

Evaluating the Sustainable Development Programs in Five-Star Hotels in Luxor and Aswan

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to evaluate the sustainable development programs in the five-star hotels in Luxor and Aswan cities. To achieve this purpose researcher used a descriptive statistic. The study population for this study comprised hotels in Luxor and Aswan cities. Population sample unit was further defined as all hotel managers, including general managers, human resource managers, safety and security managers and departmental managers. All hotels from the sample frame were interviewed by the researcher resulting in a total of 12 hotel and hospitality manager agreeing to participate in the research study. Out of a potential 163 participants, 110 participants returned the survey questionnaires which formed the sample unit. Results revealed that there is an increasing concern about sustainable development in Luxor and Aswan hotels. Also, it is noted from hotel manager's view that the most widely practices used were economic practices followed by using environmental practices, and lastly socio-cultural practices.

Keywords: Sustainability, Sustainable Development, Hotel, Luxor, Aswan.

Introduction

Today, Luxor is well equipped to accommodate tourists with many hotels and, in general, a tourist industry ready and willing to serve the people from across the globe that descend on this area of the Nile Valley every year. (Luxor government site). Aswan is characterized by several tourist features that made it a destination for tourists from all over the world, especially in winter. It has a moderate and dry climate due to its location on the Nile east bank. (Aswan government site).

Sustainability is a new trend in most of the world's hotels. Sustainability depends on practices that reduce the negative impact on the environment, such as rationalizing traditional energy consumption. Hotels which had addressed the issues of sustainability practices have been gifted significant expanses saving benefits (Mensah, 2006; Penny, 2007). Landrum and Edwards (2009) described sustainability as the process suggested to improve the quality of human life within the limitations of the global environment. Doppelt (2003) refers to sustainability as the ability to continue a defined behavior indefinitely. For more practical detail the behavior you wish to continue indefinitely must be defined. For example: Environmental sustainability, Economic sustainability and Social sustainability.

Literature Review

Blackburn (2007) stated that hotels started to use alternative energy and rationing the utilization of energy consumption for different purposes in several innovative ways. They became more committed to some polices and standards relating to external and internal design and waste management. Sustainable development (SD) goals are based on profits, people, and planet. The first goal is to find ways to operate the hotel according to the idea of a “triple bottom line,” which embodies profitable operation combined with attention to the people who work in the hotel and a focus on careful stewardship of resources. The sustainability initiative goes beyond such well-known ideas as reusing guest linens, recycling waste materials, and changing to compact fluorescent lamps. The strategy also includes community involvement by supporting charities and encouraging employees to volunteer in the community, as well as participating in global award and certification programs

Goals of Sustainable Development

According to Hitchcock and Willard (2009), global organizations such as aid organizations and even governments are increasingly sponsoring efforts to ensure SD goals are realized for every individual across the board. Some other most important SD goals set by these bodies include: eradication of poverty across the world, promotion of good health and well-being, provision of quality education for all, provision of clean water and sanitation and enabling access to affordable and clean energy.

Importance of Sustainable Development

Robinson (2006) mentioned that SD is necessary for the maintenance of the environment. The purpose of development work is people’s welfare. The target of development work is never achieved effectively if the adverse effects are ignored. The importance of SD is proper use of means and resource, development of positive attitude, development of fundamental parts and development based on people's participation.

Pillars of Sustainable Development

Environmental Sustainability: The aim is to do no damage to environment and restrain environmental conditions as well as supervising and cautiously utilizing energy and resources at the same time decreasing manufacturing waste and contaminated materials before disposal so that the environment is safe, and it is done in a lawful way (Schaltegger et al., 2003).

Economic Sustainability: Economic and social aspects cannot be separated, and it is hard to reject the vital relationships that guide the economic institutions. Human communities across the globe can maintain their independence and have access to the resources that they require, financial and other, to meet their needs. Economic systems are intact, and activities are available to everyone, such as secure sources of livelihood (Porter, 1998).

Socio-cultural Sustainability: Social aspect of Triple Bottom Line refers to standard of living, education, community and equal opportunity for all in the society. Furthermore, the sustainable business helps towards the development of community and the region. This also take account of monitoring the labor, comply human rights, enhancing working conditions and making relationships with and among labor, as well as considering any indications of social responsibility which is achieved in the civil society movement (Blowfield and Frynas, 2005).

Models for Sustainable Development

Models help us understanding the concepts of Sustainability better. Achieving SD thus, requires more effective, open, and productive association among the people themselves. Models help us gather, share, and analyses information; they help coordinating work; and educate and train professionals, policymakers, and the public in general. The following are some of the constructive models for understanding SD; three pillar basic models, egg of sustainability, Attkisson's pyramid model, prism of sustainability, and the amoeba model.

Sustainable Development in Hospitality Industry

Hoteliers have turned their focus to the importance of sustainability in the hospitality industry as it relates to hotel development and operations, including the environmental, economic and social impact. Sustainability is one of the most important issues currently facing our world. The hospitality sector has historically had a dramatic environmental impact through energy and water consumption, use of consumable and durable goods, and solid and hazardous waste creation. Hotels consume energy for HVAC operations, lighting, fuel and other power needs. Water is used for bathrooms, F&B, and laundry, as well as other general operations (irrigation, cleaning and maintenance). Waste is generated by the disposal of paper, batteries and bulbs, furniture, equipment, appliances and more (Dyer et al., 2007).

Sustainability Practices in the Hospitality Industry

Economic Practices in the Hospitality Industry

Hospitality businesses contemplate their economic impact on the community, corresponding to job creation, native wages, and their contribution to native economic process. Conjointly suppliers and an engagement across the availability chain to confirm similar values and practices square measure problems with economic property. At an equivalent time, businesses ought to maintain company gain and internal money stability (Landrum and Edwards, 2009).

Socio-cultural Practices in Hospitality Industry

The question of credibleness in traveller experiences arises once cultural traditions get changed and altered for traveller consumption. Commoditization will result in pseudo-events that square measure planned to be convenient for tourists which could result in a falsification of the normal that means of the event. Consequently, cultural promotion through traveller education and initiatives to market and enhance appreciation for cultural and historic heritage square measure indicators and actions made public by Roberts and Tribe (2008).

Environmental Practices in Hospitality Industry

Different initiatives towards additional environmental friendly operations management adopted by accommodation business might be: exercise systems use of undid and unbleached materials use of recycled provides, etc. However, researchers observe a niche between environmental ‘good’ intentions and action. Most building managers simply consider actions that advance the company’s objective. Cost-reductions through environmental actions are criticized for being the sole incentive for action. Conjointly the event of latest accommodation institutions is problematic with respect to the environmental dimension of property (Swarbrooke, 1999).

Benefits of implementing sustainability in hospitality industry are as the following; Cost saving (Tzschentke et al., 2004), Promotional material, Staff satisfaction (Swarbrooke, 1999), and Customer demand (Dewhurst and Thomas, 2003; Sloan et al., 2005). Barriers to sustainability practices which facing the hotels are as the following; High cost of implementation (Park, 2009), and Complexness of thought and Support (Sloan et al., 2005). *Finally*, the are many examples of hotel companies’ participation in SD as Accor, Hilton and Marriott ones.

Research Methodology

The research instrument used for this study was a questionnaire which is considered to be the most preferred research instrument for survey approach.

Population and Sample Size

The population comprised of hotels in Luxor and Aswan cities. According to the ministry of tourism, a total of 12 five-star hotels exist in Luxor and Aswan cities as shown in *table 1*.

Table 1: Five-star Hotels in Luxor and Aswan Cities

Five-star hotels in Luxor	Five-star hotels in Aswan
Ahti Resort	Amoun Village Hotel
Hilton Luxor Resort and Spa	Helnan Aswan Hotel
Maritim Jolie Ville Kings Island Luxor	Mövenpick Resort Aswan
Mercure Luxor Karnak	Sofitel Legend Old Cataract
Sofitel Winter Palace Hotel	Pyramisa Isis Island Aswan Resort and Spa
Sonesta St. George Hotel	
Steigenberger Nile Palace	

To achieve the research study objectives, the population was further defined as all hotel managers, including general managers, Human resources managers, safety and security managers and departmental managers. To calculate the sample size, the equation of Stephen Sampson was used to determine the sample of hotel managers. The output of the equation was 163 managers out of 284 managers.

All the hotels from the sample frame were invited by e-mail and later followed-up by face to face interview. Out of a potential 163 participants, 110 participants returned the survey questionnaires which formed the sample unit (including general or owner managers and departmental managers).

Data Collection and Analysis Process

Data collected from five-star hotels in Luxor and Aswan cities from all executive managers, including general managers, Human resources managers, safety and security managers and departmental managers. The overall process of distribution and collection of questionnaires took three months from May to July, 2017.

Collected data were processed by means of quantitative research methods. Prior to data analysis, pre-analysis data screening was performed to ensure the accuracy of the data and to deal with missing and incomplete data. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Results and Discussion

Demographic Profiles Analysis

Most respondents were male (95.2%). In addition, more than half of the respondents were over 35 years old (65%). Interestingly, more than half of hotel managers held Bachelor of hospitality and Tourism degrees (58%) and their working experience in hotels ranged from more than a year (20%), more than two years (55.4%) and more than 5 years (29.6%).

Manager Perspectives' regarding Environmental Practices

The results in *table 2* showed participants with the higher Values expressed agreement (item scores between 4.49 - 3.50) with the four statements. This indicated that hotels do many practices to protect the environment, whether that is recycling, reducing the power consumption, or educates staff on eco-friendly practices. The participants with the lower values on the scale-signified disagreement (item scores between 2.5–1.51) with the three statements: “The hotel provides devices for water conservation, the hotel provides equipment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and the hotel implements no smoking policy in public areas.

These results indicate that the hotel management has a lack of support to implement the program, which need to supply the hotel with the proper equipment needed. The results of the descriptive analysis are presented in *table 2*.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Environmental Practices

Environmental Practice	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation
The hotel provides devices for water conservation	110	2.3182	1.23208
The hotel provides training programs for employees to preserve the environment	110	4.3364	1.32220
The hotel provides equipment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions	110	2.4455	1.49976
The hotel has a system to reduce electricity consumption	110	4.4364	1.03902
The hotel provides environment related publications,	110	4.2300	1.12519
The hotel educates staff on eco-friendly practices	110	4.4273	.74758
The hotel implements no smoking policy in public areas	110	2.4455	1.25169
Total Average		3.5199	1.047

Manager Perspectives’ regarding Socio-cultural Practice

Table 3 showed that Managers “Agreed” (item scores between 4.49 - 3.50) with only one statement on the scale “hotel supports educational institutions”. However, Managers with the lowest rankings (item scores between 2.5–1.51) showed disagreement with three statement that included in the scale “The hotel is interested in preserving the cultural aspect and customs and beliefs surrounding area, the hotel promotes local traditional culture, and the hotel provides part of its profit to improve the lives of local residents”.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Socio-Cultural Practices

Socio-Cultural Practice	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation
The hotel depends on the employment of local labor	110	3.0727	1.30426
The hotel is interested in preserving the cultural aspect and customs and beliefs surrounding area	110	2.2636	1.35238
The hotel helps the foundation, which serves the local community associations	110	3.4182	1.25165
The hotel supports educational institutions	110	3.5636	1.41763
There are activities or practices help in the transfer of community culture to visitors	110	3.4909	1.31153
The hotel promotes local traditional culture	110	2.2636	1.23910
The hotel provides part of its profit to improve the lives of local residents	110	2.0455	1.12834
Total Average		2.874	0.661

Manager Perspectives’ regarding Economic Practices

The results in *table 4* shown that there was a high degree of agreement over the scale attributes, as most of participants agreed that “Reuse items on property, donate them to a charity or recycle them, the hotel strives for business growth through product innovation and quality, The percentage of employee's salaries. On contrast, they disagreed with two items of the scale “Reduce the use of hazardous chemicals, and ensure staff use and dispose of chemicals properly, and the hotel develops business plans to ensure long-term profitability and financial viability”.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Economic Practices

Economic Practice	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Reuse items on property, donate them to a charity or recycle them.	110	3.9364	1.07752
Reduce the use of hazardous chemicals, and ensure staff use and dispose of chemicals properly	110	2.4636	1.39249
The hotel develops business plans to ensure long-term profitability and financial viability	110	2.4727	1.37946
The hotel buys local products	110	4.2000	.70124
The hotel strives for business growth through product innovation and quality	110	4.3727	.89708
The percentage of employee's salaries and wages in your hotel is higher than other hotels	110	3.9818	1.01350
Develop a comprehensive system for garbage separation, recycling, and composting	110	4.1182	1.11480
Total Average		3.649	0.819

Managers Perspectives’ regarding Benefits

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the factors that are perceived to be a benefit for the hotel to implement sustainability program. Seven items were listed and were rated on a Likert type scale. Respondent perceptions indicate that a benefit of sustainability program is to improve the hotel image through enhancing customer confidence in the hotel, reduce operational costs, adopting various measures of sustainable tourism practices, hotel will ensure a good future for the tourism industry, Involvement in sustainable tourism practices has given us a marketing advantage over our competitors, and reduce negative impacts on social, cultural, and ecological environment as shown in *table 5*.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of Benefits

Benefit	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Enhance customer confidence in the hotel	110	3.7273	1.21088
reduce operational costs	110	3.9636	1.14080
By adopting various measures of sustainable tourism practices, our hotel ensures a good future for the tourism industry	110	3.9182	1.11809
Involvement in sustainable tourism practices has given us a marketing advantage over our competitors	110	3.7364	1.35238
reduce negative impacts on social, cultural, and ecological environment	110	3.9091	1.11327
Increase the loyalty of customers to hotel	110	1.8898	.93172
Sustainable tourism practices also improve our hotel image to the guests and the local communities	110	2.1364	1.22270
Total Average		3.325	0.904

Managers Perspectives’ regarding Barriers

This section highlighted the views of hotel managers on the factors that are considered as barriers for the hotels in implementing sustainability programs. Respondents were asked to rate all the items that they feel are barriers to hospitality in implementing sustainability programs. The results shown that managers agreed that the high implementation costs act as a significant barrier for hotels in establishing sustainability programs. In addition, they agreed that There are important factors that are considered to be major impediments to implementation sustainability programs such as lack of support and information from management in hotels, lack of funding & political support, lack of experience, lack of technical know-how and human resource capacity, low level of sustainable technology availability, and sustainability is complex program which cannot be translated into practical strategies as shown in *table 6*.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Barriers

Barriers	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation
The high cost that hotel needs to implement sustainability programs	110	3.8182	1.27201
Complexity which cannot be translated into practical strategies	110	3.7091	1.33647
Not all visitors prefer to stay in hotels support sustainability programs	110	3.0091	1.33062
Lack of support and information from management in hotels which need to implement sustainability programs	110	4.0636	1.16743
Lack of funding & political support	110	4.0364	1.04861
Lack of experience, lack of technical know-how and human resource capacity	110	3.6273	1.38046
Low level of sustainable technology availability	110	3.7182	1.17412
Total Average		3.711	0.351

Table 7 listed the summary of the attributes of sustainability practices, broken down into “Environmental Practice, Socio-cultural practice, and Economic practices.

Table 7: Average Descriptive Statistics of Sustainability Practices

Practice	Mean	Std. Deviation
Economic Practices	3.649	0.819
Environmental Practices	3.5199	1.047
Socio-cultural Practices	2.874	0.661

The analysis of sustainability management practices carried out by hotel managers was conducted as a frequency analysis. 35 items were included in this study. Overall, the study showed the results of both benefits and barriers with regards to the hotel managers’ participation in environmental sustainability practices. The study also noted the practices that hotel managers' view as most practiced. The most widely used Economic management practice followed by using Environmental Practice, and at the bottom is Socio-cultural practice

The study found that hotel manager perception is positively related to environmental sustainability practices. The survey results demonstrated that hotel manager concerns for Barriers encounter the implementing of sustainability programs more than Benefits which can improve company profitability.

Conclusion

Based on the results, we put forward some policy suggestions as follows:

First, to optimize the environmental management of hospitality industry in Luxor and Aswan, it is urgent to improve the development of green hotel legal system and structure based on the existing environmental laws. For energy and environmental protection, it may be meaningful to make the status of energy consumption of the hotels under the public supervision. More specifically, a hotel should present its energy consumption report every year to the public. Some incentive measures and policies may be used to encourage a hotel to do so.

Second, due to that, the performance of the 5-star hotels is not bad, it is important for them to have the environmental awareness and improve energy efficiency.

Third, although significant efforts have been made such that energy efficiency has been improved, there are still significant potentials to do better. These hotels should be encouraged to use advanced information technology to improve their energy efficiency further since it has been shown that information technology can greatly reduce energy consumption in buildings.

Fourth, since renewable energy is significant in energy efficiency and environmental protection, it is vitally important to optimize the power structure by increasing the use of renewable energies such as solar and wind power.

Recommendations

Green practices provide an opportunity to preserve the surrounding environment and thus improve all conditions for guests. Which will prompt government officials and affected communities to support the facility, especially as hotels that do not protect the natural environment and traditional around them contribute to the destruction of the attractions that depend on them in its success, such as clean air and pure water. Based on the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- Implementing education programs, installing recycling bins in guest rooms, event spaces and lobby areas, and creating incentive programs.
- Creating cost analyses of sustainable capital expenditures in the areas of water, energy, kitchen, and computer technologies and appliances.
- Do not focus on utilizing sustainability as a marketing or branding tool, but rather promote the positively impact on the surrounding community, fellow industry properties and leaders, consumers, and ultimately, the environment.
- Incorporating different stakeholders (governments agencies, hotels developers and local community) in development process of resort and hotel developments were seen as one of the best solutions forward for all triple bottom line sectors (social, environmental and economic).
- The strong collaboration in tourism and hospitality business and awareness among tourism operators can become easier to achieve through strong support from government.
- Conduct a survey of current sustainability practices in Luxor and Aswan hotels and compare practices applied in these hotels with practices applied in other green hotels in the world.
- Enhancing environmental awareness among decision makers and hotel staff to implement sustainable green practices in the region of Luxor and Aswan Hotels with a primary focus on rational consumption of water and energy resources.
- Change the existing laws relating to the hospitality sector which are outdated and have not been properly implemented and causes serious obstacles to the development of the sustainability in hospitality industry.
- Encourage hotels in Luxor and Aswan to be flagged with environmental eco-labels.

- Hotels should explore, adapt and utilize the latest technological and design innovations to enhance guest experience while reducing environmental footprint.
- Hotels should reduce the social and environmental impact of F&B operations by supporting locally-sourced ingredients and buying from farmers who practice organic and sustainable farming.
- Hotels should use the Marketing orientation to inform tourists how important and appropriate for their convenient the hotel to be sustainable.

Finally, for further research: studying and analyzing the aspects in which there are gaps in sustainability practices in order to gain a competitive edge over all properties of hospitality industry.

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تقييم برامج التنمية المستدامة في الفنادق الخمس نجوم بالأقصر وأسوان

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الملخص العربي

تعتبر الاستدامة اتجاها جديدا في معظم فنادق العالم حيث تميل إلى اعتماد سياسات واجراءات حديثة، ليكون واحدا من أحدث الاتجاهات في التنمية المستدامة. وتعتمد استدامة الفنادق على الممارسات التي تقلل من التأثير السلبي على البيئة، مثل ترشيد استهلاك الطاقة التقليدي والانتقال إلى الطاقة البديلة وترشيد استخدام الطاقة لأغراض مختلفة بعدة طرق مبتكرة. والالتزام ببعض السياسات والمعايير المتعلقة بالتصميم الخارجي والداخلي، والطرق التي تدار بها النفايات بكافة أنواعها بهدف الحفاظ على الموارد الطبيعية والحد من الآثار السلبية لبيئة صناعة الفنادق، وخفض التكاليف. وتهدف الدراسة إلى تقييم برامج التنمية المستدامة في فنادق الخمس نجوم، من وجهة نظر مدراء الفنادق نحو تطوير وتنفيذ نظام الإدارة البيئية في تشغيل الفندق. وذلك من خلال توضيح الوضع الحالي لتطبيق ممارسات الاستدامة في الأقصر وأسوان في فنادق الخمس نجوم وتحديد مدى إدراك مديري الفنادق لمختلف العوامل التي تؤثر على ممارسات الاستدامة. وقد تم تصميم وتوزيع استمارة استقصاء علي فنادق الخمس نجوم في الأقصر وأسوان (١٢ فندقا)، حيث تم توزيع ١٦٣ استمارة، كان منهم ١١٠ استمارة صالحة للتحليل. تم التوصل إلى مجموعة من التوصيات أهمها تعزيز الوعي البيئي بين صانعي القرار وموظفي الفنادق لتنفيذ الممارسات الخضراء المستدامة في فنادق الأقصر وأسوان مع التركيز بشكل أساسي على الاستهلاك الرشيد للموارد المائية والطاقة، وتشجيع الفنادق في الأقصر وأسوان على أن ترفع العلامة البيئية، بالإضافة إلى المشاركة المحلية لجميع قطاعات المجتمع في عمليات التنمية، كما يجب على الفنادق استكشاف واستخدام أحدث الابتكارات التكنولوجية. كما يجب أن تقلل الفنادق من التأثيرات الاجتماعية والبيئية لعمليات الأغذية والمشروبات من خلال دعم المكونات المحلية والشراء من المزارعين الذين يمارسون الزراعة العضوية والمستدامة. أيضا يجب على الفنادق استخدام التوجه التسويقي لإعلام السياح بمدى أهمية ومناسبة الفنادق التي تنطبق التنمية المستدامة. وأخيرا، التغلب على نقص الدعم والمعلومات من الإدارة في الفنادق التي تحتاج إلى تنفيذ برامج الاستدامة باستخدام التكنولوجيا العالية.

الكلمات الدالة: الاستدامة، التنمية المستدامة، الفنادق، الأقصر، أسوان.