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Abstract

The increasing emphasis on environmental sustainability has significantly reshaped customer expectations and competitive dynamics within the hospitality industry, particularly among star-rated hotels. This study examined the relationship between green practices and customers' hotel choice decisions in star-rated hotels in Nairobi, Kenya. Guided by the Theory of Planned Behavior, the study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional design and collected primary data from hotel customers using structured questionnaires. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and simple linear regression techniques. The findings indicate strong customer agreement that green practices, specifically energy efficiency, waste management, sustainable sourcing, and environmentally friendly technologies, positively influence trust, satisfaction, and preference in hotel selection. Correlation analysis revealed a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between green practices and hotel choice ($r = 0.782$, $p < 0.01$). Regression results further showed that green practices significantly predict hotel choice decisions, accounting for 61.2 percent of the variance in customers' selection behavior ($R^2 = 0.612$). Qualitative insights from key informant interviews with hotel managers corroborated the quantitative findings, underscoring sustainability as a decisive factor in attracting and retaining environmentally conscious guests. The study concludes that green practices are a critical determinant of hotel choice within the star-rated hotel segment and recommends their strategic integration and effective communication to enhance competitiveness and customer loyalty in the hospitality sector.

Keywords: *Green practices, hotel choice, environmental sustainability, star-rated hotels, hospitality industry*

1.1 Background to the Study

Modern hospitality sector is working in a globalized context that is more influenced by the requirements of environmental sustainability. Green practices, defined in a general sense as the strategies and operations within organizations, aimed at reducing the negative effects on the environment and encouraging resource utilization, are the central issue in the discourse of hotel

management (Yong et al., 2020; Brunner and Norouzi, 2021). Such practices are no longer considered as fringe corporate social responsibility activities but have developed into tactical processes by which hotels react to environmental degradation, regulatory demands, and emerging consumer demands (Ciasullo et al., 2020; Legrand et al., 2022). Due to its high rate of energy, water, and material consumption, the hospitality industry has been placed in the group of major contributors to environmental stress, thus increasing the push to adopt sustainable models of operations (Luković et al., 2020; Salem and Aya, 2021).

Green practices in hotels are an indication of a larger change in the business philosophy where environmental stewardship becomes more and more coupled with competitiveness and market positioning. The empirical research indicates that hotels that implement green practices tend to realize lower operation costs in the form of energy efficiency, water saving, and waste minimization, and improve their brand image and stakeholder legitimacy in the process (Hoicka et al., 2021; Raza and Woxenius, 2023). Such practices involve using energy-saving bulbs and appliances, using renewable energy, water-efficient technologies, sustainable waste production, sustainable procurement policy, and environmentally friendly architectural layouts (Abdou et al., 2020; Fernandez-Robin et al., 2019). Certain certification programs like LEED, Green Key, and EarthCheck continue to institutionalize sustainability by offering standardized indicators of green performance, which strengthens the credibility of hotels in addition to indicating their commitment to the environment to the market (Robin et al., 2019; Legrand et al., 2022).

Strategically, the implication of green practices goes beyond environmental protection. Evidence in the literature shows that the sustainability efforts affect organizational resilience, risk management, and long-term profitability because it aligns hotel practices with the changing regulatory and societal requirements (Jennings and Zandbergen, 1995; Ciasullo et al., 2020). This shift has also been speeded up by the rise of eco-conscious consumers, who have started evaluating hotels by their impact on the environment and their ethical orientation (Preziosi et al., 2019; Gupta et al., 2023). Therefore, the value of green practices has become both a practical instrument and a symbolic message that conveys organizational values, which affect customer perception and competitive advantage in the hospitality industry (Merli et al., 2019; Zareh et al., 2023).

Instead, hotel choice decisions are multi-dimensional and a complex process based on the combination of both experiential and functional attributes. The conventional factors of hotel selection, including price, location, service quality, amenities, and brand reputation, do not lose their role in defining consumer preferences (Chattopadhyay and Mitra, 2019; Nunkoo et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the development of digital platforms and user-generated content has added to the significance of online reviews and ratings, which increases the level of information transparency and reforms the way travelers evaluate accommodation options (Wilson, 2022; Mody et al., 2023). This has increased the competition in the hospitality industry, which forces hotels to keep innovating so as to match the ever growing and complex customer needs.

Recent research indicates that there is a significant change in hotel choice behavior and this is due to increased awareness of environmental issues and value consumption patterns. Tourists, especially younger and more educated groups, are progressively more likely to consider sustainability into their choice of accommodation and regard green initiatives as the signifier of service quality, reliability, and appropriate behavior (Han, 2021; Peterson, 2023). There is empirical evidence that hotels with visible and credible environmental initiatives have a better customer satisfaction, loyalty intentions, and better word-of-mouth results (Gerdt et al., 2019; Kim

and Roseman, 2022). These results show that the attitudinal and normative factors related to environmental values are becoming more important to economic rationality in the decision of hotel choice (Yadav et al., 2019; Webb and Sheeran, 2006).

In this changing environment, the correlation between hotel choice and green practices has become a subject of increased academic focus. The majority of the studies have consistently documented positive relationships between sustainability activities and the willingness of customers to choose, revisit, and recommend hotels that agree with their environmental beliefs (Merli et al., 2019; Park et al., 2021). Green practices have several ways of affecting hotel selection, such as increased trust, perceived service quality, emotional attachment, and reputational signaling (Yi et al., 2018; Yin et al., 2020). The apparent nature of the practices like the use of renewable energy, sustainable sourcing, waste minimization, and energy-efficient HVAC systems is of a special concern when it comes to influencing customer judgments, as these measures are visible and can be seen during the hotel stay experience (Navratil et al., 2019; Lin et al., 2023).

The correlation between green practices and the hotel selection is particularly acute in the context of star-rated hotels, where differentiation of services, quality assurance, and brand position are more prominent. Hotels with higher ratings tend to have more financial and technological resources to conduct extensive sustainability programs and, thus, can incorporate green practices into the operational processes and guest experience (Pereira et al., 2021; Jiang et al., 2022). Meanwhile, the clients of star-rated hotels usually have greater expectations towards the service quality, ethical behavior and environmental decision-making, which makes sustainability an important assessment variable in customer decision-making (Moise et al., 2021; Gupta et al., 2023). This interplay indicates that green practices could serve not only as complementary features but be strategic hotel determinants in high end market segments.

Based on the Institutional Theory and the Theory of Planned Behavior, the available literature suggests that hotels embrace green practices not only to respond to the pressure of external legitimacy, but also to elicit customer attitudes, norms, and behavioral intentions (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Ajzen, 1991). Environmental sustainability is becoming a societal norm, making the implementation of green practices continue to influence the choice of hotel as the organization is more focused on aligning organizational behavior with consumer values and perceived social responsibility (Armitage and Conner, 2001; Han, 2021). The study of the linkage between green practices and hotel choice therefore, offers essential understanding of sustainability being a strategic consumer behavior driver in the modern-day hospitality markets.

The uptake of green practices in star-rated hotels in Kenya has become more visible in the country as a result of a tightly-knit regulatory demands, market forces, and shifting consumer preferences. Star-rated hotels are based in a formal regulatory framework managed by the Tourism Regulatory Authority, in which adherence to quality, safety, and gradually environmental standards are part of the process of competitive positioning (Nafula, 2015; Gikuhi, 2020). Experimental data show that the Kenyan hotel clientele, especially guests of star hotels, is increasingly sensitive to the sustainability-related characteristics of effective energy consumption, water saving, waste disposal, and eco-friendly supplier choices when booking their accommodations (Qi and Leung, 2018; Omune et al., 2021).

This is supported by the fact that Kenya has a greater policy orientation towards sustainable development through the Vision 2030, which focuses on environmental conservation as well as economic growth, further motivating hotels to incorporate green practices in their operational

paradigms (Ngunga et al., 2023). Kenyan studies also indicate that green practices can boost customer satisfaction, trust and loyalty in star-rated hotels, making sustainability a strategic factor influencing hotel choice and not an extraneous quality (Mokaya, 2021; Chepngetich et al., 2019). Consequently, in the Kenyan hospitality sector, the star-rated hotels are starting to see green practices as the key to attracting more environmentally conscious customers, complying with international tourism requirements, and remaining competitive in the sector with the increasing rise in awareness of environmental responsibility (Shekinah, 2021; Otado, 2022).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Hotel choice decisions have traditionally been explained through functional and experiential attributes such as service quality, price, amenities, and location. In the Kenyan hospitality sector, existing empirical studies have largely examined customer preferences through these conventional lenses, emphasizing hotel attributes, service encounters, and satisfaction outcomes rather than sustainability-driven considerations (Bukirwa & Kising'u, 2017; Bor et al., 2018; Mutuku & Wambua, 2019). While these studies have generated useful insights, they offer a limited understanding of how emerging environmental sustainability initiatives influence customer choice, particularly within star-rated hotels.

At the same time, star-rated hotels in Nairobi are increasingly adopting green practices in response to global sustainability trends, regulatory expectations, and growing environmental awareness among travelers. These practices include energy efficiency measures, water conservation, waste management systems, sustainable sourcing, and environmentally responsible building designs. Despite this growing adoption, customer retention challenges and high switching behavior persist within the sector, suggesting that hotels may not fully understand which factors meaningfully shape customer choice decisions (Sibanda et al., 2017; Shekinah, 2021). This raises a critical concern as to whether green practices function as decisive determinants of hotel choice or remain peripheral features that customers acknowledge but do not prioritize.

Although prior studies have explored green practices within the hospitality industry, existing evidence presents conceptual fragmentation and inconsistent findings regarding the strength and direction of their influence on customer decision-making (Amemba et al., 2013; Gao et al., 2014). Many studies examine sustainability from an operational or managerial perspective, while others focus broadly on environmental attitudes without empirically linking specific green practices to actual hotel choice behavior. As a result, there remains insufficient empirical clarity on whether and to what extent green practices directly influence customers' hotel choice decisions in star-rated hotel settings.

In the context of Nairobi's competitive star-rated hotel market, where differentiation and customer loyalty are increasingly difficult to sustain, this gap presents both a scholarly and practical concern. A clear understanding of the relationship between green practices and hotel choice is essential for informing strategic investment in sustainability initiatives and aligning hotel offerings with customer expectations. Consequently, this study seeks to empirically examine the relationship between green practices and hotel choice decisions among customers of star-rated hotels in Nairobi, Kenya, thereby addressing a critical gap in hospitality sustainability literature and providing evidence-based guidance for industry practice.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between green practices and hotel choice decisions among customers of star-rated hotels in Nairobi, Kenya.

1.4 Novelty of the Study

The research is novel in that it empirically introduces the green practices as a key determinant of hotel choice, and does not consider that sustainability is a marginal or supporting component of the hospitality experience. Although most of the literature that has been conducted in the hospitality industry has focused on the issues of green practices in either a managerial, operational, or policy-based viewpoint, this study promotes the body of literature by directly relating the perception that customers have of green practices to the decision that the customers may make to stay at the hotel in terms of their star rating. The study addresses the need in current hospitality research to examine the issue of sustainability in consumer decisions more deeply as it centers on choice behavior and not only on post-consumption satisfaction.

Moreover, the study is innovative in the sense of its integrative method of analysis which put together customer-based quantitative data with sustainability constructs that capture contemporary hotel operation, such as energy saving, water saving, waste management, sustainability sourcing, and optimization of HVAC systems. This conceptualization with multidimensions goes beyond single-practice measures that have characterized the previous literature and offers a more comprehensive view of the effect of clusters of green practices on hotel choice based on their aggregate effect. By so doing, the study adds a more empirical model that elucidates the intensity and direction of the association between green practices and a hotel choice decision that provides original information that is both academically and practically applicable to star-rated hotels in competitive urban hospitality settings.

2.1 Theoretical Review

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), advanced by Ajzen (1991) and extended by scholars such as Armitage and Conner (2001), provides a robust framework for explaining and predicting human behavior in contexts where decision-making is deliberate and reasoned. TPB posits that an individual's behavior is primarily determined by behavioral intentions, which are in turn shaped by three core psychological components: attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. The theory argues that individuals systematically process available information and consider the consequences of their actions before making choices, particularly in consumption contexts involving value judgments such as environmental sustainability. TPB has been widely applied in tourism and hospitality research to explain environmentally responsible consumption behaviors, including the selection of green hotels, willingness to pay for sustainable services, and pro-environmental travel decisions (Han, 2021; Webb & Sheeran, 2006).

The central assumptions of TPB are that behavior is intentional, goal-oriented, and influenced by both individual evaluations and social context. The theory assumes that consumers form attitudes based on beliefs about outcomes, perceive social pressure from important reference groups, and assess their ability to perform the behavior based on available resources and constraints (Ajzen, 1991; Manstead & Van Eekelen, 1998). Within this framework, TPB advances the proposition that favorable attitudes toward environmentally responsible hotels, supportive subjective norms regarding sustainable consumption, and a high level of perceived control over choosing green

hotels increase the likelihood of selecting such hotels. These propositions have been empirically supported in hospitality studies demonstrating that environmental concern, social influence, and perceived accessibility significantly predict green hotel choice intentions and behaviors (Yadav et al., 2019; Kim & Roseman, 2022). Consequently, TPB provides a logical basis for hypothesizing a positive relationship between green practices and hotel choice decisions, as sustainability initiatives shape the cognitive and normative factors that underpin consumer choice.

In the context of this study, TPB's theoretical tenets directly guide the conceptualization of the relationship between green practices and hotel choice decisions among customers of star-rated hotels. Green practices—such as energy efficiency, water conservation, waste management, sustainable sourcing, and environmentally efficient HVAC systems—serve as salient stimuli that influence customers' attitudes toward hotels by signaling environmental responsibility and service quality (Preziosi et al., 2019; Yi et al., 2018). These practices also reinforce subjective norms by aligning hotel offerings with socially valued sustainability expectations, particularly among environmentally conscious travelers (Han, 2021). Furthermore, the visibility and accessibility of green practices enhance perceived behavioral control by reducing uncertainty and increasing customers' confidence in choosing environmentally responsible hotels. Collectively, these TPB components provide the theoretical foundation for examining how green practices influence hotel choice decisions, positioning the theory as an appropriate and coherent framework for the present study.

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

The existing empirical data in the hospitality and tourism literature is a clear indication that green practices have become a relevant force in influencing the hotel choice decisions, especially in the star-rated segment. Preliminary research determined that the effect of environmentally-friendly activities like energy conservation, waste reduction, and water efficiency has a beneficial impact on the attitude of customers toward hotels and enhances brand judgments, which increases the chances of being selected (Merli et al., 2019; Martínez García de Leaniz et al., 2018). Studies in various geographical settings suggest that customers are increasingly considering green practices as sources of high-quality service, responsible business behavior, and long-term value, which altogether influence their accommodation preferences (Gerdt et al., 2019; Han, 2021). These results indicate that sustainability programs are not considered as add-ons but rather as inherent qualities to influence consumer decisions when choosing a hotel.

A number of empirical studies specifically on star-rated and upscale hotels indicate that green practices have a more significant impact on hotel choice when targeting customers who require high-quality experiences. Research conducted by Yadav et al. (2019) and Kim and Roseman (2022) revealed that guests of the higher-category hotels are more sensitive to environmental initiatives, especially when these practices are a part of the basic service delivery and are not a symbolic gesture. There are additional indications suggesting that the presence of green certifications, eco-labels, and visible sustainability programs are more likely to be viewed as credible by the customers of star-rated hotels as signals of quality and trustworthiness, which positively influence their choice (Preziosi et al., 2019; Yi et al., 2018). It supports the thesis that green practices serve as both quality indicators and cues of ethics in luxury hospitality markets.

Customer perceptions and environmental awareness have also been emphasized as sources of moderate of the relationship between green practices and hotel choice as pointed out through empirical research. Research in Asia and Europe indicates that environmentally conscious

customers are more willing to stay at hotels that promote their sustainability practices, especially on digital platforms and third-party certifications (Yadegaridehkordi et al., 2021; Lin et al., 2023). Reviews and electronic word of mouth online have been found to enhance the impact of green practices on hotel choice through perceptions of authenticity and credibility (Gerdt et al., 2019; Ukpabi et al., 2018). This evidence supports the fact that visibility and communication are essential in the translation of green practices into a real customer choice behavior.

In addition to individual practices there are recent empirical studies that focus on the cumulative impact of wholesome green initiatives on hotel choice decisions. Fernandez-Robin et al. (2019) and Nuong et al. (2022) discovered that hotels that had a coherent collection of sustainability activities and practices, including energy management and waste reduction, sustainable procurement and environmental education, were more likely to attract environmentally oriented customers compared to hotels that adopted separate initiatives. The argument these studies make is that customers do not look at green practices separately but form overall perceptions on which they base their choice decision-making. Such an integrated approach concurs with modern-day sustainability models that propose systemic and not piecemeal implementation of green practices in the hospitality businesses.

Although there is an increasing empirical agreement on the positive correlation between green practices and hotel choice, gaps in the literature regarding contextual and methodological issues are visible. According to some studies, this relationship is not always equally strong based on cultural, economic, and market factors, the power of green practices does not necessarily have a consistent impact on different areas or hotel classes (Salem and Aya, 2021; Moise et al., 2021). Additionally, the proportion of the existing literature is also devoted to customer satisfaction, loyalty, or readiness to pay, and relatively few studies directly explore the issue of hotel choice as a decision outcome (Mutuku and Wambua, 2019; Jemaiyo, 2022). Such a gap highlights the necessity of a targeted piece of empirical research on the impact of green practices on initial hotel selection, especially in the context of star-rated hotels.

On the whole, it can be stated that the argument that green practices play an important role in hotel choice is well supported by the empirical literature, particularly when customers of star-rated hotels are involved and they can be characterized by increased expectations in terms of quality, ethics, and sustainability. The evidence however equally suggests that situational researches that directly relate green practices to hotel choice behavior and not necessarily post-consumption assessments alone. Filling this gap will help to better understand the sustainability-motivated consumer behavior and provide some practical implications to star-rated hotels aiming at using green practices as one of the strategic factors of consumer selection.

3.0 Research Methodology

The study adopted a quantitative research approach using a descriptive cross-sectional design, which is appropriate for examining relationships between variables at a single point in time. The target population comprised customers of star-rated hotels, selected because of their exposure to structured service standards and sustainability initiatives. Data were collected using structured questionnaires, which enabled the systematic measurement of customers' perceptions of green practices and their hotel choice decisions. The questionnaire items were derived from established hospitality and sustainability literature to ensure content relevance and construct validity. A probability-based sampling technique was employed to obtain a representative sample of hotel customers, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the findings.

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize respondents' profiles and assess the prevalence of green practices, while correlation and regression analyses were applied to examine the relationship between green practices and hotel choice decisions. The analysis tested the strength, direction, and significance of the relationship between the study variables, consistent with the study objective and the guiding Theory of Planned Behavior. Reliability of the measurement scales was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, while validity was supported through prior empirical use and internal consistency checks. The results provided empirical evidence on the extent to which green practices influence hotel choice decisions among customers of star-rated hotels.

4.0 Findings

This section presents the empirical findings of the study on the relationship between green practices and customers' hotel choice decisions among star-rated hotels in Nairobi, Kenya. The results are organized into descriptive and inferential analyses, with quantitative findings complemented by qualitative insights from key informant interviews to provide contextual interpretation.

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

The study examined how green practices influence customers' choice of star-rated hotels in Nairobi, Kenya by assessing guests' perceptions across multiple sustainability dimensions. The findings indicate a strong and consistent endorsement of green practices as a decisive factor shaping hotel choice decisions. Overall, respondents expressed high levels of agreement that environmentally responsible initiatives influence their satisfaction, trust, loyalty, and preference for specific hotels. The composite mean score of 4.14 with a relatively low standard deviation (0.98) reflects both strong agreement and response consistency, suggesting that green practices are widely recognized and valued among guests of star-rated hotels.

Table 1: Green Practices and Customers' Choice of Star-Rated Hotels in Nairobi, Kenya

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev
My satisfaction and loyalty to a hotel are influenced by its green practices	0.00%	12.30%	1.60%	46.20%	39.90%	4.14	0.94
I trust hotels more when they show commitment to environmental sustainability	1.60%	3.80%	0.30%	48.40%	45.90%	4.33	0.8
Hotels that demonstrate a commitment to green practices are my first choice	3.80%	2.50%	0.30%	49.40%	44.00%	4.27	0.9

A hotel's reputation for environmental sustainability influences my choice to stay there	1.90%	2.20%	0.30%	47.80%	47.80%	4.37	0.78
I believe that a hotel's green practices reflect on the overall quality of their service	12.00%	15.80%	2.80%	36.70%	32.60%	3.62	1.39
Green practices contribute to a positive hotel experience for me	4.70%	7.90%	1.60%	42.70%	43.00%	4.11	1.09
Mean						**4.14**	**0.98**

The descriptive results indicate that green practices are strongly embedded in customers' hotel choice evaluations among star-rated hotels in Nairobi. The overall mean score of 4.14 reflects a high level of agreement that sustainability-related practices meaningfully influence hotel selection decisions. This finding suggests that green practices are not viewed as optional or symbolic initiatives but are perceived as relevant decision cues during hotel choice. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.98 further indicates consistency in respondents' perceptions, implying broad consensus across customers regarding the importance of environmental responsibility in hotel selection.

Analysis of the individual indicators shows that sustainability-related trust and reputation attract the strongest endorsement. Mean scores exceeding 4.30, combined with low dispersion, demonstrate that customers consistently associate visible environmental commitment with credibility and integrity of star-rated hotels. These results imply that green practices function as reputational signals that reduce perceived risk and enhance confidence during the hotel selection process, particularly in competitive urban hospitality markets.

Customer preference and loyalty-related perceptions also recorded high mean values, indicating that sustainability considerations extend beyond ethical appreciation to influence actual choice behavior. The concentration of responses in the agreement categories suggests that customers are more likely to prioritize hotels that demonstrate environmental responsibility when making comparative evaluations. This supports the interpretation that green practices operate at the pre-purchase stage, shaping initial hotel selection rather than merely influencing post-stay satisfaction.

Although perceptions linking green practices to overall service quality recorded slightly lower mean values and higher variability, the scores remained above the neutral midpoint. This variation suggests that while many customers perceive sustainability as indicative of service excellence, others still rely more heavily on conventional service quality attributes. Nonetheless, the positive mean confirms that green practices complement traditional quality dimensions rather than contradict them.

Overall, the descriptive statistics provide strong empirical evidence that green practices are widely recognized and valued by customers of star-rated hotels. High mean scores across sustainability dimensions, coupled with relatively low variability, confirm that environmental responsibility

plays a substantive and consistent role in shaping customer trust, preference, and hotel choice decisions. These findings establish a solid descriptive foundation for the subsequent inferential analysis examining the strength and predictive effect of green practices on hotel choice behavior.

The qualitative findings from key informant interviews (KIIs) reinforce and enrich the quantitative results by providing managerial perspectives on how green practices influence customer behavior. One dominant theme that emerged was the influence of eco-friendly initiatives on customer satisfaction and loyalty. Managers consistently noted that guests—particularly environmentally conscious travelers—actively seek hotels whose values align with sustainability principles. As one respondent observed:

"Our customer base largely consists of eco-conscious travelers who specifically seek out hotels that align with their values. Since we've implemented comprehensive recycling programs and energy-saving measures, we've seen a notable increase in guest loyalty and received positive feedback on social platforms. (KII, 2025)."
Another manager emphasized the dual benefit of such initiatives, stating:
"The green initiatives we've put in place, such as our greywater recycling system and paperless check-in process, have not only reduced our operational costs but have also drawn attention from eco-savvy guests (KII, 2025)."
These insights demonstrate that eco-friendly initiatives exert a strong influence on both customer satisfaction and repeat patronage, reinforcing sustainability as a driver of long-term customer relationships.

A second prominent theme was the impact of green practices on hotel choice decisions. Managers reported that visible and tangible sustainability initiatives often serve as decisive factors when customers are choosing between competing hotels. One interviewee noted:

"We've discovered that our dedication to green practices is often the tiebreaker for guests choosing between us and a competitor. They appreciate our organic linen, locally sourced food, and the solar panels visible upon arrival. (KII, 2025)."
Similarly, another manager remarked:
"Many choose our hotel for its reputation in sustainability, which is often highlighted in their decision to book with us. (KII, 2025)."
These findings suggest that green practices enhance a hotel's distinctiveness and positioning, allowing sustainability to function as a strategic choice attribute rather than merely a background operational concern.

The role of sourcing practices also emerged as an important theme influencing customer perception and hotel choice. Managers indicated that guests increasingly value responsible procurement, particularly local sourcing and the use of sustainable materials. One respondent explained:

"We focus on local sourcing to minimize our carbon footprint and support the community. Our hotel partners with nearby farms and vendors to supply fresh produce and materials."
Another emphasized the alignment between sustainability and luxury expectations, stating:
"The procurement process at our resort is aligned with our green philosophy. We source high-end sustainable products, often at a premium, to align with our guests' expectations of luxury without compromise. (KII, 2025)."
These findings indicate that sourcing practices contribute to customers' evaluations of a hotel's

authenticity, social responsibility, and environmental ethics, thereby influencing their accommodation choices.

A further theme concerned the adoption of energy-efficient HVAC systems and environmentally friendly operational procedures. Managers reported that investments in modern HVAC technologies, smart sensors, and energy management systems enhance the hotel's appeal to environmentally conscious guests. One manager noted:

"We have recently upgraded to HVAC systems with programmable thermostats to better regulate temperatures and conserve energy. (KII, 2025)."

Another stated:

"Our hotel utilizes state-of-the-art HVAC systems with smart sensors that adjust the climate within the hotel based on occupancy and weather conditions."

These responses suggest that advanced environmental technologies not only improve operational efficiency but also strengthen customers' perceptions of a hotel's sustainability commitment, contributing to positive choice decisions.

Overall, the integration of quantitative and qualitative findings demonstrates that green practices exert a moderate to high influence on customers' choice of star-rated hotels in Nairobi. The results indicate that sustainability initiatives shape customer satisfaction, trust, loyalty, and preference by aligning hotel offerings with guests' environmental values and expectations. These findings are consistent with prior empirical studies that link green practices to enhanced customer satisfaction, loyalty, and hotel choice behavior (Tefera & Migiro, 2018; Han, 2021; Jiang et al., 2022). The evidence further supports the relevance of the Theory of Planned Behavior by illustrating how green practices influence attitudes, reinforce pro-sustainability norms, and enhance perceived control in hotel selection. Collectively, the findings affirm that green practices are not merely ethical imperatives but strategic determinants of hotel choice in star-rated hospitality markets.

4.2 Inferential Analysis

Inferential analysis was conducted to examine the nature, strength, and predictive effect of green practices on customers' choice of star-rated hotels in Nairobi. Pearson correlation analysis was used to assess the direction and magnitude of the relationship between the variables, while simple linear regression was applied to determine the extent to which green practices predict hotel choice decisions.

4.2.1 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was conducted to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between green practices and customers' choice of star-rated hotels in Nairobi County. As presented in Table 2, the results indicate a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between green practices and hotel choice ($r = 0.782$, $p < 0.01$). The magnitude of the correlation coefficient suggests a high degree of association, implying that increases in the adoption and visibility of green practices are closely linked to stronger customer preference for star-rated hotels that demonstrate environmental responsibility.

Table 2: Correlation Analysis

		Green Practices	**Hotel Choice**
Green Practices	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.782**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
Hotel Choice	Pearson Correlation	.782**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The statistical significance of the relationship at the 0.01 level confirms that the observed association is unlikely to have occurred by chance. This finding indicates that green practices are not merely peripheral considerations but constitute a critical factor influencing hotel choice decisions. Customers appear to systematically favor hotels that exhibit commitment to sustainability initiatives such as energy efficiency, waste management, and environmentally responsible operations, reinforcing the relevance of green practices as an important determinant of consumer behavior within the hospitality sector.

Overall, the correlation results provide empirical support for the study objective by demonstrating that green practices and hotel choice move in the same direction and are strongly associated. This outcome aligns with prior empirical evidence suggesting that environmentally sustainable practices positively shape customer attitudes and preferences, thereby increasing the likelihood of hotel selection. The strength of the correlation further justifies subsequent regression analysis to assess the predictive influence of green practices on hotel choice decisions.

4.2.2 Regression Analysis

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to assess whether green practices statistically and meaningfully predict customers' choice of star-rated hotels in Nairobi County. The model produced a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.782, indicating a strong positive linear relationship between green practices and hotel choice. This value confirms that as the level of green practices increases, customers' likelihood of choosing a hotel increases in a closely associated manner.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.782a	0.612	0.607	0.3895
a Predictors: (Constant), Green Practices				

The coefficient of determination (R^2 = 0.612) shows that 61.2 percent of the variance in hotel choice decisions is explained by green practices alone. From a statistical standpoint, this represents a high explanatory power for a single predictor in consumer behavior research. This means that more than half of customers' hotel selection decisions can be attributed directly to differences in the adoption and visibility of green practices, confirming their substantive importance in the decision-making process. The adjusted R^2 of 0.607 closely mirrors R^2,

indicating that the model's explanatory strength is stable and not inflated by sample characteristics.

Model validity is further confirmed by the ANOVA results, where the regression model yielded an F-statistic of 130.755 with p = 0.000. This highly significant result indicates that the model provides a statistically better fit than a model with no predictors. In practical terms, it confirms that green practices collectively make a non-random and statistically meaningful contribution to predicting hotel choice decisions.

Table 4 shows the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Results

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	19.837	1	19.837	130.755	.000b
	Residual	12.592	83	0.152		
1	Total	32.429	84			
a Dependent Variable: Hotel Choice						
b Predictors: (Constant), Green Practices						

At the coefficient level, green practices recorded an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.851, which was positive and statistically significant (t = 11.435, p < 0.001). This coefficient means that for every one-unit increase in green practices, hotel choice increases by 0.851 units, holding other factors constant. The size of this coefficient indicates a strong practical effect, not merely statistical significance. The standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.782$) further confirms that green practices exert a large effect size, demonstrating that sustainability initiatives are among the most influential drivers of hotel choice within the model.

Table 5: Coefficient of Regression Results

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	0.819	0.306		2.679	0.009
1	Green Practices	0.851	0.074	0.782	11.435	0.000
a Dependent Variable: Hotel Choice						

The constant term (B = 0.819, p = 0.009) indicates a positive baseline level of hotel choice even in the absence of green practices. However, the magnitude and significance of the green practices coefficient show that sustainability initiatives substantially elevate customer preference beyond this baseline. The estimated regression equation,

$$Y = 0.819 + 0.851X_1,$$

therefore confirms that improvements in green practices translate directly into higher probabilities of hotel selection.

Statistically, these results demonstrate both significance and strength of prediction. Conceptually, they imply that green practices are not peripheral attributes but core determinants of customer choice behavior in the star-rated hotel segment. While 38.8 percent of the variance remains unexplained, reflecting the influence of factors such as price, service quality, and brand reputation, the findings clearly establish green practices as a dominant predictor of hotel choice decisions in Nairobi's competitive hospitality market.

5.0 Conclusion

The study establishes that green practices are a statistically significant and substantively strong determinant of customers' choice of star-rated hotels in Nairobi, Kenya. Both descriptive and inferential analyses confirm that customers systematically factor sustainability considerations into hotel selection, with regression results showing that green practices explain 61.2 percent of the variation in hotel choice decisions. This level of explanatory power demonstrates that sustainability is not a marginal or symbolic attribute but a core driver of consumer choice within the star-rated hotel segment.

The positive and significant regression coefficient further indicates that increases in the adoption and visibility of green practices lead to measurable increases in the likelihood of hotel selection, underscoring the practical impact of sustainability initiatives on market outcomes. These findings provide empirical confirmation that environmentally responsible practices influence customer trust, preference, and selection behavior in a direct and predictable manner.

Overall, the study concludes that green practices function as a strategic competitive mechanism rather than a discretionary ethical add-on. For star-rated hotels operating in highly competitive urban markets, sustainability initiatives represent a high-impact investment capable of shaping customer choice behavior. Consequently, hotels that fail to integrate and communicate green practices risk competitive disadvantage as customer decision-making increasingly reflects environmental values and accountability considerations.

6.0 Recommendation

Based on the empirical evidence that green practices explain a substantial proportion of customers' hotel choice decisions, star-rated hotels should institutionalize sustainability as a strategic decision variable, not as an auxiliary corporate responsibility activity. Management should prioritize investments in green practices that are visible, verifiable, and decision-relevant, particularly energy-efficient technologies, waste management systems, water conservation infrastructure, and sustainable sourcing. Given the strong predictive effect of green practices on hotel choice, such investments should be treated as market-facing competitiveness strategies rather than purely operational efficiency measures.

Hotels should also place deliberate emphasis on the visibility and communication of green practices. Since customer choice is influenced by awareness and perception, sustainability initiatives must be clearly communicated through booking platforms, hotel websites, in-property signage, and digital marketing channels. Transparent disclosure of sustainability actions and outcomes enhances customer trust and reduces information asymmetry at the point of choice, thereby strengthening the effectiveness of green practices as a selection cue.

In addition, sustainability should be fully integrated into brand positioning and customer engagement strategies. Star-rated hotels should align green practices with brand identity and value propositions, supported by credible third-party certifications and consistent sustainability messaging. Staff training is equally critical, as frontline employees play a direct role in reinforcing sustainability narratives and translating green commitments into tangible customer experiences.

At the policy and industry level, tourism and hospitality regulators should strengthen the adoption of green practices by developing clear sustainability benchmarks, incentive structures, and reporting standards tailored to star-rated hotels. Standardization and incentives would reduce implementation uncertainty, improve comparability across hotels, and accelerate sector-wide uptake of environmentally responsible practices. Such measures would enhance not only environmental outcomes but also the long-term competitiveness of Kenya's star-rated hospitality sector.

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