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Hotel Guests' Perceptions of Environmentally Friendly Practices in Jordan

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Abstract

Tourism still generates negative effects on the environment that consequently objected the green practices in hotels; therefore, this study comes to measure the perception of international guests towards green practices in the Jordanian hotels. This study considers the first attempt that linked the tourists' perceptions toward green practices in hotels and their willingness to stay in eco-label hotels in Jordan. The study relied on the quantitative approach to measure the level of those practices as 270 questionnaires were collected during the period from March to September 2019. The questionnaire included questions on 7 eco-label criteria (Green hotel certification, Energy, Water, Waste and Purchasing Management, Community support and Customer education) comprising all areas of hotel operations, and 3 statements to measure hotel guests' guests' willingness to stay in eco-label hotel. The statistical analysis was performed using SPSS program version 21. The study found a positive but moderate correlation between tourists' perceptions towards environmental practices and their stay in eco-hotels. In addition, the various dimensions of environmental practices were positively related to tourists staying in an environmentally friendly hotel. This is one of the first studies that linked tourists' perceptions towards green practices in the hotels and their willingness to stay in eco-label hotel.

Keywords: eco-hotel; environmentally friendly hotel; guest perception; Jordan; tourism.

JelClassification: Q26; R11; Z32.

Introduction:

The tourism sector is one of the largest sectors economically in the world as it contributes to 10.4% of the global Gross Domestic Product (Jukes 2018). Tourism contributes to 7% of the global exports and employs 1 of 10 jobs globally (WTTC 2018), and thus, has become a leading engine for economic development worldwide. Despite the tremendous benefits of the tourism industry, it generates significant negative effects on the environment that undermines the desired benefits of the green practices in hotels. The use of fossil fuels in the tourism sector contributes to CO_2 emissions and global warming (Gossling 2002). The transportation and accommodation section alone accounts for 4.4% of such emissions (Peeters and Dubois 2010). Based on the U.S Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), decreasing energy use by 10% across the hotel industry alone may save $285 million (McLeish 2007).

About 658 thousand hotels and related accommodation services worldwide have 15.5 million rooms (UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2015). Han *et al*. (2009) estimated that the average emissions from a single hotel room to 160 - 200 kg of CO_2/m^2. The study also noted that the water consumption per room for a single night was between 170 - 440 liters. Hotels produce 1 kg of waste per guest per night as a result of providing comfortable

services like hot water, food and beverage, lighting, air conditioning, and swimming pools. These processes consume huge volumes of water, energy, goods, and natural resources, which consequently pose an extra burden on the environment (Oluwole *et al.* 2020)

Environmental consciousness is becoming an important issue in the tourism industry. According to Vora (2007), at least 43 million American travelers express concerns about hotels' environmental practices. They want them to reach a stage of other notable eco-friendly hotels through the '3S' (saving water, saving energy and saving waste). The survey of the National Leisure Travel Monitor found that 85% of leisure tourists consider themselves environmentally aware (Crocker 2008). To cater for the remaining 15%, many tourism organizations adopt green practices and products (Morrison-Saunders *et al.* 2019). This trend is going to increase to meet the customers' interests and satisfaction.

One of the most important reasons for eco-dimensions in hotels is customer satisfaction (Rahman and Reynolds 2019; Hou and Wu 2021). Although this demands usually intervene with hotels' green practices, the tourism companies are overcoming this issue by increasing the visitors' awareness and relying on the assumption that the green practice in hotels offers a number of benefits like long-term saving cost, sustainability and satisfying clients who are seeking green services (Hays and Ozretić-Došen 2014).

A study by Nilashi *et al*. (2019) found that 75% of the tourists have the intention to pay more to stay in hotels if they know that they apply green practices. The study also concluded that 62% of travelers are willing to pay an extra $25 for each night staying in environmentally friendly hotels. This shows that hotels need to adjust to the tourists' aptitude for the environment.

Jauhari and Manaktola (2007) studied the relationship between tourists' attitudes towards environmental practices in the accommodation sector. They discovered that 22% of their sample had searched the internet for environmental information regarding hotels; thus, any hotel that adopts environmentally friendly practices will have a competitive advantage, especially in areas with limited natural resources like Jordan.

Jordan is one of the poorest countries in the world in terms of water resources. Based on the Food and Agriculture Organization studies, the per capita water availability is only 70 m^3/year (Food and Agriculture Organization 2017). For energy, just 4% of Jordan's energy comes from renewable sources, while 96% comes from fossil fuels. Unlike its neighbors, Jordan has little hydrocarbon resources and imports approximately 97% of its energy needs (Hamed and Bressler 2019). Foreign tourists may have little to perception about the above situation and are likely to consume water in amounts that exceed the locale rates.

Hotel managers spend a lot of time and money on environmental practices; however, they are not certain that hotel guests notice these green efforts (Gil-Soto *et al.* 2019). Since the environment's importance has become a social issue, customers prefer environmentally friendly products and services when choosing a hotel room (Laroche *et al.* 2001; Han *et al.* 2009; Lu *et al.* 2015; Patwary *et al.* 2021). However, there is a lack of conclusive research on the perceptions of hotel guests about green practices. Considering the perception of service providers, Rawashdeh and Al-Ababneh (2016) conducted a study on applying environmental practices in four and five-star hotels in Jordan. From the viewpoint of managers, these hotels were moderate in their application of environmental criteria in terms of training employees on environmental practices, community support, saving water, saving energy, waste management, and educating tourists about these practices. The study also recommended that further studies be undertaken to expand this field from guests' viewpoint. Thus, this study came in response to that recommendation. Our study analyzes the international guest' perceptions towards seven major elements: green hotel certification, the management of energy, water, waste, and purchasing, community support, and customer education. This will provide more information on what guests value, providing information on what hotels need to prioritize and invest in it.

1. Literature Review: Environmentally Friendly Practices in Hotels

'Eco-friendly hotels' are hotels that have committed to applying different environmental practices, such as saving water and energy and reducing solid waste (Jauhari and Manaktola 2007). This will, in turn, generate more profit (Le *et al.* 2006). The Green Hotels Association defines a "green hotel" as a hotel that operates in "an environmentally friendly" way (Green Hotels Association 2015). Greening is applying the concepts of (3Rs), namely Reuse, Recycle, and Reduce (Fennell 2008). Nowadays, eco-friendly practices are part of our daily lives and are changing the way we travel. They have become one of the elements that contribute to attracting tourists and enhancing the tourism experience. So many hoteliers worldwide have sought to apply these practices in their institutions for a competitive advantage.

According to Kim *et al.* (2016), green practices in hotels can be classified into three types: guest-identifiable green attributes, such as energy-saving room appliances, towel reuse programs, and linen reuse

programs. The second type is energy-related green attributes, such as solar and wind energy. Finally, the third practice is related to green certificates in hotels, such as ISO and Green Key. Most of the current researches focuses on those practices that are identified by guests (Rahman *et al.* 2015; Wang *et al.* 2017). On the other hand, green certificates have been an easy way for hotels to refer to their green practices to clients when they want to enhance their awareness of the hotel's environmental efforts (Millar and Baloglu 2011).

To possess a global competitive advantage, many hotels are currently adopting environmentally friendly practices. These procedures target promoting air quality, energy and water conservation, and overall environmental health. They are also adopting a purchasing policy and environmental education in hotels to alleviate the negative impacts on the environment (Mbasera *et al.* 2016) (Table 1).

Table 1. Green practices in hotels

Green practice	Green hotel initiative
Sustainable management of water	▪ Conserving water in hotels by using low-flow fixtures. ▪ Hotels can keep their operations waste free by using rainwater harvesting to flush toilets. ▪ Most of the world's hotels adopted linen and towel reuse due to the careless use of water resources. ▪ Reclaimed or greywater can be used for irrigating golf courses and landscaping. ▪ Irrigating landscaping and golf courses by using reclaimed or greywater. ▪ Reusing the collected water from kitchens, dishwashers, washing machines, and bathrooms for gardening or car washing. ▪ Detecting and repairing any drip or leak in guest rooms. ▪ Using water-saving devices in guest rooms such as diverter valves. ▪ Reducing the amount of water used per flush by placing a glass jar in the toilet tank.
Energy conservation	▪ Hotels can use energy in occupied rooms only by using occupancy sensors. ▪ The hotel's carbon footprint can be improved by investing in new renewable energy sources (i.g, sunlight, and wind power). ▪ Hotels can use energy-saving light bulbs such as compact efflorescent light bulbs and energy star-efficient heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC). ▪ Reducing energy consumption measures can be implemented in green hotels through operating as much as possible during daylight hours.
Solid waste management	▪ Hotels can participate in important waste management by recycling solid waste. ▪ Composting at the hotels and use it for community gardens by processing organic waste and municipal refuse collection in the composting depot.
Air quality management	▪ Using air filtration in hotels. ▪ Cutting vehicle pollution in hotels through lift sharing. ▪ Reducing pollution and congestion on the roads by using public transport or bicycles. ▪ Passing of decrees requiring that restaurants ▪ Instilling ventilation and creating smoking sections in restaurants based on decree passing would have a mitigatory effect.
Environmental purchasing	▪ Hotels can purchase recycled eco-friendly packaging for administrative offices, guest rooms, and kitchens such as toilet tissue, stationery, take-out boxes and bags, and other items made from previously recycled goods/biodegradable packaging ▪ Hotels can reduce the economic leakages and support the local economy as much as possible by purchasing locally-produced food and locally-grown food, which are fresh, indigenous, and representative of the area. ▪ Hotels can purchase green biodegradable products such as cleaning solutions, toilet tissue, soaps, shampoos, eating utensils, and other items made for hotel environmental programs or guest houses.
Community awareness	▪ Giving green information that will be available to the society by using leaflets in libraries, newspaper articles, radio news programs, TV, and magazine articles. ▪ Providing environmental education in hotels as well as in the community. ▪ Providing local environmental initiatives as part of conservation training activities such as financially supporting an association for environment protection and cleaning a park or beach.
Managing permits	▪ Hotels can use building permits, such as green buildings that improve people's health and productivity. ▪ In compliance with green management legislation, green hotels must focus on complying with government regulations and saving money by reducing energy usage and waste. ▪ Hotels must follow the laws and regulations, including incentives such as credits for installing renewable energy sources and tax exemptions, recycling requirements, and building codes.

Source: Adapted from Mbasera *et al.* (2016)

Many environmental practices can be implemented in the hotel sector, making the sector more sustainable and environmentally friendly. For example, hotels adopt sustainable development principles to reduce clients' concerns and reduce energy consumption (Verma and Chandra 2018). Some hotels also took specific environmental review measures to assess the environmental costs concerning energy, waste, transportation, and local environmental management. Therefore, environmental sustainability is one of the important features that must be considered in relation to general sustainability (Mufidah *et al.* 2018).

The implementation of green practices in hotels derives its strength from tourists' awareness and support for sustainable tourism. There are a set of factors that play an important role in how hotels adopt green practices. The adopted practices vary from one hotel to another and region to region. One of the reasons behind this variation stems from differences in ethical issues and national laws and legislation related to environmental protection (Chan *et al.* 2008). Many studies indicate that green practices in hotels can produce economic benefits (Blanco *et al.* 2009) by providing competitive advantages, innovative environment, consumer satisfaction, and improved tourists' loyalty to these hotels (Goodman 2000). Adopting green practices can also achieve green buying behavior (Chin, Chin and Wong 2018). Therefore, hotels that do not practice environmentally friendly practices should be fully responsible for the environmental problems they produce (Yin, Du and Chen 2020).

Customers' preference can be a result of demographic variables of customers such as age, gender, education, and income. One study seeked to quantify the perceptions of customers towards green practices in hotels for different demographics by collecting 656 valid questionnaires for analysis using the SPSS program, Wang *et al.* (2020). They found significant positive relationships between tourists' perceptions and their demographic characteristics, particularly age and income, more than other variables such as education and gender. This study concluded that young clients, “millennials” and female clients are more likely to choose and recommend green accommodation services, compared to male or elderly clients who have a lower interest in environmental issues.

In the study of Gil-Soto *et al.* (2019), the main findings indicate that despite customers' awareness of green efforts on energy, water, purchasing, waste, location, education, and innovation, the customers do not recognize the level of commitment of hotels toward the environment. The guest perceptions on the hotels' efforts to pursue environmentally friendly practices do not differ significantly due to the travel method or reviewer's experience on any travel platforms. To address this gap, this study found that communication about environmentally friendly practices needs to be redesigned and intensified by hotel managers to benefit from these efforts.

The benefits of investing in the above efforts are customer loyalty. Yusof *et al.* (2017) measured the impact of green practices in non-green hotels on tourists' satisfaction and their loyalty to the hotel. They found that green practices in the hotel industry have a significant positive impact on tourists' satisfaction. The perception of tourists was examined by Merli e*t al.* (2019) on how they perceive the measures implemented by hotels to reduce their environmental effects. The study results indicated that clients were positively aware of the role of hotels in preserving the environment, with a significant impact on the satisfaction and loyalty of tourists. Ahn and Kwon (2020) also chimed in and explored the relationship between the green practices in the hotel industry and the loyalty of guests through the link between cognitive evaluation (*i.e.*, perceived cost and value), affective responses (*i.e.*, positive/negative anticipated emotion and attitude), and conative sense (*e.g.*, behavioral intention). The study showed a strong relationship between cognitive evaluation and affective responses, as well as a relative influence on creating cognitive sense towards eco-hotels practices.

At the regional level, Eid *et al.* (2020) conducted a study to expand the current knowledge of consumers' green behaviors towards green hotels in Egypt. They integrated the theory of value-belief-norm and planned behavior theory into one theoretical framework to understand the consumer decision-making process regarding their intentions to visit a green hotel. The researchers found that attitudes towards green hotels, perceived behavioral control, sense of commitment, and corporate image were the main drivers of guests' intentions to visit green hotels. They also found that the three main configurations (value, belief, and norms) greatly affect customers' intentions to visit green hotels. Within the framework of merging the two theories, they concluded that the company's image, the value of the biosphere, and green activities are the basic components of a high intention among customers to visit green hotels.

Nevertheless, at the national level, there are no study that deals with the environmentally friendly practices in hotels from the customers' point of view. For example, Alananzeh *et al.* (2017) studied the impact of employees' perception of implementing green supply chain management on a hotel's economic and operational performance. Alzboun *et al.* (2016) researched the effect of sustainability practices on financial leakage in the hotel industry in Jordan from the manager's perspective, but there is a gap on the customer's point of view. While

Ababneh (2021) seeks to examine new trends towards green practices in Jordanian hotels through an experimental investigation into the mediating role of employee participation in environmental initiatives between green human resource management practices and individual green behavior.

2. Materials and Methods

A random sampling method was used to draw a sample of guests from tourist sites in Jordan for over three months. Thus, 350 tourists were sampled randomly. Informed consent was obtained before data collection after they were informed of the study's purpose. The study's questionnaire was developed based on Graci and Knehnel's (2009) scale by modifying the content to measure tourists' perceptions instead of managers' perceptions. The questionnaire included 40 items on 7 eco-label criteria comprising all areas of hotel operations. Each criterion had specific eco-practices and 3 items to measure hotel guests' willingness to stay in eco-label hotels (Table 2). Thus, the hotel guests were asked about their perceptions of implementing eco-label criteria in hotels by investigating their agreement toward eco-label goals and values. The data were collected using a questionnaire that followed a five-point Likert scale, with"1" being "strongly disagree" and "5" being "strongly agree". Out of 350 distributed questionnaires, 270 questionnaires were received back at a return rate of about 77%. The researchers excluded 80 questionnaires because they were incomplete.

Table 2. The items of the questionnaire

Eco-label Criteria	No. of Items
1. Green hotel certification	4
2. Energy management	9
3. Water management	5
4. Waste management	8
5. Purchasing management	1
6. Community support	3
7. Customer education	10
Total Eco-label items	40
Stay in eco-label hotel	
1. Willingness to stay in eco-label hotel	**3**
Total	**43**

The data were analyzed for the mean and standard deviation for each criterion in order to describe the guests' perceptions on the implementation of eco-label criteria in hotels. Cronbach Alpha was used to test the internal consistency among the 43 statements above, and the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used to establish the construct validity for the study scale. In addition, correlation and regression analyses at P = 0.05 were conducted to assess the relationship between guests' perceptions towards eco-label implementation in hotels and their stay in eco-label hotels. The statistical analysis was performed using SPSS program version 21.

3. Results and Discussion

As shown in Table 3, the demographic profile of participants indicated that the majority of respondents were males (58.1%). 53%, 20.7%, 18.1% of respondents were from three continents: Europe, North America, and Asia, respectively. The majority of respondents (64.8%) had undergraduate degrees or postgraduate ones, and only 23% had secondary school certificates. 49.7 % of respondents were married, 45.9% were single, and 4.4% were widows(er). The respondents' age shows that 22.2 % of them were 30 years of age or below, 45.6 % were between 31 and 50 years old, 20% were between 51 and 60 years old, and 11.5 % were 61-year-old or above. The majority of respondents (57.8%) had monthly incomes of more than 1501$, and 27.4% of them had income less than 1500$. Based on the demographic profile above, the selected sample show a relatively balanced heterogeneous male/female ratio although some studies show a varied conception regarding sex (Laroche *et al.* 2001). The responses were reliable as 77.2 % of the respondents' age was more than 30 years old and economically capable of paying extra costs seeing green hotels, which is congruent with the study by Agarwal and Kasliwal (2017). Also, the behavior of young guests could be generally influenced by their environmental knowledge (Norazah 2013).

The profile of participants' visits as shown in Table 4 indicates that 38.5% of respondents know Jordan from the internet, 20.7% from friends and relatives, and only 12.6% from the media. Most of the respondents (57%) visited archaeological sites, and stayed in 4-5 stars hotels (57.5%), while 17.4% stayed in 3 stars hotels. The length of stay at hotels shows that 13.3% of respondents stay for 1-3 nights, 37% stay for 4-7 nights, 26.3% stay

for 8-11 nights, and 21.5%) stay for more than 12 nights. About 14.1% of respondents had room only, 43.3% had bed & breakfast, 19.3% had half board, 17% had full board.

Table 3. Profile of hotel guests

Variables	N	Percentage	Variables	N	Percentage
Gender:			**Marital Status:**		
Male	157	58.1%	Single	124	45.9%
Female	113	41.9%	Married	134	49.7%
	270	100%	Widow(er)	12	4.4%
Continent:				270	100%
Europe	143	53.0%	**Age:**		
North America	56	20.7%	Less than 20	7	2.6%
Asia	49	18.1%	21-30	53	19.6%
Africa	4	1.5%	31-40	64	23.7%
Australia	15	5.6%	41-50	56	21.9%
Missing	3	1.1%	51-60	54	20%
	270	100%	61 and more	31	11.5%
Education:			NA	2	0.7%
High School	62	23%		270	100%
Undergraduate	65	24.1%	**Income:**		
Postgraduate	110	40.7%	Less than 500$	37	13.7%
Missing	33	12.2%	501-1000 $	15	5.6%
	270	100%	1001-1500$	22	8.1%
			1501-2000$	40	14.8%
			More than 2001$	114	42.2%
			NA	42	15.6%
				270	100%

Based on these results, the majority of the guests stayed in hotels with high eco-label standards for a considerable amount of time coupled with bed and breakfast, which consequently may affect their judgments regarding eco-label practices. These findings agree with the study by Ghaith (2019) who found that guests stayed in Egyptian Eco-lodge for 1–4 days and the most important sources of information that impact guests' decision-making to choose the Eco-lodge were the internet and recommendations from friends and relatives.

Table 4. Profile of guests visit

Variables	N	Percentage	Variables	N	Percentage
Source of knowledge about Jordan:			**Accommodation:**		
Internet	104	38.5%	Unclassified hotel	37	13.7%
Friends and relatives	56	20.7%	1-2 stars hotel	19	7%
Media	34	12.6%	3 stars hotel	47	17.4%
Books and guides	20	7.4%	4 stars hotel	83	30.8%
Travel agency\tour operator	33	12.2%	5 stars hotel	72	26.7%
Fairs or exhibitions	1	0.4%	Missing	12	4.4%
Other	22	8.2%		270	100%
	270	100%	**Length of stay:**		
Visit Purpose:			1-3 nights	36	13.3%
Visiting archaeological sites	154	57%	4-7 nights	100	37%
Visiting friend and relatives	23	8.5%	8-11 nights	71	26.3%
Eco-tourism	15	5.6%	12-15 nights	26	9.6%
Medical tourism	5	1.9%	More than 16 nights	32	11.9%
Religious tourism	21	7.8%	Missing	5	1.9%
MICE Tourism	9	3.3%		270	100%
Study	12	4.4%	**Board:**		
Other	3	1.1%	Room only	38	14.1%
	28	10.4%	Bed and breakfast	117	43.3%
	270	100%	Half-board	52	19.3%
			Full board	46	17%
			Missing	17	6.3%
				270	100%

The internal consistency analysis was conducted for the items of the scale. Table 5 shows Cronbach's alpha and the number of items in each factor. The reliability alpha coefficients for the factors were high and ranged from 0.823 to 0.932. The value of Cronbach's alpha above 0.70 is the acceptable value.

Table 5. Reliability analysis results for the study scale

Factor	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Guests' perceptions of eco-label practices	40	.932
Guest stay in eco-label hotel	3	.823
Total	43	.934

An Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used to establish the study scale's construct validity, a principal component analysis with Varimax rotation showed the significant factor loadings for this study. The following Tables present the outcomes of the factor analysis after rotation.

Table 6. The output of factor analysis for guests' perceptions of eco-label practices

Item	Component						
	1 WasM	2 CE	3 WM	4 EM	5 GC	6 PM	7 CS
EC1					.379		
EC2					.738		
EC3					.711		
EC4					.696		
EC5				.351			
EC6				.512			
EC7				.350			
EC8				.414			
EC9				.395			
EC10				.382			
EC11				.515			
EC12				.677			
EC13				.663			
EC14			.698				
EC15			.784				
EC16			.591				
EC17			.523				
EC18			.437				
EC19	.552						
EC20	.759						
EC21	.653						
EC22	.692						
EC23	.525						
EC24	.650						
EC25	.672						
EC26	.684						
EC27						.427	
EC28							.593
EC29							.643
EC30							.488
EC31		.581					
EC32		.622					
EC33		.765					
EC34		.681					
EC35		.656					

Item	Component						
	1 WasM	2 CE	3 WM	4 EM	5 GC	6 PM	7 CS
EC36		.480					
EC37		.368					
EC38		.674					
EC39		.492					
EC40		.333					
Eigen-value	11.674	2.428	2.237	1.792	1.691	1.503	1.278
Percentage of variance explained	29.185	6.070	5.593	4.479	4.226	3.758	3.195
Cumulative %(Total explained)	29.185	35.255	40.848	45.328	49.554	53.312	56.507

As shown in Table 6, the result of the factor analysis presented seven dimensions structure (Green Hotel Certification (GC), Energy Management (EM), Water Management (WM), Waste Management (WasM), Purchasing Management (PM), Community Support (CS), Customer Education (CE)) for guests' perceptions of eco-label practices with an Eigenvalue exceeding 1. The seven-dimension solution is consistent with the previous study, which considered eco-label practices as multidimensional variables (Graci and Knehnel 2009). Item loadings on these components ranged from 0.333 to 0.784.

Table 7. The output of factor analysis for guest stay in eco-label hotel (stay)

Item	Component
	1 Stay
EC1	.879
EC2	.882
EC3	.823
Eigen-value	2.226
Percentage of variance explained	74.209
Cumulative % (Total explained)	74.209

As shown in Table 7, the factor analysis results presented a one-dimension structure for a guest stay in eco-label hotels with an Eigenvalue exceeding 1. The one-dimension solution is consistent with the previous study, which considered guest stay in an eco-label hotel as a one-dimensional variable (Graci and Knehnel 2009). Item loadings on this component ranged from 0.823 to 0.882.

Descriptive analysis was conducted for the dimensions and overall scales. Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Distribution of the dimensions of the study's variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Green Hotel Certification (GC)	2.99	0.78
Energy Management (EM)	2.54	0.76
Water Management (WM)	2.80	0.96
Waste Management (WasM)	2.60	0.88
Purchasing Management (PM)	2.38	1.19
Community Support (CS)	2.75	1.03
Customer Education (CE)	2.62	0.91
Guests' perceptions of eco-label practices (ECO)	**2.67**	**0.65**
Guest stay in eco-label hotel (Stay)	**3.30**	**0.94**

The results in Table 8 showed that the mean score for overall guests' perceptions of eco-label practices is 2.67±0.65, which means that eco-label practices were moderately implemented in hotels, as reported by guests. At the dimensional level, all eco-label factors were implemented in the sampled hotels, for example, Green hotel certification (GC) had the highest score (mean=2.99±0.78), followed by Water management (WM) (mean=2.80±0.96), and the lowest score was for Purchasing management (PM) (mean=2.38±1.19). The findings revealed that guests' mean score stays in the eco-label hotel (Stay) 3.3±0.94 as reported by guests. This

indicates that hotel guests prefer to stay in eco-label hotels that implement eco-label practices. However, the perception of the guest towards eco-label practices is moderate, unlike, for example, the study by Hsiao et al. (2014), who found a very positive perception over the same variables above (mean ≈4.5).

Despite numerous calls to protect the environment, adopting eco-friendly behaviors remains a persistent challenge to adopting eco-friendly practices. This study indicates that consumer education is one of the important variables influencing tourists' perceptions of green practices of Jordanian hotels. Consumer education ranked fourth according to a mean of 2.62±0.91, which corresponded to results presented by Nimri *et al.* (2020) in Australia. This Australian study sought to expand the knowledge of hotel consumers' green behaviors by developing and testing an expanded model for the theory of planned behavior to comprehensively understand the decision-making processes of consumers regarding their intentions to stay in an eco-label hotel. The results showed that the proposed theoretical framework has a strong ability to predict intentions and determine the role of previous experiences in generating intentions, which can assist hotel managers in developing and implementing hotel operations that take into account environmentally friendly purchasing behavior for consumers.

The perceptions of guests towards green/eco-hotels as shown in Table 9 indicates that most of the respondents (47%) did not stay in green/eco-hotels before, while 40.4% stayed in a green/eco-hotel before. About 53.3% of respondents are looking for a hotel's green certification before booking, and 28.7% were not looking for a hotel's green certification before booking. The majority of respondents (51.1%) would not have liked to pay more to stay in a hotel that makes efforts to be environmentally friendly, while 38.9% would like to pay more to stay in a hotel that makes efforts to be environmentally friendly. Previous studies had noted that proper management and certification strengthens consumer confidence in hotel service delivery (Darnall *et al.* 2008) and that tourists were willing to pay more for their stay in environmentally friendly accommodation (Arias *et al.* 2003; Masau and Prideaux, 2003 and Han *et al.* 2009), which is not strongly evident in the current study. The difference in the observed results in our study and previous research might depend on the customer's professions as Millar and Baloglu (2011) particularly noted that 77% of business travelers and 84% of leisure travelers would pay the same price environmentally friendly hotels.

Table 9: Guests perceptions toward green/eco-hotel

No.	Question	Yes %	No %	Do not know %	Missing %	Total %
1.	Have you stayed in a green/eco-hotel before?	109 40.4%	127 47%	28 10.4%	6 2.2%	270 100%
2.	Do you look for a hotel's green certification before booking?	144 53.3%	77 28.7%	44 16.3%	5 1.7%	270 100%
3.	I would like to pay more to stay in a hotel that makes efforts to be environmentally friendly.	105 38.9%	138 51.1%	22 8.1%	5 1.9%	270 100%

The findings indicated that the guest's willingness to pay more for green\eco hotels, as shown in Table 10. About 40.7% of respondents will pay by 1-5% more, about 41.5% will pay by 6-10% more, 13.3% will pay by 11-20% more, and lastly, 1.5% will pay more than 21%. Compared to other similar studies, the guests to Jordan hotels seem modest in paying extra eco practices costs. For example, Jauhari and Manaktola (2007) argue that tourists who are willing to pay more for green hotels vary. Their study concluded that 11% were willing to pay 25% more, 40% were willing to pay 50-100% more, while 40% were willing to pay 4-6 % more while staying at green hotels.

Table 10. Guests willingness to pay more for green\eco hotel

Question	Willingness to pay more					
	1-5%	6-10%	11-20%	More than 21%	Missing	Total
How much extra would you pay more to stay in a hotel that makes efforts to be environmentally friendly?	110 (40.7%)	112 (41.5%)	36 (13.3%)	4 (1.5%)	8 (3%)	270 (100 %)

The correlation analysis tested the relationship between guests' perceptions of eco-label practices and guest stay in eco-label hotels. The results as shown in Table 11 indicate a positive but moderate correlation between guests' perceptions of eco-label practices and guest stay in an eco-label hotel (r = 0.43). The various dimensions of eco-label practices were positively correlated with a guest's stay in eco-label hotels.

Table 11. Pearson correlation between guests' perceptions of eco-label practices and guest stay in eco-label hotel

		GC	EM	WM	WasM	PM	CS	CE	ECO	Stay
GC	Pearson Correlation	1	.448**	.283**	.321**	.341**	.174**	.261**	.550**	.293**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.004	.000	.000	.000
EM	Pearson Correlation	.448**	1	.559**	.661**	.314**	.233**	.544**	.735**	.234**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
WM	Pearson Correlation	.283**	.559**	1	.571**	.240**	.340**	.524**	.710**	.376**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
WasM	Pearson Correlation	.321**	.661**	.571**	1	.377**	.365**	.590**	.780**	.356**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
PM	Pearson Correlation	.341**	.314**	.240**	.377**	1	.407**	.394**	.669**	.203**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.001
CS	Pearson Correlation	.174**	.233**	.340**	.365**	.407**	1	.541**	.653**	.352**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
CE	Pearson Correlation	.261**	.544**	.524**	.590**	.394**	.541**	1	.788**	.288**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
ECO	Pearson Correlation	.550**	.735**	.710**	.780**	.669**	.653**	.788**	1	.429**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
Stay	Pearson Correlation	.293**	.234**	.376**	.356**	.203**	.352**	.288**	.429**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

There is a moderate correlation between 'water management' and 'stay' (r = .376) followed by a significant correlation between 'waste management' and 'stay' (r = .356), then between 'community support' and 'stay' (r = .352). The weakest correlation was between 'purchasing management' and 'stay' (r = .203). A linear regression model was conducted to investigate guests' perceptions of eco-label practices on guest stay in eco-label hotels as shown in Table 12.

Table 12. Linear regression for impact guests' perceptions of eco-label practices on guest stay in eco-label hotel

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable: guest stay in eco-label hotel					
	R	R^2	F	β	T	Sig.
Green Hotel Certification (GC)	.293	.086	25.209	.293	5.021**	.000
Energy Management (EM)	.234	.055	15.559	.234	3.945**	.000
Water Management (WM)	.376	.142	44.254	.376	6.652**	.000
Waste Management (WasM)	.356	.127	38.837	.356	6.232**	.000
Purchasing Management (PM)	.203	.041	11.531	.203	3.396**	.001
Community Support (CS)	.352	.124	37.904	.352	6.157**	.000
Customer Education (CE)	.288	.083	24.200	.288	4.919**	.000
Overall Eco-label practices	**.429**	**.184**	**60.397**	**.429**	**7.772****	**.000**

As shown in Table 12, the regression results indicated that guests' perceptions of eco-label practices are positively and significantly correlated with the guest stay in eco-label hotel. The value between guests' perceptions of eco-label practices and guest stay in eco-label hotel is (β =.429, and P-value =0.000). The overall model statistic in Table 12 (R2 = 0.184, p = 0.000) supported the view that guests' perceptions of eco-label practices have a weak positive influence on their stay in eco-label hotel. However, though guests' perceptions of eco-label practices are considered a weak predictor of guest stay in an eco-label hotel, these perceptions of eco-label practices may explain the 18.4 % variance in the guest's stay eco-label hotels.

All the dimensions of ECO practices had a significant influence on guests' stay in eco-label hotels. Ranking these dimensions in descending order, practice that influenced guests' stay the highest was Water Management (WM) (R2 = 0.142, p =0.000), followed by Waste Management (WasM) (R2 = 0.127, p =0.000), Community Support (CS) (R2 = 0.124, p =0.000), Green Hotel Certification (GC) (R2 = 0.086, p =0.000), Customer Education (CE) (R2 = 0.083, p =0.000), Energy Management (EM) (R2 = 0.055, p =0.000), and the practice that influenced the least was for Purchasing Management (PM) (R2 = 0.041, p <0.01). To elaborate further, these results indicate that guests overall moderately perceived those eco-label practices related to water and waste management, community support, green hotel certification, and customer education, and thus their

impacts on guests' stay in eco-label hotels were moderate. While the other eco-label practices related to purchasing management and energy management were slightly perceived by guests and thus their impacts on guests' stay in eco-label hotels was very weak.

Conclusions

This study's contribution is twofold: first, it is the first study that linked the tourists' perceptions of green practices in hotels and their willingness to stay in eco-label hotels. Second, this is also the first study at the national level that sought to study the environmental dimensions in Jordanian hotels from consumers' perspectives, although all the previous studies have been done from the managers' and employee's perspectives.

The study concluded that international guests perceive the eco-label practices as important during their stay at the Jordanian hotels. However, respondents were mostly not willing to pay more for eco-label practices. Although international travelers consider themselves environmentally educated and conservative, the current study results showed a moderate perception. Eco-label practices in Jordan's hospitality industry are not solely dependent upon 'supply' or 'demand.' A collection of multiple factors could have been the culprits behind the low perception, including for example, sociodemographic variables of guests, local environmental resources, and probably the culture in destinations.

One of the theoretical results of this study is that it succeeded in identifying the seven basic variables for the application eco-label practices in hotels from the point of view of consumers, namely (Green hotel certification, energy, water and waste and purchasing management, Community support, and Customer education), and these variables may help future studies to adopt the same scale (questionnaire) to measure customers' perceptions towards green practices in the hospitality sector. This significantly enriches the theoretical framework that can be incorporated into green practices in hotels.

This study can be considered to some extent encouraging hoteliers to adopt more green and environmentally friendly practices to attract more customers and achieve more economic benefits. This is because understanding the need for sustainable behavior in the hospitality sector is an education issue that can no longer be ignored. However, the hospitality industry in Jordan does not practice strong and sustainable environmental practices. Customers view green hotels positively and have an intention to choose services such as hotels more favorably and are willing to pay more for these services. Considering this information, this study may be the first of many future studies on the same topic. Incorporating more variables in future studies may provide more conclusive information on customers' perception and behavior towards green hotels.

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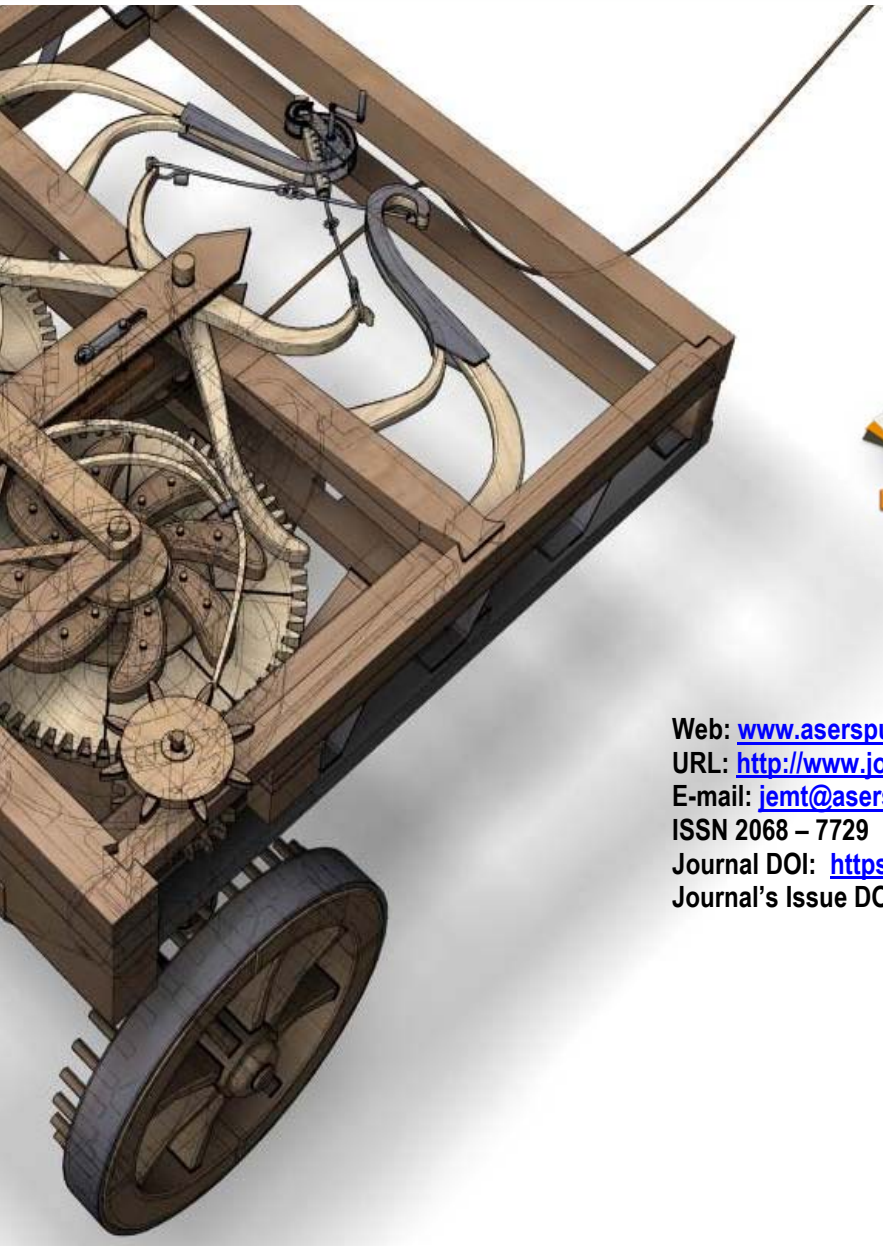

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