

**A PROJECT REPORT ON
PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF GUEST EXPERIENCES
WITH FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS TRADITION IN THE
HOTELS OF POKHARA**

**BY
BARSHA PHAGAMI MAGAR**

Registration No: 2023-2-15-0336

Exam Roll No: 23150214

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project work report entitled “A Phenomenological Study of Guest Experiences with Floral Arrangements Tradition in The Hotels of Pokhara” submitted for the BHM is my original work and the Project Work Report has not formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, or other similar titles.

Barsha Phagami Magar

July, 2026

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the Project Work titled “A Phenomenological Study of Guest Experiences with Floral Arrangements Tradition in The Hotels of Pokhara” submitted by Barsha Phagami Magar (Roll No- 23150214) for the partial fulfilment of the requirements of BHM embodies the Bonafide work done by her under my supervision.

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Suresh Raj Adhikari

Supervisor, Project Work

July, 2026

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The hospitality industry is one of the world's fastest-growing service sectors, contributing significantly to economic development, employment generation, and tourism promotion. Hotels, resorts, and other accommodation establishments play a crucial role in providing comfort, relaxation, and memorable experiences for travelers. In today's highly competitive tourism market, guests expect more than quality accommodation and efficient service; they seek meaningful, enjoyable, and emotionally satisfying experiences throughout their stay. As a result, hospitality organizations are increasingly focusing on creating environments that not only meet functional needs but also enhance guests' emotional well-being and overall satisfaction. Environmental aesthetics, interior design, and sensory experiences have therefore become important components of modern hospitality management, helping hotels differentiate themselves and build long-term customer loyalty (Kotler, 1973; Pizam & Ellis, 1999).

The physical environment of a hotel is often the first aspect that guests encounter upon arrival and plays a significant role in shaping their perceptions of the property. Elements such as architecture, lighting, furniture, color schemes, music, fragrance, artwork, and decorative features work together to create a particular atmosphere that influences guest's emotions and expectations. A welcoming and aesthetically pleasing environment can create positive first impressions, increase guests' comfort, and strengthen their confidence in the quality of the hotel's services. Conversely, an unattractive or poorly maintained environment may negatively influence guest's perceptions even before they interact with hotel employees. Consequently, hotels increasingly invest in environmental design to provide memorable experiences that extend beyond traditional accommodation services (Bitner, 1992; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996). Among the various components of hotel aesthetics, floral arrangements have become an important decorative and experiential element. Floral arrangements refer to the artistic organization of fresh or artificial flowers, foliage, and other natural decorative materials into visually appealing displays. In hospitality settings, these arrangements are commonly placed in hotel

entrances, reception areas, lobbies, restaurants, guest rooms, banquet halls, conference venues, and other public spaces. While flowers undoubtedly enhance the visual beauty of these areas, their contribution extends beyond decoration. Floral arrangements communicate warmth, elegance, freshness, care, and hospitality, helping hotels create inviting environments that leave lasting impressions on guests. Through thoughtful design and placement, flowers become an integral part of the hotel's overall atmosphere and identity. Research has shown that sensory elements within service environments contribute significantly to customer's perceptions of quality and their overall experiences (Oh et al., 2007). Similarly, Ulrich (1984) demonstrated that exposure to natural elements can reduce stress, improve emotional well-being, and create positive psychological responses, suggesting that floral arrangements may contribute to guest's comfort and relaxation within hotel environments.

The importance of environmental aesthetics in hospitality has been widely recognized by researchers. Bitner's (1992) Servicescape Theory explains that the physical surroundings of service organizations influence customer's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses. According to this theory, environmental factors such as décor, layout, ambient conditions, and design shape how customers evaluate service quality and determine their willingness to revisit or recommend a business. Similarly, Kotler (1973) introduced the concept of atmospherics, arguing that carefully designed physical environments function as powerful marketing tools capable of influencing customer perceptions and purchasing decisions. These theories suggest that decorative elements such as floral arrangements contribute to guests' evaluations of hotels by creating attractive, comfortable, and emotionally engaging environments.

The Environmental Psychology Model developed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) further explains the relationship between environmental stimuli and human behavior. According to their Stimulus–Organism–Response framework, physical surroundings influence individual's emotional states, which subsequently affect their behavioral responses. Within hotel environments, attractive floral arrangements may generate feelings of pleasure, relaxation, and comfort, encouraging guests to spend more time in hotel spaces, evaluate services more positively, and develop favorable intentions to revisit the property. Wakefield and Blodgett (1996) similarly found that

attractive physical surroundings positively influence customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions in leisure and hospitality settings. These theoretical perspectives demonstrate that environmental design plays a central role in shaping guests' overall experiences.

Customer satisfaction remains one of the primary indicators of success within the hospitality industry. Although service quality, employee behavior, and hotel facilities significantly contribute to satisfaction, researchers increasingly recognize that emotional experiences are equally important. Pizam and Ellis (1999) emphasized that customer satisfaction in hospitality is closely connected to guests' emotional responses rather than merely the functional performance of services. Likewise, Kim and Perdue (2013) found that aesthetic attributes within hotel environments significantly improve guests' perceptions of hotel quality and emotional satisfaction. These findings suggest that decorative features such as floral arrangements contribute to creating memorable hospitality experiences that encourage repeat visitation and positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

Nepal's tourism industry has experienced continuous growth over recent decades, with hospitality organizations placing increasing emphasis on improving service quality and guest experiences (MoCTCA, 2023). Among Nepal's major tourist destinations, Pokhara occupies a unique position because of its natural beauty, cultural heritage, adventure tourism, and expanding hospitality sector. Every year, thousands of domestic and international tourists visit Pokhara for leisure, business, and recreational purposes, making it one of Nepal's leading tourism destinations (MoCTCA, 2016). To meet the diverse expectations of these visitors, hotels continuously improve both their physical facilities and service environments. Floral arrangements are frequently incorporated into hotel interiors to reflect local culture, enhance visual appeal, and create welcoming atmospheres that complement Pokhara's scenic identity. Such aesthetic elements contribute to creating memorable guest experiences and enhancing guests' perceptions of hotel quality and satisfaction (Kim & Perdue, 2013).

Despite the widespread use of floral arrangements in hotels, existing hospitality research has primarily focused on service quality, customer satisfaction, hotel management, and experience design. Comparatively few studies have explored

how guests personally perceive floral arrangements or how these decorative elements influence their emotions, comfort, and overall hotel experiences. Most previous research examines environmental aesthetics from managerial or marketing perspectives, with limited attention given to guests lived experiences and personal interpretations (Bitner, 1992; Kim & Perdue, 2013). Furthermore, within the Nepalese hospitality context, particularly in Pokhara, studies exploring guests lived experiences of floral arrangements remain scarce.

This gap highlights the need for a qualitative phenomenological study that explores the lived experiences of hotel guests regarding floral arrangements in hotels in Pokhara. By focusing on guests' personal perceptions, emotions, and interpretations, this study seeks to develop a deeper understanding of how floral arrangements influence comfort, aesthetic appreciation, satisfaction, and the overall hotel experience. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the existing body of hospitality literature while providing practical insights for hotel managers, hospitality professionals, and tourism stakeholders in designing aesthetically pleasing environments that enhance guest satisfaction and memorable hospitality experiences.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Although floral arrangements are widely used in hotels in Pokhara as an important element of interior decoration and hospitality aesthetics, there is still limited understanding of how guests actually experience and interpret them during their stay. In most cases, hotels incorporate floral designs primarily for visual enhancement and ambiance creation, but less attention is given to how these arrangements influence guest emotions, comfort, and overall satisfaction. Furthermore, the emotional, psychological, and sensory impacts of floral arrangements such as feelings of relaxation, comfort, and aesthetic pleasure have not been adequately explored in the context of the hospitality industry in Pokhara. Existing hospitality research tends to focus more on functional aspects such as service quality, pricing, infrastructure, and staff behavior, while aesthetic and sensory elements like floral decoration remain under-researched. As a result, the role of cultural meaning attached to floral arrangements is also unclear, particularly in terms of how both domestic and international tourists interpret these symbolic elements within hotel environments.

Therefore, there exists a clear research gap in understanding how floral arrangements influence guest emotions, comfort, and overall hotel experience. It is not well-established what meanings guests attach to these floral decorations and how such aesthetic elements contribute to shaping their memory of the stay and overall satisfaction. This lack of focused research limits the ability of hotel managers to fully utilize floral arrangements as a strategic tool for enhancing guest experience. Hence, this study seeks to address this gap by examining the emotional, psychological, and experiential impact of floral arrangements in hotel settings, and how they contribute to shaping the overall perception of hospitality services in Pokhara.

1.3 Research Questions

1. How do floral arrangements influence guests' emotions, comfort, and relaxation in hotels?
2. What meanings do guests attach to floral arrangements in hotel settings?
3. How do cultural and traditional floral practices influence guests' perceptions of hotel floral arrangements?

1.4 Objectives of the Research

- To identify how floral arrangements, influence guests' emotions, comfort, and relaxation during their hotel stay.
- To examine the meanings and impressions guests attach to floral decorations in hotel environments.
- To analyze the role of floral arrangements in shaping guests' overall satisfaction and memorable hotel experiences.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study helps to understand how floral arrangements influence guests' emotions, comfort, relaxation, and overall satisfaction during their hotel stay. It highlights the importance of aesthetic and sensory elements in hospitality, which are often overlooked compared to service quality, pricing, and facilities. By focusing on these visual and emotional aspects, the study adds value to understanding how hotel environments shape guest experiences beyond functional services. The findings will also help hotel managers and hospitality professionals in Pokhara improve hotel

ambiance and guest experience through more effective use of floral decoration, ultimately contributing to better customer satisfaction and loyalty.

In addition, the study provides practical knowledge on using floral arrangements as a strategy to create memorable and welcoming hotel environments. It also explores the cultural significance of flowers in Nepal and how traditional floral practices can be integrated into modern hospitality services to enhance authenticity and guest appeal. Furthermore, this research can serve as a useful reference for future researchers in the fields of hospitality management, tourism, guest psychology, and hotel interior aesthetics, as it contributes to a better understanding of the emotional and experiential role of environmental design in the hospitality industry.

1.6 Literature Review

This literature review examines existing scholarly works on environmental aesthetics, servicescape, floral arrangements, sensory experiences, and customer satisfaction within the hospitality industry. The review is systematically organized into three major themes: the influence of hotel physical environments on guest perceptions, the role of floral arrangements in shaping emotional and sensory experiences, and the contribution of environmental aesthetics to guest satisfaction and behavioral intentions. While previous research has extensively examined hotel service quality, customer satisfaction, and environmental design, comparatively limited attention has been given to understanding how hotel guests personally perceive and experience floral arrangements during their stay. Furthermore, studies exploring this phenomenon within the hospitality context of Pokhara, Nepal, remain scarce. This study addresses this research gap by adopting a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore how guests experience, interpret, and assign personal meaning to floral arrangements in hotels.

For, Kotler (1973), in his pioneering work on atmospherics, explained that the physical environment of a service organization functions as an important marketing tool capable of influencing customers' emotions, perceptions, and purchasing decisions. He emphasized that environmental elements such as color, lighting, decoration, fragrance, and spatial design create an atmosphere that shapes customers' overall experiences. Building upon this perspective, Bitner (1992) introduced the Servicescape Theory, explaining that the physical surroundings of service

organizations significantly influence customers' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses. Through the concepts of ambient conditions, spatial layout, functionality, and signs, symbols, and artefacts, Bitner demonstrated that well-designed environments improve perceived service quality, customer satisfaction, and revisit intentions. These studies provide an important theoretical foundation for understanding how floral arrangements influence guests' experiences within hotel environments. Mehrabian and Russell (1974) further strengthened the understanding of environmental influences by developing the Environmental Psychology Model, commonly known as the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) framework. According to this model, environmental stimuli first influence individuals' emotional states, which subsequently affect their behavioral responses. Within hotel settings, decorative elements such as flowers, colors, fragrance, lighting, and interior design can stimulate feelings of comfort, pleasure, relaxation, and excitement, thereby encouraging favorable evaluations of the hotel environment. Their work established that physical surroundings are not merely decorative but play an active role in shaping customers' emotional experiences. Likewise, Wakefield and Blodgett (1996) investigated the influence of physical surroundings within leisure and hospitality environments using a quantitative research approach. Their findings revealed that aesthetically pleasing environments positively influence customer satisfaction, behavioral intentions, and revisit decisions. The researchers concluded that customers evaluate not only the quality of service delivered by employees but also the attractiveness and comfort of the surrounding environment when forming overall impressions of hospitality establishments. Their findings highlight the importance of investing in attractive environmental features such as floral arrangements to improve guest experiences. Pizam and Ellis (1999) examined customer satisfaction within hospitality enterprises and argued that guest satisfaction extends beyond efficient service delivery to include emotional responses generated throughout the service experience. Their study demonstrated that positive emotional experiences strengthen customer loyalty, encourage repeat visits, and increase positive word-of-mouth recommendations. This suggests that decorative elements capable of creating positive emotions, including floral arrangements, may play a valuable role in enhancing overall guest satisfaction.

According to (Oh et al., 2007) explored the concept of the experience economy within tourism and hospitality. Their research showed that memorable tourism experiences are created through sensory engagement, emotional involvement, aesthetic appreciation, and active participation. The authors concluded that attractive physical environments significantly enrich visitors' experiences by stimulating multiple senses simultaneously. Their findings support the argument that floral arrangements contribute not only to visual beauty but also to creating memorable emotional experiences for hotel guests. Ulrich (1984) further emphasized the psychological benefits of natural elements by demonstrating that exposure to nature can reduce stress and improve individuals' emotional well-being. His findings suggest that natural features within built environments create feelings of relaxation, comfort, and psychological restoration. In hotel settings, floral arrangements can serve as natural environmental elements that enhance guests' emotional experiences and contribute to a more welcoming and relaxing atmosphere. Kim and Perdue (2013) investigated the influence of cognitive, affective, and sensory attributes on hotel choice and guest satisfaction. Using empirical evidence from hotel customers, they found that aesthetic elements strongly influence guest's perceptions of hotel quality, emotional satisfaction, and future behavioral intentions. Their findings indicate that carefully designed environments encourage guests to perceive hotels as more welcoming, comfortable, and luxurious. Consequently, environmental aesthetics, including floral arrangements, represent important factors influencing guest's overall evaluations of hotel experiences.

Within the Nepalese context, the (MoCTCA, 2016) identified Pokhara as one of Nepal's leading tourism destinations because of its natural attractions, cultural heritage, and rapidly expanding hospitality industry. Similarly, the (MoCTCA, 2023) reported continuous growth in tourism activities, encouraging hotels to improve both service quality and environmental presentation to remain competitive. Despite these developments, existing studies have primarily focused on tourism growth, hotel management, and customer satisfaction, while comparatively little attention has been given to exploring how guests personally experience environmental aesthetic elements such as floral arrangements in hotels.

Overall, the reviewed literature demonstrates that environmental aesthetics significantly influence guest's perceptions, emotions, satisfaction, and behavioral

intentions. However, previous studies have predominantly examined these issues through quantitative methods and managerial perspectives. Limited research has explored the lived experiences and personal meanings that hotel guests associate with floral arrangements, particularly within the hospitality context of Pokhara. This gap justifies the present qualitative phenomenological study, which seeks to explore how guests perceive, experience, and interpret floral arrangements and how these experiences contribute to their overall hotel stay.

1.6.2 Review of Key Empirical Themes

To develop a comprehensive understanding of the role of floral arrangements in shaping hotel guest experiences, this section reviews the key empirical themes identified from previous studies. The review is organized around three major themes: the influence of the hotel physical environment and servicescape on guest experience, the emotional and sensory responses generated by floral arrangements, and the contribution of environmental aesthetics to guest satisfaction. Examining these themes provides insight into how floral arrangements influence guests' perceptions, emotions, and overall hotel experiences while identifying the existing research gap that the present phenomenological study seeks to address.

1.6.2.1 Influence of Hotel Servicescape on Guest Experience

The physical environment of a hotel plays a vital role in shaping guests' perceptions, emotions, and overall experiences. In the hospitality industry, the environment in which services are delivered is considered an important factor influencing customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. A well-designed hotel environment creates positive first impressions, enhances comfort, and contributes to guests' evaluations of service quality. Researchers have emphasized that environmental elements such as architecture, interior design, lighting, color, décor, spatial layout, and natural decorative features significantly influence guests' emotional responses and overall hotel experience. Kotler (1973) introduced the concept of atmospherics, explaining that the physical environment of a service organization functions as a powerful marketing tool. He argued that visual and sensory elements, including color, lighting, fragrance, music, and decoration, shape customers' perceptions and purchasing decisions. According to Kotler, creating an attractive atmosphere enables organizations to provide memorable experiences while

influencing customer's emotions and satisfaction. His work established that environmental design should be viewed as an essential component of hospitality management rather than merely a decorative feature. Building upon this concept, Bitner (1992) developed the Servicescape Theory, which explains that customers' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses are influenced by the physical surroundings in which services are delivered. The theory identifies three major components of the servicescape: ambient conditions, spatial layout and functionality, and signs, symbols, and artifacts. Bitner emphasized that these environmental elements shape customers' perceptions of service quality, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. In hotel settings, decorative features such as floral arrangements can be considered part of the servicescape because they contribute to creating welcoming, aesthetically pleasing, and emotionally engaging environments that positively influence guests' experiences. Similarly, Wakefield and Blodgett (1996) examined the influence of physical surroundings in leisure and hospitality settings. Their findings revealed that attractive and well-maintained environments significantly improve customer satisfaction, increase revisit intentions, and encourage positive behavioral responses. The researchers concluded that customers evaluate not only the quality of services provided but also the appearance and comfort of the surrounding environment when forming overall impressions of hospitality establishments. Their study highlights the importance of investing in environmental aesthetics to create memorable guest experiences and strengthen customer loyalty.

1.6.2.2 Emotional and Sensory Experiences of Guests

The emotional and sensory experiences of hotel guests are strongly influenced by the surrounding environment. Beyond providing visual beauty, environmental elements such as flowers, fragrance, color, lighting, and interior decoration create psychological responses that affect guests' comfort, relaxation, and overall perception of the hotel. Hospitality researchers have recognized that sensory experiences contribute significantly to memorable guest experiences by stimulating positive emotions and strengthening emotional connections with the physical environment.

Mehrabian and Russell (1974) developed the Environmental Psychology Model, commonly known as the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) framework, to explain how environmental stimuli influence human emotions and behavior. According to this model, environmental features first affect an individual's emotional

state, which subsequently determines behavioral responses such as satisfaction, approach behavior, or avoidance. In hospitality settings, decorative elements such as floral arrangements, pleasant fragrances, attractive colors, and aesthetically designed interiors serve as environmental stimuli that can evoke feelings of pleasure, comfort, relaxation, and excitement. Their work demonstrates that environmental design extends beyond visual attractiveness by influencing guests' emotional well-being and overall hospitality experience. Supporting this perspective, Oh et al., (2007) examined the concept of the experience economy within tourism and hospitality. Their study emphasized that memorable tourism experiences are created through sensory engagement, emotional involvement, aesthetic appreciation, and active participation. The researchers found that attractive physical environments encourage stronger emotional connections between guests and hospitality establishments by stimulating multiple senses simultaneously. Their findings suggest that floral arrangements contribute not only to the visual appearance of hotels but also to guests' emotional satisfaction by creating welcoming, peaceful, and aesthetically pleasing environments. Ulrich (1984) further emphasized the psychological benefits of natural elements by demonstrating that exposure to nature can reduce stress and improve individuals' emotional well-being. His findings suggest that natural features within built environments create feelings of relaxation, comfort, and psychological restoration. In hotel settings, floral arrangements can serve as natural environmental elements that enhance guests' emotional experiences and contribute to a more welcoming and relaxing atmosphere.

Within hotel settings, floral arrangements represent an important sensory element that enhances the overall atmosphere through their natural beauty, color combinations, texture, and, in many cases, fragrance. These characteristics help create a calm and welcoming environment that allows guests to feel comfortable and relaxed throughout their stay. By positively influencing guests' emotions and sensory experiences, floral arrangements contribute to memorable hospitality experiences and strengthen the emotional value that guests associate with hotel environments.

Overall, the reviewed literature indicates that environmental stimuli significantly influence guests' emotional responses and sensory experiences within hospitality settings. The Environmental Psychology Model and experience economy concept provide a strong theoretical basis for understanding how floral arrangements

contribute to guests' feelings of comfort, relaxation, aesthetic appreciation, and memorable hotel experiences. These studies support the importance of exploring guests lived experiences of floral arrangements through a phenomenological perspective.

1.6.2.3 Environmental Aesthetics and Guest Satisfaction in Hotels

Guest satisfaction is one of the primary indicators of success in the hospitality industry. While service quality, employee performance, and hotel facilities remain essential components of guest satisfaction, researchers have increasingly recognized that environmental aesthetics also play a significant role in shaping guests' perceptions and overall experiences. Attractive physical surroundings create positive emotional responses, improve perceived service quality, and encourage guests to revisit hotels and recommend them to others. Consequently, hotels continue to invest in aesthetically pleasing environments as a strategy for enhancing customer satisfaction and maintaining a competitive advantage. Pizam and Ellis (1999) examined customer satisfaction within hospitality enterprises and emphasized that guest satisfaction extends beyond the functional delivery of services. They argued that emotional experiences throughout a guests' stay significantly influence overall satisfaction, loyalty, and future behavioral intentions. According to the researchers, creating positive emotional responses through both service delivery and the surrounding environment is essential for achieving high levels of customer satisfaction. Their findings suggest that environmental features such as floral arrangements contribute to creating enjoyable and memorable hospitality experiences.

Similarly, Kim and Perdue (2013) investigated the influence of cognitive, affective, and sensory attributes on hotel choice and guest satisfaction. Their study demonstrated that aesthetic elements within hotel environments significantly influence guests' perceptions of hotel quality, emotional satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. The researchers concluded that visually attractive environments enhance guests' overall evaluations of hotels, increase their intention to revisit, and encourage positive word-of-mouth recommendations. These findings indicate that decorative elements, including floral arrangements, contribute to creating welcoming environments that strengthen guests' satisfaction and loyalty.

Within the Nepalese context, the identified Pokhara as one of Nepal's leading tourism destinations because of its natural beauty, cultural attractions, and expanding

hospitality industry. Likewise, the (MoCTCA, 2023) reported continued growth in Nepal's tourism sector, encouraging hotels to improve both service quality and environmental presentation to remain competitive in attracting domestic and international visitors. As hotels strive to provide memorable guest experiences, environmental aesthetics, including floral arrangements, have become increasingly important in creating attractive and welcoming hospitality environments.

Overall, the reviewed literature indicates that environmental aesthetics contribute significantly to guest satisfaction, perceived hotel quality, customer loyalty, and behavioral intentions. However, previous studies have primarily focused on customer satisfaction and environmental design from managerial or quantitative perspectives. Limited research has explored how hotel guests personally experience and interpret floral arrangements as part of the hotel environment, particularly within the hospitality context of Pokhara. This gap reinforces the need for the present phenomenological study, which seeks to understand the lived experiences of hotel guests regarding floral arrangements and their influence on overall hotel satisfaction.

1.6.3 Literature Gap

Existing studies in the hospitality industry have predominantly utilized quantitative methodologies to examine hotel service quality, environmental aesthetics, customer satisfaction, and guests' behavioral intentions, leaving a significant research gap regarding the lived experiences of hotel guests with floral arrangements. Although previous research has demonstrated that hotel services and physical environments positively influence guests' perceptions and satisfaction, limited studies have explored how guests personally experience, interpret, and assign meaning to floral arrangements, particularly within the hospitality context of Pokhara, Nepal. This study addresses this gap by adopting a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore guests' lived experiences with floral arrangements in hotels. By focusing on guests' personal narratives, the study provides a deeper understanding of how floral arrangements influence emotions, comfort, aesthetic appreciation, and the overall hotel experience, thereby contributing a guest-centered perspective to hospitality research.

1.7 Research Methodology

This chapter describes the research methodology adopted to explore the lived experiences of hotel guests regarding floral arrangements in the hotels of Pokhara. It explains the research design, participant selection, sampling technique, data collection methods, data analysis procedures, ethical considerations, and the delimitations and limitations of the study. A qualitative phenomenological approach was employed to gain an in-depth understanding of how guests perceive, experience, and attach meaning to floral arrangements during their hotel stay. The methodology provides a systematic framework to ensure that the findings are credible, relevant, and aligned with the objectives of the study.

1.7.1 Research Design

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the lived experiences of hotel guests regarding floral arrangements in the hotels of Pokhara. A phenomenological approach is appropriate because it focuses on understanding how individuals experience and interpret a particular phenomenon in their daily lives. In this study, the phenomenon under investigation is guests' experiences and perceptions of floral arrangements within hotel environments.

The qualitative phenomenological design enabled the researcher to collect rich, detailed descriptions of participants' thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Through this approach, the study explored how floral arrangements influence guests' first impressions, emotional responses, overall satisfaction, and perceptions of the hotel environment. The use of this research design provided an in-depth understanding of the meanings that guests attach to floral arrangements and their contribution to the overall hospitality experience.

1.7.2 Population and Participants

The target population for this study consisted of hotel guests who had stayed in hotels in Pokhara and had experienced floral arrangements during their stay. Since the study aimed to explore guests' lived experiences and perceptions, participants were selected based on their direct experience with the phenomenon under investigation.

To ensure that the participants could provide rich and meaningful information, the following criteria were considered:

- Participants must have stayed in a hotel in Pokhara that displayed floral arrangements in areas such as the lobby, reception, restaurant, or guest rooms.
- Participants must be at least 18 years of age.
- Participants must be willing to voluntarily participate in the study and share their personal experiences and perceptions regarding floral arrangements.
- Participants must be able to communicate their experiences clearly during the interview.

1.7.3 Sampling Technique

This study employed purposive sampling to select the participants. Purposive sampling is appropriate for qualitative phenomenological research because it enables the researcher to deliberately select individuals who have direct experience with the phenomenon being investigated and can provide rich, meaningful, and relevant information.

For this study, participants were selected based on their experience of staying in hotels in Pokhara where floral arrangements were present. Only guests who had observed and experienced floral arrangements during their stay and were willing to share their perceptions and experiences were included in the study. A sample of 6 to 10 hotel guests was considered appropriate, as qualitative phenomenological research emphasizes obtaining detailed and in-depth information rather than achieving statistical generalization. This sample size was sufficient to identify common themes and gain a comprehensive understanding of guests lived experiences regarding floral arrangements in hotels.

1.7.4 Data Collection Method

The primary method of data collection for this study was semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews were chosen because they allow participants to freely describe their lived experiences, perceptions, and opinions while enabling the researcher to guide the discussion using predetermined open-ended questions. This approach provided flexibility to explore participants' experiences in greater depth and obtain rich qualitative data.

An interview guide was prepared to ensure consistency during the interviews. The interview questions focused on the following areas:

- **Background Information:** Participant's age, gender, hotel stay experience, and frequency of staying in hotels in Pokhara.
- **Perceptions of Floral Arrangements:** Participants' first impressions, opinions, and observations regarding floral arrangements in hotel environments.
- **Emotional and Sensory Experiences:** Participants' feelings, emotions, and sensory responses influenced by the colors, fragrance, and appearance of floral arrangements.
- **Guest Satisfaction:** Participants' views on how floral arrangements contributed to their overall satisfaction and hotel experience.
- **Cultural Significance:** Participants' perceptions of the use of local flowers and the role of floral arrangements in reflecting Nepali hospitality and culture.

The interviews were conducted in a comfortable and convenient setting for the participants. With their informed consent, the interviews were recorded and supplemented with written notes to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the collected data.

1.7.5 Data Analysis Procedure

The data collected through the semi-structured interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis within a phenomenological framework. Thematic analysis was employed to identify, organize, and interpret patterns and meanings from the participant's lived experiences regarding floral arrangements in hotels. The data analysis process consisted of the following steps:

1. Verbatim Transcription:

All interview recordings were transcribed verbatim to ensure that the participant's responses were accurately and completely documented.

2. Data Familiarization:

The researcher carefully read and reviewed the interview transcripts several times to gain a thorough cognitive understanding of the participants' experiences and perspectives.

3.Coding Framework:

Significant statements, meaningful phrases, and recurring ideas related to guest's experiences with floral arrangements were highlighted and assigned initial conceptual codes.

4.Theme Development:

Similar codes and meaning units were clustered together to form broader, comprehensive themes and sub-themes reflecting common participant experiences.

5.Phenomenological Interpretation:

The identified themes were interpreted in relation to the research objectives, theoretical framework, and relevant literature to understand how floral arrangements influence guest emotions and satisfaction.

The findings were presented using thematic descriptions supported by participants' direct quotations to provide an authentic representation of their lived experiences.

1.7.6 Ethical Considerations

This study strictly adhered to the ethical principles of qualitative research. Before conducting the interviews, all participants were informed about the purpose and objectives of the study, the procedures involved, and the intended use of the collected information. Informed consent was obtained from each participant before the interviews were conducted.

Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any stage without providing any reason or facing any negative consequences. The researcher respected the participants' decisions throughout the research process. All interview recordings, transcripts, and research documents were kept securely and used solely for academic purposes. The collected data were treated with strict confidentiality and were not shared with unauthorized individuals.

1.7.7 Delimitations and Limitations

This study is delimited to exploring the lived experiences of hotel guests regarding floral arrangements in selected hotels in Pokhara, Nepal. The research focuses only on guests who have directly experienced floral arrangements during their hotel stay. It does not include the perspectives of hotel managers, employees, florists, or guests from hotels outside Pokhara. The study specifically examines how floral arrangements influence guests' perceptions, emotions, and overall satisfaction within the hotel environment.

A limitation of this study is that the findings are based on the experiences of a small number of participants using a qualitative phenomenological approach. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to all hotel guests or hotels across Nepal. In addition, the study relies on participants' personal experiences and perceptions, which may differ from one individual to another based on personal tastes. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into the role of floral arrangements in shaping guest experiences in the hospitality industry.

CHAPTER II

FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings of the study based on the analysis of data collected through semi-structured interviews with hotel guests in Pokhara. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis to explore the participants' lived experiences with floral arrangements in hotel settings. Three major themes emerged from the analysis: Floral Arrangements as Environmental Aesthetics in Hotels, Emotional and Sensory Experiences of Guests, and Guest Satisfaction and Cultural Significance of Floral Arrangements. Each theme is presented with relevant participant quotations and interpretative analysis to provide a comprehensive understanding of how floral arrangements influence guests' overall hotel experiences.

2.1 Theme 1: Influence of Hotel Servicescape on Guest Experience

The first major theme emerging from the interview data highlights the influence of the hotel's physical environment and servicescape on guests' overall experiences. Participants consistently described floral arrangements as an important element of the hotel environment that shaped their perceptions and enhanced their overall stay. Beyond their decorative purpose, floral arrangements were perceived as features that created a welcoming atmosphere, improved the hotel's aesthetic appeal, and reflected the quality of hospitality provided. Based on the participants' experiences, two sub-themes were identified: 1. Creating a Positive First Impression and 2. Enhancing Hotel Ambiance.

2.1.1 Creating a Positive First Impression

A key finding of this study was that floral arrangements played an important role in shaping guests' first impressions of the hotel. Participants consistently described fresh flowers as one of the first features they noticed upon entering the hotel. They explained that floral arrangements created a welcoming atmosphere and reflected the hotel's cleanliness, elegance, and commitment to hospitality, thereby influencing their initial perceptions of the hotel environment. Jean Ale, a guest at Busy Bee Resort, stated, "The flower arrangements at the resort entrance immediately attracted my attention. They made the hotel look elegant and welcoming from the moment I arrived. Similarly, Bhageerath Khadka, a guest at Hotel

Blossom, shared, “Seeing fresh flowers in the reception area gave me the impression that the resort was clean, well-organized, and cared about its guests.”

These findings indicate that floral arrangements contributed to positive first impressions by communicating professionalism, attention to detail, and a welcoming environment. Participants associated floral displays with high standards of hospitality, suggesting that the hotel's physical environment influenced their expectations of service quality from the moment they arrived.

2.1.2 Enhancing Hotel Ambiance

A significant finding of this study was that floral arrangements enhanced the overall ambiance of the hotel. Participants described flowers as an important element of the hotel's physical environment that contributed to a pleasant, relaxing, and visually appealing atmosphere. The presence of fresh flowers improved the aesthetic appeal of different hotel spaces and created an environment that guests perceived as comfortable and welcoming. These experiences suggest that floral arrangements played a meaningful role in enhancing the hotel's ambiance and positively influencing guests' overall experiences during their stay. Ashok Sai, a guest at Mount Annapurna Resort, shared his experience of how floral arrangements contributed to the hotel's atmosphere. He explained that the floral displays immediately captured his attention and created a peaceful environment that enhanced his stay. Reflecting on his experience, he stated: “The colorful flowers made the lobby look beautiful and lively. They created a peaceful atmosphere where I enjoyed spending my time.”

2.2 Theme 2: Emotional and Sensory Experiences of Guests

The second major theme that emerged from the participant's responses was Emotional and Sensory Experiences of Guests. Participants described how floral arrangements influenced their emotions and sensory perceptions during their hotel stay. They explained that the presence of fresh flowers created feelings of comfort, relaxation, and happiness while also enhancing the sensory appeal of the hotel environment through their colors, fragrance, and natural beauty. Based on the participants' experiences, two sub-themes were identified: 1. Feelings of Comfort and Relaxation and 2. Sensory Appeal of Floral Arrangements.

2.2.1 Feelings of Comfort and Relaxation

A significant finding of this study was that floral arrangements promoted feelings of relaxation and comfort among hotel guests. Participants explained that the presence of fresh flowers created a calm and peaceful atmosphere, allowing them to feel more comfortable during their stay. The natural appearance and thoughtful placement of floral arrangements contributed to a soothing environment, helping guests feel relaxed and enjoy their hotel experience. Grish Tamang, a guest at Hotel Barahi, explained that the floral arrangements created a calm and pleasant environment, making his stay more comfortable and enjoyable. Describing his experience, he stated: “The flower arrangements made me feel relaxed as soon as I entered the hotel. The fresh flowers created a peaceful and welcoming atmosphere that helped me feel comfortable after travelling. Their natural beauty made the environment more enjoyable and gave me a positive feeling throughout my stay.”

2.2.2 Sensory Appeal of Floral Arrangements

A significant finding of this study was that the sensory appeal of floral arrangements positively influenced guests' hotel experiences. Participants described flowers as enhancing the hotel environment through their natural beauty, pleasant fragrance, and vibrant colors. These sensory elements created a refreshing and welcoming atmosphere, allowing guests to feel more relaxed, comfortable, and emotionally connected to their surroundings. The findings suggest that floral arrangements stimulated guest's senses and contributed to a more enjoyable and memorable hotel stay. Ramesh Pun, a guest at Hotel Pokhara Grande, shared that the natural fragrance and visual beauty of the floral arrangements created a pleasant atmosphere that enhanced the overall hotel experience. Reflecting on the sensory experience, the participant stated: “The fresh flowers looked beautiful and smelled pleasant. Their natural fragrance and colorful appearance made the hotel feel fresh and peaceful. Whenever I walked through the lobby, I felt relaxed and refreshed because the flowers created such a pleasant environment.”

2.3 Theme 3: Environmental Aesthetics and Guest Satisfaction in Hotels

The third major theme that emerged from the participants' interviews was Environmental Aesthetics and Guest Satisfaction in Hotels. Participants consistently explained that floral arrangements enhanced their overall satisfaction by creating an

attractive, welcoming, and comfortable hotel environment. They believed that flowers improved the visual appeal of the hotel, reflected attention to detail, and strengthened their perceptions of service quality. Several participants also mentioned that attractive floral decorations made their stay more enjoyable and memorable. Based on the participant experiences, two sub-themes were identified: 1. Floral Arrangements and Guest Satisfaction and 2. Memorable Hospitality Experiences.

2.3.1 Floral Arrangements and Guest Satisfaction

A significant finding of this study was that floral arrangements positively influenced guest's overall satisfaction with their hotel experience. Participants consistently described flowers as an important element that enhanced the hotel's atmosphere and increased their enjoyment during their stay. The presence of fresh and well-maintained floral arrangements reflected the hotel's attention to detail, creating a welcoming environment that made guests feel valued and comfortable. These experiences suggest that floral arrangements contributed to guest's satisfaction by improving their overall perception of the hotel's quality and hospitality. Anish Joshi, a guest at Temple Tree Resort & Spa, shared that the floral arrangements enhanced satisfaction by creating a pleasant and welcoming atmosphere throughout the stay. Reflecting on the experience, the participant stated: "The fresh floral arrangements made the hotel feel warm, elegant, and inviting. They created a pleasant atmosphere that helped me relax and enjoy my stay. Seeing the flowers gave me the impression that the hotel cared about its guests and paid attention to detail. Because of this, I felt more satisfied with my overall experience at the hotel."

2.3.2 Memorable Hotel Experience

A significant finding of this study was that floral arrangements contributed to creating memorable hotel experiences for guests. Participants described flowers as an important feature that enhanced the overall atmosphere of the hotel and made their stay more enjoyable. The presence of fresh and beautifully arranged flowers created a unique and lasting impression, making guests feel welcomed, comfortable, and emotionally connected to the hotel environment. These experiences suggest that floral arrangements added value to the overall guest experience and contributed to positive memories of their stay. Dilip Aryal, a guest at Hotel Mount Kailash, shared that the floral arrangements made the hotel experience more memorable by creating a

beautiful and welcoming environment. Reflecting on the experience, he stated: “The beautiful flower arrangements made my stay feel special. The floral arrangements added a unique charm to the hotel. Their natural beauty and freshness made every area feel welcoming, and I often stopped to admire them. They became one of the highlights of my stay and something I will always remember.”

2.4 Summary

In summary, the empirical findings across all three themes demonstrate that floral arrangements are significant environmental elements that shape hotel guest's lived experiences in Pokhara. Guests consistently perceive floral arrangements as integral components of the hotel's physical environment, contributing to positive first impressions, enhancing the servicescape, and creating welcoming and aesthetically pleasing surroundings. The findings further reveal that floral arrangements evoke positive emotional and sensory responses by promoting feelings of comfort, relaxation, freshness, and psychological well-being through their colors, natural beauty, and fragrance. Moreover, participants associated attractive floral displays with higher levels of guest satisfaction, perceiving them as indicators of the hotel's professionalism, attention to detail, and commitment to quality hospitality. Collectively, these findings demonstrate that floral arrangements extend beyond their decorative function to become meaningful environmental features that enhance guests' perceptions, emotional experiences, satisfaction, and memorable hospitality experiences within hotels in Pokhara.

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Conclusion

This study explored the lived experiences of hotel guests regarding floral arrangements in the hotels of Pokhara using a phenomenological research approach. The findings revealed that floral arrangements are more than decorative elements; they play an important role in shaping guests' perceptions, emotions, and overall hotel experiences.

The study found that floral arrangements create positive first impressions by enhancing the visual appeal and ambiance of hotel environments. Guests associated fresh and well-maintained floral displays with cleanliness, professionalism, and quality service. In addition, floral arrangements contributed to emotional and sensory experiences by creating feelings of comfort, relaxation, freshness, and happiness through their colors, fragrance, and natural beauty.

Furthermore, the findings indicated that floral arrangements positively influence guest satisfaction and contribute to memorable hotel experiences. Participants also recognized the cultural significance of floral decorations, particularly when local flowers reflected Nepalese traditions and hospitality. Overall, the study concludes that floral arrangements are valuable environmental elements that enhance the aesthetic quality of hotels, strengthen emotional connections with guests, and improve the overall hospitality experience in the hotels of Pokhara.

3.2 Recommendations

Based on the lived experiences and perceptions shared by the participants, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the use of floral arrangements in hotels and improve guest experiences:

1. **Enhancing Floral Arrangement Practices:** Hotel management should prioritize the use of fresh, attractive, and well-maintained floral arrangements in key guest areas such as the lobby, reception, restaurants, and guest rooms. Proper placement and regular maintenance of floral displays can create positive first impressions and improve the overall hotel atmosphere.

2. **Promoting Local Floral Identity:** Hotels should incorporate locally available flowers and traditional floral designs into their decorative practices. Using native flowers can strengthen the cultural identity of the hotel, promote Nepalese hospitality, and provide guests with a more authentic and memorable experience.
3. **Providing Staff Training on Floral Presentation:** Hotel operators should provide basic training for employees responsible for floral decoration and maintenance. Developing staff knowledge and skills in floral presentation will help ensure that floral arrangements remain attractive, fresh, and consistent with the hotel's service standards.
4. **Integrating Floral Arrangements into Guest Experience Strategies:** Hotel management should recognize floral arrangements as an important component of the overall guest experience rather than simply decorative items. Floral aesthetics should be integrated into hospitality and marketing strategies to enhance guest satisfaction, strengthen the hotel's image, and encourage repeat visits.
5. **Recommendations for Future Research:** Future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies in different regions of Nepal or among various categories of hotels to gain broader insights into guest experiences with floral arrangements. Comparative studies using larger samples or different qualitative and quantitative research approaches may provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of floral arrangements in the hospitality industry.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Section A: Participant Background

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself?
2. How old are you?
3. What is your gender?
4. How many times have you stayed in hotels in Pokhara?
5. What type of hotel did you stay in during your most recent visit?

Section B: Perceptions of Floral Arrangements

6. What was your first impression of the floral arrangements when you entered the hotel?
7. How would you describe the floral arrangements in the hotel?
8. Which area of the hotel had the most attractive floral arrangements? Why?

Section C: Emotional and Sensory Experiences

9. How did the floral arrangements make you feel during your stay?
10. Did the colors or fragrance of the flowers influence your emotions? Please explain.
11. Do you think floral arrangements created a relaxing and welcoming atmosphere? Why?

Section D: Guest Satisfaction

12. Did the floral arrangements contribute to your overall satisfaction with the hotel? Why or why not?
13. Did the floral arrangements make your stay more memorable? Please explain.
14. Would attractive floral arrangements encourage you to revisit the hotel or recommend it to others?

Section E: Cultural Significance

15. Did you notice the use of local flowers or traditional floral decorations?
16. Do you think floral arrangements reflect Nepalese hospitality and culture? Why?
17. What suggestions would you give to hotels to improve floral arrangements and enhance guest experiences?

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Background Information

- Age:
- Gender:
- Number of hotel stays in Pokhara:
- Type of hotel stayed in:

2. Perceptions of Floral Arrangements

- What was your first impression of the floral arrangements?
- Do floral arrangements improve the appearance of the hotel? Why?
- Which area had the most attractive floral arrangements?

3. Emotional and Sensory Experiences

- How did the floral arrangements make you feel?
- Did the colors or fragrance influence your mood?
- Did the flowers create a relaxing atmosphere?

4. Guest Satisfaction

- Did floral arrangements increase your satisfaction with the hotel?
- Did they make your stay more memorable?
- Would they encourage you to revisit or recommend the hotel?

5. Cultural Significance

- Did you notice the use of local flowers?

- Do floral arrangements represent Nepalese hospitality?
- What improvements would you recommend?