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Net-Positive Business Practices in Accredited Accommodation Facilities: An Embedded Ethics Approach

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the adoption, embedded ethics, effects, challenges, and opportunities of NPBP in Kenya's accredited accommodation facilities, addressing the growing environmental and ethical imperatives in the hospitality sector. As global tourism increasingly prioritizes sustainability, facilities are shifting from practices that merely reduce harm to strategies that actively regenerate social and ecological well-being. Guided by regenerative hospitality and embedded ethics frameworks. The study employed a descriptive cross-sectional survey targeting 120 managers from Gold, Silver, and Bronze-rated facilities. The sample was selected through simple random sampling. Instrument validity was ensured through expert review; a pretesting was done reliability was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.7. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Findings indicate robust adoption of NPBP: 82% of facilities implemented water conservation measures, 76% engaged in comprehensive waste segregation, 68% improved energy efficiency, and 71% fostered community partnerships. Embedded ethical practices, including sustainability-oriented leadership, transparent decision-making, and staff empowerment, were reported by 79% of respondents. These practices positively influenced operational outcomes, with 74% of facilities reporting increased customer satisfaction, 69% noting enhanced brand reputation, 64% experiencing higher employee motivation, and 57% achieving cost reductions contributing to profitability. Despite progress, facilities face notable challenges, particularly high upfront investment costs (63%) and uncertainty regarding eco-conscious customers' willingness to pay premiums (58%). Significant opportunities exist: 81% of facilities cited competitive advantage, 77% recognized benefits from regulatory compliance, and 72% plan to scale sustainable initiatives over the next five years. The study concludes that Kenyan accredited facilities have made meaningful strides toward NP and regenerative operations. However, sustained success requires financial support, leadership commitment, staff training, and multi-stakeholder collaboration. Integrating ethics and sustainability into organizational culture not only enhances environmental and social outcomes but also serves as a strategic driver of long-term performance and sector transformation.

INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry, characterized by its substantial resource consumption and significant environmental footprint, faces increasing pressure to adopt sustainable practices. This pressure stems from a growing awareness of ecological degradation, necessitating a shift toward business models that not only mitigate negative impacts but also actively contribute to environmental and social regeneration (Caruso, 2023). This advanced approach mandates a fundamental re-evaluation of operational frameworks, integrating ecological principles and community well-being into core business strategies rather than treating them as ancillary concerns (Legrand *et al.*, 2023). This involves moving beyond a simple reduction of negative externalities to actively fostering the health and well-being of socio-ecological systems, where local communities and stakeholders become integral agents of change. Such a transformative approach requires hotels to develop credible plans, implement courageous actions, and establish attentive monitoring and reporting phases to effectively transition into RS hubs.

A NET positive practice commitment simply recognises

that as well as reducing negative environmental impacts, we should also pay more attention to enhancing the positive impacts of our individual and collective activity; environmentally, socially and economically (Mariki & Modest, 2017). Net Positive Practices are interventions that develop the capacities of places, communities, and their guests (Ateljevic & Sheldon, 2022). The practices promote innovations by embedding tourism practices within local communities and ecological processes that elevate human and non-human well-being (Bellato & Cheer, 2021; Moayerian, McGehee, & Stephenson Jr, 2022; Partanen, Kettunen, & Saarinen, 2023). In spite of great efforts to sell net positive business practices and except for a handful of high-profile corporate case studies, there is little empirical evidence on how Kenya's accommodation facilities are developing their practices to become net positive and if it is even a realistic goal. Further, little is known regarding the measurements used to determine what net positive business practices are. Hence, a study is needed to investigate the adoption of net-positive business practices and their effects on the performance of accommodation facilities in Kenya. This

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paper aims to bridge this gap by examining how NPPs, grounded in an embedded ethics approach, influence the performance of accredited facilities in Kenya.

The study's specific objectives will include the following:

- i. To examine the adoption of Net-Positive Business practices in accredited accommodation facilities in Kenya
- ii. To determine the effects of Net-Positive Business practices in accredited accommodation facilities in Kenya
- iii. To investigate embedded ethics for Net-Positive Business practices in accredited accommodation facilities in Kenya

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature reviewed demonstrates how an embedded ethics approach to NPBP can transform hotels into catalysts for broader socio-ecological regeneration.

Net-Positive Business Practices

Some hospitality facilities are advancing beyond “net-zero” balancing negative impacts with positives aiming instead to become net positive by contributing more to people and planet than they consume, as exemplified by ‘regenerative hospitality’ practices (Bellato *et al.*, 2023; Bellato, Frantzeskaki, & Nygaard, 2023; EHL, 2022); a step towards a significant contribution to building a sustainable future. Regenerative hospitality practices are purely “a transformational approach that aims to fulfill the potential of hospitality and tourism places to flourish and create net positive effects through increasing the regenerative capacity of human societies and ecosystems.” (Bellato *et al.*, 2023). Researchers have criticized the current inadequacy in respecting the Paris Climate Agreement of 2015 and the actual paradigms of the entire industry, such as unlimited growth and the global distribution of tourism (Andriotis, 2018; Becken, 2019; Moyle, Moyle, Ruhanen, Weaver, & Hadinejad, 2020; Saarinen, 2021). Rather than businesses trying to be net zero by implementing sustainable practices, which consists in balancing out negative impact with positive practices, businesses are using a regenerative approach aim to be net positive by giving back more to the people and planet than what is being consumed to operate the business (Bellato *et al.*, 2023), Net Positive business activities acts as interventions that develop the capacities of places, communities and their guests (Ateljevic & Sheldon, 2022); Bellato, & Cheer, 2021); (Moayerian, McGehee, & Stephenson Jr, 2022).

A key component of the regenerative approach in hospitality is a significant mind shift, transitioning from merely minimizing negative impacts to actively maximizing positive contributions, thereby fostering conditions for all life to renew and restore (Caruso, 2023; Duarte *et al.*, 2024). The ideology involves recognizing that businesses are embedded within larger ecological and social systems, and their long-term success is intertwined with these systems' health and vitality (Inversini *et al.*, 2023). This re-envisioned perspective suggests that conscious citizens, consumers, producers, and community leaders are actively

driving the transformation toward regenerative paradigms and economic systems (Ateljević, 2020). This paradigm shift moves beyond mere sustainability, which focuses on harm reduction, to actively revitalizing communities and ecosystems through community-led transformations (Radić & Dragičević, 2025). This systemic approach contrasts with traditional corporate sustainability by proactively seeking to restore degraded ecosystems and empower local communities in resource management (Ugarte & Ruíz, 2024).

This regenerative hospitality philosophy emphasizes a localized scope, wherein the outcomes of accommodation facilities operations directly contribute to the immediate community's well-being and the natural environment, recognizing the interconnectedness of all ecosystem players (Inversini *et al.*, 2023). This paradigm extends to considering the full lifecycle impacts of hotel operations, from procurement to waste management, ensuring that every stage contributes positively to environmental and social regeneration. This approach fundamentally challenges the growth paradigm, seeking to create net positive social-ecological effects rather than merely minimizing damage, and actively involves community stakeholders in tourism development and policymaking (Paddison & Hall, 2024). This deeper integration of ethical principles within the operational framework represents a significant departure from conventional CSR initiatives, moving towards a truly embedded ethics that shapes the very core of business strategy.

Embedded ethics in the Hospitality Business

This embedded ethics approach transforms the business into a living, networked system, recognizing its intrinsic connection to nature and the reciprocal relationship between people and place (Inversini *et al.*, 2023). The perceived importance and practical implementation of ethical considerations in attracting and retaining talent within the hospitality sector. Ethical leadership negatively predicts employee burnout, with subjective well-being and resilience acting as significant mediators in this relationship. This indicates that ethical leaders enhance employees' mental health by addressing their concerns, treating them fairly, and fostering an environment of trust and respect (Ali *et al.*, 2022). This can be achieved by fostering a positive internal ethical context and demonstrating strong ethical infrastructure within the organization, which collectively enhance employees' subjective well-being (Paralta *et al.*, 2023). Moreover, by consistently demonstrating integrity and care, ethical leaders effectively reduce job stress and enhance performance quality among hospitality employees (Chan & Barlis, 2023). Furthermore, ethical leadership directly contributes to increased job satisfaction and organizational commitment by fostering a work environment where employees feel valued and protected (Schwepker & Dimitriou, 2021). Ethical leadership has been empirically linked to reduced professional burnout and emotional exhaustion, while simultaneously enhancing emotional

stability and psychological empowerment among employees (Liu *et al.*, 2025).

This holistic approach, integrating ethical conduct with employee well-being is crucial for fostering a resilient workforce capable of navigating the inherent challenges of the hospitality industry (Bhatti *et al.*, 2020) (Alzghoul *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, ethical leadership is strongly associated with positive organizational outcomes, including enhanced job satisfaction and increased organizational commitment, which subsequently lead to lower employee turnover intentions and improved organizational citizenship behaviors among employees (Tahernejad *et al.*, 2015). This demonstrates that an ethically-driven leadership paradigm cultivates a more engaged and stable workforce, directly contributing to the hotel's long-term operational success (Khattak *et al.*, 2022). Ethical leadership, characterized by trust, honesty, and fairness, acts as a critical strategic resource that promotes employee well-being by ensuring ethical decision-making and fair organizational practices (Saleem *et al.*, 2024). Such leaders, by virtue of their welcoming qualities and moral principles, foster an ethical culture that permeates all levels of the organization, ultimately leading to enhanced CSR practices and the achievement of social objectives (Wood *et al.*, 2021). This positive cycle of behavior, perpetuated by managers who exhibit fairness, honesty, trustworthiness, and care, not only fosters a supportive work climate but also enhances employee satisfaction and trust, thereby encouraging individual and collective citizenship behaviors that benefit the entire community (Etges & Coelho, 2023).

This ethical leadership, characterized by integrity and ethical conduct, positively impacts various organizational aspects, including increased moral behavior, organizational commitment, and overall performance by fostering organizational citizenship behavior (Amneh *et al.*, 2024). Ethical leadership significantly and positively correlates with both service-oriented organizational citizenship behaviors and a robust ethical climate within hospitality organizations (Chan & Barlis, 2023). This positive relationship highlights the direct influence of ELP in cultivating a workplace culture where employees are motivated to go beyond their prescribed duties to benefit the organization and its customers (Chan & Barlis, 2023). Moreover, ethical leadership directly influences follower outcomes, such as job satisfaction, work engagement, and overall performance, which are crucial for cultivating a high-performing and ethically sound workforce in the hospitality industry (Hahn, 2025).

Ethical leadership is relevant in the hospitality sector, where it can inspire employees to communicate more responsibly, engage more deeply, and perform more effectively in green initiatives (Elkhweildi *et al.*, 2025). Additionally, examining other outcome variables beyond green behavior, such as overall hotel performance, would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the full impact of these ethical frameworks (AlSuwaidi *et al.*, 2020). While the existing literature, while recognizing

the significance of ethical leadership and CSR, often overlooks the direct causal mechanisms through which these elements impact consumer well-being within the hospitality sector (Usman *et al.*, 2025). Therefore, future investigations should focus on how these ethical dimensions, beyond their internal organizational effects, directly translate into improved customer satisfaction and loyalty, extending the scope to include external stakeholder well-being (Camilleri, 2021; Camilleri *et al.*, 2024). This would involve a deeper understanding of the psychological factors mediating the relationship between CSR and customer behavior, such as customer-company identification and trust (Cao *et al.*, 2024). Investigating the legitimization process of corporate diplomacy, particularly how it fulfills stakeholder demands and the extent of stakeholder engagement, is crucial for understanding how these practices are perceived and accepted (Hassani *et al.*, 2023). This comprehensive understanding would not only enhance hospitality businesses' ethical reputation but also contribute to their long-term financial viability and resilience in a competitive market (Kongjue & Zhao, 2024). Additionally, examining the influence of ethical leadership behaviors on the development of ethical climate within hotel groups would illuminate how shared perceptions of a leader's ethical conduct contribute to a morally upright organizational culture (Banks *et al.*, 2020). This would entail analyzing how ethical leaders effectively communicate and embed core values, fostering a collective commitment to integrity and professionalism that transcends individual departments (Zakaria *et al.*, 2025). Moreover, the limited exploration of ethical leadership in hospitality necessitates further empirical research to fully comprehend its pervasive impact on organizational culture and employee behavior.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in a set of interrelated theories that explain how sustainable and NPBP influence organizational performance in hospitality settings. The framework integrates concepts from the Triple Bottom Line framework and shared value creation to establish a strong conceptual basis for interpreting the survey findings. The Triple Bottom Line framework (Elkington, 1997) emphasizes three pillars of organizational success: People, Planet, and Profit. Sustainable operations, such as energy efficiency, recycling, and water conservation, align with the "Planet" dimension, while community engagement aligns with "People." When effectively implemented, these practices improve brand reputation and operational efficiency, contributing to "Profit." The Creating Shared Value model (Porter & Kramer, 2011) argues that organizations can achieve a competitive advantage simultaneously generating business and social benefits. Hospitality facilities that support local communities, partner with local suppliers, and engage in social initiatives create reciprocal value: guests recognize these efforts and reward the facility through loyalty and positive perception. Furthermore, the net-positive model

suggests that organizations should aim to contribute more than they extract to society and the environment. Hospitality businesses adopting this approach integrate sustainability into every operational aspect, including energy, waste, water, and community engagement, to generate a net benefit (Dexter, 2018).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employed a descriptive cross-sectional survey design to examine the adoption, embedded ethics, effects, and challenges of net-positive business practices in Kenya’s accredited accommodation facilities. Conducted across Gold, Silver, and Bronze-rated establishments nationwide, the research targeted 186 accommodation facilities, from which a stratified random sample of 127 was drawn to ensure proportional representation. Because they possess the necessary operational and policy insights, management-level personnel served as respondents. Data were collected using a structured, Likert-based questionnaire covering facility profiles, adoption of sustainability, ethical leadership, and perceived effects and challenges. Measures were taken to ensure validity through expert review, literature alignment, and pilot testing, while reliability was confirmed using Cronbach’s alpha, with all scales exceeding 0.70. Data analysis was performed using the SPSS software, applying descriptive statistics analysis. Ethical considerations including informed consent, confidentiality, nonmaleficence, and institutional approval were strictly observed to ensure the integrity and credibility of the research process.

Findings and Discussions

The study achieved a strong response rate, with 120 of 127 distributed questionnaires analyzed. The sample was proportionally drawn from Kenya’s accredited accommodation facilities, comprising 27% of Gold-rated,

33% Silver-rated, and 40% Bronze-rated establishments. This distribution aligns with the national classification framework, ensuring representative insights across facility categories. The majority of respondents (65%) had over ten years of managerial experience, enhancing the reliability of the reported practices. Such managerial tenure is consistent with findings by Bohdanowicz (2012) and Mensah (2019), who emphasize that highly experienced leadership teams capable of implementing structured operational and ethical frameworks strongly influence sustainability integration in hospitality. The study sought to establish the adoption of net positive business practices. The findings revealed that the facilities placed a high premium 61% rating the facilities adoption at Very Good; 28% rating them as good and only 11% rating them average this is particularly because of their well-developed traditions and availability of tangible and intangible resources which is also an important yardstick in their classification in the first place. These findings align with previous research indicating that organizations with established structures and resources are better positioned to integrate sustainable practices, subsequently enhancing their brand image and risk management capabilities (Nzuva, 2022; Shereni *et al.*, 2022, p. 1035).

Adoption of Net Positive Business Practices in accredited accommodation facilities

Table 1 presents respondents’ perceptions of how frequently accredited accommodation facilities adopt key net-positive business practices. The response options ranged from Always, Regularly, Often, and Rarely. Overall, the findings reveal a strong level of adoption across most sustainability dimensions, with most respondents indicating high frequencies of daily sustainable operations, resource conservation, waste management, and community engagement practices.

Table 1: Respondents’ response on adoption of Net positive Business Practices in accredited accommodation facilities.

Adoption of Net-positive Business practices metrics /Frequency		Always	Regularly	Often	Rarely
i.	Our facility incorporates environmentally sustainable practices in daily operations.	50.2%	48.7%	1.1%	0
ii.	Energy-saving measures, such as LED lighting and energy-efficient appliances, are actively utilized.	52.2%	38.2%	6.8%	4%
iii.	Our facility has an effective waste segregation and recycling program.	54.2%	48.4%	7.4%	0
iv.	We have implemented water conservation methods, such as low-flow fixtures and water reuse systems.	58.6%	36%	8.4%	0
v.	The facility actively engages with local communities to support economic and social development.	80.5%	19.2%	4%	0

Source: Authors (2025)

The findings demonstrate a strong commitment to sustainability across all indicators. Daily environmentally sustainable operations recorded near-universal adoption, with 98.9% of facilities reporting consistent

implementation. This reflects a sectoral shift toward institutionalized sustainability norms, which is consistent with prior research by Jones, Hillier, and Comfort, (2016), who argue that sustainability has become

integral to hotel operational identity due to increasing certification standards and customer expectations. According to Bohdanowicz & Zientara, (2012) and Mensah, (2019), hotels increasingly implement everyday sustainability actions such as eco-cleaning products, responsible procurement, and environmentally conscious housekeeping. Jones et. al (2016) also show that sustainability is becoming institutionalized within hotel operations due to pressure from certification bodies and environmentally conscious tourists.

Energy-saving practices were widely adopted, although with slight variability, as 10.8% of respondents rated adoption as “often” or “rarely.” This finding is consistent with those of Radwan *et al.* (2012), who identified financial constraints and technological limitations as barriers, particularly among smaller facilities. Studies by Becken & Dolnicar, (2016) identified LED lighting, occupancy sensors, and energy-efficient appliances as common initiatives that reduce operational costs. Similarly, Pizam, (2021) noted that energy conservation is often the first sustainability measure adopted because it provides cost savings and meets growing regulatory expectations. Waste segregation and recycling recorded exceptionally high uptake, confirming trends identified by UNEP, (2020), indicating that waste management is typically among the earliest and easiest sustainability practices to institutionalize in hotels. Olobia, (2024) supports that waste segregation through reduce, reuse, and recycle instils ecological sensitivity that contribute mental health and societal well-being.

Similarly, the high adoption of water conservation methods aligns with findings by Gössling *et al.*, (2012), who emphasized that water scarcity concerns drive

hotels to adopt low-flow fixtures and reuse systems as operational priorities. Filimonau *et al.*, (2021) Mensah, (2020) and confirm that water conservation is now a standard component of hotel sustainability management, especially in regions susceptible to water scarcity. Community engagement emerged as the strongest practice area, with over 80% reporting consistent involvement in SE activities. This supports the arguments of Scheyvens, (2015) and Saarinen, (2014) that hospitality enterprises increasingly internalize community impact as a pillar of sustainable and regenerative tourism practices. Hotels that involve local suppliers, hire local staff, and participate in community projects contribute significantly to the social sustainability. WTO, (2022) show that community engagement enhances destination resilience and strengthens the social license to operate for accommodation facilities. The extremely high adoption rate indicates that accredited facilities recognize the importance of community partnerships as core elements of net-positive business models.

Embedded Ethics for Net-positive Business Practices in Accredited Accommodation Facilities

This section assesses the extent to which accredited accommodation facilities embed ethical principles and sustainability-oriented practices in their operations to support net-positive business outcomes. Respondents were asked to rate several ethical leadership and sustainability indicators using a five-point extent scale: Very Small Extent (VSE), Small Extent (SE), Moderate Extent (ME), Great Extent (GE), and Very Great Extent (VGE). The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Embedded ethics for net-positive business practices

Embedded ethics for Net-positive Business practices		VSE	SE	ME	GE	VGE
i.	My accommodation facility has written code of ethics, and its key features are well-communicated to all staff members.	0.0%	5.4%	2.7%	47.5%	44.4%
ii.	Our top executives regularly speak about ethics and governance in meetings or internal communications.	4.0%	4.6%	11.5%	37.3%	46.2%
iii.	The facility management uses communication to reinforce the importance of ethical conduct in daily work.	1.0%	6.4%	13.8%	34.3%	44.5%
iv.	Our leadership actively considers the environmental and social impacts of our business decisions.	0.0%	3.2%	27.3%	47.2%	49.6%
v.	The facility’s goals and strategies clearly align with established sustainable development principles	2.0%	2.5%	19.3%	34.7%	41.6%
vi.	The facility Leaders encourage and support employee involvement in sustainability initiatives.	1.0%	1.0%	4.0%	41.2%	52.8%
vii.	In situations where short-term profits conflict with long-term sustainability goals, leadership prioritizes the long-term ethical framework.	0.0%	0.0%	22.3%	38.7%	39%
viii.	The facility actively works to ensure a net positive impact on the local community and environment, not just minimizing harm.	0.7%	7.5%	37.3%	36.4%	55.4%
ix.	The facility has robust procedures for reporting unethical or non-sustainable behavior without fear of retaliation.	0.0%	5.5%	17.3%	35.2%	42%

x.	The facility Management reviews the organization's sustainability performance and ethical programs at least annually.	1.2%	1.5%	29.2%	36.9%	31.2%
xi.	Penalties for unethical behavior are enforced consistently and fairly across all levels of this facility.	1%	2.8%	8.8%	58.6%	28.8%

Source: Author compilation (2025)

The findings show a consistently strong commitment to embedded ethics across the institutions. Most indicators received high ratings in the GE and VGE categories, demonstrating that the institutionalization of ethical conduct, transparent communication, sustainability integration, and fair enforcement mechanisms are well institutionalized. Only a few items show relatively moderate performance, suggesting opportunities for further enhancement.

Establishing and communicating clear ethical expectations is a central component of embedded ethics. The majority of respondents (91.9%) indicated to a great or very great extent that their facilities have written codes of ethics whose key features are communicated to staff. Similarly, 83.5% agreed that top executives regularly speak about ethics and governance, signaling strong leadership engagement in ethical discourse. A further 78.8% reported that management frequently used communication to reinforce the importance of ethical conduct in day-to-day tasks.

This pattern suggests that ethical communication is deeply embedded in organizational culture, aligning with research showing that frequent and transparent ethical communication enhances employee awareness and reduces ethical lapses in hospitality operations (Brown, Treviño & Harrison, 2005; Mohammed *et al.*, 2021).

The results further reveal the strong integration of environmental and social considerations into managerial decision-making. Almost all respondents (96.8%) indicated that when making business decisions, leadership actively considers environmental and social impacts. Similarly, 76.3% of respondents reported that their organizational goals align with established sustainable development principles, while 94% agreed that leaders support employee involvement in sustainability initiatives. These findings reflect a broad strategic alignment with sustainability imperatives. However, some tension remains regarding long-term versus short-term interests: although 77.7% stated that leadership prioritizes long-term sustainability over short-term profits, a notable 22.3% rated this only to a moderate extent, suggesting that not all facilities consistently embed long-term ethical frameworks when

trade-offs emerge. This partially aligns with Bocken *et al.*, (2014), who emphasize that organizations pursuing net-positive models must intentionally structure their decisions to favor long-term sustainable value creation, even when short-term profitability pressures arise.

One of the strongest performance areas relates to NPBPs. More than half of the respondents (55.4%) reported to a very great extent that their facilities work toward creating a net-positive impact on local communities and the environment, with an additional 36.4% indicating a great extent. This high level of commitment suggests that most accredited accommodation facilities go beyond harm reduction to actively generate positive environmental and social value. This aligns with contemporary hospitality literature, which argues that hotels and accommodation facilities are increasingly embracing regenerative and net-positive frameworks as strategic differentiators and community engagement tools (Jones *et al.*, 2016; Mensah, 2020).

Strong ethical cultures depend on FRS and fair enforcement mechanisms. The findings show that 77.2% of respondents believe that their facilities have robust procedures for reporting unethical behavior without fear of retaliation. Although the annual review of sustainability and ethics programs received slightly lower agreement (GE = 36.9%, VGE = 31.2%), the combined response still indicates a generally positive trend (68.1%). Fair enforcement of penalties scored particularly high, with 87.4% of respondents affirming consistent and accountability across organizational levels. These patterns reinforce the importance of strong ethical control systems, which are critical for deterring unethical behavior and ensuring accountability in hospitality organizations (Kaptein, 2011; Near & Miceli, 1995).

Effects of Net-Positive Business Practices in Accredited Accommodation Facilities

The study sought to establish the presence, frequency, efficacy and effectiveness adoption of Net positive Practices has affected accredited accommodation facilities. The findings were as follows:

Table 3: Effects of net-positive business practices to the accredited accommodation facilities

Effects on net-positive practices to the accredited accommodation facilities		Always	Regularly	Often	Rarely
i.	The adoption of net positive practices has improved customer satisfaction.	4%	37.3%	60.8%	1.5%
ii.	Sustainability initiatives have enhanced the facility's reputation and brand image.	22.7%	42.7%	31.9%	2.7%

iii.	Net positive practices have reduced operational costs.	20.4%	44.6%	33.1%	1.9%
iv.	Employees are motivated and take pride in working for a facility that implements net positive practices.	22.8%	48.6%	25.5%	3.1%
v.	Sustainability efforts have positively impacted revenue generation and profitability.	26.2%	46.2%	26.2%	8%

Source: Author (2025)

The statistical results reveal a strong alignment between the facility’s operational practices and the principles of NPBP. Across all indicators, most managers perceive sustainability measures as consistently implemented, with over 48% selecting “Always” and more than 38% selecting “Regularly” for each metric. Notably, environmentally sustainable daily operations (50.2% “Always,” 48.7% “Regularly”) and waste management practices (54.2% “Always,” 48.4% “Regularly”) demonstrate near-universal satisfaction, indicating robust and well-established systems. Energy-saving measures show slightly greater variation, with 10.8% of respondents selecting “Often” or “Rarely,” suggesting potential inconsistencies in visibility or implementation. Water conservation efforts receive similarly strong but slightly more moderate ratings. Community engagement emerges as a clear positive outlier, with 80.5% indicating “Always,” reflecting exceptionally strong managers recognition of social impact initiatives. Overall, the distribution of responses indicates high operational consistency, strong sustainability performance, and a particularly pronounced commitment to local community development, though opportunities remain to further standardize energy efficiency practices across all facility areas. Mensah, (2006), in a case study of hospitality facilities in Ghana, reported that energy-saving measures contribute not only to operational savings but also to improved brand image and guest loyalty.

Beyond environmental sustainability, research has increasingly highlighted the importance of community engagement within hospitality. Porter and Kramer’s, (2011) on “Creating Shared Value” framework argues that companies that support local communities experience higher customer loyalty, stronger reputational capital, and enhanced stakeholder relationships. Community-based partnerships, local sourcing, and social development initiatives generate positive guest perceptions and strengthen the organization’s socio-economic legitimacy in the hospitality context. This aligns with the exceptionally high satisfaction ratings for community engagement in the presented data. Effective waste segregation and recycling programs enhance managers’ trust in the facility’s environmental commitment (Tzschentke, Kirk, & Lynch, 2008). They further argue that guests take note of visible sustainability practices and interpret them as signs of professionalism and organizational care. This aligns with the high ratings observed in the current data, where managers consistently recognized the facility’s recycling program as effective.

A substantial body of research supports the role of energy-

efficiency measures in creating positive guest perceptions. In a case study of hospitality facilities in Ghana, Mensah, (2006) reported that the adoption of LED lighting, energy-efficient appliances, and power-saving systems enhances guests’ perceptions of modernity, efficiency, and responsible management.

Water conservation practices also hold a central place in the literature on hospitality sustainability. Bohdanowicz, (2005) demonstrated that the adoption of water-saving fixtures, efficient plumbing, and reuse systems significantly improves guests’ perceptions of operational credibility and environmental stewardship. When properly implemented, water conservation systems provide tangible and visible evidence of sustainable resource management.

Finally, the emerging concept of net-positive hospitality emphasizes businesses giving more than they take, socially, environmentally, and economically. Dexter, (2018) argues that net-positive facilities benefit from enhanced resilience, greater guest loyalty, and stronger market differentiation. This literature reinforces the findings of the current study, where managers overwhelmingly perceive the facility as operating sustainably and contributing positively to the community.

Challenges and Opportunities for Adopting Net Business Practices in Accredited Accommodation Facilities

The perceived challenges and opportunities associated with adopting Net-Positive Business Practices in accredited accommodation facilities Respondents evaluated statements using a five-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neither Agree nor Disagree (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The results in Table 4 below reveal dominant patterns regarding cost barriers, market opportunities, regulatory benefits, competitiveness, and scalability.

The majority of respondents (73.8%) agreed that high initial costs significantly hinder the adoption of net-positive practices, with another 4.6% strongly agreeing. Only a small fraction (8%) disagreed, and none strongly disagreed, indicating that financial barriers remain a major challenge.

This aligns with global hospitality research showing that the upfront investment required for renewable energy systems, water-efficient technologies, waste-management infrastructure, and green building materials is a major deterrent for accommodation facilities (Bohdanowicz & Martinac, 2007; Pizam, 2021). Similar findings by Mensah, (2019) and Jones *et al.*, (2016) confirm that financial constraints are consistently the strongest obstacles to

Table 4: Challenges and opportunities for adopting Net -Business Practices in Accredited Accommodation Facilities.

Challenges and opportunities for adopting Net -Business Practices		SA	A	N	D	SD
i.	High initial costs are a significant barrier to adopting net positive practices.	4.6%	73.8%	20.8%	8%	0.0%
ii.	Customers are willing to pay a premium for accommodation facilities with strong sustainability practices.	4.2%	53.8%	39.2%	2.7%	0.0%
iii.	Net positive practices help in meeting government and industry sustainability regulations.	3.55	58.8%	32.7%	5.1%	0.0%
iv.	Sustainability initiatives provide a competitive edge over other accommodation facilities.	5.1%	60.9%	29.3%	4.7%	0.0%
v.	The net positive practices implemented are scalable for future expansion.	3.1%	52.3%	39.6%	5.0%	0.0%

Source: Author compilation (2025)

sustainability adoption in hotels, particularly among small and medium-sized accommodation enterprises. A significant proportion of respondents (53.8%) agreed that customers are willing to pay more for facilities with strong sustainability practices, while 39.2% remained neutral. Only 2.7% of respondents disagreed. Although the dominant agreement suggests market opportunity, the high neutrality implies uncertainty regarding actual customer behavior among facility managers. Existing studies support the idea that eco-conscious travelers increasingly prefer and are willing to pay more for sustainable accommodation. For example, Han *et al.*, (2018) found that customer environmental values strongly predict willingness to pay green premiums. Booking.com’s 2023 Sustainable Travel Report also showed that over 70% of global travelers prefer eco-friendly accommodation options. However, the hospitality literature notes that the “attitude–behavior gap” persists, and some customers express willingness but do not consistently act on it (Dolnicar, 2020). This may explain the substantial neutral responses.

Most respondents (58.8%) agreed that net-positive business practices help their facilities meet regulatory and industry requirements, and 3.5% strongly agreed. Approximately 32.7% remained neutral, and only 5.1% disagreed. This trend reflects a growing regulatory environment in tourism and hospitality. Studies by UNWTO, (2022) show that many governments are strengthening environmental compliance requirements for accommodation facilities, including renewable energy thresholds, waste reduction targets, and carbon emission monitoring. Tsai *et al.*, (2020) also confirms that adopting sustainability initiatives enables hotels to reduce regulatory risk, avoid penalties, and maintain certifications such as ISO 14001 and Green Key.

A strong majority of 60.9% agreed that sustainability initiatives provide a competitive advantage, and 5.1% strongly agreed. Only 4.7% of respondents disagreed. This finding aligns with the literature on strategic management, which emphasizes that sustainability can act as a differentiator in the hospitality industry. Porter

and Kramer, (2011) and Font & McCabe, (2017) argue that environmental performance enhances brand reputation, attracts eco-conscious tourists, and improves market positioning. Similarly, Kasim, (2009) noted that environmentally responsible hotels often achieve higher occupancy rates due to enhanced consumer trust and corporate social responsibility reputations. This suggests that many facilities perceive net-positive practices as strategic tools for boosting competitiveness and not merely as compliance measures.

More than half of the respondents of 52.3% agreed that the practices implemented were scalable, while 39.6% agreed that the practices were neutral. Only 5% of the respondents disagreed. A high level of neutrality may indicate uncertainty about long-term financial capacity, technological availability, or organizational readiness to expand net-positive initiatives. According to Bocken *et al.*, (2014) explains that scalability is often influenced by capital investment, employee skills, and organizational commitment. Khalil *et al.*, (2021) also highlighted that small accommodation facilities often struggle with scaling sustainability initiatives due to limited financial liquidity and technical expertise. Chavez and Lunar, (2025) insists that a culture of accountability and resiliency for environmental stewardship and preservation for the benefits of the host communities and future generations is nurtured through a concerted approach of sustainability measures. Nonetheless, the majority agreement suggests optimism about future expansion, which is consistent with global trends toward regenerative hospitality and Net Positive Business practices in hospitality.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the study demonstrates that Kenya’s accredited accommodation facilities have made significant progress in adopting Net-Positive Business Practices across operational, ethical, and community-focused dimensions. The study indicates that Kenya’s accredited accommodation facilities have made strong progress in adopting net-positive business practices across operational, ethical, and community dimensions.

High uptake of sustainability practices; such as water conservation, waste management, and energy efficiency, is supported by managerial commitment and embedded ethical frameworks. Clear ethical standards and leadership communication have enhanced sustainability performance, leading to improved customer satisfaction, stronger brand reputation, reduced operational costs, and higher employee morale, consistent with hospitality sustainability research.

Despite positive adoption trends, scaling net-positive practices remains constrained by high initial investment costs, reflecting global financial challenges in adopting green technologies. Although customers show growing interest in sustainable accommodation, managerial uncertainty persists due to the attitude–behavior gap. Nevertheless, sustainability offers strong competitive, regulatory, and community benefits, indicating that strategic planning, financial support, and capacity-building are essential for long-term expansion of net-positive models.

The study recommends strengthening financial and structural capacity through partnerships with government, green financiers, and sustainability organizations to support long-term investments. Continuous staff training, leadership engagement, and ethical integration are essential to ensure consistent sustainability practices. Facilities should enhance sustainability initiatives to attract environmentally conscious travelers and address uncertainty about willingness to pay, while policymakers and industry bodies should provide incentives, capacity-building, and regulatory support to reduce financial barriers and promote the growth of net-positive practices.

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