

# EXPLORING THE IMPLICIT IMPACT OF SUSTAINABILITY CERTIFICATIONS ON SERVICE QUALITY EXPECTATIONS: A NETNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF UPSCALE HOTELS IN HO CHI MINH CITY

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## ABSTRACT

While sustainability badges are becoming a standard feature on digital travel platforms, their influence on guest expectations and post-stay evaluations in emerging urban contexts remains under-explored. Grounded in Signaling Theory, this study adopts a netnographic approach to investigate the implicit impact of these certifications on service quality perceptions at four sustainability-labeled upscale hotels in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam. A systematic content analysis was conducted on 1,294 ratings and 547 user-generated reviews from Booking.com. The analysis identifies seven key experiential dimensions: staff, room, food and beverage, location, additional services, price-value perception, and overall experience. Findings indicate that while guests rarely explicitly reference sustainability labels, these badges function as latent signals that preconfigure high-performance expectations across core service attributes. Specifically, the study conceptualizes the 'Green Expectation Amplification Effect', where sustainability certifications implicitly elevate standards for staff ethics, room quality, and perceived value. These results offer critical insights for hotel managers on aligning green signaling with service delivery to mitigate potential expectation-performance gaps in the competitive upscale segment.

**Keywords:** Sustainability certifications, signaling theory, service quality expectations, netnography, upscale hotels, Ho Chi Minh City.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainability badges and eco-labels within the contemporary hospitality landscape are formally defined as certification mechanisms that validate an establishment's commitment to environmental stewardship and social responsibility [1]. From a strategic marketing perspective, these certifications function as critical green signals that allow properties to achieve meaningful differentiation in a saturated global market. This differentiation is essential for bolstering brand reputation and cultivating trust among prospective guests. Beyond external promotion, the adoption of rigorous sustainability standards, which encompass initiatives ranging from energy efficiency to advanced waste management, is frequently associated with superior resource management. Such operational enhancements have been empirically linked to improved net operating income for hospitality businesses in various developed market settings [2]. By projecting a robust green image, urban hotels can effectively

capture the burgeoning segment of environmentally conscious travelers who prioritize ethical and sustainable considerations in their travel decision-making processes [3].

When examined through the lens of supply and demand, sustainability badges serve as vital information-sharing instruments designed to bridge the transparency gap between the actual environmental performance of a hotel and the perceptions held by its guests [4]. Hoteliers on the supply side utilize these labels to authenticate their legitimacy and environmental claims, whereas guests on the demand side rely on them as cognitive shortcuts or heuristic cues to streamline complex booking procedures [3]. However, a substantial gap remains in the existing academic literature because the majority of previous studies have concentrated heavily on how green labels influence consumer intentions during the pre-purchase phase. There remains a significant lack of in depth research on guests' actual post stay experiences, particularly regarding the implicit mechanisms through which a sustainability certification reshapes guests' evaluative benchmarks for core service quality (e.g., staff attitude, room comfort). Furthermore, the increasing prevalence of expectation-performance gap suggests that the possession of a sustainability badge can be a precarious asset, as it may lead to significant consumer backlash if the actual service delivery fails to align with the certified status [5].

In the geographical and economic context of Ho Chi Minh City, which serves as the primary commercial powerhouse of Viet Nam and a critical destination for urban tourism, the hospitality sector has experienced a period of exceptionally rapid and intensive development [6]. This accelerated growth has placed unprecedented levels of stress on the urban infrastructure and the limited environmental resources of the city, thereby necessitating an urgent transition toward more sustainable business models [7]. Nevertheless, Ho Chi Minh City currently faces a formidable challenge regarding the absence of a standardized and expert-led framework for sustainability, which often results in environmental efforts that are merely symbolic rather than substantive in nature [5]. Within this specific emerging-market context, there is a pressing need to understand whether sustainability certifications inadvertently create a “psychological benchmark” that amplifies guest scrutiny regarding service quality, a phenomenon we term the Green Expectation Amplification Effect. As urban travelers visiting the city become more discerning and technologically savvy, any discrepancy between the visual appeal of a sustainability badge and the practical reality of service delivery becomes a major point of friction, threatening the long-term competitiveness of the city's tourism products [8].

The present study addresses these voids by investigating how sustainability certifications implicitly shape service quality expectations in Ho Chi Minh City's upscale hotels. Specifically, it aims to (1) identify service dimensions most susceptible to amplified scrutiny under green certification, and (2) uncover narrative patterns of guest satisfaction and dissatisfaction beyond conventional surveys. Drawing on Signaling Theory and the expectancy-disconfirmation model, the study proposes the Green Expectation Amplification Effect, where sustainability badges act as a psychological benchmark that raises expectations for staff ethics, room quality, and operational integrity.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Signaling Theory and the Green Trust Mechanism**

Signaling theory is fundamentally concerned with resolving the problem of information asymmetry between two interacting parties, specifically in situations where insiders such as organizations hold private information about their underlying quality that outsiders such as consumers cannot easily observe. In a highly competitive marketplace, high-quality firms intentionally use observable and costly signals to communicate their unobservable attributes

to receivers, thereby differentiating themselves from lower-quality competitors. For a signal to be efficacious and credible, it must incur a signal cost that makes cheating or false signaling too difficult or expensive for inferior entities to imitate [9]. In the context of upscale hotels, prospective guests often face significant information asymmetry regarding a hotel's actual environmental practices and its overall service quality. Therefore, hotels can adopt recognized sustainability certifications as strategic, costly signals to transparently communicate their genuine commitment to environmental standards. By investing in these rigorous certification processes, hotels send a reliable message that not only reduces the consumers' uncertainty but also cultivates a socially legitimate corporate image that aligns with the growing societal demands for sustainable business practices [10].

The successful communication of these environmental signals serves as a critical antecedent to activating the green trust mechanism. Green trust is defined as a consumer's willingness to depend on a product, service, or brand based on the belief or expectation resulting from its credibility, benevolence, and ability regarding its environmental performance [11]. In recent years, as consumer environmentalism has become more prevalent, the rise of deceptive marketing, where companies exaggerate or fabricate their environmental functionalities, has significantly increased consumers' green perceived risk, making them highly skeptical and reluctant to trust corporate environmental claims [12]. To mitigate this perceived risk and overcome consumer skepticism, organizations must provide reliable and objective information. Sustainability certifications act as this vital third-party verification, effectively lowering the green perceived risk while simultaneously elevating the green perceived quality [13]. When hotels successfully leverage these certifications to validate their environmental promises, it directly enhances customer green satisfaction and fosters a deep-seated green trust. Ultimately, this green trust mechanism positively shapes the guests' service quality expectations, transforming implicit sustainability signals into tangible competitive advantages, higher purchase intentions, and long-term green loyalty [14].

## **2.2. Guest satisfaction, dissatisfaction and hotel experiences**

Guest satisfaction constitutes a fundamental metric in hospitality research because it functions as a primary antecedent to brand loyalty, positive electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), and long-term financial performance [15]. Theoretical frameworks such as the expectancy-disconfirmation model suggest that satisfaction arises from a post-consumption evaluation in which the actual performance of a service is compared against pre-visit expectations [8]. When the perceived quality of a hotel stay aligns with or surpasses these initial expectations, positive disconfirmation occurs, leading to a state of satisfaction. Conversely, any perceived deficiency in service delivery results in negative disconfirmation and subsequent dissatisfaction [16]. Within the upscale urban hotel sector, satisfaction is increasingly understood as a subjective and multi-dimensional construct that is shaped by both the cognitive evaluation of tangible attributes and the affective responses elicited during the guest journey.

In the specific context of urban hospitality in Viet Nam, empirical analysis of guest narratives identifies several critical drivers that underpin the satisfaction of sophisticated travelers. High levels of satisfaction are primarily associated with staff professionalism and friendliness, room cleanliness, and the variety of food and beverage offerings, including local and healthy options. For instance, in prominent establishments like Mia Saigon -- Luxury Boutique Hotel and Le Meridien Saigon, the quality of interaction with staff and the excellence of in-house facilities are frequently cited as the most significant satisfiers. On the other hand, dissatisfaction is often triggered by perceived price-value mismatches, noise disturbances, and environmental issues in the hotel surroundings [17]. It is important to note that satisfaction and dissatisfaction in these urban settings do not represent simple polar opposites. Certain core

attributes like room hygiene and safety function as “hygiene factors” that cause significant dissatisfaction when poorly performed, whereas experiential elements like unique riverside locations or personalized service act as “satisfiers” that actively enhance the overall experience.

Recent academic discourse has highlighted the intricate and interactive nature of these experiential attributes. Positive staff behavior has the potential to mitigate guest frustrations regarding physical facility defects or temporary operational inconsistencies. Furthermore, unique culinary experiences or authentic local designs can often compensate for perceived shortcomings in room size or central accessibility for specific traveler segments [18]. This complexity is particularly relevant when examining the role of sustainability badges as market signals. These certifications create a pre-arrival expectation of ethical and responsible conduct, which then colors how guests interpret their subsequent interactions with the hotel [4]. Interestingly, research in Ho Chi Minh City suggests that while sustainability badges are rarely mentioned explicitly in guest reviews, the “green” value is experienced indirectly through cues such as perceived safety, healthy gastronomy, and the ethical conduct of the personnel. Consequently, understanding the synergy between traditional service quality and sustainability signals is essential for developing a holistic framework of guest satisfaction in modern urban tourism [19].

### **2.3. Sustainability in hospitality and sustainability badges**

Sustainable hospitality is a multifaceted concept that encompasses environmental, social, and economic dimensions, including critical practices such as energy and water efficiency, comprehensive waste management, fair employment policies, community engagement, and the preservation of local cultural heritage [1]. To validate these commitments, various certification schemes and eco-labels, such as Green Key, EarthCheck, and the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification, have been established to recognize hotels that adhere to rigorous sustainability criteria [8]. In practice, however, the rapid proliferation of these diverse labels has occasionally led to a “label jungle” effect, which generates significant confusion among both international consumers and hospitality practitioners regarding the relative stringency and credibility of each certification [20].

In response to this complexity, major online travel platforms have introduced proprietary sustainability badges that aggregate data from multiple existing schemes or self-reported environmental practices into standardized and user-friendly visual icons [4]. These digital signals, notably the “Travel Sustainable” tiers on platforms such as Booking.com, are intended to enhance transparency, minimize information overload, and facilitate more responsible consumption choices for modern travelers [7]. Empirical evidence indicates that the presence of such sustainability labels and explicit environmental claims can significantly improve a hotel's perceived brand image and increase consumer trust. Furthermore, these signals have been shown to enhance the willingness to pay among environmentally conscious segments, provided that the communication of these green attributes is perceived as credible and authentic [3].

Nevertheless, several critical challenges continue to hinder the effectiveness of sustainability signaling in the hospitality industry. First, a growing number of guests perceive some sustainability initiatives as superficial or as a form of “expectation - performance gap” particularly when these claims are not corroborated by tangible and visible environmental practices during the actual stay [5]. Second, there is empirical evidence suggesting that sustainability attributes may often be considered secondary to more fundamental service concerns such as hygiene, personal comfort, and price competitiveness when guests formulate their post-stay evaluations. Third, the degree to which travelers consciously notice and interpret these badges on digital booking platforms remains an area requiring further exploration. Some findings indicate that while badges can serve as valuable cognitive heuristics, they are frequently overlooked when competing with powerful price or prime location cues in the decision-making process [4].

In emerging Asian metropolises like Ho Chi Minh City, the implementation of sustainability badges intersects with rapid urbanization, systemic environmental degradation, and the evolving consumption patterns of an expanding middle class [6]. Upscale hotels in this context including prominent establishments such as Mia Saigon -- Luxury Boutique Hotel, Le Meridien Saigon, Novotel Saigon Centre, and Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel, have adopted sustainability labels both as a proactive response to emerging regulatory pressures and as a strategic mechanism to achieve differentiation in a highly competitive urban market. However, the extent to which urban tourists in Viet Nam interpret these sustainability badges as meaningful indicators of quality rather than mere marketing devices remains an open empirical question. Recent research in this specific urban context suggests that sustainability is often experienced indirectly through perceived safety, high-quality local gastronomy, and responsible staff conduct, rather than through direct recognition of the digital badge itself.

To explain this phenomenon, this study draws upon Signaling Theory [21]. In the information-asymmetric market of Ho Chi Minh City's upscale hospitality, sustainability certifications function as potent market signals that mitigate guest uncertainty. These signals do not merely communicate environmental commitment; they act as an implicit promise of superior overall service quality. Consequently, this study proposes the “Green Expectation Amplification Effect” wherein sustainability standards serve as a psychological benchmark. Even without explicit mention in reviews, these badges implicitly elevate guest expectations for tangible service dimensions, such as staff dedication and room comfort, essentially reconfiguring the baseline for luxury service delivery.

#### **2.4. Netnography and user-generated content in hospitality research**

Netnography, initially conceptualized by Kozinets [22], has gained significant traction in contemporary tourism studies as a robust method for exploring online communities, travel blogs, and review platforms [20]. As a specialized adaptation of traditional ethnography designed for the internet as a virtual fieldwork site [23], netnography involves the systematic observation and analysis of naturally occurring online interactions. This methodology allows researchers to capture rich narrative and emotional content with minimal intrusion, thereby preserving the authenticity of the guest experience [24]. In the hospitality sector, netnography and content analysis of UGC have been effectively utilized to investigate various accommodation types, ranging from rural homestays to luxury urban hotels.

In the context of Viet Nam, prior research has demonstrated the utility of netnography in identifying core satisfaction and dissatisfaction dimensions. For instance, a recent study of urban hotels in Ho Chi Minh City analyzed 1,294 Booking.com reviews to reveal that guest satisfaction was primarily driven by host-guest interactions and authentic cultural experiences. However, that study also highlighted significant dissatisfaction stemming from infrastructure weaknesses and inconsistent service quality. Building on this foundation, the current research applies a netnographic design to the upscale urban hospitality sector of Ho Chi Minh City. The study focuses on 1,294 online narratives retrieved from Booking.com regarding four leading hotels that have been awarded sustainability badges, specifically Mia Saigon -- Luxury Boutique Hotel, Le Meridien Saigon, Novotel Saigon Centre, and Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel.

Compared to conventional survey methods, netnography offers several strategic advantages for examining sustainability-labelled establishments. First, online reviews are written spontaneously by guests, providing direct insights into their authentic priorities and concerns without the influence of researcher prompting [19]. Second, these digital narratives frequently combine textual descriptions with visual elements, which allows researchers to capture how guests frame specific sustainability-related cues, such as green spaces or healthy

breakfast options, within their overall evaluative framework. Third, netnography is uniquely capable of highlighting the absence of sustainability discourse. If sustainability badges are rarely mentioned explicitly in the reviews, it suggests that other experience dimensions, such as service professionalism or facility quality, dominate the cognitive assessments of the guests.

The analytical process in this study involves a systematic content analysis of the 1,294 narratives to identify recurring themes and sub-categories. This rigorous approach produces seven main categories: Staff and Service, Room and In-house Facilities, Food and Beverage, Location and Surroundings, Additional Services and Experiences, Price and Perceived Value, and Overall Experience. By synthesizing these dimensions, the research explores how sustainability signals intersect with traditional service quality attributes in an Asian urban context. Consequently, this netnographic design facilitates a deeper understanding of the “critical incidents” that either fulfill the promises of sustainability badges or expose the perceived inconsistencies that lead to guest dissatisfaction [8].



*Figure 1.* Locations of the four sustainability-certified upscale hotels in Ho Chi Minh City's central districts.

*Source:* mymap.google.com

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Research Area**

Ho Chi Minh City serves as the primary economic powerhouse and the largest tourism hub of Viet Nam. In the broader context of Asia emerging as one of the fastest growing destination regions globally, Viet Nam in general and Ho Chi Minh City in particular have witnessed a rapid expansion of the international tourist market [6]. As a principal gateway to the country, the city possesses superior accessibility through direct flight routes to key global markets, which allows it to function as a strategic distribution center for tourists traveling throughout the nation. The inherent appeal of Ho Chi Minh City lies in its diverse array of tourism resources, which encompass cultural, historical, and natural elements that create a favorable macro-environment for the intensive development of the hospitality sector.

The hospitality landscape in the city is highly diverse, ranging from ultra-luxury establishments to budget accommodations, which are predominantly concentrated in central districts where vibrant service activities such as gastronomy, shopping, and entertainment take place. However, this period of rapid and intensive development has also precipitated significant challenges regarding service quality and the long-term satisfaction of visitors [6]. Prior empirical research in the Vietnamese context has indicated that while tourists may express satisfaction with scenic landscapes and cost-effectiveness, substantial gaps often persist between the perceived importance of service attributes and the actual satisfaction levels regarding destination communication and service delivery [6].

Consequently, Ho Chi Minh City provides an ideal empirical setting to examine traveler responses to initiatives aimed at enhancing service quality and sustainability, particularly through the implementation of sustainability badges. The city's upscale hospitality sector, represented by prominent certified properties such as Mia Saigon - Luxury Boutique Hotel, Le Meridien Saigon, Novotel Saigon Centre, and Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel, offers a unique opportunity to test the effectiveness of these green signals. As urban travelers become increasingly sophisticated, understanding how they navigate the intersection of rapid urbanization and sustainable practices is critical for the future competitiveness of the destination [8]. This research context thus facilitates a deep exploration of whether these sustainability badges successfully fulfill their promises or contribute to guest friction in an era of digital and ecological transition [7].

### **3.2. The Netnography Method**

This study employs a netnographic approach for the purposes of data collection and analysis to achieve a profound understanding of online consumer behavior [22]. Kozinets defines netnography as specific sets of research positions and accompanying practices embedded in historical trajectories as well as webs of theoretical constructs and citation networks. In the field of tourism research, this method is described as a novel adaptation of traditional ethnography for the internet as a virtual fieldwork site [23]. Netnography involves the systematic observation of or participation in public online forum discussions, which provides valuable insights into consumer dialogues regarding accommodation experiences [25]. This approach facilitates the investigation of narratives and attempts to comprehend social phenomena while maintaining objectivity, thereby serving as a faster and more cost-effective alternative to traditional ethnography [22].

The adoption of netnography in this research is driven by three strategic considerations. First, online travel platforms have become increasingly critical information sources for both travelers and researchers in the digital era [26]. Second, this method allows for the rigorous study of the behaviors of a specific demographic group, which in this context refers to guests staying at upscale hotels awarded with sustainability badges in Ho Chi Minh City. Third, the narrative analysis of travel reviews provides rich textual and pictorial information that enables researchers to gain a deeper understanding of visitors' authentic emotions and experiences regarding hotel sustainability efforts [24]. In recent years, an expanding body of netnographic research has been published in prominent tourism journals, which demonstrates the validity and reliability of this methodology for analyzing UGC [20].

### **3.3. Data Collection**

Following Kozinets (2002), the study first identified the online communities most relevant for examining hotel service quality in Ho Chi Minh City from the tourists' perspective. Online reviews posted on Booking.com were subsequently selected as the primary data source for comparative analysis [27]. Established in Amsterdam in 1996, Booking.com has evolved from a local startup into a leading global platform for digital travel information services. According to the platform's publicly available guidelines, only guests who have completed a

booking through Booking.com, including those booking on behalf of others, are eligible to submit accommodation reviews (Figure. 2). In addition, reviews must be submitted within three months of the guest's checkout date.

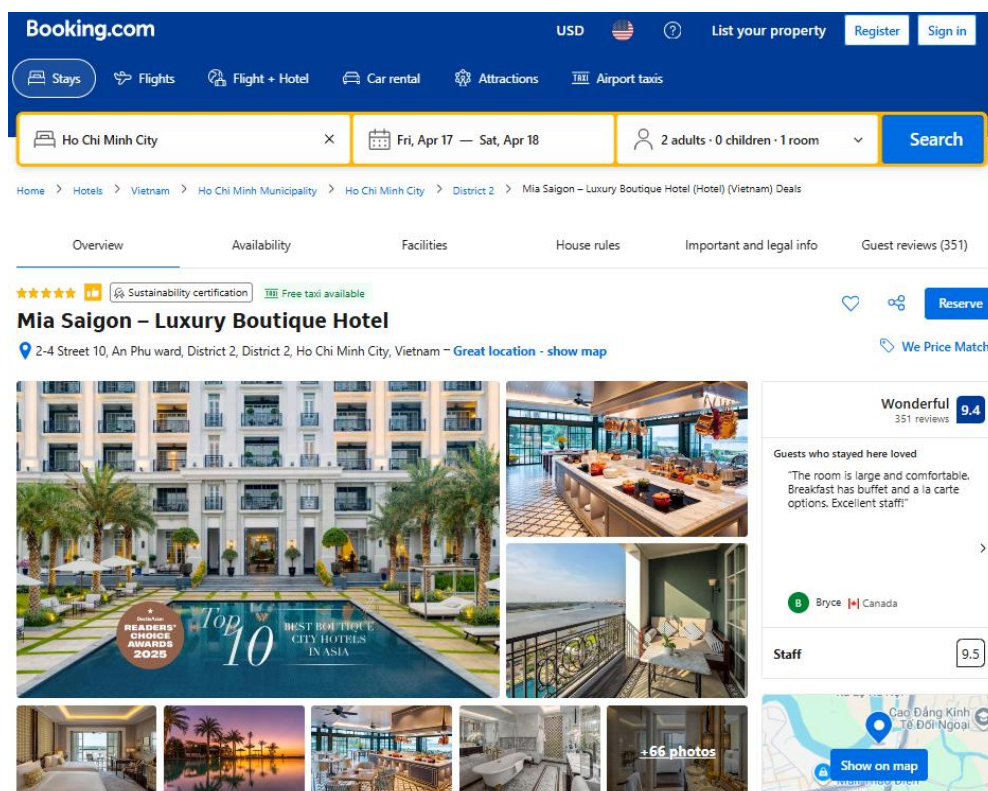


Figure 2. A snapshot of a hotel with sustainability badges in Ho Chi Minh city on Booking.com, displaying the overall rating score and tourists' opinions.

*Source: booking.com*

The second stage focused on data collection. In accordance with netnographic principles, exhaustive sampling was not required; instead, the process sought to obtain illustrative evidence of the phenomena under investigation. The study selected four hotels at the destination that had received sustainability badges, as shown in Figure 3. The selection followed two criteria. First, hotels with the highest overall guest ratings were chosen to help identify factors contributing to their strong performance as well as potential sources of dissatisfaction. Second, each hotel needed to have an adequate number of guest reviews within a three-year period from February 2023 to January 2026. Figure 3 presents the hotels included in the study.

Textual reviews for the four hotels were analyzed. The dataset comprises 1,294 ratings, including 547 user generated reviews (Table 1). Of these, 89% were submitted by international tourists, with visitors from Asia representing 49% and those from Europe representing 31 percent of the total (Table 2). The reviews were classified into two categories, “liked” and “disliked”, based on the default structure used by Booking.com. Because many reviews were written by international travelers in different languages, Google Translate was employed to facilitate comprehension. As noted by Shukla et al. (2023), Google Translate is widely used for language translation. Its updated version applies an example based machine translation, which enhances accuracy by learning from a large corpora of linguistic data. It performs interlingual translation by encoding sentence level semantics rather than relying solely on phrase level matching.



Mia Saigon – Luxury Boutique Hotel holds LEED certification as Viet Nam's first LEED-certified hotel, according to its official Vietnamese website.



Le Meridien Saigon has achieved Green Globe certification for the 2025–2026 period, as reported by VnExpress on October 9, 2025.



Novotel Saigon Centre has been Green Key certified since early 2024, as stated on the hotel's official sustainability commitment page.



Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel holds Green Globe certification for both 2024 and 2025 and previously held the Green Lotus Level 4 label from 2015 to 2018, as documented by SGGP and the Saigon Times.

Figure 3. Top four hotels with sustainability badges.

Source: booking.com

Table 1. Hotel with sustainability badge in Ho Chi Minh City selected for analysis.

| Hotel                              | Overall rating (1) | Total reviews (2) | Room rate (USD) (3) |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel  | 8.8                | 475               | 220                 |
| Novotel Saigon Centre              | 8.6                | 348               | 145                 |
| Le Meridien Saigon                 | 8.3                | 198               | 194                 |
| Mia Saigon - Luxury Boutique Hotel | 9.3                | 359               | 286                 |

1. Updated overall review scores on Booking.com as of January 2026.
2. Total number of reviews recorded from February 2023 to January 2026.
3. Room rates for one night for two guests with breakfast, listed on Booking.com in January 2026.

Source: Compiled by authors

*Table 2. Nationalities of reviewers included in the netnography sample from February 2023 to January 2026.*

| Hotel                              | Asia | Europe | Oceania | Americas | Africa | Unknown Nationality |
|------------------------------------|------|--------|---------|----------|--------|---------------------|
| Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel  | 257  | 108    | 66      | 35       | 10     |                     |
| Novotel Saigon Centre              | 143  | 95     | 26      | 10       | 1      | 1                   |
| Le Meridien Saigon                 | 99   | 64     | 23      | 14       | 1      |                     |
| Mia Saigon – Luxury Boutique Hotel | 138  | 144    | 49      | 23       | 7      |                     |
| Total                              | 637  | 411    | 164     | 82       | 19     | 1                   |

*Source: Compiled by authors*

The third step concerned the role of the researchers. In netnography, when researchers enter an active online community as participant observers who ask questions and guide interactions, they are expected to disclose their identities and research purposes, obtain informed consent, and conduct member checks with key informants [20]. In contrast, when researchers access review platforms as nonparticipant observers, it is generally accepted that there is no requirement to reveal research objectives or seek permission, because these platforms are public forums in which posts are often anonymous and may have been published months or years earlier [23]. This study adopted a passive and covert approach; the researchers did not intervene in ongoing discussions or influence the individuals posting content. This covert netnographic strategy reflects a substantial personal and social distance between the researchers and the reviewers [28].

### **3.4. Data Analysis**

Content analysis was employed to systematically examine the user-generated content (UGC). This method, widely applied in tourism research for organizing textual data and identifying thematic patterns, enhances structure and clarity in large review datasets. A manual coding procedure was implemented, after which the reviews were grouped and overlapping categories were consolidated. Through this process, individual reviews were assigned to broader thematic groups and later refined by merging similar elements. The final outcome was the identification of seven principal categories that explain the key factors driving guest satisfaction and dissatisfaction across the four hotels analyzed (Table 3).

*Table 3. Main categories and sub-categories with related content.*

| Main Category                               | Subcategory                                                                             | Lable                 |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Staff & Service (STAFF)                     | Friendliness, warmth, helpfulness of staff                                              | STAFF_FRIENDLINESS    |
|                                             | Speed and efficiency in handling requests                                               | STAFF_EFFICIENCY      |
|                                             | Foreign language skills, ability to serve international guests                          | STAFF_LANGUAGE        |
|                                             | Professionalism and service standards                                                   | STAFF_PROFESSIONALISM |
|                                             | Fair treatment, non-discrimination, inclusive attitude toward all guest segments        | STAFF_FAIRNESS        |
| Room & In-house Facilities (ROOM)           | Cleanliness of room, bathroom, corridors, public areas                                  | ROOM_CLEANLINESS      |
|                                             | Quality of in-room equipment                                                            | ROOM_EQUIPMENT        |
|                                             | Additional facilities: gym, spa, business center, kids' area, etc.                      | FACILITIES_ADDITIONAL |
| Food & Beverage (FNB)                       | Quality of breakfast, buffet, room service                                              | FNB_QUALITY           |
|                                             | Availability of local dishes, vegetarian/vegan, healthy or organic options              | FNB_VARIETY_LOCAL     |
|                                             | Service at restaurants/bars                                                             | FNB_SERVICE           |
| Location & Surroundings (LOCATION)          | Hotel location                                                                          | LOCATION_CONVENIENCE  |
|                                             | Surrounding scenery and environment                                                     | LOCATION_ENVIRONMENT  |
|                                             | Safety and security of surrounding neighborhood, guests feeling safe                    | LOCATION_SAFETY       |
| Additional Services & Experiences (SERVICE) | Pool, rooftop, bar, lounge, club lounge experiences                                     | SERVICE_LEISURE       |
|                                             | Tours/activities organized by hotel                                                     | SERVICE_TOURS         |
|                                             | Transport services: taxi support, airport shuttle, bike/motorbike/car (incl. EV) rental | SERVICE_TRANSPORT     |
|                                             | Spa, massage, wellness, yoga, gym with trainer, etc.                                    | SERVICE_WELLNESS      |
| Price & Perceived Value (PRICE)             | Room price compared with quality                                                        | PRICE_VALUE           |
|                                             | Promotions, loyalty benefits, long-stay offers                                          | PRICE_PROMOTION       |
|                                             | Price transparency                                                                      | PRICE_TRANSPARENCY    |
| Overall Experience (OVERALL)                | Overall impression of the stay                                                          | OVERALL_IMPRESSION    |
|                                             | Willingness to return or recommend to others                                            | OVERALL_RETURN_INTENT |
|                                             | Key highlights of the stay                                                              | OVERALL_HIGHLIGHTS    |
|                                             | Major issues that significantly damage the overall experience                           | OVERALL_MAJOR_ISSUE   |

*Source: Authors*

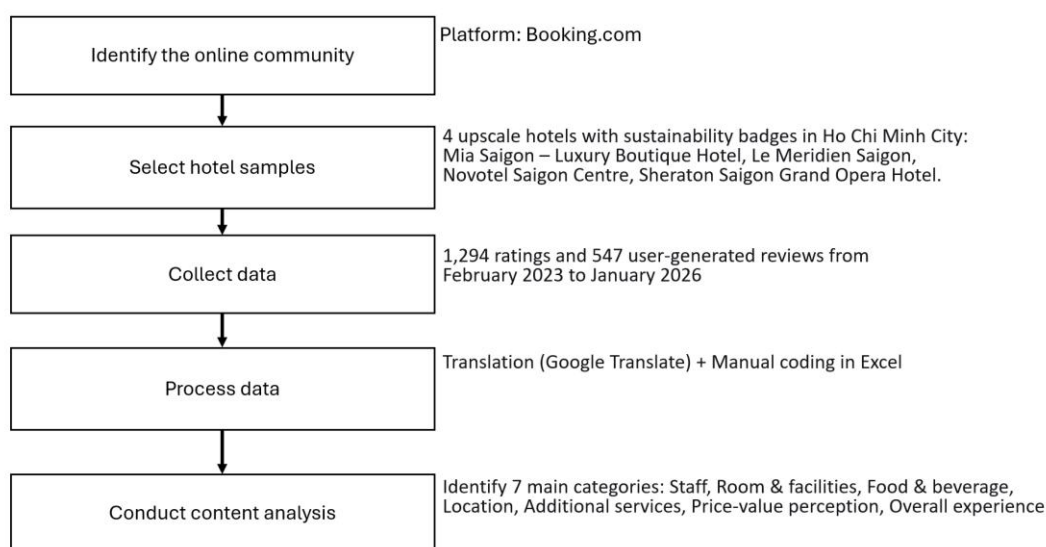


*Figure 4. Netnographic research steps applied to upscale hotels in Ho Chi Minh City.*

*Source: Authors*

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Factors Contributing to tourists' satisfaction with Hotels Experiences

The results indicate that guest satisfaction in hotel experiences is primarily influenced by the following factors, ranked in descending order: overall experience, location, staff, room quality, food and beverage, service, price (Table 4). The subsequent discussion presents the positive attributes associated with each category, followed by the corresponding negative attributes.

*Table 4. Main categories contributing to satisfaction with the hotel experience.*

| Category | Le Meridien Saigon | Mia Saigon – Luxury Boutique Hotel | Novotel Saigon Centre | Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel | TOTAL |
|----------|--------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| F&B      | 39                 | 83                                 | 32                    | 97                                | 251   |
| LOCATION | 79                 | 117                                | 36                    | 131                               | 363   |
| OVERALL  | 53                 | 201                                | 33                    | 136                               | 423   |
| PRICE    | 18                 | 9                                  | 11                    | 19                                | 57    |
| ROOM     | 67                 | 101                                | 48                    | 157                               | 373   |
| SERVICE  | 26                 | 81                                 | 6                     | 43                                | 156   |
| STAFF    | 46                 | 131                                | 33                    | 142                               | 352   |

*Source: Authors*

#### 4.1.1. Overall experience

Overall experience codes synthesised guests' global evaluations. Many reviewers highlighted “Excellent stay”, “highly recommended” expressed strong intention to return or recommend and identified specific highlights such as “beautiful hotel”, “a wonderful place”, “everything was perfect” or “greatest service in the world”.

#### *4.1.2. Room & In-House Facilities*

Hotel facilities were another significant contributor to tourist satisfaction. Attributes related to rooms and amenities constituted the second most frequently cited source of positive feedback, with 373 total positive mentions. Guests consistently commended the cleanliness of rooms and the modernity of the equipment, encompassing furnishings in bedrooms and bathrooms as well as general in-house facilities. This sentiment is reinforced by specific guest reviews. An Australian tourist noted that the rooms at Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel offered many advantages, including large, clean spaces and big, comfortable beds. Similarly, a tourist from Japan praised Le Meridien Saigon Hotel as an absolutely beautiful hotel, also highlighting its large clean rooms and big comfortable beds. Analysis of the feedback category confirms this, showing high ratings were driven predominantly by the completeness of equipment, which received 174 positive mentions, and by cleanliness, noted in 78 positive mentions. Frequently used descriptors for rooms included the phrases: the room was excellent, very clean, and spacious room.

#### *4.1.3. Location*

Location emerged as the factor most commonly associated with tourist satisfaction in the review data. Its importance is illustrated by guest feedback across several hotels. A tourist from Australia lauded the location of Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel, describing it as one of their favourite hotel locations due to its proximity to interesting venues and shopping centres. A guest from Kenya commended the Novotel Saigon Centre for its good location near the War Museum. Furthermore, the location of Mia Saigon – Luxury Boutique Hotel was praised by a guest from The United Kingdom, who appreciated the scenic views from the property. The hotel's riverside setting on the Saigon River was characterised as highly ideal, providing beautiful vistas. This overall appreciation for location is summarised by recurring keywords in the reviews, such as super central and easily accessible, location cannot be better, quiet location, and located across the Saigon River.

#### *4.1.4. Staff*

The findings indicate that hotel staff also played a substantial role in shaping satisfactory guest experiences, accounting for 352 positive mentions. This underscores the critical influence of personnel on the overall quality of a tourist's stay. Guests placed high value on the warm hospitality, friendly demeanour, and helpfulness demonstrated by staff, which collectively fostered a welcoming and comfortable environment. Staff friendliness was identified as a primary factor in forming positive guest perceptions. For instance, one review of Mia Saigon – Luxury Boutique Hotel stated, the most precious thing about this hotel gem is the incredible friendly and attentive staff. In addition to interpersonal qualities, guests also recognised the efficiency and professionalism of the staff. Notably, negative comments regarding staff were exceptionally infrequent, appearing in only six mentions within the dataset.

#### *4.1.5. Food and beverage*

Food and beverage was a significant factor in guest satisfaction, receiving 251 positive mentions. Guests expressed high satisfaction with breakfast, buffet options, and overall restaurant quality, frequently describing them as excellent, delicious, fresh, and well-presented. For instance, a British tourist praised Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel, describing the best Breakfast they ever had, the options were great, team on the floor was great and worked diligently. Many UCG highlighted appreciation for local Vietnamese dishes and healthy options like vegetarian, vegan, and organic ingredients. This offering enhanced the dining experience and aligned with guest values around sustainability and healthy eating. Service quality in restaurants and bars further boosted satisfaction, with guests commending

attentive, efficient, and personalized service. For example, an Australian guest at Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel noted: “The staff in the club lounge were fantastic. When they found out I had an allergy to berries they made sure that there were desserts without berries available for me throughout my stay”.

#### *4.1.6. Price and service*

Price value received fewer positive mentions 57 compared to other categories. Such posts pertained mainly to room rates, food and drink, and sightseeing services. Among the four hotels, Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel received 19 positive reviews linked to price, followed by Le Meridien Saigon hotel with 18 mentions. The remaining two hotels, Novotel Saigon Centre Hotel and Mia Saigon – Luxury Boutique Hotel, recorded significantly fewer mentions of price, with 11 and 9 mentions respectively. This suggests that price was a relatively minor consideration for visitors at these properties.

Additional services and experiences contributed a distinct value layer, with 156 positive mentions. Guests valued leisure amenities like rooftop pools, bars, and lounges for relaxation and panoramic views, often describing them as oases or retreats that enhanced enjoyment and perceived quality of life. Transport services, including airport shuttles and taxi assistance, were noted for convenience and safety. Wellness facilities such as spas, gyms, and yoga classes supported guest wellbeing, aligning with broader sustainability themes around health and balance.

## **4.2. Factors Contributing to tourists’ Dissatisfaction with Hotels Experiences**

*Table 5. Main categories contributing to dissatisfaction with the hotel experience.*

| Category | Le Meridien Saigon | Mia Saigon – Luxury Boutique Hotel | Novotel Saigon Centre | Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel | TOTAL |
|----------|--------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| FNB      | 9                  | 5                                  |                       | 22                                | 36    |
| LOCATION | 17                 | 5                                  |                       | 11                                | 33    |
| OVERALL  | 11                 | 11                                 | 6                     | 11                                | 39    |
| PRICE    | 14                 | 3                                  | 7                     | 15                                | 39    |
| ROOM     | 28                 | 1                                  | 8                     | 51                                | 88    |
| SERVICE  | 15                 | 3                                  |                       | 10                                | 28    |
| STAFF    | 11                 | 5                                  | 3                     | 24                                | 43    |

*Source: Authors*

Although the selected hotels received consistently high overall ratings, the analysis revealed several recurring sources of dissatisfaction (Table 5) and more details in table 6. These issues mainly stemmed from concerns about room and room amenities, professionalism and efficiency of staff, facility inconsistencies in service or quality, and occasional shortcomings in food and services.

Table 6. Subcategories contributing to dissatisfaction with the hotel experience.

| Category | Subcategory           | Le Meridien Saigon | Mia Saigon – Luxury Boutique Hotel | Novotel Saigon Centre | Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel | TOTAL |
|----------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| FNB      | FNB_QUALITY           | 5                  | 4                                  |                       | 15                                | 24    |
|          | FNB_SERVICE           | 4                  | 1                                  |                       | 6                                 | 11    |
|          | FNB_VARIETY_LOCAL     |                    |                                    |                       | 1                                 | 1     |
| LOCATION | LOCATION_CONVENIENCE  | 1                  | 3                                  |                       |                                   | 4     |
|          | LOCATION_ENVIRONMENT  | 16                 | 2                                  |                       | 11                                | 29    |
| OVERALL  | OVERALL_IMPRESSION    | 5                  | 5                                  | 5                     | 10                                | 25    |
|          | OVERALL_MAJOR_ISSUE   | 2                  | 2                                  | 1                     | 1                                 | 6     |
|          | OVERALL_RETURN_INTENT | 4                  | 4                                  |                       |                                   | 8     |
| PRICE    | PRICE_PROMOTION       | 1                  |                                    |                       |                                   | 1     |
|          | PRICE_TRANSPARENCY    | 2                  |                                    | 2                     | 1                                 | 5     |
|          | PRICE_VALUE           | 11                 | 3                                  | 5                     | 14                                | 33    |
| ROOM     | ROOM_CLEANLINESS      | 10                 |                                    | 1                     | 9                                 | 20    |
|          | ROOM_EQUIPMENT        | 17                 | 1                                  | 6                     | 37                                | 61    |
|          | FACILITIES_ADDITIONAL | 1                  |                                    | 1                     | 5                                 | 7     |
| SERVICE  | SERVICE_LEISURE       | 11                 | 1                                  |                       | 9                                 | 21    |
|          | SERVICE_TRANSPORT     | 1                  | 2                                  |                       | 1                                 | 4     |
|          | SERVICE_WELLNESS      | 3                  |                                    |                       |                                   | 3     |
| STAFF    | STAFF_EFFICIENCY      | 4                  | 2                                  | 2                     | 6                                 | 14    |
|          | STAFF_FAIRNESS        | 2                  |                                    |                       | 3                                 | 5     |
|          | STAFF_FRIENDLINESS    | 2                  |                                    | 1                     | 4                                 | 7     |
|          | STAFF_LANGUAGE        |                    | 1                                  |                       | 1                                 | 2     |
|          | STAFF_PROFESSIONALISM | 3                  | 2                                  |                       | 10                                | 15    |

Source: Authors

#### 4.2.1. Room

In terms of customer dissatisfaction with the hotel experience, room and room amenities emerged as the most significant factor (88 posts). The most frequently noted area for improvement pertained to outdated equipment and insufficient room cleanliness. Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel had the highest number of review posts about equipment (37 posts).

Negative feedback related to facilities included malfunctions in systems like air conditioning, plumbing, and elevators, as well as worn furnishings in public areas. Although infrequent, these maintenance issues in premium, sustainability certified hotels prompted some guests to doubt the management's dedication to upkeep and enduring quality, key aspects of sustainability.

Inadequate soundproofing was another common criticism. This directly impacted guest rest and privacy, and due to the importance of sleep in travel, these shortcomings could disproportionately lower overall satisfaction.

Some guests also identified problems with waste management, such as unclear bin labeling or lack of recycling options. Such operational lapses are notably significant for hotels with sustainability certifications, as they conflict with the environmental standards the labels represent. This observed disparity between promise and practice can erode trust and challenge the credibility of the certification.

#### *4.2.2. Staff*

This category emerged as the second factor that contributed to guests' dissatisfaction with the hotel experience (43 posts). A primary concern cited by guests involved perceptions of inconsistent or inequitable treatment by staff. One Vietnamese guest at the Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel claimed that staff discriminated against them because they were locals. In another case, a Panamanian tourist staying at the same Sheraton hotel reported, "As a tourist, one expects flexibility and understanding. I had booked a motorbike tour through the hotel, and upon arrival, the driver was rushed off by security personnel and told to leave immediately, without any consideration". In the case of the Le Meridien Saigon hotel, there were some complaints about the professionalism of the staff for not informing guests about the ongoing repairs to the pool area.

#### *4.2.3. Location, F&B, Price, Service and Overall*

Guest dissatisfaction was also linked to other aspects, for example, price. Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel and Le Meridien Saigon Hotel had the most complaints. There were 11 and 14 complaints respectively. Other services were also mentioned. For instance, the Sheraton Saigon Grand Opera Hotel has 15 reviews regarding food quality. A Singaporean customer complained "The selection was smaller and staff weren't as polite and attentive as plates weren't immediately cleared away. They seemed unwilling to serve coffee and expected us to operate the machines instead". Location environment was also mentioned with noise, with 16 dissatisfied reviews at Le Meridien Saigon hotel. Guests at the hotel mentioned that Vietnamese people are fond of karaoke, leading to loud singing in the vicinity.

### **4.3. Discussion**

Through the lens of Signaling Theory [17], sustainability badges function as high equity market signals designed to reduce information asymmetry. However, the findings suggest that these signals act as a double edged sword. By broadcasting a green signal, hotels inadvertently trigger the Green Expectation Amplification Effect, which preconfigures a psychological benchmark where guests equate ethical commitment with superior service excellence.

This amplification effect can be further explained by the elevated level of green trust that guests implicitly assign to certified properties. According to Signaling Theory, a sustainability badge functions as a costly and credible signal, which reduces information asymmetry and fosters a baseline of trust in the hotel's ethical and operational integrity. However, this heightened green trust paradoxically intensifies post-stay scrutiny, particularly regarding staff attitudes and interpersonal service. Because guests expect that a certified hotel's commitment to sustainability inherently extends to fair, respectful, and professional employee conduct, any perceived deviation such as indifference, inconsistency, or discriminatory behavior, triggers a form of reverse green skepticism. Unlike conventional skepticism, which arises from distrust of green claims, this reverse mechanism emerges from betrayed trust: the higher the initial trust, the more rigorously guests examine staff behavior, and the greater the disappointment when service falls short. Consequently, sustainability certifications not only amplify positive expectations but also convert staff-related service failures into disproportionately severe violations of the implicit "green promise" thereby intensifying negative electronic word-of-mouth.

Consequently, when operational failures occur, such as hygiene lapses or staff unprofessionalism, the resulting negative disconfirmation is significantly more pronounced than in non-certified establishments. From the guest perspective, such defects are perceived not merely as service inconsistencies but as a breach of the implicit promise represented by the sustainability badge. This amplifies the gap between expectation and performance, leading to heightened levels of dissatisfaction and more severe critical narratives in user-generated content.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

This study advances the literature on sustainable hospitality, signaling theory, and netnographic methodology through a rigorous examination of guest satisfaction and dissatisfaction with sustainability-labeled hotels in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam. By analyzing 1,294 ratings and 547 user-generated reviews from four upscale, sustainability-certified properties on Booking.com, the research provides empirical insights into how green certifications intersect with multifaceted guest experiences in an emerging Asian urban context. This concluding section synthesizes the study's theoretical contributions, practical implications, limitations, and directions for future research.

### **5.1. Theoretical Contributions**

First, this study extends Sustainability Signaling Theory into the post-stay evaluation phase. While prior research predominantly examined how green badges influence pre-purchase intentions, our findings demonstrate that these signals remain cognitively active throughout the entire guest journey. In the post-purchase phase, the authenticity of sustainability signals is empirically validated through actual service delivery. As evidenced in Section 4.2 (Findings), the data reveals that guests at certified hotels disproportionately criticized operational failures such as outdated equipment (88 negative posts), insufficient cleanliness, and poor soundproofing. These criticisms reflect not mere dissatisfaction but a perceived breach of the implicit promise conveyed by the sustainability badge, confirming that signaling effects persist beyond the booking stage.

Second, the study identifies and theorizes the Green Expectation Amplification Effect within the expectancy-disconfirmation framework. A sustainability badge acts as an “umbrella signal” that leads guests to implicitly assume superior attention to detail, ethical conduct, and operational integrity. Consequently, even minor service failures generate disproportionately severe negative disconfirmation compared to non-certified properties. As evidenced in Section 4.2 (Findings), the data reveals that staff-related dissatisfaction despite being only the second most frequent category (43 posts) included accusations of discriminatory treatment toward local guests and complaints about unprofessional behavior (e.g., failing to inform guests about ongoing pool repairs). These reactions are consistent with a trust-betrayal mechanism, where high initial green trust intensifies post-hoc scrutiny and amplifies dissatisfaction.

Third, this research introduces and conceptualizes Embedded Sustainability Cues, providing a theoretical bridge between signaling theory and service quality research. Rather than expecting explicit references to certifications, guests decipher sustainability values indirectly through staff ethics, culinary provenance, and waste management practices. As evidenced in Section 4.2 (Findings), the data reveals that dissatisfaction arose from concrete operational lapses such as unclear waste bin labeling or lack of recycling options, as well as from perceived inequity in staff treatment. These embedded cues, not the badge itself, become the focal points of guest validation or rejection, explaining why sustainability labels are rarely mentioned explicitly yet still shape evaluative benchmarks.

Fourth, the study advances a multi-dimensional framework for Experiential Green Integration, categorizing embedded cues into social (staff fairness and professionalism), environmental (cleanliness, waste management), and operational (equipment maintenance, soundproofing) dimensions. As evidenced in Section 4.2 (Findings), the data reveals that guest dissatisfaction clustered precisely around these three dimensions: room and amenities (88 posts, environmental/operational), staff behavior (43 posts, social), and service inconsistencies (e.g., food quality with 15 posts at Sheraton). This empirical clustering validates the proposed framework and shifts theoretical focus from “visible green signaling” to “experiential green integration” demonstrating that certification effectiveness depends on cumulative validation through everyday service touchpoints.

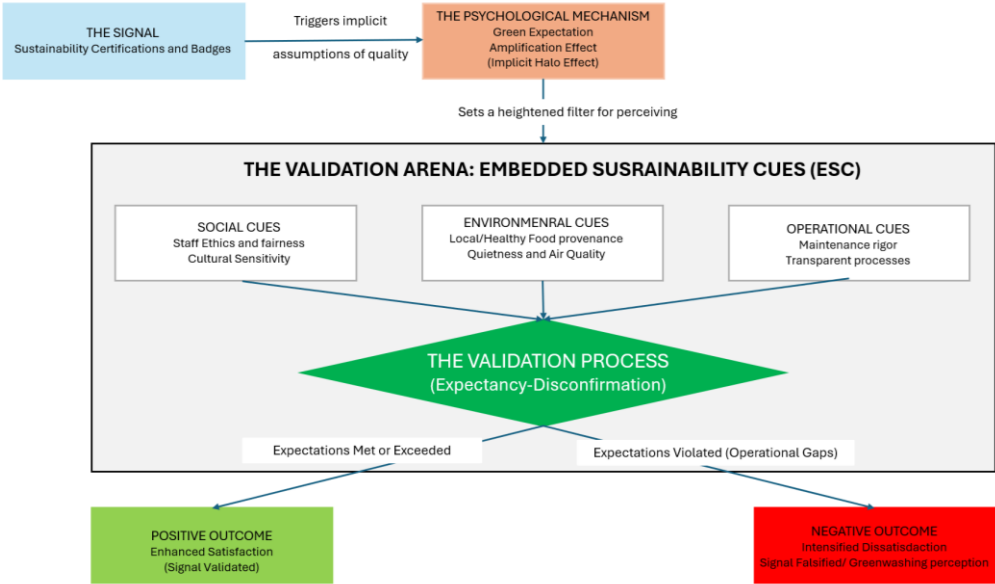


Figure 5. The Process of Sustainability Signal Validation through Embedded Cues in Upscale Hotel Experiences.

Source: Authors

5.2. Practical Implications

The empirical evidence provides a roadmap for stakeholders to improve the alignment between sustainability claims and guest reality.

For Hotel Management: There is a fundamental requirement to prioritize foundational service quality. Cleanliness and maintenance must be secured before a property emphasizes green differentiation. Management should ensure that sustainability is visible through tangible practices, such as transparent supply chains for food and ethical staff behavior, which serve as the primary social signals of responsibility.

For Digital Platforms: Online travel agencies should move beyond binary badges toward more granular and multidimensional rating systems. Incorporating third party verification and using guest sentiment analysis to monitor the ongoing validity of a badge would enhance market transparency and reduce the risk of deceptive marketing.

For Policy Makers: In alignment with the National Green Growth Strategy for 2021-2030 (Decision 1658/QĐ-TTg), there is a critical need to operationalize the mandate of developing and applying “green tourism labels” for accommodation establishments. Local authorities in Ho Chi Minh City should develop localized sustainability standards that reflect the specific urban and cultural context of Viet Nam. Furthermore, drawing on Decision 1658's orientation towards green financing, local governments should provide targeted technical and financial

support (e.g., green credit) to assist upscale hotels in resolving operational gaps and transitioning from symbolic to substantive sustainability. This systematic support will mitigate the negative impacts of the “Green Expectation Amplification Effect” and ultimately build long-term destination equity

### 5.3. Limitations and Future Research

Despite the rigor of this study, several limitations offer directions for future inquiry. The geographical focus on four upscale hotels in Ho Chi Minh City means the findings may not be directly applicable to budget sectors or different cultural regions. The timeframe, spanning from 2023 to 2026, captures a specific era of market recovery and digital evolution. Additionally, the reliance on qualitative netnography, while providing rich narrative depth, precludes statistical generalization.

Future researchers should consider integrated methods that combine netnography with quantitative surveys or experimental designs. Investigating how different generations, such as Gen Z, respond to sustainability signals compared to older cohorts would provide valuable demographic insights. Moreover, longitudinal studies are necessary to observe how the salience of these badges evolves as the Vietnamese hospitality market reaches higher levels of maturity.

### 5.4. Concluding Reflections

In conclusion, this research highlights that sustainability is no longer an optional add on but a core dimension of the luxury hotel experience. The transition from symbolic signaling to substantive practice is essential for maintaining guest trust. For sustainability to truly drive transformation, it must be embedded into the daily rhythms of service and the physical quality of the environment. Ultimately, the value of a certification lies not in its presence on a website but in the cumulative impressions of care and responsibility experienced by the guest during their stay.

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## APPENDIX

Table 7. Hospitality UGC Codebook & Keywords used in the paper. Source: Author

| Main Category     | Subcategory                                            | Keywords                                                          | Label                 |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Staff & Service   | Staff attitude, friendliness, and enthusiasm           | friendly, welcoming, polite, helpful, smile, hospitality...       | STAFF FRIENDLINESS    |
| Staff & Service   | Speed and efficiency of handling requests              | fast, quick, smooth, efficient, prompt, check-in, check-out...    | STAFF EFFICIENCY      |
| Staff & Service   | Foreign language skills and guidance                   | English, communication, fluent, language, international guests... | STAFF LANGUAGE        |
| Staff & Service   | Professionalism and service skills (4-5 star standard) | professional, standard, skilled, expert, attentive...             | STAFF PROFESSIONALISM |
| Staff & Service   | Fairness and non-discrimination                        | fair, equal, inclusive, respectful, no bias...                    | STAFF FAIRNESS        |
| Rooms & Amenities | Cleanliness of rooms and public areas                  | clean, spotless, tidy, hygienic, dust-free, neat...               | ROOM CLEANLINESS      |
| Rooms & Amenities | Quality of in-room equipment                           | bed, mattress, AC, TV, soundproof, lighting, minibar...           | ROOM EQUIPMENT        |
| Rooms & Amenities | Additional facilities (gym, spa, kids' club)           | gym, pool, spa, playground, business center, facilities...        | FACILITIES_ADDITIONAL |
| Rooms & Amenities | "Green" amenities and plastic reduction                | eco-friendly, refillable, no plastic, energy-saving, green...     | FACILITIES_GREEN      |
| Food & Beverage   | Quality of breakfast and room service                  | delicious, tasty, breakfast, buffet, fresh, variety...            | FNB QUALITY           |

|                 |                                             |                                                                 |                             |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Food & Beverage | Selection of local, vegan, and healthy food | local food, vegetarian, vegan, healthy, organic, plant-based... | FNB<br>VARIETY<br>LOCAL     |
| Food & Beverage | Restaurant/Bar service and atmosphere       | service, waiting time, ambiance, vibe, atmosphere, dining...    | FNB<br>SERVICE              |
| Food & Beverage | Sustainable practices in F&B                | food waste, no straws, local sourcing, sustainability...        | FNB<br>SUSTAINABILITY       |
| Location        | Hotel location and convenience              | central, walking distance, near, convenient, location...        | LOCATION<br>CONVENIENCE     |
| Location        | Surrounding environment and views           | view, scenery, quiet, noisy, landscape, surroundings...         | LOCATION<br>ENVIRONMENT     |
| Location        | Security and safety of the area             | safe, secure, security, safety, well-lit, feel safe...          | LOCATION<br>SAFETY          |
| Services        | Leisure services (pool, rooftop, bar)       | rooftop, pool, bar, lounge, relaxation, chill..                 | SERVICE<br>LEISURE          |
| Services        | Tours and cultural activities               | city tour, workshop, culture, activity, organized tour...       | SERVICE<br>TOURS            |
| Services        | Transportation and rentals                  | taxi, shuttle, bike rental, car, transport, airport transfer... | SERVICE<br>TRANSPORT        |
| Services        | Wellness and gym services                   | massage, yoga, wellness, instructor, sauna, treatment...        | SERVICE<br>WELLNESS         |
| Price           | Value for money                             | worth it, value, price, expensive, affordable, reasonable...    | PRICE_<br>VALUE             |
| Price           | Promotions and loyalty offers               | discount, deal, offer, member, loyalty, promotion...            | PRICE<br>PROMOTION          |
| Price           | Pricing transparency and fees               | clear, hidden fees, tax, transparent, bill, charge...           | PRICE<br>TRANSPARENCY       |
| Overall         | General impression of the stay              | amazing, good, average, bad, stay, experience...                | OVERALL<br>IMPRESSION       |
| Overall         | Return intent and recommendations           | return, come back, recommend, referral, visit again...          | OVERALL<br>RETURN<br>INTENT |
| Overall         | Most prominent highlights                   | highlight, best part, favorite, standout, impressive...         | OVERALL<br>HIGHLIGHTS       |
| Overall         | Major issues and complaints                 | issue, problem, disaster, complaint, conflict, bad...           | OVERALL<br>MAJOR<br>ISSUE   |