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HOTEL GREEN SPACES AS A NATURE-BASED SOLUTION INFLUENCE TO GUEST MENTAL HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SATISFACTION

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Abstract

Since plenty of tourists prefer to stay at environmentally friendly hotels is growing rapidly, green spaces in hotels are becoming increasingly important. The present research is designed in order to learn the influence of green spaces on the visitors' mental health, wellbeing and satisfaction in the hotel industry. An academic literature search was conducted for studies and review of the effects of green spaces.

Key words: green spaces, nature-based solutions (NBS), mental health, wellbeing

Introduction

Recent years have seen a blossoming interest in the benefits of nature contact to human health. The effective use of green spaces as NBs in business is crucial for enhancing mental health, boosting wellbeing, and addressing a variety of challenges. Additionally, proper NBS use in hotels is essential since it can improve guests' mental health and wellbeing. Since achieving mental health and emotional wellbeing through green spaces has become an important lifestyle concept, the natural capital is being systematically deplanting. The primary element of NBS, green spaces include areas for rest, recreation and physical activity that can be found inside or outside of hotels (González-Hernández & Orozco-Gómez , 2012). It is very appropriate to put focus on green spaces as a nature-based solution to search for method improving mental health and wellbeing in hospitality industry, especially in hotels where human resources play an important role.

Mental stress and emotional depression is a global public issue related to human welfare (Gascon et al., 2017; Pietila et al., 2015)

In particular, objectives of the research were to review articles on this topic, finding gaps in the researches and learning future limitations. The research aims to learn the role of green spaces as a nature-based solution for mental health and wellbeing and discover possible influence on the traveler satisfaction in the hotel industry



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Literature review

1.1 Green spaces as nature-based solutions (NBS)

Numerous problems confront modern society, including unsustainable urbanization, health issues, resource depletion and loss, ecosystem degradation, climate change, and growing natural disaster risks. NBSs are starting to get attention as a means of achieving desired outcomes, including as decreases in disaster risk, improvements to human wellbeing, and green growth, as society explores for different answers to these problems. NBS refers to a theory created specifically to use nature as a means of providing solutions to various societal and environmental problems while also causing social and environmental outcomes in tandem (Nesshöver et al., 2017; Van Den Bosch & Sang, 2017).

In an environmentally friendly hotels where the performance of green indoor and outdoor environments along with the performance of service or its attributes are the key determinants of product quality estimation, green spaces, green surfaces and natural environment are especially important (Liang et al., 2014; Moon, Yoon, & Han, 2016; Trang et al., 2018). The main features of green spaces, a crucial component of NBS, is greening gray surfaces inside and outside of a hotel like indoor/outdoor walls, entrance and rooftops (Qin, Zhous, Sun, Leng, & Lian, 2013; Vujcic et al., 2017).

1.2 Mental health

Mental health encompasses emotional, psychological, and social well-being, influencing cognition, perception and behavior. It likewise determines how an individual handles stress, interpersonal relationships, and decision-making. People with good mental health usually experience little stress and anxiety, are able to transform their feelings of anxiety or worries into assurance and believe that they are important and valuable members of society (Gascon, Zijlema, Vert, White, & Nieuwenhuijsen, 2017; Kim, Chua, Lee, Boo, & Han, 2016). Crucial concern in today's corporate world is the mental health of customer.

Numerous studies are being undertaken in the domains of economics, sociology, psychology, and the environmental sciences as a result of the recent growth in interest in the natural environment as a means of improving people's mental health and capacity for recovery (López-Mosquera et al., 2011).



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1.3 Well-being

A state of well-being where an individual feels relaxed, comfortable, or refreshed effectively copes with stress in everyday life, which is a vital facet of mental health (Kamimura et al., 2018; Liang et al., 2014). Importantly, emotional well-being determines the product consumption of a customer (Sirgy et al., 2007)

1.4 Satisfaction

Due to the advantages of it brings to the business such as increased commitment, loyalty, retention, word-of-mouth referrals and revenue, profit growth customer satisfaction is a well-established concept that has been extensively researched in existing studies (Hennig-Thurau, 2004; Herjanto, Erickson, & Calleja, 2017; Mohammed & Rashid, 2018; Wang, Lu, & Tan, 2018b). Every business in the consumer market faces a significant challenge in satisfying customers and meeting their needs that consumers' needs are becoming more sophisticated (Han & Hwang, 2017; Ladeira, Santini, Araujo, & Sampaio, 2016; Wang et al., 2018b). Satisfaction indicates patrons' aggregated evaluation of total consumption experiences with a particular company's product/service on the basis of their prior expectation about its quality (Mohammed & Rashid, 2018). In the hotel industry, as in many other industries, customer satisfaction plays a significant role in how guests make decisions. Its significance in explaining how hotel guests create post-purchase decisions has been repeatedly emphasized (Mohammed & Rashid, 2018; Radojevic, Stanistic, Stanic, & Davidson, 2018; Zhao et al., 2019).

Effect of green spaces to mental health, wellbeing and satisfaction

Based on illness issues, depression and stress, two of the most common mental illnesses, are regarded as the biggest health problems people face (Vujcic, M et al., 2017). Depression and other mental diseases consequently have a negative impact on people's quality of life and welfare, including personal suffering, high economic expenses, societal problems, and qualitative aberrations. Additionally, it has been demonstrated that these results are associated with other mental diseases and raise the suicide rates among people suffering from depression (Kennedy et al., 2004). According to a World Health Organization (WHO) research, depression and mental stress will overtake heart disease as the second-most onerous diseases in the world by 2020.



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Recently, as researchers look for ways to aid patients in recovering from mental illness, interest in the natural world has increased.

Customer wellbeing and self-rated mental health were found by Han et al. 2020; to have a strong mediating influence on the association between NBSs and consumer behavior. This demonstrates how a natural healing atmosphere can help users feel less stressed.

Discussion

Undoubtedly, offering healthy and natural physical surroundings to guests has become a vital issue in the hotel industry across the globe. This study learned the influence of hotels' green spaces as nature-based solutions for guests' mental health, wellbeing, and satisfaction. The role of mental health and wellbeing as antecedents of satisfaction and mediators were clearly identified. This study makes a critical contribution to existing knowledge that trigger guests' decisions to return to a particular hotel and the internal relationships between satisfaction and mental health and wellbeing. Moreover, this study offers an essential theoretical framework as it provides a deeper understanding of the possible relationship between objectives. Specifically, green spaces that are available both inside and outside of hotels were shown to be significant factors affecting guests' mental health and wellbeing in the travelers' satisfaction. This implies that despite its criticality, relying solely on hotel services is not enough to fulfill guests' needs or wants concerning wellbeing and mental health while staying at a hotel. Based on the theories, increasing green spaces for rest, leisure, and physical activities both inside and outside of hotels and increasing green items (e.g., trees, flowers, potted plants, or green decorations or decor) within the green spaces can be essential to meet guests' needs to relieve mental anxiety and stress, improving refreshed feeling, and boosting psychological well-being. These factors are essential for travelers' satisfaction and eco-friendly hotel management. Therefore, the wellbeing of guests and various positive effects achieved by securing green spaces inside and outside of the hotel can be cited as essential conditions for the sustainable management of hotels. Considering these results, hotel proprietors need to focus on maximizing the use of the hotel's green spaces to improve guest service strategies. For example, boosting the availability, accessibility, and variety of green spaces in a hotel (e.g., gardens, natural surroundings like rivers, lakes, mountains, or oceans, green rest areas, and green



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lobbies) by investing various resources can be effective for eliciting positive responses and behaviors in guests. Our findings also demonstrate that the total effect of attitude on traveler satisfaction was significantly greater than that of the other research constructs. Informing guests about the diverse benefits of staying at a hotel where many green spaces/items/atmospherics are readily available (e.g., mental/physical health benefits) through various communication channels can be an efficient way to increase their positive attitude toward staying at the hotel. This result is of great theoretical importance, as it shows that mental health and wellbeing are crucial elements when building a theoretical framework explaining the role of green spaces as nature-based solutions in travelers' satisfaction. To increase guests' mental health, hotel proprietors need to focus on creating a comfortable environment for their guests. Previous researchs indicated that customers' mental health and psychological well-being can be improved when they form complementary relationships with relaxing/nature-friendly physical atmospheres (Trang, H.L.T.; Lee, J.; Han, H.,2019; Vujcic, M.; Tomicevic-Dubljevic, J.; Grbic, M.; Lecic-Tosevski, D.; Vukovic, O.; Toskovic, O.,2014). Guests believe that a hotel's green spaces and its performance help them to feel psychological resilience when their belief about satisfaction at the hotel is strong. Practically, our findings imply that at similar levels of guest assessment regarding the performance of green spaces, they are more likely to feel refreshed and to relieve mental anxiety and stress in a highlevel of satisfaction. Building on existing hotel literature, this study contributes crucial theoretical and managerial value, as our findings provides a deeper understanding of the hotel guests' satisfaction. This finding supports that mental health and wellbeing is a bridge that mediates green spaces and satisfaction relationship. Hospitality researchers should recognize the intricate and crucial mediating nature of the study variables. This study has a few limitations that may provide future study opportunities. Although this study focuses on the hospitality industry, future research should be used in the urban environment, service industries, and other industries. This is likely to result in errors that may occur from differences in the characteristics of the hospitality sector and other types of industries. Therefore, there is a need to use measurement tools unique to the hotel sector for future studies



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Conclusion

In conclusion, the theoretical basis of this study concerning the nature of “green spaces” and the associated human responses and satisfaction in the hotel sector is fairly weak. This study helps us to better comprehend a hotel’s green spaces and its possible influence on guests’ mental health and wellbeing. More specifically, the green spaces in hotels can positively increase the mental health of customers, and such positive reactions of customers can be a great aid in forming attitudes toward the hotel and building positive branding. Such a clear understanding and perception of the importance of green spaces in hotels can be said to have presented a strategic direction for hotel operators to move forward, and a very concrete and meaningful strategy to incite positive customer attitudes toward the hotel. This study was not the first in developing a sturdy framework of traveler satisfaction by enhancing the intricate associations among green spaces as nature-based solutions, mental health and wellbeing. Despite its few limitations, this study offers high value and originality, advancing knowledge in hotel industry literature.

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