

Do Green Commitments Drive Hotel Performance? Extending the VBN Theory: Evidence from Five-Star Hotels in Kampala City

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Abstract: *Purpose*—This study determines whether green engagements influence hotel performance, thus providing empirical evidence extending the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) theory from five-star hotels of Kampala City. It particularly examines the impact of green practices-energy and water efficiency, waste reduction on performance outcomes. *Methodology/Design/Approach* — A cross-sectional survey design was used; four five-star hotels were the focus of this study: Kampala Serena, Sheraton Kampala, Commonwealth Resort Munyonyo, and Pearl of Africa. The data were collected through semi-structured questionnaires from 197 purposively and randomly selected respondents and were analysed using SPSS. *Findings*—The study showed a significant positive correlation between green practices and hotel performance ($r=0.486$, $p < 0.05$). Regression results revealed that the contribution of green practices to the variation in performance was 23.6% ($R^2=0.236$), thus indicating that only relying on technical interventions will not guarantee better outcomes. The performance outcomes included cost savings, improved competitiveness, customer loyalty, and eco-friendliness. *Originality of the research*— This research adds to the sustainability literature by empirically applying VBN theory to hotels in developing countries context, showing how the internal values and beliefs lead to pro-environmental hotel performance outcomes.

Key words: VBN Theory, energy conservation, water conservation, waste management, hotel performance

1. Introduction

In its nature, the hospitality industry is said to be a resource-heavy sector that uses huge amounts of energy and water while disposing of large quantities of waste, thus contributing to environmental degradation and greenhouse gas emissions (Cowan et al., 2010; Huang et al., 2015). The general operation of hotel facilities, 24/7, makes great demand for energy in heating, cooling, lighting, laundry, kitchens, and guest comfort, all of which result in significant emissions and water consumption (Zengeni et al., 2013). With poor resource management, these pressures become worse, causing, among others, a rise in operating costs, environmental degradation, and decreased competitiveness (Legrand et al., 2014; Karimi, 2014). It is in these instances that green practices, which consist of any initiative considered environmentally friendly that follows up in reducing resource consumption, waste production, and promoting sustainability, have been touted as critical to hotel performance and its survival.

Environmental concerns were not central to business practice before the 1980s. Pollution rose, population grew, and the resource industries became vulnerable to an energy crisis of 1973–74, pushing the hoteliers toward energy conservation strategies (Stoddard et al., 2012; Fukey & Issac, 2014). The Brundtland Report of 1987 framed sustainable development as meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs, and this principle was further buttressed by the Earth Summit held in 1992, which gave impetus to environmental

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