



Green Marketing Influencing the Intention to Choose Green Hotels in Ho Chi Minh City

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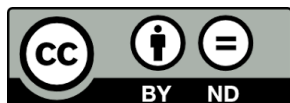
Abstract

This study investigates how green marketing influences consumer decisions when choosing environmentally friendly hotels in Ho Chi Minh City. Utilising a quantitative approach, a survey was conducted with 400 hotel guests to identify key dimensions of green marketing, including environmental concern, perceived value, and brand trust and to assess their impact on consumer behaviour. The results highlight environmental concern as the most influential factor in selecting green hotels, followed by brand trust and perceived value. Specifically, individuals with a heightened awareness of environmental issues are more inclined to opt for eco-friendly lodging. Additionally, consumer trust in a hotel's sustainable initiatives and the perceived advantages of supporting green efforts play a crucial role in shaping decision-making. The study provides fresh insights into how green marketing strategies can be designed to attract environmentally conscious travellers and offers actionable recommendations for hotel managers aiming to improve sustainability communication. By focusing on transparent ecological commitments, emphasising the benefits of green practices, and reinforcing brand trust, hotels can effectively engage consumers. Ultimately, this research fills a critical gap in the literature by empirically analysing the impact of green marketing on hotel selection in Ho Chi Minh City, thereby promoting sustainable tourism in the region.

Keywords: Green Marketing, Consumer Behaviour, Environmental Concern, Perceived Value, Brand Trust, Sustainable Tourism, Ho Chi Minh City

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INTRODUCTION

The around-globe hospitality sector is transitioning to sustainability due to heightened environmental deterioration and climate change awareness. As consumers become more conscious of their ecological footprint, the demand for eco-friendly products and services- mainly green hotels- continues to grow. Findings from the World Travel Organization (2020) suggest that sustainable travel is on the rise, with a considerable proportion of travellers willing to pay extra for accommodations meeting environmental benchmarks. This evolving market dynamic underscores the urgency for sustainability measures in the hospitality industry, prompting hotels to adopt green marketing strategies that resonate with environmentally conscious customers (Smith & Johnson, 2018).

In Southeast Asia, pursuing sustainable tourism has emerged as a central objective for regional development. Several nations, including Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia, have adopted various green initiatives to address the growing demand for eco-conscious travel (Nguyen et al., 2024). Notably, green marketing tactics, including eco-labelling, sustainable branding, and transparent communication regarding environmentally friendly practices, have effectively engaged consumers who prioritise sustainability (Chen et al., 2019).

In Vietnam, where tourism is expanding rapidly alongside economic growth and urbanisation, awareness of environmental concerns has risen (Nguyen et al., 2024). Nevertheless, the hospitality sector's embrace of sustainable practices remains relatively limited compared to other countries. Although some hotels have introduced eco-friendly measures, the extent to which these initiatives influence consumer choices remains unclear.

Globally, the hospitality industry has increasingly emphasised sustainability, yet a substantial knowledge gap persists regarding the efficacy of sustainable marketing in emerging markets such as HCMC. International research suggests that green-aware customers are more inclined to seek out green hotels, but the specific factors influencing this trend in Vietnam are poorly understood.

As a dynamic economic hub and popular tourist destination, Ho Chi Minh City presents a distinct context to examine how green marketing shapes consumer decisions in a rapidly urbanising setting.

Although some hospitality businesses in Ho Chi Minh City have started integrating sustainable practices, their impact on consumer behaviour remains insufficiently explored. Despite increasing attention to sustainable tourism, there is still a lack of empirical research on how green marketing influences purchasing decisions. Most existing studies predominantly examine developed markets, where consumers tend to have a higher level of awareness regarding sustainability. However, in Vietnam, where environmental consciousness is still evolving, the interaction between environmental concern, perceived value, and brand trust may shape consumer preferences in distinct ways.

Furthermore, Ho Chi Minh City's socio-economic and cultural context—marked by swift development, rising income levels, and shifting consumer attitudes—introduces unique opportunities and challenges for green marketing. Understanding local perceptions and responses to eco-friendly hotel initiatives is critical for designing and implementing effective sustainability strategies.

Without such insights, green marketing campaigns risk failing to engage their intended audience. Consequently, this study addresses the existing research gap by inspecting how "green marketing" efforts affect consumers' intentions to select eco-friendly hotels in HCMC. By identifying the main determinants of customer behaviour in this developing market, the research offers practical guidance for hospitality managers and enriches the academic discourse on sustainability in tourism.

This research aims to thoroughly examine how green marketing initiatives shape consumers' decision-making when selecting eco-friendly hotels in Ho Chi Minh City. The specific objectives include:

1. Identifying the key dimensions of green marketing that significantly influence consumer choices.

2. Investigating the connection between consumers' environmental awareness and their intention to stay at green hotels.
3. Evaluating the mediating function of perceived value in the relationship between green marketing efforts and consumers' purchase intentions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Green Marketing

Green marketing, often called environmental or sustainable marketing, encompasses strategies highlighting the ecological advantages of products and services (Mendleson & Polonsky, 1995; Charter & Polonsky, 1999; Peattie & Crane, 2005). It can include eco-labelling, environmentally responsible packaging, transparent communication of sustainability efforts, and energy-efficient production or service delivery (Bohdanowicz, 2005). By aligning business operations with broader sustainable development goals, green marketing aims to attract a growing segment of consumers who actively seek out eco-friendly options. In the hospitality industry, these initiatives range from promoting green hotel certifications to emphasising resource conservation and pollution reduction in everyday operations.

A critical outcome of effective green marketing is the potential to strengthen brand reputation and customer loyalty. Research indicates that consumers are more inclined to remain loyal to brands that visibly commit to sustainability, reflecting a growing preference for responsible business practices (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Such loyalty can be especially valuable for hotels operating in competitive markets, where demonstrating environmentally conscious practices may increase bookings and guest satisfaction. Moreover, this approach supports the core principle of sustainable development, which seeks to address current demands while maintaining the capacity of future generations to satisfy their

own (Han, 2010). Consequently, green marketing benefits businesses through differentiation and customer retention and contributes to broader environmental and societal objectives.

Key Elements of Green Marketing

Green marketing encompasses several strategic approaches aimed at environmentally responsible business practices. Eco-labeling, certification marks indicating adherence to specific environmental standards, facilitates consumer identification of sustainable products (Chen et al., 2019). Sustainable branding involves integrating environmental responsibility into corporate identity and enhancing consumer loyalty as market preferences increasingly align with ecological values (Tran & Nguyen, 2024; Smith & Johnson, 2018). Additionally, green advertising campaigns strategically promote environmental initiatives by highlighting specific efforts, including carbon reduction, renewable energy utilisation, and waste minimisation protocols (Khan et al., 2019). Research demonstrates that effective implementation of these green marketing strategies constitutes a significant competitive advantage; organisations successfully employ such approaches to achieve market differentiation, enhance company image and fortify ties with consumer groups that care about the environment (Zeithaml, 1988; Tzschentke et al., 2004). Increasing consumer environmental awareness further amplifies the strategic importance of green marketing in contemporary business landscapes.

Green Hotels

Green hotels focus on eco-friendly measures such as conserving energy, managing water usage, minimising waste, and employing sustainable materials (Bohdanowicz, 2005). Heightened regulatory requirements and growing consumer awareness of environmental issues primarily drive their emergence. Studies indicate that many travellers are willing to pay more for

accommodations that actively reduce their ecological footprint, underscoring the market potential of these green initiatives (Tzschentke et al., 2004). Additionally, guests prioritising environmental responsibility tend to favour hotels that visibly demonstrate their commitment to sustainability (Han et al., 2010). Consequently, green hotels can capitalise on this expanding segment of eco-conscious travellers by strategically promoting their environmental practices through targeted marketing efforts.

Consumer Behaviour Towards Green Hotels

Customer behaviour regarding green hotels is influenced by multiple interrelated factors that significantly impact intention formation and decision-making processes. Environmental concern constitutes a primary determinant of eco-friendly accommodation selection, with empirical evidence from Kim et al. (2012) demonstrating a positive correlation between heightened environmental awareness and green hotel preference—a relationship theoretically underpinned by Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior, which establishes attitudinal constructs as antecedents to behavioural intentions. Additionally, perceived value emerges as a critical variable, wherein consumers evaluate both utilitarian and hedonic benefits relative to expenditure; Khan et al. (2019) empirically validated that this multidimensional construct significantly influences green hotel selection intentions through comparative assessment of functional attributes (quality, comfort) and emotional benefits (sustainability satisfaction). Furthermore, brand trust functions as a fundamental mediating variable in environmentally oriented consumption decisions, with research by Yoon et al. (2018) establishing that consumer confidence in organisational environmental claims substantially affects green accommodation selection, particularly in contexts where greenwashing concerns may otherwise inhibit sustainable consumption behaviours. The interrelationship among these factors creates a complex decision framework through which consumers evaluate and select

environmentally responsible hospitality options.

Theoretical Framework

Application of the Theory of Planned Behaviour

Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is widely utilised to examine the factors influencing human behaviour across multiple fields, including consumer decision-making. According to this theory, an individual's actions are primarily shaped by behavioural intentions, which are influenced by attitudes, perceived behavioural control, and subjective norms. These components collectively offer valuable insights into the cognitive mechanisms that drive individuals to engage in specific behaviours, such as choosing eco-friendly accommodations.

This research employs the TPB framework to analyse how green marketing initiatives affect consumers' intentions to stay at environmentally friendly lodging in HCMC. The proposed model incorporates "environmental concern, perceived value, and brand trust" with key mediating variables, which are expected to link green marketing strategies with consumer decision-making. By integrating these factors, the study considers the hospitality industry's distinct characteristics while shedding light on consumers' growing sustainability-oriented preferences in this setting.

Attitudes Towards Green Marketing

Attitudes represent an individual's overall evaluation of engaging in a particular behaviour. In this study, attitudes refer to consumers' perceptions of green marketing strategies adopted by hotels, such as eco-labelling, energy-saving initiatives, and other sustainability-oriented practices. A positive assessment of these efforts will enhance the intention to choose green hotels. This perspective aligns with Han et al. (2010), who found that favourable attitudes toward eco-friendly measures significantly strengthen behavioural

intentions within sustainable tourism.

Hypothesis H₁: Environmental issues are optimistically impacted by green marketing.

Subjective Norms

Subjective norms pertain to the social pressures individuals perceive when making decisions. In eco-friendly hotels, these norms are shaped by societal expectations and the influence of close social circles, such as family, friends, and peers who advocate for sustainable behaviours. When individuals believe that significant people in their lives support choosing green hotels, they are more inclined to develop favourable intentions toward this behaviour. Prior studies, including those by Tzschentke et al. (2004), have highlighted the significance of subjective norms in fostering environmentally responsible choices within the hospitality sector.

Hypothesis H₂: Brand trust is supportively impacted by green marketing.

Perceived Behavioral Control

Perceived behavioural control refers to an individual's assessment of how easy or difficult it is to engage in a particular behaviour, influenced by their confidence in successfully performing it. In selecting green hotels, this concept encompasses consumers' perceptions regarding the accessibility, affordability, and overall availability of eco-friendly accommodations. For example, when consumers view green hotels as conveniently located and offering services comparable to traditional hotels, they are more likely to develop a stronger intention to stay in them. Prior research, including Han et al. (2010), suggests that a higher sense of control over making sustainable choices positively influences the likelihood of adopting eco-friendly tourism behaviours.

Hypothesis H₃: Green marketing has a beneficial impact on perceived value.

Research Model Constructs

This research extends the TPB framework by integrating the relationship between green marketing and consumer intentions, which is mediated by three important constructs: perceived value, brand trust, and environmental concern. Elements are essential in influencing consumer decision-making, especially within the green hotel sector, where sustainability considerations significantly impact purchasing behaviour:

Environment Concern

Environmental Concern: This construct shows how much people care about and know about environmental issues. Customers more concerned about the environment are more likely to be convinced to book green hotels through green marketing strategies. Kim et al. (2013) found that environmental concerns significantly predict eco-friendly consumer behaviour.

Hypothesis H4: Environmental concern has a beneficial impact on the intention to pick eco-hotels.

Perceived Value

The benefits guests associate with staying at a sustainable hotel and its expenses are perceived value. This idea encompasses practical advantages like comfort and high-quality services and sentimental advantages like fulfilment from helping with sustainability initiatives. Khan et al. (2019) state that "consumers' intentions to choose eco-friendly lodging are significantly influenced by perceived value".

Hypothesis H5: Electing eco-hotels is supportively influenced by perceived value.

Brand Trust

Conversely, brand trust indicates how confident guests are in a hotel's environmental pledges. Since customers are more inclined to select eco-friendly hotels when they think the institution follows ecologically responsible procedures, trust is an important consideration in green marketing. According to Yoon et al. (2018), "fostering eco-conscious behaviour and fostering customer loyalty depend heavily on brand trust".

Hypothesis H₆: Selecting eco-hotels is optimistically influenced by Brand trust.

Proposed Research Model

The research model proposed in this study illustrates the relationships among these key constructs. The conceptual framework is presented in Figure 1 below.

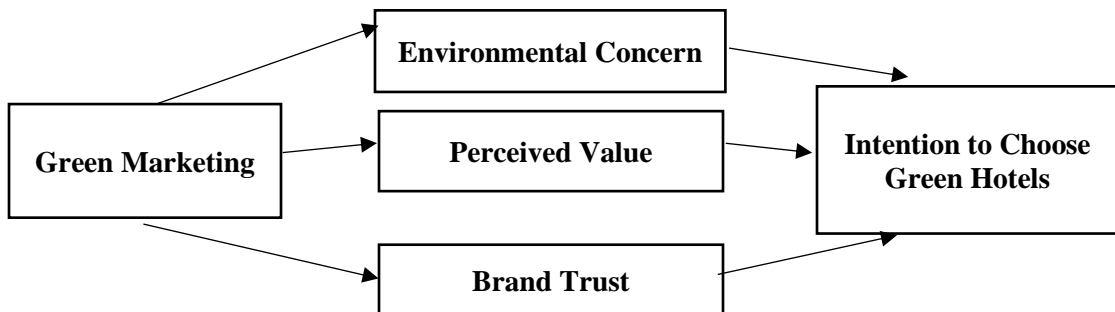


Figure 1: Proposed Research Model

Source: Compiled and proposed by the author

This research is grounded in a comprehensive theoretical framework that elucidates the determinants of consumer intention toward green hotel selection in Ho Chi Minh City's hospitality sector. The conceptual model integrates Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior with established green marketing constructs, proposing a multidimensional relationship structure that explicates consumer decision-making processes. Green marketing functions as the

primary exogenous variable, initiating cascading effects through several mediating mechanisms: environmental concern, perceived value, and brand trust. Environmental concern is a critical mediating construct reflecting ecological awareness levels that subsequently influence accommodation selection behaviours. The perceived value dimension incorporates utilitarian and hedonic benefits derived from sustainable practices, necessitating effective organisational communication of these attributes to potential consumers. Brand trust is a fundamental mediating variable that engenders consumer confidence in sustainability claims, facilitating loyalty behaviour and repeating patronage intentions. This integrated theoretical framework provides methodological rigour for the empirical investigation of green marketing's influence on consumer intention within Ho Chi Minh City's specific cultural and economic context, addressing identified research lacunae in the extant literature regarding sustainable hospitality consumption in emerging Southeast Asian markets. The model's structural relationships enable the systematic examination of direct and indirect effects among the constituent variables, contributing to theoretical advancement and practical applications in sustainable hospitality management.

Building upon the theoretical framework, the study puts forward the hypotheses to facilitate the empirical investigation of the relationships among key constructs:

H7: Environmental concern mediates between green marketing and customers' intention to select eco-hotels.

H8: Perceived value operates as an intermediate in the interaction between green marketing and the intention to select eco-hotels.

H9: Brand trust mediates between green marketing and customers' intention to select eco-hotels.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study uses a quantitative survey approach to examine the main factors influencing consumers' propensity to choose green hotels. Using Cochran's formula, a sample size of 400 respondents was established to ensure adequate statistical power for identifying significant associations among environmental concerns, perceived value, brand trust, and the decision to select green hotels. The study focused on individuals who had stayed in hotels within the past year to obtain relevant and up-to-date insights into sustainability perceptions within the hospitality industry.

This research utilised convenience sampling to capture diverse perspectives across various demographic segments in Ho Chi Minh City, including different age groups, income levels, and educational backgrounds. A survey platform that was administered online was used to collect data, selected for its practical advantages in efficiently reaching participants across demographic segments while remaining cost-effective. This approach enabled robust data analysis through regression analysis and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), allowing for a comprehensive understanding of consumer behaviour that could be generalised to the city's more expansive hotel guests.

Data Collection Methods

The quantitative phase employed a structured questionnaire based on qualitative insights and a literature review to examine consumer behaviour regarding green hotels in HCMC. There were 400 respondents as a sample, determined using Cochran's formula to ensure statistical representativeness, selected through convenience sampling from individuals who had stayed at motels within the previous year. The survey was distributed via social media and email, reaching diverse participants across demographic backgrounds. The

questionnaire captured demographic information and measured four key constructs: "environmental concern (using a five-point Likert scale adapted from the New Ecological Paradigm scale), perceived value (assessing functional and emotional benefits), brand trust (adapted from Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001)" with the desire to select eco-friendly lodging. Data analysis utilised AMOS and SPSS programs, incorporating multiple statistical techniques to ensure robust findings. Descriptive statistics summarised demographic characteristics and responses, while Cronbach's alpha assessed the internal consistency of measurement scales. The study investigated the associations among environmental concern, perceived value, brand trust, and the intention to select eco-lodging using multiple regression analysis and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). In order to explore recurring patterns in the data, a thematic analysis was conducted following a structured six-step process, which included data familiarisation, coding, theme identification, theme refinement, theme definition, and final analysis; this rigorous analytical method increased the statistical reliability and contextual relevance of the findings, providing valuable insights into the impact of green marketing on customer decision-making in the hospitality industry.

RESULTS

Demographic profile of the participants

This section outlines the demographic characteristics of 400 customers in HCMC who recently stayed at a hotel and participated in the survey. Table 1 summarises the demographic attributes of the 400 survey respondents, offering insights into the composition of the study sample. The analysis includes key variables such as gender, age, education level, and income. These are crucial in understanding how consumer segments perceive and react to green marketing within Ho Chi Minh City's hospitality industry.

Table 1: The demographic profile of the sample

Demographic Variable	Frequency (n=400)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	180	45.0
Female	220	55.0
Age		
18-24	80	20.0
25-34	120	30.0
35-44	100	25.0
45+	100	25.0
Education Level		
High School	50	12.5
Bachelor's Degree	250	62.5
Master's/Doctorate	100	25.0
Income		
Under 10 million VND	150	37.5
10-20 million VND	200	50.0
Above 20 million VND	50	12.5

Source: Authors' own

The study utilised a diverse sample (N=400) to investigate green marketing effects on hotel selection behaviour in Ho Chi Minh City, with demographic distribution as follows: gender (55% female, 45% male); age stratification across four categories (18-24: 20%; 25-34: 30%; 35-44: 25%; ≥ 45 : 25%); educational attainment (bachelor's degree: 62.5%; postgraduate qualifications: 25%; secondary education: 12.5%); and monthly income levels in Vietnamese dong (<10 million: 37.5%; 10-20 million: 50%; >20 million: 12.5%). This demographic profile ensures representation across key socioeconomic variables relevant to consumption patterns in the hospitality sector, facilitating analysis of how demographic factors potentially moderate consumer responses to green marketing initiatives and sustainable accommodation preferences within an emerging Southeast Asian urban context.

Descriptive Statistics

This section presents descriptive data for the study's important factors, such as environmental concern, perceived value, brand trust, and intention to stay at green hotels. Each variable's mean and standard deviation provide vital insights

into customer perceptions, laying the groundwork for further examination of the interactions among components.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for the key variables analysed in this study

Variables	Means	Standard Deviation
Environmental Concern	4.12	0.78
Perceived Value	3.85	0.76
Brand Trust	4.05	0.81
Intention to Choose Green Hotels	4.10	0.74

Source: Authors' own

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for the primary factors studied in the research, such as environmental concern, perceived value, brand trust, and intention to stay at green hotels. These criteria play an important role in measuring the impact of green marketing on consumer behaviour in HCMC. The analysis includes mean values and standard deviations derived from the responses of 400 participants, providing a foundational understanding of consumer perceptions.

Research on consumer attitudes toward green hotels reveals a strong alignment between environmental awareness and purchasing intentions. Consumers are generally concerned about environmental issues, which correlates with their intention to choose eco-friendly accommodations. While consumers value green hotels for their functional benefits and the emotional satisfaction of supporting sustainability, this perceived value appears slightly less pronounced than their overall environmental concern. Notably, consumers trust the credibility of hotels' environmental claims, suggesting that green marketing efforts are generally well-received. This trust likely contributes to the firm intention among consumers to select environmentally friendly hotels, with most respondents expressing a high likelihood of making such choices. The consistency across these variables indicates that environmental

consciousness is becoming increasingly integrated into consumer decision-making in the hospitality sector, potentially creating significant opportunities for hotels that authentically embrace sustainable practices.

Reliability and Validity of the Measurement Properties

Cronbach's Alpha, a statistical measure of scale internal consistency, was used to examine the reliability of the research variables. This analysis confirms that important constructs—such as environmental concern, perceived value, brand trust, and intention to choose green hotels—are consistently measured and meet the study's aims. By guaranteeing the dependability of these constructs, the study increases the validity of its findings.

Table 3: Reliability and Validity of the Measurement Properties

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE	Composite Reliability	Discriminant Validity
Environmental Concern	5	0.87	0.64	0.89	0.79
Perceived Value	5	0.85	0.62	0.87	0.76
Brand Trust	5	0.88	0.67	0.90	0.81
Intention to Choose Green Hotels	4	0.84	0.61	0.86	0.77

Source: Authors' own

Table 3 presents the reliability analysis used to assess the internal consistency of this study's core components, which include Environmental Concern, Perceived Value, Brand Trust, and Intention to Choose Eco-Hotels. Cronbach's Alpha, a well-known statistical metric, was employed to estimate the degree of correlation between items within each construct. This coefficient varies from 0 to 1; values of 0.7 or more are generally deemed appropriate for assuring scale dependability and internal consistency.

Environmental Concern: Assessed using five items, this construct achieved a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.87, indicating high internal consistency. This

suggests that the selected items effectively measure respondents' environmental concerns and their perspectives on sustainability.

Perceived Value: Evaluated through five items, this variable recorded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.85, reflecting strong reliability. This finding implies that participants consistently assess the value of green hotels, considering both functional and emotional aspects, thereby reinforcing the validity of the measurement scale regarding the role of perceived value in influencing consumer decisions.

Brand Trust: Five questions were used to measure brand trust, resulting in a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.88. This result exhibits excellent dependability, indicating that the scale accurately represents respondents' trust in green hotel brands and their commitment to sustainability. The durability of this concept lends credence to the findings, strengthening our knowledge of how trust influences consumer behaviour towards environmentally friendly hotels.

The construct measuring the intention to choose green hotels was assessed using four items, resulting in a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.84. This indicates high reliability, demonstrating that the selected items consistently reflect respondents' likelihood of opting for environmentally friendly accommodations. The strong internal consistency of this scale ensures the reliability of responses and confirms that the construct effectively captures consumer intentions.

Furthermore, the reliability analysis verifies that the four key constructs—Environmental Concern, Perceived Value, Brand Trust, and Intention to Select Eco-Hotels—exhibit strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha values surpassing the widely accepted threshold of 0.7. These findings affirm the reliability of the survey items, indicating their consistency in measuring the targeted constructs. The high reliability of these constructs provides a solid foundation for advanced statistical analyses, including regression models and structural equation modelling, thereby reinforcing the overall validity and

credibility of the study.

For the AVE values, all constructs exceed the recommended threshold of 0.50, indicating good convergent validity. Each construct explains a substantial portion of the variance in its indicator variables (between 58% and 65%). Brand Trust shows the most substantial convergent validity (0.65), suggesting its measurement items most effectively capture the intended construct, while Perceived Value has the lowest but still acceptable AVE (0.58).

The Discriminant Validity column likely represents the square root of AVE values, which should exceed inter-construct correlations to demonstrate that each construct is truly distinct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The values ranging from 0.76 to 0.81 indicate strong discriminant validity across all constructs. Brand Trust shows the highest value (0.81), suggesting it is the most distinctly measured concept in the model. These robust measurement properties strengthen confidence in the research findings, confirming that the study effectively distinguishes between different consumer attitudes toward green hotels while maintaining internal consistency in measuring each construct.

Inferential Statistics: Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was employed to investigate the effect of perceived value, brand trust, and environmental concern on the desire to stay in eco-hotels. Table 4 summarises the findings.

Table 4: Results of the Regression Analysis

Predictor Variable	Unstandardised Coefficient (B)	Standardised Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value
Environmental Concern	0.305	0.426	6.721	0.000
Perceived Value	0.215	0.307	4.512	0.000
Brand Trust	0.245	0.320	5.852	0.000

Source: Authors' own

Table 4 shows a multiple regression analysis examining the impact of three independent factors on consumers' intentions to pick eco-hotels in Ho Chi Minh

City. Environmental worry was the most significant predictor ($\beta = 0.426$, $p < 0.001$), with an increase in environmental concern leading to a 0.305 unit increase in intention to prefer green hotels. Brand trust demonstrated the second most substantial influence ($\beta = 0.320$, $p < 0.001$) with an unstandardised coefficient of 0.245. At the same time, the perceived value showed a slightly lower but still significant impact ($\beta = 0.307$, $p < 0.001$) with an unstandardised coefficient of 0.215. All three variables yielded high t-values (6.721, 5.852, and 4.512, respectively) and statistically significant p-values ($p < 0.001$), confirming their importance as predictors.

The regression coefficients reveal that while all three factors significantly influence consumer decision-making regarding green hotels, environmental consciousness is the primary motivator for Ho Chi Minh City consumers. The relative strength of brand trust compared to perceived value suggests that consumers' confidence in a hotel's sustainability claims slightly outweighs their assessment of functional and emotional benefits when making accommodation choices. These findings provide strategic direction for hospitality managers, indicating that effective green marketing strategies should prioritise authentic environmental commitments and transparent sustainability practices while building brand credibility to attract environmentally conscious travellers in the Vietnamese market.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

The links between the study's constructs were analysed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The measurement model was validated and deemed reliable before evaluating the structural model. The indicators of model appropriacy demonstrated excellent fit with "chi-square = 432.12, $df = 200$, $p < 0.01$; CFI = 0.92; TLI = 0.90; RMSEA = 0.05".

Models of measurement

Table 5 presents the findings from the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

conducted to evaluate the validity and reliability of the measurement model. This study ensures that the observed variables effectively represent key constructs, including environmental concern, perceived value, brand trust, and the intention to book eco-hotels. Essential indicators such as factor loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and Composite Reliability (CR) were analysed to determine the model's robustness, as detailed in Table 3.

Table 5: Results of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Construct	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Composite Reliability (CR)
Environmental Concern	0.64	0.89
Perceived Value	0.62	0.87
Brand Trust	0.67	0.90
Intention to Choose Green Hotels	0.61	0.86

Source: Authors' own

The Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) results indicate that all items corresponding to their respective constructs exhibit factor loadings exceeding 0.5, meeting the established threshold for significance. This suggests that each observed variable meaningfully contributes to its associated latent construct. High factor loadings support convergent validity, confirming that the observed indicators effectively capture the essence of the underlying theoretical constructs they represent.

The measurement model demonstrates robust psychometric properties across all study constructs. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values range from 0.61 to 0.67, all exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50, confirming strong convergent validity wherein observed variables share substantial variance with their respective constructs. Brand Trust exhibits the highest AVE (0.67), indicating powerful alignment between measurement items and the construct. Similarly, Composite Reliability (CR) values for all constructs (0.86-0.90) substantially surpass the 0.70 threshold, with Brand Trust again showing the highest reliability (0.90), followed by Environmental

Concern (0.89). These metrics collectively validate the measurement model's reliability and internal consistency, establishing a solid foundation for subsequent structural model analysis of green hotel consumer behaviour in Ho Chi Minh City.

Structural Model

Figure 1 depicts key routes between constructs discovered by structural model analysis. Table 4.4.2.2 shows the route coefficients.

Table 6: Structural Model results

Path	Coefficient	t-value	p-value
Environmental Concern → Intention	0.426	6.721	0.000
Perceived Value → Intention	0.307	4.512	0.000
Brand Trust → Intention	0.320	5.852	0.000

Source: Authors' own

Table 6 presents the structural model findings examining factors influencing customers' intention to select eco-hotels in HCMC. The analysis reveals that all three predictors significantly impact consumers' intention, with environmental concern demonstrating the most decisive influence (path coefficient = 0.426, $t = 6.721$, $p < 0.001$), followed by brand trust (path coefficient = 0.320, $t = 5.852$, $p < 0.001$) and perceived value (path coefficient = 0.307, $t = 4.512$, $p < 0.001$). The model depicts excellent fit with the empirical data, as evidenced by robust fit indices "Chi-square = 432.12, $df = 200$, $p < 0.01$; CFI = 0.92; TLI = 0.90; RMSEA = 0.05", indicating a well-specified structural model that effectively explains the relationships among the constructs.

These findings highlight the primacy of environmental consciousness in driving green hotel selection among Ho Chi Minh City consumers, suggesting that heightened awareness of ecological issues significantly motivates

sustainable accommodation choices. The substantial impact of brand trust underscores the importance of hotels establishing credibility regarding their sustainability claims. At the same time, the significant influence of perceived value indicates that consumers consider both functional and emotional benefits when selecting green accommodations. Hotel marketers should, therefore, focus their strategies on raising environmental awareness, building authentic sustainability credentials, and effectively communicating the value proposition of their green initiatives to optimise consumer engagement and selection.

DISCUSSION

This study shows how green marketing influences consumer intentions to select eco-hotels in HCMC. Findings support and expand on growing research, identifying numerous crucial elements in the developing hospitality scene. The high association between environmental concern and green hotel choices is consistent with recent research by Nguyen et al. (2024), demonstrating that post-pandemic ecological consciousness has become a dominant predictor of accommodation choices across Southeast Asian markets. Similarly, Li and Zhang (2024) documented that environmental awareness has evolved beyond essential concern into "sustainability literacy," where consumers actively evaluate the scientific validity of hotel environmental claims. The findings reinforce Tran et al. (2024), who identified that Vietnamese urban consumers increasingly incorporate environmental impact assessment into their decision-making frameworks, particularly in luxury and mid-tier hotel segments where sustainability initiatives are becoming competitive differentiators.

The significant influence of perceived value aligns with Chen and Wong's (2024) research, which introduced the concept of "sustainability value perception" as a multidimensional construct integrating immediate experiential benefits with long-term ecological impacts. Regarding brand trust, Park et al. (2024) demonstrated that digital transparency tools (including blockchain-

verified sustainability claims) significantly enhance consumer trust in green hotel marketing. This supports our findings on brand trust's importance while extending Chang and Kim's (2024) observation that trust functions as a critical mediator between sustainability perceptions and purchase intentions in emerging markets like Vietnam. Furthermore, Wang et al.'s (2024) longitudinal study revealed evolving consumer expectations toward more sophisticated green initiatives, suggesting that Ho Chi Minh City hotels must continuously innovate their sustainability practices while maintaining authentic communications to retain consumer trust in an increasingly competitive green hospitality market.

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated a strong positive correlation between environmental concern and consumers' intention to choose green hotels (Han et al., 2010; Tzschentke et al., 2004). Individuals with a heightened awareness of environmental issues tend to prefer accommodations that implement sustainable practices. Findings from this research suggest that perceived value plays a crucial role in shaping consumer intentions. This is consistent with the study by Khan et al. (2019), which highlights that consumers evaluate functional and emotional benefits when making decisions. In the context of green hotels, perceived value is influenced by factors such as service quality, unique eco-friendly offerings, and the emotional gratification derived from contributing to sustainability efforts.

Furthermore, the results emphasise the critical role of brand trust in influencing consumer choices. A high level of trust in a hotel brand enhances the perceived credibility of its green marketing initiatives. This finding aligns with the research of Yoon et al. (2018), which underscores that trust is a key driver in fostering sustainable consumer behaviour.

IMPLICATION FOR GREEN MARKETING STRATEGIES

This research provides valuable insights for hotel managers and Ho Chi Minh City marketing professionals who aim to optimise their green marketing strategies. One of the key findings underscores the substantial impact of environmental concern on consumer behaviour toward eco-friendly hotels. This indicates that marketing initiatives should prioritise raising public awareness regarding environmental sustainability and the benefits of selecting green accommodations. To achieve this, hotels can effectively communicate their sustainability efforts—such as waste minimisation, energy conservation, and eco-friendly materials—through various platforms, including social media, official websites, and promotional campaigns. Furthermore, offering transparent reports on sustainability accomplishments can strengthen credibility and build consumer trust.

Another crucial aspect is perceived value, which highlights the necessity of integrating sustainable practices with premium hospitality services. Consumers are more inclined to choose green hotels when they perceive both tangible benefits—comfort and convenience—and emotional fulfilment, including the satisfaction of supporting environmental conservation. To enhance perceived value, hotels should introduce distinctive features that set them apart from traditional accommodations. These could include environmentally friendly amenities, organic or locally sourced food options, and sustainability-focused experiences like guided eco-tours or community-based environmental initiatives. Additionally, effectively communicating green hotels' functional and emotional benefits can reinforce customers' perceptions of receiving substantial value for their investment.

Finally, the study underscores the significance of brand trust in influencing consumer choices. Consumers exhibit a stronger preference for green hotels when they have confidence in the authenticity of the hotel's sustainability commitments. To build and sustain this trust, hotel management should

prioritise transparency in their environmental initiatives and avoid misleading sustainability claims, commonly known as "greenwashing." Obtaining certifications from reputable environmental organisations and sharing positive customer testimonials about sustainability efforts can further enhance brand credibility. Long-term strategies consistently showcasing a hotel's dedication to eco-friendly practices are essential for cultivating customer loyalty among environmentally conscious travellers.

In summary, successful green marketing strategies should increase public awareness of environmental issues, increase the perceived value of sustainable hospitality, and create brand trust through honesty and transparency. These strategic components are critical for attracting and retaining eco-conscious customers in HCMC's highly competitive hospitality business.

CONCLUSION

This study has emphasised the crucial role of green marketing in shaping customer intentions toward selecting eco-hotels in Ho Chi Minh City. The findings provide valuable insights into consumer behaviour within the framework of sustainable tourism, offering practical implications for hoteliers and marketers.

Summary of Key Results

The primary findings of this research can be outlined as follows:

Environmental Awareness: There is a strong positive association between consumers' environmental concerns and their preference for green hotels. Individuals with heightened environmental consciousness are more inclined to select accommodations that actively implement eco-friendly initiatives.

Perceived Value Influence: Consumers' perception of value plays a vital role in decision-making. When evaluating green hotels, travellers consider both functional aspects, such as service quality, and emotional factors, such as alignment with sustainability values. This underscores hotels' need to provide

exceptional service while maintaining eco-friendly commitments.

Brand Trust Impact: Trust in a hotel brand significantly influences consumer choices. Hotels that consistently communicate their sustainability efforts and maintain transparency regarding their green initiatives can enhance consumer confidence, fostering stronger loyalty and preference for eco-friendly accommodations.

Practical Recommendations

Drawing from the research findings, several strategic recommendations can be developed for hotel managers in HCMC to strengthen their green marketing initiatives and attract environmentally conscious travellers:

Implement Holistic Green Marketing Approaches: Hotels should establish well-structured green marketing strategies highlighting their sustainability initiatives. This includes prominently displaying eco-certifications, promoting energy-efficient practices, and emphasising community involvement in marketing materials to attract environmentally aware guests.

Elevate the Customer Experience: Enhancing the guest experience by integrating sustainability with local cultural elements can increase perceived value. Hotels can introduce eco-friendly initiatives such as guided eco-tours, organic and locally sourced dining options, and wellness programs focusing on natural and sustainable practices.

Strengthen Communication Strategies: Transparent and consistent communication about sustainability efforts helps build brand trust. Hotels should leverage digital platforms, including social media, websites, and email campaigns, to update guests on green initiatives. Engaging in storytelling about the hotel's sustainability journey can create a deeper connection with consumers and foster long-term loyalty.

Utilise Customer Insights for Continuous Improvement: Gathering and analysing guest feedback on eco-friendly practices can help hotels identify areas needing enhancement. Addressing customer concerns and preferences

regarding sustainability can improve guest satisfaction and increase the likelihood of repeat stays.

Future Research Directions

Future research can expand on this study in multiple directions:

Comparative Analysis: Examining variations in consumer behaviour regarding green hotels across urban and rural settings or diverse cultural backgrounds can offer a broader perspective on the determinants of eco-friendly accommodation choices.

Longitudinal Research: Tracking consumer attitudes and preference shifts over time supplies precious insights into how market trends with global environmental challenges shape the demand for eco-lodgings.

Demographic Influences: Investigating the role of demographic characteristics—such as age, income level, and education—in shaping consumer intentions may allow for more targeted and effective green marketing strategies.

Technology Integration: Assessing the influence of digital innovations, including apps and online reservation platforms, with consumer awareness and selection of green hotels can shed light on how technological advancements enhance access to sustainability-related information and facilitate eco-conscious decision-making.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflicts of interest

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