

THE GROWTH DUE TO INNOVATIONS IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY AND THE EFFECT ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE INDUSTRY#

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ABSTRACT

Background: *The existence of global warming and climate change rages on between the scientific community and entities that continue to refuse to accept the theory despite the abundance of scientific research that substantiates it. The need of the hour is to identify the positive and negative effects of new innovations on the environment used by hotel industry which is leading to rise in global warming.*

Objective: *To examine the role of hotel industry's innovations in saving the climate. **Methodology:** A questionnaire was distributed among personnel working in the hotel industry to find out if the new innovations are harming a sustainable environment in the hotel industry and is having any positive or negative effect on global warming. **Results:** 54.8% of the hotel industry thinks that the sustainability is more important than earning profit. A majority of the personnel working in the industry believe that the hotel industry is exploiting human as well as Natural resources. Only 26.2% said that the hotel industry is taking steps to reduce carbon emission. **Conclusion:** Hotels are becoming eco-friendly but at a very slow pace. To make the environment more sustainable in the industry we need to act upon the infrastructure betterment. Renewable Resources are to be used and encouraged.*

Key Words: *Hotel, Sustainability, Eco friendly, Carbon*

INTRODUCTION

The Earth is 4600 million years old. Dinosaurs appeared 1000 million years ago. Then came the ice age and after that is the current scenario. Humans have made earth a 'rubbish tip of paradise' during the last 60 seconds of biological time. The debate over the existence of global warming and climate change rages on between the scientific community and entities that continue to refuse to accept the theory despite the abundance of scientific research that substantiates it. Most of our hotel industry continues to operate in a mode of "business as usual" pertaining to environmental issues. This attitude is not acceptable given the gravity of the problem and the potential consequences.

There are some facts regarding global warming considered to be "known with virtual certainty" (EPA

Paper presented in "Internation Conference on Development of Economies through Innovation and Sustainable Growth: Vision 2020"

data 2011) which means that the following assertions have a more than 99% chance to be true:

- The human activity of burning fossil fuels is changing the composition of the earth's atmosphere
- The levels of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gases (GHG's) in the atmosphere have risen since the pre-industrial times.
- GHG's emitted by human activities remain in the atmosphere for decades to centuries making it virtually certain that the levels of these gases will continue to rise.
- Increasing GHG concentrations tend to warm the planet
- An unequivocal warming the trend of about 1.0 to 1.70F occurred in both the Northern and Southern Hemisphere as well as over the oceans between the years 1906-2005 (IPCC,2007)

According to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), scientists anticipate that as the concentration of GHG's in the atmosphere continues to rise, average global temperature and sea levels will continue to rise as a result and precipitation patterns will change. These changes have the potential to be devastating and costly to the hospitality industry. The contribution of the hospitality industry to global warming and climate change due to its sheer size is enormous. These contributions will be further explored for the purposes of this paper. Issues of energy usage, limited natural resources, and operational costs are always central issues to any industry. Finding the appropriate balance in all of these areas is vitally important to each individual, corporation, industry, and to our world as a whole.

Although the hospitality industry is a major contributor to global warming and climate change, the industry appears to be dreadfully lacking in proactive initiatives to reduce their contributions. Many questions arise around these topics, and so far, no clear answers. What are hospitality corporations doing in their attempt reduce their contribution to global warming and climate change? Who within the industry is responsible for implementing the conversion to green or sustainable hospitality facilities? Because industry-specific efforts to combat climate change are falling well short of what they need to be, it is imperative that this problem be explored further. Mandated initiatives within the industry must be put into place to ensure that a carbon-neutral, sustainable hospitality industry can continue to meet the needs of the customers.

Contribution to Climate Change by the Hospitality Industry

Tourism and the Hospitality Industry have been important aspects in the economic development of many regions in the world. However, along with these benefits come negative consequences for the environment. As one of the world's fastest and largest growing industries, its development is placing great stress on the environment. Globally it is estimated that 5% of CO₂ and other GHG emissions can be attributed to the tourism industry. It is estimated that buildings are responsible for approximately 40% of global energy use and up to 30% of global GHG emissions can be attributed to the tourism

industry.

It is estimated that buildings are responsible for approximately 40% of global energy use and up to 30% of global GHG emissions. In the United States hotels account for more than 5 billion square feet of space, nearly 5 million guest rooms, and generate approximately \$4 billion in annual energy usage. Energy consumption, water usage, the generation of enormous amounts of garbage, failure to recycle, failure to utilize recyclable and compostable products and a host of other contributors to global environmental problems are neglected by the hospitality hotel industries. For these reasons there are many possible interventions possible for utilization in this industry.

More over ETPs are being installed in the hotels. More Solar Power is being used. Green Hotels are coming up.

Initiatives to Combat Global Warming/Climate Change

There are initiatives in a variety of industries that are aggressively attempting to address the problem of global warming and climate change, as well as mitigating its effects. These include, but are not limited to, the United States Building Council LEED program, the Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method, and the Green Globe Certification and Operational Performance Program.

LEED Program

Since the year 2000 the United States Green Building Council has been transforming the building industry marketplace to promote the sustainable building, design, construction, and operations practices (LEED and the Hospitality Industry, 2011.) The acronym LEED stands for 'Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design'. LEED has developed a rating system that attempts to certify and push the advancement of a planet-wide implementation of green building and developmental practices. In 2006 a LEED program was specifically developed to assist hospitality facilities in becoming more environmentally friendly, or green. As of March 3, 2011, 91 lodging properties have achieved LEED certification, and an additional 1, 100 properties have registered with the program and are working toward their certifications (FAQ LEED and the Hospitality Industry 2011).

The Green Building Council has also created a Green Venue Selection Guide to be used by businesses to integrate hospitality facilities with green practices into their travel and event management planning. Both of these programs were created by an entity outside of the hospitality industry. In reviewing the recent initiatives toward becoming a "carbon-neutral" or "sustainable" industry, there were none identified that were specific to the hospitality industry. While some corporations within the industry are actively pursuing LEED accreditation and other avenues for becoming green, the numbers are negligible in comparison to the size of the industry as a whole.

This paper focuses on identifying the positive and negative effects of new innovations on the environment; the impact of the hotel industry on global warming; current initiatives in place both in and out of the hotel industry to combat the problem. The broad objective of the study was to examine the role of hotel industry's innovations in saving the climate. For this, a survey was conducted and it was found that some hotels have established a carbon neutral facility according to the latest Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) data. However, there remain a vast number of hotels which don't follow the said guidelines.

METHODOLOGY

For the work survey design was adopted. A questionnaire was distributed among personnel working in the hotel industry to find out if the new innovations are harming a sustainable environment in the hotel industry and is having any positive or negative effect on global warming.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the survey are presented in Table 1, are being discussed as following:

It was found that 54.8% of the respondents think that the sustainability is more important than earning profit whereas 45.2% said that profit comes first for the survival of the industry. A majority (62.7%) of the personnel working in the industry believe that the hotel industry is exploiting human as well as natural resources and very few steps are being taken to renew the natural resources.

Table 1: Sustainability and its Effects

Particulars	Percentage
Is sustainability more important than getting new innovations in the hotel industry which are harmful to the climate but are profitable?	
Yes	54.8%
No	45.2%
Do you feel that hotel industry is becoming eco friendly?	
Yes	79.4%
No	20.6%
Is the hotel industry exploiting the resources, both human and natural?	
Yes	62.7%
No	37.3%
By using more of machines, are we retarding employment generation?	
Yes	36.7%
No	63.3%
Does the hotel industry believe in reducing carbon emissions by using less of technology?	
Yes	73.8%
No	26.2%

Around 63.3% didn't agree that machines are reducing employment generation as to run them personnel's are required. This is surprising as in the other industries one finds that more machines means less employment, but it is just the opposite in the hostel industry.

73.8% of the personnel working in the hotel industry responded that the hotel industry doesn't believe in reducing carbon emissions at all whereas 26.2% said that the hotel industry is taking steps to reduce carbon emission.

CONCLUSION

Hence, the conclusion of this research comes out to be that 54.8% of the Employees believe that the hotel industry is becoming more sustainable. Majority of the hotel industry is still inclined towards gaining profit at any cost. 73.8% believe that the hotel industry pays no attention to carbon emission. It is becoming eco-friendly but at a very slow pace. A large amount of waste is still being produced. It is exploiting the natural resources and new innovations are making it sustainable. But not every hotel is doing its part in increasing the pace of the growth that is needed to be a sustainable industry. More steps to make things better are needed to be taken. Introduction of more green initiatives. More hotels should try to get inducted into the green hotel category. More use of solar and wind energy is required. Less of non-renewable resources, more of renewable resources. To make the environment more sustainable in the industry we need to act upon the infrastructure betterment. Renewable Resources are to be used and encouraged.

All we need to do is Think Responsible Act Sustainable.

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