

# Assessing the Impact of Personalized Services and Environmental Sustainability Practices on Repeat Business in Five-Star Hotels in Ernakulam District

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to examine the influence of personalized services and environmental sustainability practices towards guest satisfaction as well repeat business among five-star hotels in Ernakulam district. Structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were employed to collect primary data from a sample of 382 guests. This should be added after the Descriptive statistics write up "on descriptive stats high mean scores - Personalized services (4.2), Environmental sustainability practices (3.8), Guest satisfaction (4.3), Repeat business Intention (4.1)". Results from regression analysis revealed significant positive effects of personalized services ( $\beta = 0.45$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and environmental sustainability practices ( $\beta = 0.35$ ,  $p < .001$ ) attitude toward satisfaction level in predicting the guest satisfaction levels. Guest satisfaction was positively related to repeat business, according to correlation analysis ( $r = 0.65$ ;  $P < .001$ ). The other dimension analyzed, the effect of personalized services and environmental sustainability practices on repeat business vs new clients, reveals a significant difference with an  $F = 12.34$  ( $p < .001$ ). Implications: The findings contribute to the growing recognition in marketing research that personalized services and sustainability initiatives are critical when it comes to increasing guest loyalty, offering important strategic guidance points for hotel managers.

**KEYWORDS:** Personalized services, Environmental sustainability, Guest satisfaction, Repeat business, Five-star hotels, Ernakulam district.

## INTRODUCTION

Five-star hotels implement several strategies to enhance guest experience and entice them back for repeat business in this increasingly competitive segment of hospitality industry. Personalization and environmental sustainability have proven to be two important factors that drive guest loyalty, among others. This is where personalized services come into play - to match the specific interests and demands of each visitor, making their overall experience even better (Jones & Lockwood 2020). On the other hand, environmental sustainability practices are indicative of a hotels dedication to achieve ecological responsibly that increasingly appeals travellers who endeavour into environmentally sustainable tourism activities (Bohdanowicz et al., 2021). Advancements in technology and data analytics provided an opportunity for such personalization of services to happen, allowing hotels now the ability to deliver a

more personalized experience. Hospitality personalization increases guest satisfaction and dramatically improves return visit likelihood (Pine & Gilmore, 2019) It is even more important in the luxury hotel sector where guests demand an elevated level of personal service and bespoke experiences. By using the information about guest preferences, past behaviours and feedback, these properties can develop hyper-personalised itineraries & amenities even before a guest's arrival with deep emotional linkage towards their clientele (Noone et al., 2017). In addition to social responsibilities, environmental sustainability practices have also been widely covered as a fundamental part of hotel operations. Travellers are becoming more aware of the carbon footprint of their travel and seek hotels that have a genuine commitment to sustainable practices. This change in consumer preference further is backed up by (Han, Hsu & Sheu 2018), which states the efforts on environmental sustainability influence customers perceptions and their return intention. Luxury five-star hotels that adopt environmentally friendly practices, including energy savings systems and waste management programs while adopting sustainable sourcing appeal not only to the emerging segment of eco-conscious tourists but by also contribute positively towards environmental conservation (Mensah, 2014). Personalization and environmental sustainability incorporated into core strategy of five-star hotels fit well together, that abounds to create a differentiated value proposition from the competitors. Verma and Chandra (2016) performed an in-depth analysis which showed that the hotels outperform on these aspects often end up sharing better guest loyalty behaviour than those of their counterparts. This is due to the fact that guests perceive these efforts as representation of quality and accountability within a hotel property, resulting in increased guest satisfaction. In 2020 and beyond, delivering personalized services that give travellers a sense of environmental stewardship will be essential for hoteliers to deliver unforgettable experiences that keep customers returning. The present study seeks to evaluate the influence exercised by these factors over guest loyalty seen in five-star hotels of Ernakulam district thereby proving useful knowledge(s) for managers of hotel and industry players who utilize this information to formulate strategies converting them into regular guests ensuring extended benefits from hospitality enterprises.

### **Need and Significance**

Every customer interaction must offer something special because in the fast-paced world of hospitality, creating regulars is more important than ever. Nowhere is this truer than when it comes to hotels, and especially 5-star hotels which are the epitome of luxury where guest expectations similarly reach sky high levels as does customer acquisition costs (Kotler et al puck). This helps these outfits experience first-hand that Customer retention cost far less then acquiring new ones. Hence, knowing the main drivers of guest loyalty is extremely crucial if you are to remain a profitable and successful long-term business. It was found by Verma and Chandra (2016) in their studies that personalised services as well as those following environment sustainability led to a major improvement in guest retention. These result in personalised services that are tailored to meet the specific needs and preferences of each guest, ensuring unforgettable experiences leading to repeat visits. Hotels have the power to create experiences that are personalized and deeply resonate with guests by using customer data combined with advanced analytics. It is a way to both increase guest satisfaction and create emotional engagement, which in turn leads to loyalty (Pine & Gilmore 2019). Research has demonstrated that bespoke experiences directly correlate with increased guest satisfaction-and the probability of recurring customers (Jones & Lockwood, 2020). Hence, the requirement of adding customised services to five-star hotels' core strategy is justified. In addition to the above hotel selection factors, practices of environmental sustainability are important also for guest loyalty. There seems to be a growing trend among global consumers who increasingly comb for accommodation

that matches their sustainability or eco-friendly values since the world has come aware on environmental issues (Han, Hsu & Sheu, 2018). Adopting green habits in not just saves the environmental impacts of hotels but attract new eco-friendly consumer group. Studies show that guests are more likely to re-visit hotels which display a care for the environment (Bohdanowicz et al, 2021). As a result, the incorporation of sustainability measures is an effective double-edged sword to not only save our planet but improve guest loyalty and return business too. Research significance can be developed by providing valuable information on personalized services in 5-star hotels and repeat business according to the practices of environmental sustainability. Hence this study looks into the factors in relation to Ernakulam district so as to throw light on the best practices and strategic initiatives that hotel managers there can pursue for guest retention purpose. The study adds to a growing body of hospitality management literature and suggests several practical implications for industry stakeholders (Mensah, 2014). This research may also help in bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application within hospitality sector. Emphasizing on personalized services and sustainable practices, the report reinforces how hotels are required to take a 360-degree view of guest experience management. This practice is designed to not just address the immediate needs of your guests, but also deepen relationships with these individuals that turns them into repeat customers in most situations leading then toward longer ongoing success (Noone, McGuire, & Rohlf's 2017). Emphasising the importance and necessity of personalization services to repeat business in five-star hotels, this study highlights the role played by personalised practices for environmentally sustainable tourism. This research paper is to help the luxurious hotels in Ernakulam district for developing and implementing such strategies, will spread new perspectives based on critical examination of those factors.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The luxury sector of the hospitality industry is highly competitive, as hotels constantly work to separate from their competitors while creating a space for themselves in an attempt to draw visitors back time and again. In this sense, the story of five-star hotels in Ernakulam district is no different. Even though they have great service, and more amenities than any other hotel with the star rating, it is extremely difficult to keep a consistent stream of repeat business. Additionally, the expectations of today's more demanding and environmentally aware travellers are changing, further worsening this problem when it comes to providing personalized services. The fundamental research issue investigated in this study is that there is insufficient understanding with respect to how personalized services and environmental sustainability practices influence repeat business at five-star hotels. A few instances and studies suggest that they might help in increasing guest loyalty Few proper research exist on whether these factors truly impact customer loyalty more significantly than other service quality dimensions, but no comprehensive review is available to ascertain how extent their effects have been studied within Ernakulam's luxury hotel sector. If hotel managers do not understand how these variables together affect repeat business, it would be difficult to allocate resources efficiently and implement strategies that matter most to their customers. Personalized services are all about elevating the guest experience in a way that speaks to how they would like an experience rather than what makes sense for everyone. Nevertheless, there is scarce empirical evidence to substantiate the kind of personalized services that are most influential on guest loyalty in five-star hotels. The lack of this knowledge stops hotel managers from enhancing their services in a way that could lead to higher guest satisfaction and more repeat users. In the same way, although green business practices are increasingly recognised as essential components of corporate responsibility and guest appeal., research on where environmental sustainability has led to repeat custom does not exist (Lahti et al., 2009). While

numerous green practices have been implemented by hotels, the impact of those programs on levels of repeat business remain unclear. As travellers increasingly seek eco-friendly accommodations, this knowledge gap directly impacts hotels - specifically those that do not rise to meet these guest expectations and face losing a competitive edge. As such, this study focusses on addressing the specific type of personalized service that leads to repeat business in five-star hotels and that has two ends - one end looking into identifying & analyzing personalized services offered by 5 \* hospitality units. Then, to assess the influence of environment sustainability measures on guest loyalty under such context. This study aims to highlight these concerns which could enable hotel managers design strategies and operational efficiency measures. Therefore, it is imperative to know the distinct particulars of individualized services and environmental sustainability practices as they stimulate repeated business in five-star hotels. The purpose of this study is to bridge the gap in research and provide experimental endorsements which may influence repeat business as well as contribute towards sustainable growth strategies for luxury hotels operating in Ernakulam district.

### **Research Methodology**

The study is grounded in mixed methods research design to identify the impact of personalized services and environmental sustainability practices on repeat business at five-star hotels in Ernakulam district. This research design combines quantitative and qualitative data collection to deliver a deeper understanding of determinants that explain guest loyalty. Within this study, 382 samples were collected and detected as the primary data. Sample: The Sample consists of reported guests who have stayed in 5-star hotels located at Ernakulam District. Sampling method: Convenient and purposive sampling. Study participants were randomly selected and approached at the end of their stay. All participants were included from different hotels to maintain diversification of participant demographics, length of stay and purpose of visit. A structured questionnaire was used to collect the quantitative data, guests' perceptions and experiences on personalized services and environmental sustainability practices. The questionnaire was a closed-ended type using Likert scale for assessing the level of guest satisfaction, and repeat assumption to return again in hotel. Quality and customisation of services, the environmental practices of a hotel - as well general satisfaction, and repeat visit intentions were central outcome variables. Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews with a subset of the participants (n = 44, ~10% of total sample) to complement this. In-depth interviews sought to explore the experiences and preferences of these guests, providing valuable qualitative data that might help explain or qualify the quantitative findings. Interviews zeroed in on personalized services and sustainability practices that influenced guests' likelihood to return. Statistical analyses were performed for quantitative data. Summary statistics were used to describe the data and inferential statistical testing in regression analyses was conducted through examination of personalization, environmental sustainability practices and repeat business. Data was analyzed using the statistical software SPSS. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed thematically (qualitative data). This approach involved encoding the information and detecting repetitive themes and forms of data that inform about what guests prefer. The constraints of "worthily voices" were thus cross-validated by the quantitative indications with a purpose to yield in full its dimensions of data and knowledge (mixed method design).

### **LITERATURE REVIEWS**

Over the years, much of research in marketing and hospitality have centred around customer loyalty based on importance for business success. The importance of a high degree of guest loyalty, especially in the

luxury end of hospitality can be critical as studies show that it is more expensive to attract new customers than retaining long-time existing ones (Kotler et al. 2017). Customer loyalty is not just an index of guests' contentment but also a yardstick for future successful visits, positive word -of-mouth and continued profitability (Dick & Basu 1994). In hotel business, personalized services from customers is one of the factors to be considered when measuring customer loyalty. Personalized services, which are the customization of how tasks (such as booking a room or requesting information) will be done in line with the tastes and needs of each guest. Having evolved from the overall marketing concept of relationship marketing (Berry, 1995) - which as its name suggests is about building relationships with your customers over time by offering experiences that are created specifically for those customers you care most about. Research indicates that customization services improves guest satisfaction by means of adding emotional appeals and is more likely to take advantage over repetitive business referrals (Pine & Gilmore, 1999; McCarthy, Stock & Verma, 2010). For example, a hotel which recognizes and appreciates the work created by anticipation of the collected for customer data lodging requests will improve client loyalty (Noone et al., 2017). In recent years, environmental sustainability practices have also emerged as a major factor that drives guest loyalty. As environmental issues are gaining more and larger concerns, travelers start to look for accommodation which shows its commitment on service responsibility in the form of being sustainable (meaning eco-friendly) hotel as well. A comprehensive set of environmental sustainability practices taking place in hotels- energy efficiency, waste reduction, water conservation and eco-friendly products. Hotels that implement these practices will not only lower their negative environmental footprint, but they also appealing to a wider and growing segment of environmentally friendly consumers. To the extent that guests see a hotel's endeavors on environmental sustainability as an indicator of its quality and responsibility, availability has been estimated to positively influence repeat stays (Bohdanowicz et al. 2011:). Theoretical Framework The authors propose a framework that focuses on how the literature of relationship marketing can be integrated with CSR to explain why and when momentum is created between MSCRM initiatives. Relationship marketing theory suggests that companies can gain a competitive edge on the market by building up long-term relationships with their consumers, by offering personalized interactions and specialized services (Berry 1995). For the hospitality industry, this supports expectations where customised services should deliver to trigger personal guest loyalty by providing remarkable and significant experiences that entice repeat behaviour (Verhoef 2003). In contrast, CSR theory highlights that company ethical and sustainability fulfilment are significant elements of a responsible corporate image construction which helps generate customer trust and loyalty (Carroll 1999). In this sense, environmental sustainability practices in the hotel industry can be considered as a CSR that fulfills ethical customer expectations and fulfils their satisfaction rates and loyalty (Chen 2011). This research attempts to examine the interactional effects of personalized services and environmental sustainability practices in context of repeat business for five-star hotels by incorporating both theoretical perspectives. Insights into the interplay of these factors could be useful for hotel managers intending to improve both their service and sustainability performance in order to enhance guest loyalty. The combined use of relationship marketing and CSR theories provides a cross-field model to explain customer loyalty in luxury hotels, underlining the necessity for personalized service delivery as well as ethical business behaviour over time.

### **Objectives**

1. To evaluate the impact of personalized services on guest satisfaction in five-star hotels in Ernakulam district.

2. To assess the effect of environmental sustainability practices on guest satisfaction in five-star hotels in Ernakulam district.
3. To determine the relationship between guest satisfaction and repeat business in five-star hotels in Ernakulam district.
4. To compare the impact of personalized services and environmental sustainability practices on repeat business in five-star hotels in Ernakulam district.

**Null Hypotheses**

1. H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant impact of personalized services on guest satisfaction in five-star hotels in Ernakulam district.
2. H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant effect of environmental sustainability practices on guest satisfaction in five-star hotels in Ernakulam district.
3. H<sub>03</sub>: There is no significant relationship between guest satisfaction and repeat business in five-star hotels in Ernakulam district.
4. H<sub>04</sub>: There is no significant difference in the impact of personalized services and environmental sustainability practices on repeat business in five-star hotels in Ernakulam district.

**Statistical Analysis**

Descriptive Statistics

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables**

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Personalized Services Score	4.2	0.8	1	5
Environmental Sustainability Score	3.8	0.9	1	5
Guest Satisfaction Score	4.3	0.7	1	5
Repeat Business Intention Score	4.1	0.8	1	5

The descriptive statistics essentially summarized the main variables in the study such as personalised services, guest satisfaction and repeat business intention items together with environmental sustainability scores. The means for these variables suggest that (1) On the whole guests at five-star hotels in Ernakulam report generally positive ratings across Dimension 3 variables. Personalized Services has an average score of 4.2 implying that guests feel a high level of personal attention and personalised treats sent to their room are much more pleasing the high mean score for this item suggests that personalized services can substantially improve guest satisfaction and loyalty (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). With an average score of 3.8, it means that guests do appreciate the hotels to engage in environmental sustainability activities; Eggertsson likens this to the score for personalized services, though slightly lower it is still a good reception. The relevance of environmental sustainability as a salient factor in guests' decision-making is demonstrated here, since an increasing number of tourists nowadays expect that the accommodations they choose have engaged (or engage with) serious initiatives to minimize their footprint on nature | Han et al. Guest satisfaction had a mean score of 4.3, the highest among all variables respectively suggests that in general guests are very much satisfied with their stay at this five-star hotels full range of services offered by these properties. This very high level of satisfaction is critical as it derives from all the activities that influence guest's probability to return and recommend the hotel (Kotler, Bowen, & Makens 2017). The repeat business intention mean score was 4.1 which communicates that most guests are likely to come back and stay at the same hotels in the future. This indicates very high responses for repeat business intention, thereby implying its strong effect on both personalization and sustainability approaches to gain

guest retention - an important aspect of creating the prospects for long-term success in hospitality (Dick & Basu 1994). And the responses vary moderately with standard deviations for these variables lie between 0.7 and 0.9 This variance shows that although the vast majority of guests are very pleased and happy, there too exists differences in perceptions a experiences between individuals. The relatively low standard deviations also mean that the likelihood of highly divergent (low or high) scores in either dimension decreases, which overall suggests a standardized provision of personalized attention and environmental sustainability practices across hotels.

**Regression Analysis**

**Table 2: Regression Analysis for Guest Satisfaction**

Independent Variable	Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-Statistic	p-Value
Personalized Services	0.45	0.05	9.00	<0.001
Environmental Sustainability Practices	0.35	0.06	5.83	<0.001
Constant	1.20	0.34	3.53	<0.001

In this study, the regression analysis is being done to assess how customized services and environmental re-thusiasm have on ster oitg be satisfaction in five-star hotels of Ernakulam district. Table with coefficients (and Standard Errors, t-ratios and p-values in parentheses) of the independent variables personalized services and environmental sustainability practices. Personalized services 0.45 (m.e.: 0.05) The t-statistic for this variable is 9.00, and the p-value < 0.001 Results: The results revealed a strong and statistically significant positive association between personalised service and guest satisfaction. The coefficient of 0.45 shows that each additional personalized services score value provided causes an increase in guest satisfaction by a factor of 0.4562, all other factors being equal This finding supported existing literature that suggests dynamically customized interaction has a substantial effect on guest satisfaction levels (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). However, the coefficient of environmental sustainability practices was 0.35 (standard error=0.06). That p-value is less than 0.0010 and the t-statistic = 5.83, respectively for this variable It means that there is a positive relationship from guest satisfaction to environment sustainability practice. The coefficient value of 0.35 indicates that, while controlling for all other variables in the model, each unit increase in environmental sustainability practices score is associated with a 0.35-unit change (standard errors omitted within this post and subsequent posts) at significance level < It shows that the importance of sustainability in hospitality is becoming stronger because guests prefer to stay at hotels which respect environment (Han, Hsu and Sheu 2010). There is a constant term in the regression model, with an E-score of 1.20 (s.e =0.34). The university's t-statistic for the constant is 3.53 with a p-value less than 0.001 (Good). The constant is the level of guest satisfaction when personalized services and environmental sustainability practices are zero. The positive and significant constant term shows that there are other variations in guest satisfaction not included within those two variables in this model The above findings are supported by the multiple regression analysis which shows that personalized services and sustainability practices of environmental both found to significantly influence guest satisfaction individually, whereas Personalized Services have slightly higher impact when compared with Environmental Sustainability Practices. The findings also emphasize the need for five-star hotels to maintain their commitment towards personalized service delivery and sustainability initiatives as means of achieving improved guest satisfaction. This helps hotels meet the guest expectations, which is a key activity for generating loyalty and repeat business.

**Correlation Analysis**

**Table 3: Correlation Analysis between Guest Satisfaction and Repeat Business**

Variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)	p-Value
Guest Satisfaction & Repeat Business	0.65	<0.001

Research Correlation analysis to study the Guest satisfaction and repeat business of five-star hotels in Ernakulam district. The correlation coefficients (r) have values of 0.65 and the p-value is less than 0.001 for all outcomes A correlation coefficient of 0.65 reflects guest satisfaction has a positive linear relationship on repeat business intentions (strong) Thus, guest satisfaction leads to increase in the intent of guests returning this hotel. The size of this relationship is important and indicates that improvements in guest satisfaction may have a strong effect on loyalists choosing the same hotel for their next stay. A p-value of <0.001 indicate that the observed correlation is unlikely due to random chance, i.e., it is statistically significant. This high degree of significance underlines the stability of correlation coefficient attesting that there is a strong link between guest satisfaction and repeat business. These results correspond with the literature in hotel industry since customer satisfaction has been always described as a pivotal force driving repeat business and guest loyalty (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2017). Positive guest experience and full amenity satisfaction are more likely to get guests come back or refer the hotel. This ultimate cycle of satisfaction and repeatability is pivotal to luxury hospitality at the end-of-the-day, if these properties are going to be profitable over time.

**ANOVA**

**Table 4: ANOVA for Impact Comparison on Repeat Business**

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Mean Square (MS)	F-Statistic	p-Value
Between Groups	5.67	1	5.67	12.34	<0.001
Within Groups	174.52	380	0.46		
Total	180.19	381			

ANOVA- Prove statistical to feature together the on-repeat business only settings was that personalized services and environmental sustainability practices have larger within only among repeated stronger effect than. The SS for between groups = 5.67 with d-1= MS of (using the same formula as above) This type of variance between groups captures the amount that repeat business score varies depending on if a restaurant offers personalised service or environmental sustainability practices. Sum of squares (SS) Within groups 174.52 380 Mean square (MS) 0.46 This is the variance between groups and explains how much repeat business scores differ across each group due to differences within-groups. The F-statistic is calculated as the ratio of mean square between groups to the mean square within group also known as within the error and it comes out 12.34. Because F-statistic and  $p < 0.001$ , H1 is supported as well this means the difference of effect between personalized services vs repeat business with environmental sustainability practices will be statistically significant in affecting return customers. Or what scientists would describe as, incredibly low chance this difference occurred by accident. This indicates that personalized services or environmental sustainability programs do not have equal impacts on repeated trade, but more powerful impact of one variable over the other. Find out which variable has greater influence. But as it turns out, the current ANOVA results seem to suggest that there is in fact a significant difference between those two variables and how they related with encouraging repeat business. An

implication is that hotels, depending on their situation regarding the two variables, should work hard to address the variable with stronger effects in order to strengthen guest loyalty as well as repeat business. The knowledge of the relative effectiveness between personalized services and environmental sustainability practices allows managers to allocate resources more efficiently and formulate strategies that may further help with guest retention.

## CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to investigate the importance of personalized services and environmental sustainability practices on guest satisfaction and repeat business in five-star hotels in the Ernakulam district. In this regard, the analysis based on the data obtained directly from 382 guests assisted in providing an understanding of the specifics of factors, influencing loyalty. The results of descriptive statistics show high ratings of guest reporting satisfaction levels related to personalized services, and environmental sustainability issues. The overall satisfaction and repeat business recommendation were also reported at high levels of 4.3 and 4.1, which means hotels are successful in delivery and meeting guests' expectations. The results of regression analysis of the effects of personalized services and environmental sustainability show both have a significant positive impact on guest satisfaction at a level of 0.45 and 0.35, respectively, with p-value less than 0.001. Therefore, it means enhancing these dimensions would notably improve guest satisfaction. The slightly higher positive impact of personalized service showed them to be the greater factor in guest satisfaction in comparison to sustainability. The correlation analysis of guest satisfaction and repeat business also provided a strong positive result of  $r=0.65 < 0.001$ . This means that arbitrary guest satisfaction is positively linked to increased intentions of repeat business. The result of ANOVA results indicated a significant difference in impact between personalized services and environment sustainability on repeat business with an F-statistic of 12.34 and  $p < 0.001$ . This suggests that one of these two variables has a significant impact on promoting repeat business, but it needs more assessment to determine which. In summary, both customized service delivery and environment sustainability are essential in encouraging guest satisfaction and repeat business in five-star hotels. Thus, more attention needs to be paid to these areas to ensure better services. Focusing more on personalized service and environment sustainability in hotels can meet and exceed guest specifications for sustained performance in the industry.

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