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EXAMINING THE INFLUENCE OF BEST SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES ON THE SATISFACTION OF VISITORS AT THE OMAN CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE

Umman Konvansiyon ve Sergi Merkezi'ndeki Ziyaretçi Memnuniyeti Üzerinde En İyi Sürdürülebilir Uygulamaların Etkisinin İncelenmesi

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Öz: This research examines the influence of best sustainable practices on the satisfaction of visitors at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC). With growing awareness of environmental challenges, convention and exhibition venues are increasingly expected to implement eco-friendly initiatives that enhance visitor experience. The study integrates the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model to explain how sustainability initiatives serve as stimuli that shape visitors' internal perceptions and ultimately influence their satisfaction and behavioural intentions. A quantitative approach was adopted, guided by positivism philosophy, an explanatory design, and a deductive method. Primary data were collected through an online survey of 33 visitors to the OCEC, and results were analysed using descriptive and inferential techniques. Findings revealed that sustainable initiatives such as waste management, water conservation, transportation solutions, and the use of eco-friendly materials positively influenced visitor satisfaction, with energy efficiency initiatives emerging as the most impactful. Although all practices contributed to favourable experiences, respondents highlighted the potential for further innovation, particularly in digital platforms and smart energy solutions. The study concludes that embedding sustainability into event management not only enhances visitor satisfaction but also strengthens the competitive positioning of OCEC as a leading sustainable venue in the region.

Keywords: Convention Centre, Sustainability, Waste Management, Energy Efficiency, Customer Experience.

Öz: Bu arařtırma, Umman Kongre ve Sergi Merkezi'nde (OCEC) uygulanan en iyi sürdürülebilirlik uygulamalarının ziyaretçi memnuniyeti üzerindeki etkisini incelemektedir. Çevresel sorunlara yönelik farkındalığın artmasıyla birlikte, kongre ve sergi merkezlerinden ziyaretçi deneyimini iyileřtiren çevre dostu girişimleri hayata geçirmeleri giderek daha fazla beklenmektedir. Çalışma, sürdürülebilirlik girişimlerinin ziyaretçilerin içsel algılarını şekillendiren ve nihayetinde memnuniyetlerini ile davranışsal niyetlerini etkileyen birer uyarıcı işlevi gördüğünü açıklamak için Uyarıcı-Organizma-Tepki (SOR) modelini entegre etmektedir. Arařtırma, pozitivism felsefesi, açıklayıcı arařtırma tasarımı ve tümdengelimci yöntem doğrultusunda nicel bir yaklaşım benimsemiştir. Birincil veriler, OCEC'i ziyaret eden 33 katılımcıya uygulanan çevrimiçi anket yoluyla toplanmış, elde edilen bulgular betimsel ve çıkarımsal analiz

teknikleri ile değerlendirilmiştir. Bulgular; atık yönetimi, su tasarrufu, ulaşım çözümleri ve çevre dostu malzeme kullanımı gibi sürdürülebilirlik girişimlerinin ziyaretçi memnuniyetini olumlu yönde etkilediğini, enerji verimliliği uygulamalarının ise en güçlü etkiye sahip olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Tüm uygulamalar olumlu deneyimler sağlamakla birlikte, katılımcılar özellikle dijital platformlar ve akıllı enerji çözümleri gibi alanlarda yenilikçi adımların gerekliliğine dikkat çekmiştir. Araştırma, sürdürülebilirliğin etkinlik yönetimine entegre edilmesinin yalnızca ziyaretçi memnuniyetini artırmakla kalmayıp OCEC'in bölgedeki öncü sürdürülebilir mekân konumunu da güçlendirdiği sonucuna ulaşmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kongre Merkezi, Sürdürülebilirlik, Atık Yönetimi, Enerji Verimliliği, Müşteri Deneyimi.

INTRODUCTION

Research Background

Contemporary visitors in the event management, tourism, and hospitality industries increasingly demand the integration of sustainability and environmentally responsible practices due to heightened awareness of global environmental challenges such as climate change and socioeconomic inequalities (Hadassa, 2024). Recognizing this shift, the present study aims to explore how sustainable practices are integrated within convention and exhibition centres, which play a pivotal role in revenue generation and guest satisfaction in the tourism and event management sectors. The research is particularly significant as these facilities are strategically positioned to contribute to environmental preservation through waste management, energy efficiency, and eco-friendly architectural design (Nakkham and Silanoi, 2023).

The starting point of this study is the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC), located approximately 4 km from Muscat International Airport. OCEC serves as an exemplary case due to its extensive facilities—including two auditoriums with seating capacities of 3,200 and 456—and its commitment to green practices and sustainability (OCEC, 2024). The research adopts a qualitative case study method to gain in-depth insights into the center's sustainable operations and management strategies. Participants, including OCEC management staff, event organizers, and visitors, were purposefully selected based on their direct involvement with or experience in implementing and engaging with the centre's sustainability initiatives. This approach ensures that the findings accurately reflect diverse perspectives on how sustainability is embedded within large-scale event venues in Oman.

Problem Statement and Rationale

While there is a growing body of literature on sustainable event management practices, research examining the direct implications of sustainability on visitor satisfaction remains limited. In particular, studies focusing on convention and exhibition centers in the Middle East, including the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC), are sparse. Existing research acknowledges that visitors appreciate sustainability initiatives; however, there is insufficient understanding of how these practices influence overall visitor experiences, satisfaction levels, and behavioral intentions such as revisiting or recommending the venue (Buonincontri et al., 2017).

This study departs from the general discussion of sustainability in events by specifically investigating the intersection between sustainability integration and visitor satisfaction in a regional context. It draws on multiple theoretical frameworks, including sustainable tourism theory, which emphasizes the importance of balancing environmental, social, and economic outcomes in tourism and event management; green consumer behavior theory, which explains how environmental consciousness shapes preferences and decision-making; and satisfaction and experiential theories, which highlight the role of perceived service quality, environmental responsibility, and overall experience in determining visitor satisfaction. By integrating these perspectives, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of how sustainability practices influence visitor perceptions and expectations in convention and exhibition settings.

Moreover, the research emphasizes the regional context of the Middle East, where sustainable event management is an emerging but under-researched area. Case studies from the region suggest a growing interest in eco-friendly practices, yet there is limited empirical evidence linking these initiatives to visitor satisfaction and loyalty. Therefore, examining OCEC not only addresses this regional research gap but also offers practical insights for the strategic transformation of the center. The findings are expected to inform institutional benchmarks for sustainability, aligning visitor expectations with evolving environmental norms while enhancing the overall quality and competitiveness of event facilities in Oman and the broader Gulf region.

Research Aim

The aim of this research is to examine how sustainable event management practices at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre influence visitor satisfaction and experience. The study applies sustainable tourism, green consumer behaviour, and visitor satisfaction theories to understand the impact of eco-friendly initiatives on visitor perceptions, revisiting intentions, and overall satisfaction, addressing a gap in the Middle Eastern context.

Research Objectives

1. To identify the distinctive sustainable practices implemented at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre.
2. To assess how these practices influence visitor satisfaction, perceptions, and revisiting intentions.
3. To propose actionable strategies for enhancing sustainability, addressing regional gaps, and aligning the Centre with evolving environmental and visitor expectations.

Research Questions

1. What are the best sustainable practices incorporated at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre?
2. How do specific sustainable practices, such as waste management, energy efficiency, and water conservation impact visitor satisfaction at the Centre?
3. Which new strategies should be integrated to improve sustainable event management practices at the Centre?

Structure of the Dissertation

The structure of the dissertation is as follows:

1. The introduction chapter offers the background and rationale for conducting the research.
2. The literature review highlights the major theoretical underpinnings associated with the research topic.
3. The methodology chapter highlights the choices informing data collection and analysis.
4. The findings and discussions chapter highlights the influences of the data analysis.
5. The conclusions and recommendations chapter represents the overall findings and their relevance to the research objectives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of literature relevant to understanding the relationship between sustainable event management practices and visitor satisfaction, with a particular focus on the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC). The primary aim is to provide a theoretical and empirical foundation for evaluating how sustainability initiatives—such as energy efficiency, waste management, water conservation, and eco-friendly design—impact visitor experiences, perceptions, and behavioral intentions.

The rationale for this research stems from the increasing global and regional emphasis on sustainability in the tourism, hospitality, and event management sectors. While prior studies have explored sustainable event management practices and their general benefits, there is limited empirical evidence on how these practices specifically influence visitor satisfaction in convention and exhibition settings, particularly in the Middle East (Al-Kwafi & Ahmed, 2020; Buonincontri et al., 2017). This research addresses this gap by providing context-specific insights from OCEC, a facility recognized for integrating sustainability but underexplored in academic literature.

The literature review systematically examines key themes: first, the theoretical foundations underpinning sustainability in tourism and events, including sustainable tourism theory, green consumer behavior theory, and visitor satisfaction theory; second, empirical studies assessing the relationship between sustainability practices and visitor experiences globally and in regional contexts; and third, strategic and innovative approaches for enhancing sustainable practices in convention and exhibition centers. By critically evaluating these studies, the review identifies gaps in knowledge, particularly regarding the Middle Eastern context, and establishes the originality and significance of this research.

Finally, the chapter outlines how insights from the literature inform the research objectives, guiding the identification of best practices at OCEC and the development of strategies to enhance sustainability while aligning with visitor expectations. This approach ensures that the study contributes both theoretically, by integrating sustainability and satisfaction frameworks—and practically, by offering actionable recommendations for improving sustainable event management in the region.

Theoretical Framework

The research topic aims to investigate the relationship between the best sustainable event management practices and visitor satisfaction at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC) and this research aligns with the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR model). Undertaking this theoretical framework explains that stimuli from the environment, during this case, sustainable practices influence the internal state of visitors, leading to specific responses such as satisfaction and intention to recommend the event. In the context of OCEC, highly effective sustainable management practices such as eco-friendly venue design, waste reduction initiatives, and also community engagement mainly serve as stimuli. Undermining these practices helps the visitors shape their perceptions and experiences within the venue, potentially enhancing their overall satisfaction. The SOR model emphasises that positive ambient conditions and facilities help contribute significantly to visitor satisfaction levels, influencing their overall likelihood of returning or recommending the event to others. Incorporating hospitality elements rooted in local culture and sustainable practices mainly resonates with visitors' values, which further enhances their overall job satisfaction. Applying the SOR model, allows the researcher to comprehensively evaluate how sustainable event management practices impact overall visitor satisfaction and look ahead in contributing towards branding OCED as a premier, eco-friendly destination for events.

Key Sustainable Practices Incorporated at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre

The Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC) has made significant strides in culminating sustainable practices within its operations in order to promote environmental responsibility.

Renewable energy initiatives

One of the major projects of OCEC's sustainability strategy is its solar panel installation which mainly features more than 8,300 panels. This particular system, which is capable of producing approximately 7.8 gigawatt-hours of electricity annually, can power an entire village and reduce CO₂ emissions by 3,317 tons annually. Commitment towards sustainable operations is further highlighted by OCEC's goal to become a zero-carbon venue by the year 2050, indicating a long-term vision for achieving environmental sustainability (Circularbusinessreview.com, 2024).

Green Building Design

OCEC was mainly built as a LEED Gold-certified facility, that is mainly designed to optimise natural light and airflow to reduce energy consumption significantly. Moreover, the building incorporates a variety of green spaces that include planting fruit trees and a honeybee farm that look to enhance biodiversity and also support the local flora (Circularbusinessreview.com, 2024).

Community engagement and waste management

The centre actively engages within the community by partnering with local organisations to repurpose surplus food, donating over seven tons of food last year. Moreover, OCEC promotes recycling initiatives during events that encourage exhibitors to reuse materials such as food and steel (Circularbusinessreview.com, 2024).

Electric vehicle charging stations

In order to provide support to eco-friendly transportation, OCEC has installed electric vehicle charging stations in collaboration with local partners. This initiative aims to encourage visitors to adopt sustainable travel behaviours.

Undermining these comprehensive sustainable practices, OCEC not only helps in enhancing its operational efficiency but also positions itself as a leader in environmental responsibility within the region. The multi-faceted approach explains the commitment to sustainability that is integral to OCEC's identity and its role in hosting international events.

How specific sustainable practices such as waste management, energy efficiency, water conservation, etc. impact the satisfaction of visitors at the Centre

The sustainable practices implemented at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre mainly significantly enhance overall visitor satisfaction through different dimensions that include waste management, energy efficiency, and water conservation.

Waste management

OCEC's robust waste management system mainly comprises developing collaboration with the local food banks to redirect surplus food that contributes to positive visitor perceptions. Considering this approach not only helps in minimising waste but also reinforces the centre's commitment to social responsibility, which resonates well with environmentally-conscious visitors (Ocec.om, 2024).

Energy efficiency

Energy efficiency mainly means, especially the installation of a 4.6-megawatt rooftop solar power system, providing OCEC with a sustainable energy source that meets most of its electricity needs. Undertaking this initiative not only helps in reducing the venue's carbon footprint but also supports a comfortable and well-lit environment, that enhances the overall experiences of the

visitors (Pvknowhow.com, 2024). Overall research shows that venues mainly recognised for their eco-friendly operations look ahead to installing greater trust and also satisfaction among the guests which could positively influence their intentions to return to events at OCEC (Hitec.org, 2024).

Water conservation

OCEC looks to address water conservation through strategic landscaping practices that minimise water usage and the overall implementation of drought-resistant plant species. Such efforts elevate the aesthetic appeal of the venue while demonstrating its commitment to sustainability, thus looking to increase overall visitor satisfaction as they enjoy a well-maintained and environmentally-friendly setting (Ocec.om, 2024).

The alignment of OCEC's sustainable practices within visitor expectations not only grows loyalty but also looks to improve the venue's reputation as a leader in sustainable event hosting. Integrating thoughtful waste management, energy efficiency, and water conservation strategies allows OCEC to effectively improve the satisfaction of its visitors, showing its dedication to environmental stewardship.

Explore new strategies for enhancing sustainable event management practices at the Centre

Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre can enhance its sustainable event management practices through various innovative strategies.

Digital technology implementation

Introducing digital platforms for event management looks to minimise paper use, providing real-time updates and communications for attendees. This particular shift can further lead to the adaptation of virtual attendance options, hence reducing travel-related emissions (Bladen *et al.*, 2022).

Enhanced waste management

Developing a robust waste management system such as composting stations and improved recycling initiatives can help eliminate the environmental impact. Educating attendees on waste segregation enhances participation in recycling efforts (Ofori and Opoku Mensah 2022).

Energy and water efficiency innovations

Making investments in green technology such as smart energy management systems optimise energy usage, while rainwater harvesting systems also help in preserving water. These innovations not only contribute to sustainability but also help in lowering the overall operational costs.

Community engagement

Strengthening partnerships with local suppliers and charities for catering and resources promotes eco-friendly practices. Engaging with the local community in sustainability initiatives helps in developing a sense of shared responsibility and growing overall visitor satisfaction (Circularbusinessreview.com, 2024).

Undertaking this strategy, OCEC helps position itself as a leader in sustainable event management, that aims to attract environmentally-conscious clients and attendees.

Literature Gap

Irrespective of the comprehensive sustainable practices at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre, the overall research limitations include potential biases in visitor perceptions of sustainability and their actual satisfaction levels. The dependency on self-reported data might not

accurately reflect the impact of sustainability initiatives. Furthermore, external factors influencing visitors such as event type and external environment conditions, might not be adequately controlled.

Summary

The Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre has aimed to implement various sustainable practices to grow environmental responsibility. Key initiatives mainly comprise solar panel installation that generates 7.8 gigawatt-hours of electricity annually, LEED Gold building design for energy efficiency, and robust waste management through food recycling. Water conservation efforts and also the installation of electric vehicle charging stations further explain OCEC's commitment to sustainability. Undertaking these practices not only helped in improving operational efficiency but also significantly enhanced visitor satisfaction which helped in positioning OCEC as a leader in sustainable event hosting and attracting eco-conscious clients and attendees.

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methodology adopted to examine the relationship between sustainable event management practices and visitor satisfaction at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC). It presents the research philosophy, approach, design, data collection, analysis, and ethical considerations, explaining how each choice aligns with the study's objectives and theoretical framework.

Research Philosophy

The study is grounded in positivism, which assumes that reality is objective and measurable. This philosophy is suitable for analyzing quantifiable relationships between sustainability initiatives—such as energy efficiency, waste management, and eco-friendly design—and visitor satisfaction. While alternative paradigms like post-positivism or pragmatism could address subjective experiences, positivism allows for the testing of hypotheses derived from sustainable tourism, green consumer behavior, and visitor satisfaction theories. Acknowledging the multidimensional nature of satisfaction, the study recognizes that some experiential aspects may not be fully captured.

Research Approach

A deductive approach was employed to test theoretical constructs using quantitative methods. This approach links the research questions and hypotheses directly to existing theories, enabling the examination of causal relationships between sustainable practices and visitor satisfaction indicators such as perceived service quality, overall experience, and revisiting intentions.

Research Design

An explanatory research design was selected to evaluate cause-and-effect relationships between sustainability practices and visitor satisfaction. This design is appropriate because it supports quantitative testing of the hypotheses and provides insights into the strength and direction of the relationships, guiding evidence-based recommendations for enhancing sustainable event management at OCEC.

Data Collection and Sampling

Primary data were collected through an online survey targeting visitors who had experienced events at OCEC. A total of 33 participants completed the survey, selected through purposive sampling. While the sample size limits generalizability, it provides initial empirical insights. The

questionnaire included close-ended items using a five-point Likert scale, adapted from validated studies on sustainable tourism and visitor satisfaction. Demographic information was collected to contextualize responses.

Instrument Validity and Reliability

Content validity was ensured through expert review and adaptation from established instruments. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with values above 0.7 confirming internal consistency of the measured constructs.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics summarized visitor perceptions and satisfaction levels, while inferential analyses—including correlation and regression—tested the hypothesized relationships. Regression assumptions (normality, linearity, homoscedasticity) were verified, and results were interpreted at $p < 0.05$.

Ethical Considerations

The study followed strict ethical procedures. Participant consent was obtained, and anonymity and confidentiality were maintained in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. The research was approved by the University's Ethics Committee, ensuring compliance with institutional standards.

Summary

In conclusion, the study adopts a positivist philosophy, deductive approach, and explanatory design to examine the impact of sustainable practices on visitor satisfaction at OCEC. Quantitative data collected via a validated survey were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Ethical standards were rigorously observed, and methodological limitations, such as sample size and the subjective dimensions of satisfaction—are acknowledged to contextualize the findings.

RESULTS

Introduction

The current section highlights the quantitative analysis of the survey data collected from visitors to the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre. A descriptive and inferential analysis has been conducted including visual chart analysis and statistical models.

Descriptive Analysis

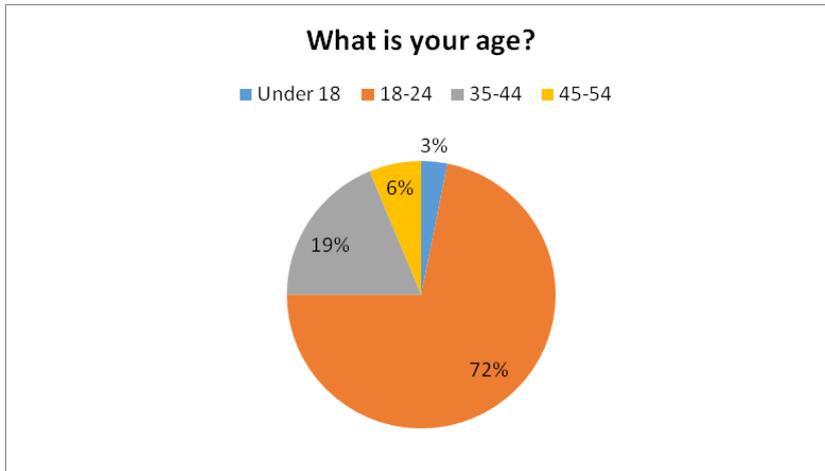


Figure 1. Age analysis (Source: Self-created)

The majority of the participants belonged to the age group of 18 to 24 years, depicting the highest participation of Gen Z participants.

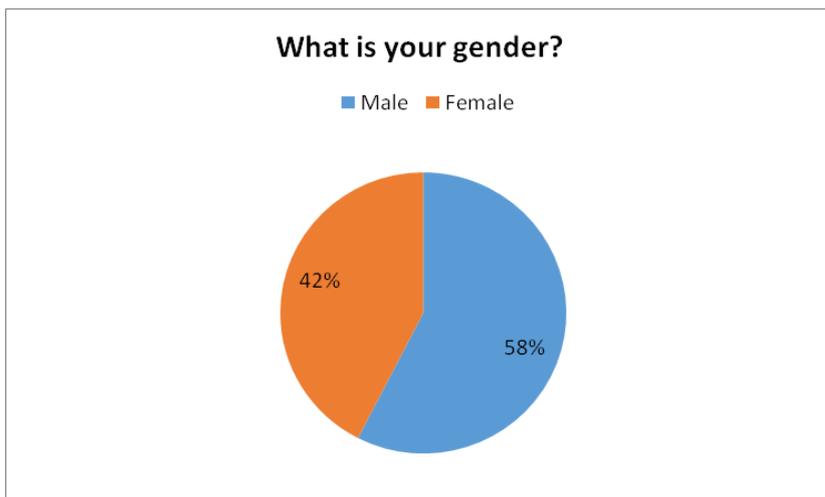


Figure 2. Gender assessment (Source: Self-created)

As per the results of the survey, 58% of the participants were male, whereas 42% of them were female, depicting the majority of responses given by male visitors.

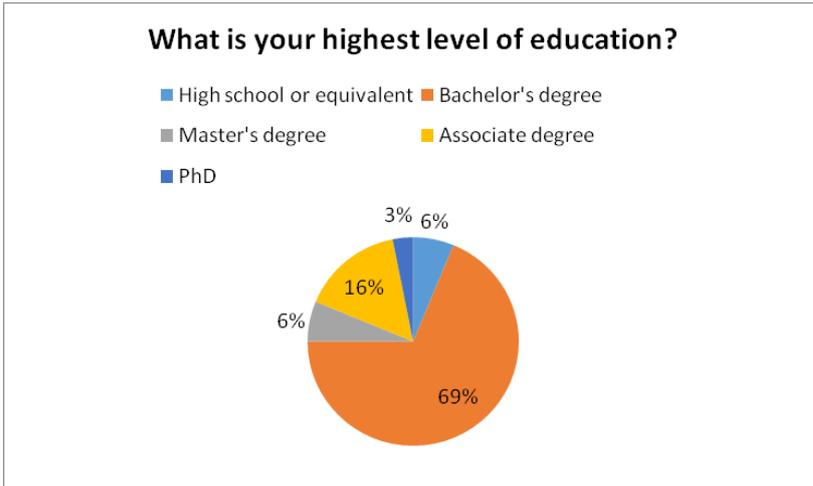


Figure 3. Educational qualification (Source: Self-created)

As per the responses, most of the participants of the study have a bachelor’s as their highest degree; however, participants were also found to have a PhD, Associate, and master's as their highest qualification.

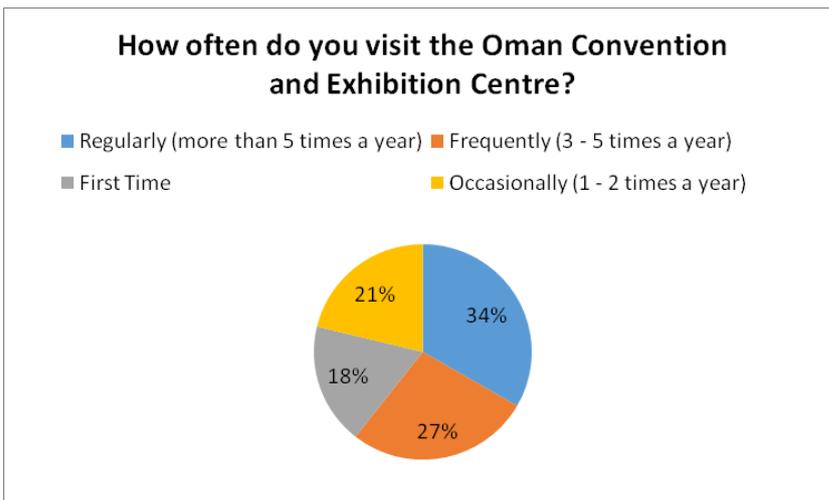


Figure 4. Visiting Oman Convention Centre (Source: Self-created)

The majority of the participants, 34% of them, were found to visit the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre on a regular basis, more than 5 times a year. In addition, 27% of the visitors were found to visit frequently, reflecting 3 to 5 times a year. Moreover, 21% of the participants visited occasionally, like 1 or 2 times a year, however, only 18% of the survey respondents were found to visit it for the first time.

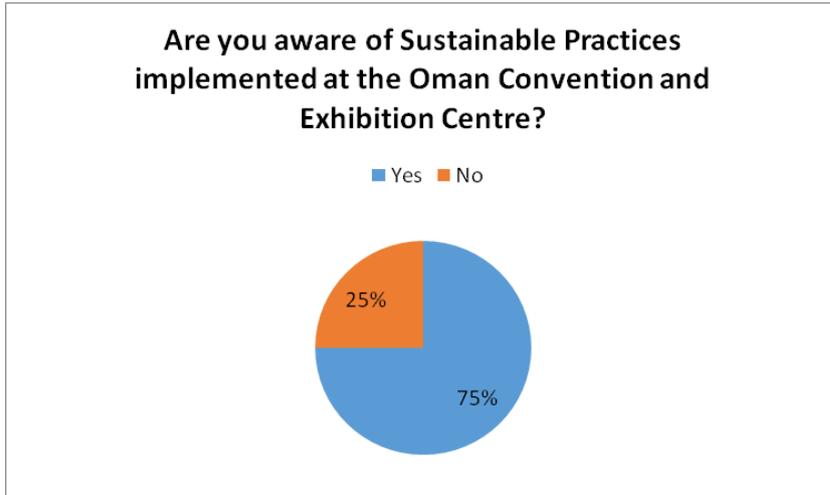


Figure 5. Awareness of sustainable practices at the Oman Convention (Source: Self-created)

Concerning the responses given by the participants, it has been evident that the majority of the visitors positively answered the question of sustainable practices and the implementation of the same at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre. However, 75% of the participants were found to be aware of sustainable practices as well.

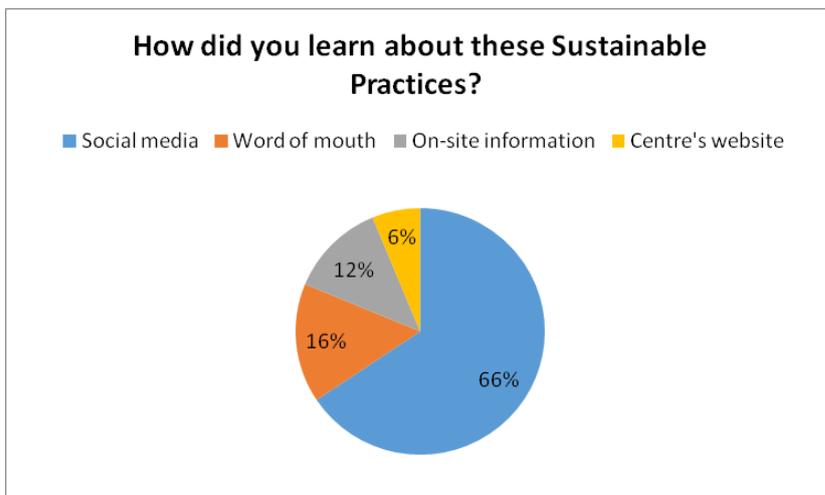


Figure 6. Learning about sustainable practices (Source: Self-created)

Upon further progress of the survey, the participants were asked about the source from where they have learned about the sustainable practices of companies. In this regard, following the responses, it has been found that a maximum of the respondents learned about sustainable practices from social media applications, depicting responses from 66% of the participants.

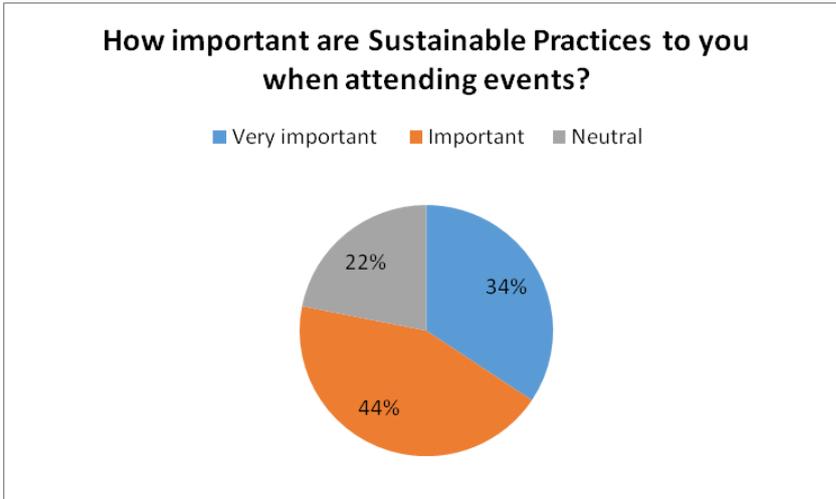


Figure 7. Importance of sustainable practices (Source: Self-created)

The visitors were further asked about the importance of sustainable practices in the case of attending events at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre. Following the responses, it emerged that 44% of the participants stated that it is important, whereas 34% of them said that it is very important. This indicates that sustainability is one of the significant factors that visitors consider while attending events at the Centre.

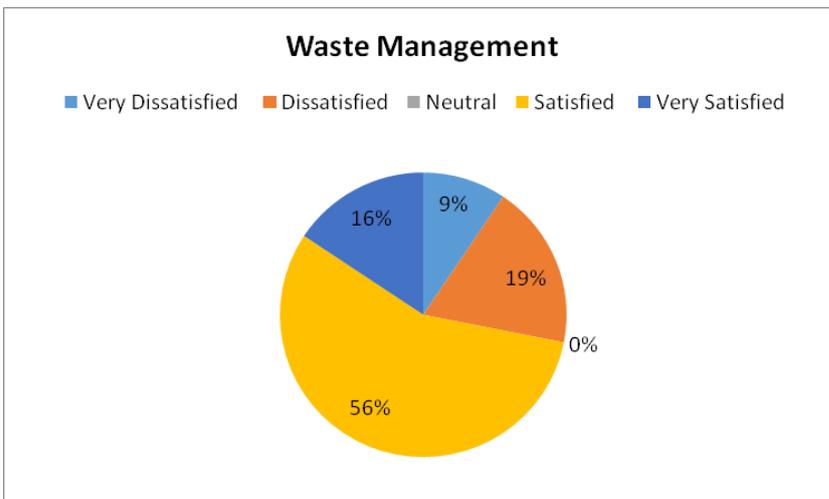


Figure 8. Waste management (Source: Self-created)

The satisfaction level of the participants related to different sustainability practices implemented by the organisation has been evaluated. Concerning waste management, it has been found that most of the participants, for example, 56% of the participants were found to be satisfied with the waste management practices of Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre, depicting the effectiveness of the Centre in maintaining sustainability.

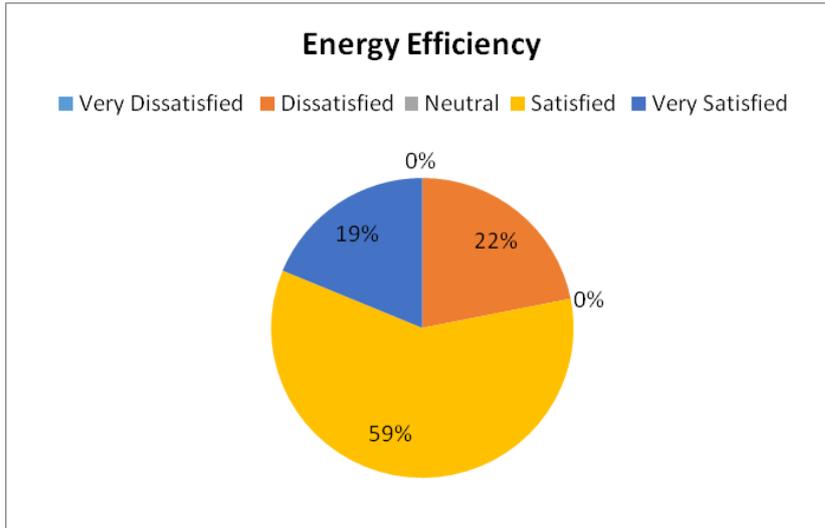


Figure 9. Energy efficiency (Source: Self-created)

The evaluation of the satisfaction level of the visitors related to energy efficiency in Oman was conducted, and 59% of the visitors stated that they were satisfied with the initiatives undertaken by the Centre to maintain energy efficiency.

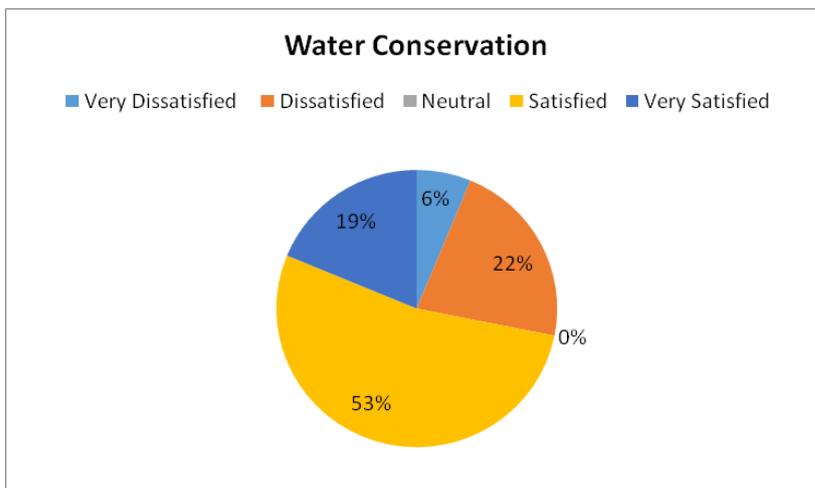


Figure 10. Water conservation (Source: Self-created)

The satisfaction rate regarding the effectiveness of the Centre in maintaining water conservation has been high among the visitors, as 53% of them positively answered the question.

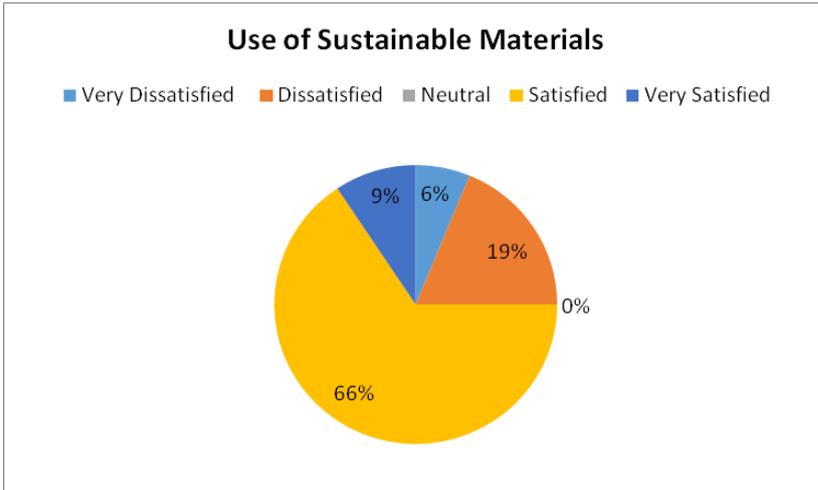


Figure 11. Sustainable material usage (Source: Self-created)

The satisfaction rate has been the highest of the visitors regarding the ability of the Centre to use sustainable materials. For instance, 66% of the visitors mentioned being satisfied with the usage of eco-friendly materials by the Oman Centre.

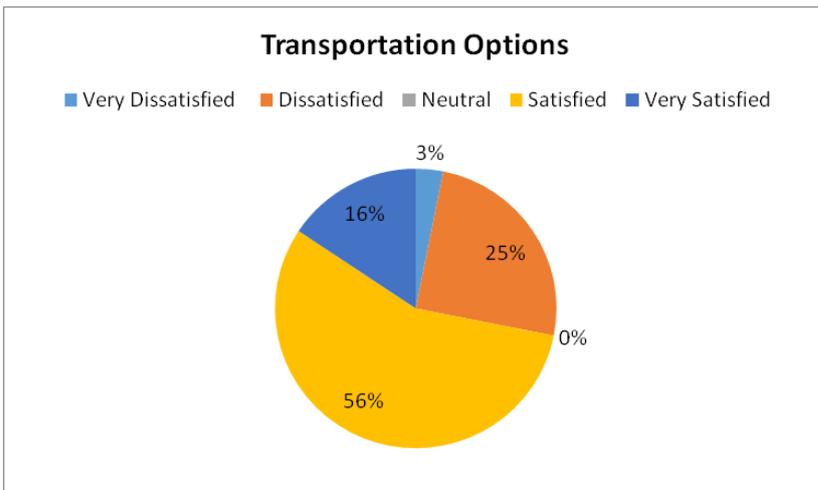


Figure 12. Transportation (Source: Self-created)

The visitors were satisfied with the transportation options they had while visiting the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre.



Figure 13. Impact of waste management (Source: Self-created)

The visitors were further asked about the impact of each initiative undertaken by the Oman Centre on the experience level. In this regard, concerning the initiatives of waste management, 75% of the visitors stated that they had significant impacts on their experience level.

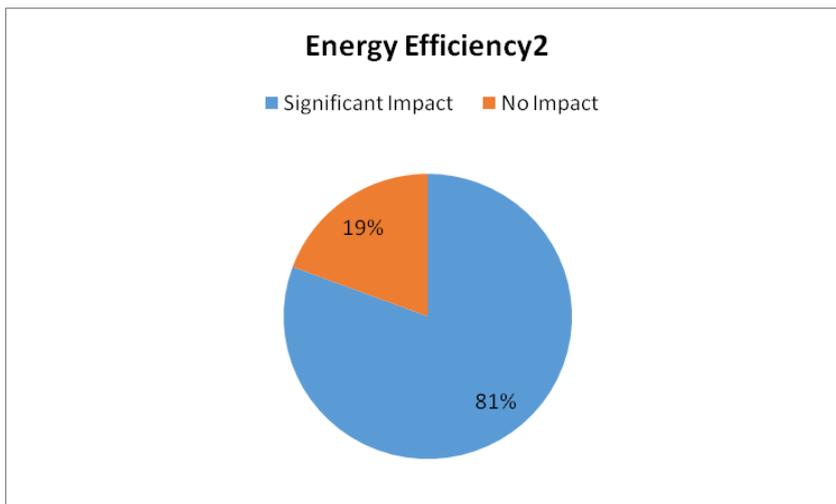


Figure 14. Impact of energy efficiency (Source: Self-created)

Moreover, 81% of the visitors mentioned that the energy efficiency initiatives had a strong and significant impact on their experience level.

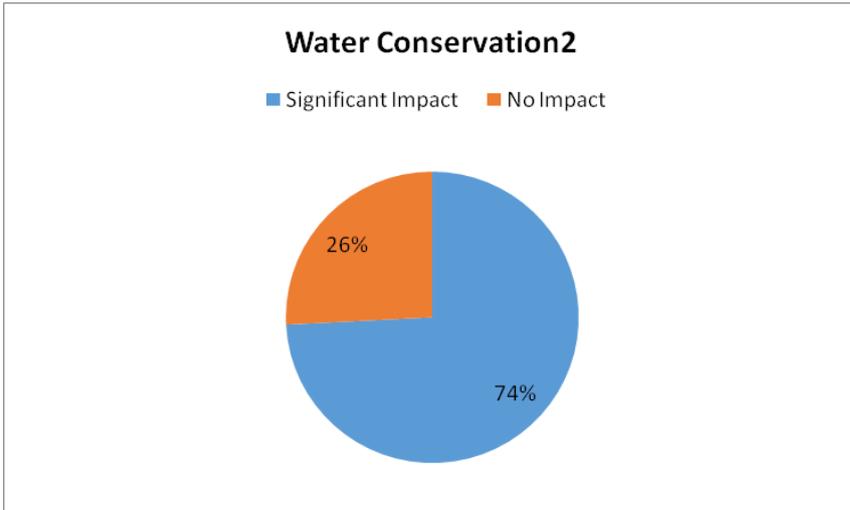


Figure 15. Impact of water conservation (Source: Self-created)

It has been noticed that 74% of the visitors stated that the initiatives related to water conservation had a significant impact on their experience at the Oman Centre.

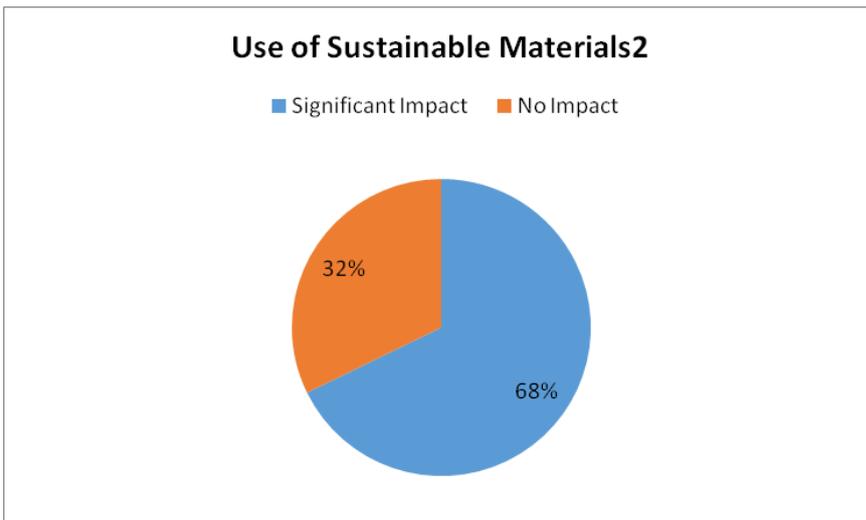


Figure 16. Impact of eco-friendly materials (Source: Self-created)

The eco-friendly material usage for the construction of the Centre significantly impacted the experience level of the participants, reflecting positive responses from 68% of them.

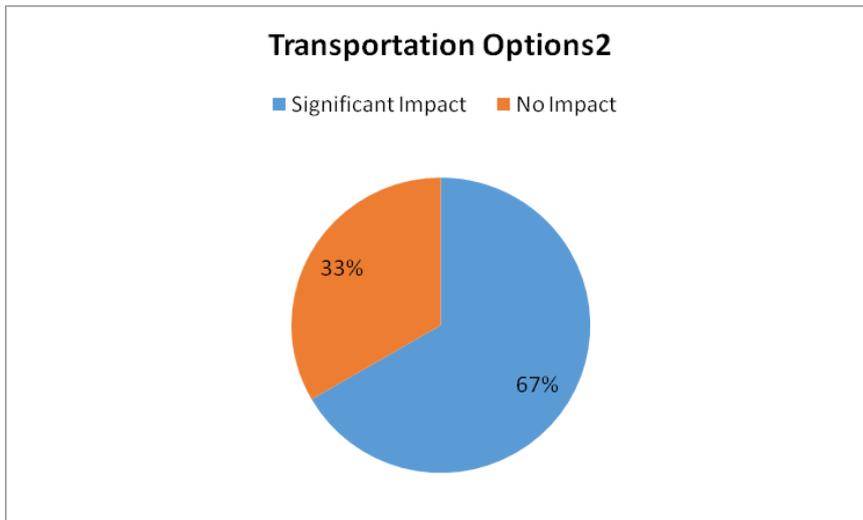


Figure 17. Impact of transportation system (Source: Self-created)

As per the results, 67% of the participants stated that the transportation arrangements significantly impacted their experience.

The visitors were further asked about the additional practices that they would like to be seen implemented at the Centre. In this regard, different responses from the visitors were obtained. However, one common response was to integrate solar power and create a no-plastic zone.

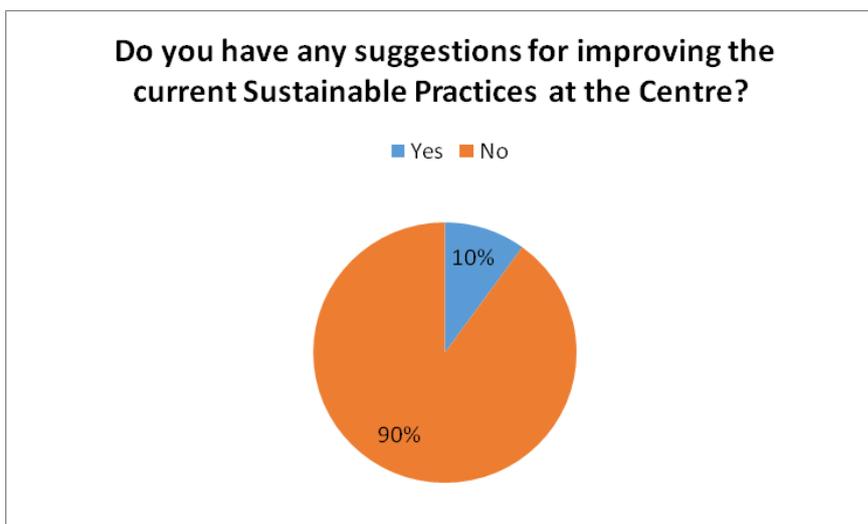


Figure 18. Suggestions for improving current practices at the Centre (Source: Self-created)

The visitors were further asked to provide suggestions for the Oman Centre regarding the improvement of their current sustainable practices. However, 90% of the visitors had no suggestion for the Centre, stating all the practices are effective.

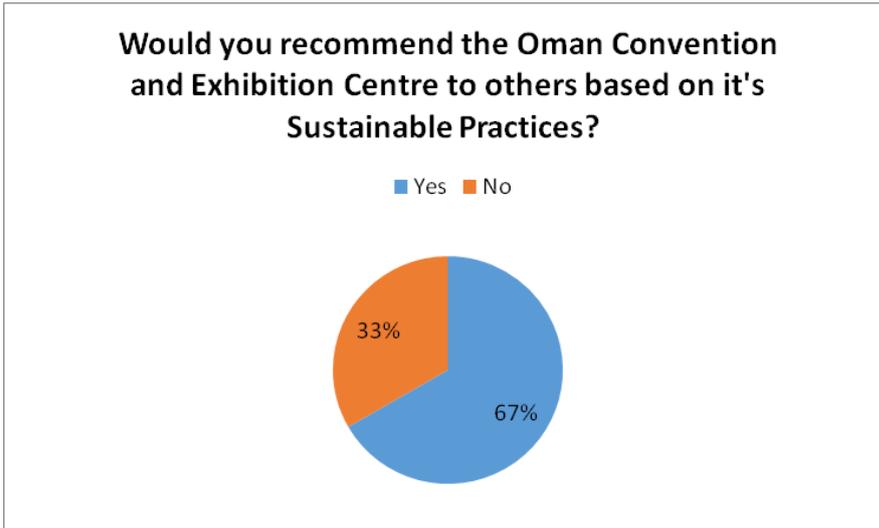


Figure 19. Recommendation (Source: Self-created)

The majority of the visitors, 67% of them, recommended the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre to others relying on their sustainable practices.

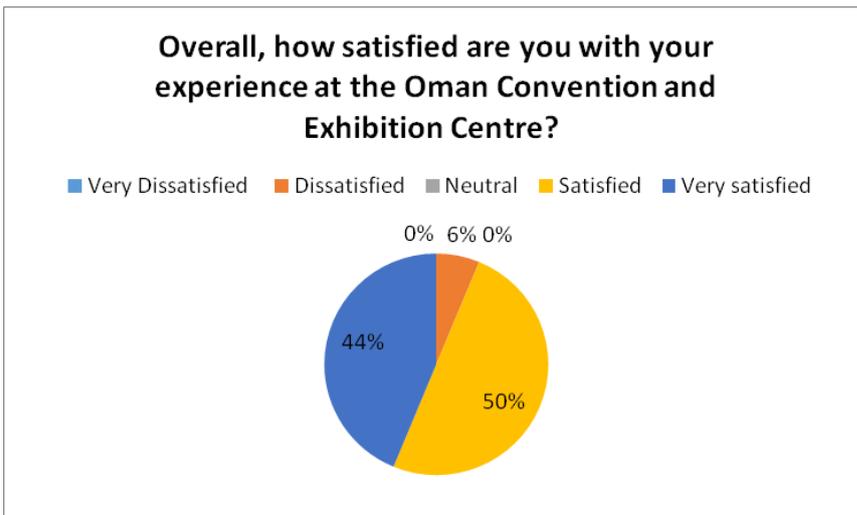


Figure 20. Rate of satisfaction (Source: Self-created)

Finally, the overall satisfaction level of the participants regarding their experience at the Oman Centre was asked. In response to this question, 50% of the visitors stated they were satisfied with the experience at the Oman Centre; however, very few were dissatisfied.

Inferential analysis

Correlation

Correlations							
		Experienceat Oman	WasteManag ement	EnergyEfficien cy	WaterConserv ation	Useofsustain ablematerials	Transportatio n
ExperienceatOman	Pearson Correlation	1	.758	.801	.792	.692	.738
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.138	.103	.110	.196	.154
	N	5	5	5	5	5	5
WasteManagement	Pearson Correlation	.758	1	.979**	.990**	.991**	.981**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.138		.004	.001	.001	.003
	N	5	5	5	5	5	5
EnergyEfficiency	Pearson Correlation	.801	.979**	1	.994**	.969**	.994**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.103	.004		.001	.006	.001
	N	5	5	5	5	5	5
WaterConservation	Pearson Correlation	.792	.990**	.994**	1	.973**	.994**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.110	.001	.001		.005	.001
	N	5	5	5	5	5	5
Useofsustainablematerial s	Pearson Correlation	.692	.991**	.969**	.973**	1	.975**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.196	.001	.006	.005		.005
	N	5	5	5	5	5	5
Transportation	Pearson Correlation	.738	.981**	.994**	.994**	.975**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.154	.003	.001	.001	.005	
	N	5	5	5	5	5	5

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1. Correlation outcome (Source: Self-created)

The correlation analysis examined the inter-relationship between respondents' experience in Oman and such sustainability practices as waste management, energy conservation, water conservation, sustainable material usage, and transport. The findings indicated that although experience in Oman and the sustainability measures had moderately strong correlations ($r = .692$ to $r = .801$), the relationships shared were not statistically significant on the 0.01 level of probability ($p > .05$) (Franzese and Iuliano, 2018). This implies that experience from Oman barely reflects on the effectiveness of the sustainable practices' implementation, as the sample of the study is small.

On the contrary, based on the results of the Pearson correlation, sustainability variables were found to share statistically significant correlations among themselves. For instance, positive correlations were found between waste management and other sustainability variables like water conservation, energy efficiency, transportation, and use of sustainable materials, depicting p-values less than 5% (Makowski *et al.*, 2020). In addition, energy efficiency was also strongly correlated with transportation and water conservation. Strong correlations were also found between sustainable materials, transportation, and water conservation. Thus, based on the results, it can be stated that the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre has effectively implemented sustainability initiatives, depicting their concern for environmental sustainability.

Regression

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.952 ^a	.906	.812	3.43188

a. Predictors: (Constant), Transportation, EnergyEfficiency

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	227.644	2	113.822	9.664	.094 ^b
	Residual	23.556	2	11.778		
	Total	251.200	4			

a. Dependent Variable: ExperienceatOman
b. Predictors: (Constant), Transportation, EnergyEfficiency

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.556	2.317		1.535	.265
	EnergyEfficiency	5.444	1.961	5.335	2.777	.109
	Transportation	-5.000	2.106	-4.563	-2.375	.141

a. Dependent Variable: ExperienceatOman

Table 2. Regression outcome (Source: Self-created)

A multiple regression analysis was performed to explore the degree to which transportation and energy efficiency influence experience in Oman (Sarstedt *et al.*, 2019). The model generated a correlation coefficient (R = .952) and an R-Square = .906, which means the prediction outcome of experience has been sound, depicting 95.2%, and the joint influence of the sustainability variables on the experience has also been sound, depicting an explanation over 90.6% by the predictor variables (Montgomery *et al.*, 2021). As per the ANOVA, the F-ratio and p-value together depict an equation, “F (2, 2) = 9.664, p>0.05, R-square = .906”. This indicates a strong effect of the predictor variables on the dependent variable; however, the p-value is above the standard value of 5%, which reflects that the effect is not statistically significant.

The coefficients table depicts an understanding that energy efficiency had a positive correlation with experience in Oman following the unstandardised beta value (B = 5.444), whereas transportation had a negative correlation (B = -5.000) (Nayebi and Nayebi, 2020). In addition to this, the results depicted that none of the predictors was statistically significant, with p-values of .109 and .141, respectively. The p-values of both variables are greater than 0.05, which is likely due to the small sample size (Arkes, 2023). However, based on the regression, it can be stated that the energy efficiency initiatives undertaken by the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre had a strong positive impact on the experience level of the visitors.

Summary

In summary, the results depict that the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre has been capable of implementing relevant sustainability practices such as water conservation, energy efficiency, waste management, and transportation, which improved the experience level of the visitors.

However, as per the inferential results, it can be concluded that the energy efficiency initiatives had the strongest impact on the experience level of the visitors at the Oman Centre.

DISCUSSION

Introduction

The chapter enlightens on the linkage between the secondary and primary findings of the research. It has developed a brief discussion on the overall findings of the research, thereby assisting the researcher in acknowledging the efficacy of the findings to draw relevant conclusions.

Discussion

Sustainability initiatives have become an integral part of organisations, especially in the event management sector, as it has a direct influence on the satisfaction and experience level of visitors. Based on the secondary findings, the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre has integrated significant sustainable practices that promote environmental sustainability. As emerged from the findings, the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre has integrated renewable energy initiatives, such as reducing carbon emissions. In addition, the organisation is found to use sustainable materials that help in green building design, thereby improving sustainability prospects (Circularbusinessreview.com, 2024). Moreover, it has been found that the Oman Centre actively engages with the communities by developing partnerships with local organisations in the market, which further helped in promoting recycling initiatives within the communities. Furthermore, the Oman Centre is found to install charging stations for electric vehicles that improve the transportation system, depicting a stable partnership with the local organisations.

In this context, linking with the experience analysis of the visitors in Oman, it has been evident from the survey responses that most of the participants were satisfied with the sustainability initiatives implemented by the Centre. The visitors responded that the initiatives of waste management positively impacted their experience in Oman. Linking the responses with the findings from (Oece, 2024), the development of collaboration with the local food banks to redirect surplus food positively impacted the experience of the visitors. In addition to this, the visitors also mentioned that the energy efficiency initiatives undertaken by the organisation, significantly influenced in developing positive experience. The installation of the 4.6-megawatt rooftop solar power system can be stated to have potentially improved the experience of the visitors (Pvknowhow.com, 2024). The strategic landscape practices have benefited the organisation in improving the water conservation practices, which further positively impacted the satisfaction and experience of the visitors.

In this context, upon further analysis, it has been found that the visitors were strongly satisfied with the sustainable practices integrated by the organisation, however, few suggested the organisation create a no-plastic zone. Furthermore, as per the inferential results, it has been evident that although all the sustainability initiatives had a strong impact on the experience level of the visitors, the influence of the energy efficiency practices has been the strongest. Aligned with the study developed by Ofori and Opoku Mensah (2022), integrating initiatives that focus on energy consumption creates a positive impact on the perception of customers in the market, and in the case of visiting centres, it helps in attracting visitors. In addition to this, it increases the strength of developing strategic relationships with the visitors in the market, thereby improving the engagement rate. This indicates an understanding that integrating sustainability initiatives related to energy consumption potentially benefits organisations in creating a positive image in the market, which significantly enables visitors to engage.

Moreover, relating to the responses given by the participants, it can be stated that the sustainability initiatives have positively impacted their satisfaction rates, which influenced their interest in engaging with the Oman Centre. It has benefited the visitors to trust the organisation to ethically

serve the community, with the inclusion of sustainability initiatives. Additionally, the collaborative initiatives undertaken by the organisation positively benefited in gaining the trust and loyalty of the visitors, thereby contributing to increased strategic performance. Also, it has benefited the visitors in improving their experience of visiting the centre, which has further made the visitors re-visit the centre. Thus, it can be stated that the implementation of sustainable practices has benefited the Oman Centre in improving visitors' experience.

Summary

In summary, the chapter reflects that there is a positive linkage between the primary and the secondary findings of the study as the visitors stated having a positive experience due to the inclusion of sustainable practices. The energy efficiency practices strongly influenced the satisfaction and experience of visitors.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study set out to examine the relationship between sustainable event management practices and visitor satisfaction at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC), addressing a notable gap in research on sustainability in convention and exhibition facilities within the Middle East. The research is significant both theoretically, by integrating sustainable tourism, green consumer behavior, and visitor satisfaction theories, and practically, by evaluating actionable sustainability initiatives at a leading regional venue.

The findings indicate that the integration of sustainability initiatives at OCEC positively influences visitor satisfaction and engagement. Specifically, green building design, energy efficiency, water conservation, waste management, sustainable transportation initiatives, and community engagement practices were found to significantly enhance the visitor experience. Among these, energy efficiency measures—including the optimization of airflow and natural light—had the most substantial impact on visitor perceptions, confirming the importance of environmentally conscious operational practices in shaping satisfaction outcomes. Similarly, the installation of solar panels and collaboration with local food partners demonstrated the Centre's commitment to sustainability, reinforcing the value of corporate social responsibility initiatives in visitor experience.

These results align with previous studies highlighting the positive impact of sustainable practices on visitor satisfaction (Buonincontri et al., 2017; Nakkham & Silanoi, 2023). However, this study extends the literature by providing empirical evidence from the Middle Eastern context, illustrating how culturally and regionally relevant practices—such as local community engagement and landscaping initiatives—contribute to enhanced satisfaction, a perspective that has been underexplored in prior research. Notably, some findings, such as the strong effect of energy efficiency initiatives, suggest that visitors increasingly value measurable and visible sustainability practices, which confirms the theoretical propositions of green consumer behavior theory.

While the findings are encouraging, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The study's reliance on a small sample size (33 participants) and survey-based quantitative data may limit the generalizability of results. Additionally, visitor satisfaction is inherently multidimensional, and some subjective experiential aspects may not have been fully captured. Future studies could employ larger samples and mixed-methods approaches to triangulate findings and explore long-term behavioral impacts, such as loyalty and revisiting intentions.

Research limitations

The research was conducted with the consideration of primary data collected through a survey. In this regard, one of the significant limitations of the research is that the sample size of the participants has been small, depicting responses from 32 participants. Moreover, the study failed to develop a comprehensive analysis of the research topic due to the absence of interview data, which could have been collected from the managers of the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre. However, the research lacks the reliability test of the scale used for the survey, which is also a limitation of the study.

Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, several practical recommendations are proposed for OCEC and similar facilities:

1. Expand energy efficiency initiatives: Continue optimizing building systems, lighting, and natural ventilation, while exploring smart energy management technologies to enhance sustainability and visitor satisfaction.
2. Integrate digital sustainability solutions: Implement digital tools, such as mobile apps for sustainable navigation or real-time energy usage displays, to engage visitors and enhance their awareness of sustainability efforts.
3. Strengthen community and local partnerships: Continue collaborating with local food suppliers, artisans, and service providers to support regional sustainability and create unique visitor experiences.
4. Enhance environmental communication: Provide clear and visible information about sustainability initiatives, allowing visitors to recognize and appreciate the Centre's environmental efforts.
5. Monitor and evaluate initiatives regularly: Use visitor feedback, surveys, and performance indicators to continually assess the effectiveness of sustainability measures and adjust strategies accordingly.

The study contributes theoretically by demonstrating the applicability of sustainability and satisfaction frameworks in a Middle Eastern convention centre context. Practically, it provides actionable insights for institutional decision-makers to align operational sustainability with visitor expectations, enhancing overall satisfaction and competitiveness.

Future Scope

Future studies can be extended by surveying a greater and more diverse population of visitors over several events and time periods in the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre. Moreover, adding qualitative techniques like interviews or focus groups can yield a greater understanding of visitor attitudes. Future research can incorporate a comparison between visitor satisfaction across event sites and different sustainability attributes in order to determine best practices. However, this, in turn, can benefit the organisation in undertaking effective strategic decisions, which can benefit in increasing visitor engagement.

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