and responsible consumption behaviour among the society and produce a healthier environment.

7.7 RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

Very limited work has been done on green hotels and no research work has been found in India to study the effect of green image on customer patronage intention. The present study attempts to add empirical and fresh perspective into the existing literature on hospitality marketing and effect of hotel’s image on guest patronage. The findings obtained from data analysis and interpretation and observations put forth by the researcher can have profound and strategic implications for the hoteliers, the various
certification agencies and researchers pursuing research in the same area. The major contributions of the study are as follows:

- The results obtained in this study have important implications for hotel managers and suggests that they should keep adding value to their hotel services making their guests’ satisfied, so as to retain their customers and survive in the competitive market.

- The current study has made meaningful contribution to the patronage intention and hotel image literature since it deals with the measurement of the influence of green image on customer patronage, using critical technique and survey method.

- The study can be an important source of reference for marketing agencies involved in hotel marketing and people involved in hotel sales.

### 7.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

All feasible efforts are made to make the study more reliable, valid and exhaustive, yet certain limitations could not be ruled out and are required to keep in the mind whenever its findings are considered for implementation. These limitations are as under:

1) Every effort has been made to keep the objectivity in research but the element of subjectivity cannot be ruled out as response obtained may be actuated by personal likes and dislikes.

2) In this research, respondents have been surveyed from the six selected green hotel properties of northern India only. In future, wide number of respondents from many other hotel properties of the country can be taken covering wide spectrum of the hospitality sector, thus widening the scope of the research in the aforementioned area.

3) The study is limited to Indian Hospitality sector, a larger empirical study can be useful to replicate the results in other services sectors like organic food, stationary items, restaurants etc.
4) The present study analysed the customer’s perspective and behavior regarding green hotel, but do not take into account what hoteliers thinks about environmentally friendly hotels, and to what extent they may be incorporating environmental policies into the company’s culture.

5) Comparative study can be done by studying perceptions of the travel agents, hoteliers and guests regarding green image and its effect on guest patronage intention.

7.9 FUTURE RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

- Future research should consider the studying of guest patronage intentions and the factors influencing it from the perspective of other stakeholders like employees, administration etc.

- The guest patronage is not only influenced by guest loyalty and guest satisfaction but may also be influenced by values and other beliefs. Future research could also assess personal values and how these values, along with attitude may influence green hotel preference.

- The same type of study can also be conducted for specific hotel categories. Results may differ for customers of luxury resorts and those of budget hotels. In addition, the same type to study may be conducted for F&B establishments that are serving organic food and beverages.

- Further research should measure future actual behaviour because prior research has shown that actual behaviour differs significantly from intentions. Therefore, future research should try to observe the actual impact of loyalty and satisfaction on customer patronage.

- As an extension of the present research work, comparative study could be done by studying perceptions of the travel agents, hoteliers and guests regarding green image and its effect on guest patronage intention.
- In future, a comparative perspective on differing perceptions of those who have availed the green accommodation and those who have not can also be conducted. It will give an insight into what make people choose the eco friendly hotel properties.

- The present study is limited to the northern India. In future, same study could be conducted in the southern part of India, making it a comparative analysis between the two.