

Academic Research

The potential of environmentally – friendly hotel development in Azerbaijan.

Research question: To what extent environmentally – friendly hotels can
succeed in the Azerbaijani market?

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Executive Summary

The main purpose of this research is to find out the potential of environmentally friendly hotel development in the Azerbaijan hotel industry. The main objectives are the evaluation of the public's perception of the “green” label in hotels, its potential to become a popular and preferred spot in the Azerbaijani market, and profitability notion of a phenomenon by taking into consideration the consumers’ willingness to pay for “green” hotels over traditional hotels in the industry. The research has been carried out via online semi – structured interviews and open – ended survey questions to analyze the topic from both hotel managers’ and customers’ perspectives and correlate the relationship between the two angles. Moreover, the researcher attempted to crosscheck the hotel customers’ and managers’ responses in order to be able to assess the authenticity of the reactions. To add, the researcher figured out that the interviews and surveys to be conducted on an online basis is the most rational approach to collect the data due to COVID-19 and lockdown complications (Moreno, Fuentes – Lara & Navarro, 2020). The qualitative data analysis was conducted by following interpretivist research philosophy and applying the inductive reasoning method along with the thematic analysis technique. The researcher attempted to encode the qualitative data through the thematic analysis technique and used themes as coding units. Consequently, three themes were discovered by the researcher which were corresponded with the three objectives of the thesis. The qualitative data covered two parts which are primary data and secondary data. The primary data sets were gathered in this project through online semi – structured interviews and open – ended survey questions answered by managers of different brand hotels and consumers of the hotel industry in Azerbaijan, whereas the information provided by professionals and customers was supported by comprehensive academic research regarding the application of “green” practices in international countries obtained from academic books, papers, and articles, which is the secondary data (Irwin, 2013). After evaluating the findings, the researcher provided the discussions of the results in the project and drew conclusion lines based on research outcomes, as well as, the researcher specified limitations of the results and further recommendations.

Keywords: Green hotels, green concept, environmental protection, environmental awareness, eco – friendly practices.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Problem Statement

Since the beginning of the 21st century, individuals' awareness regarding environmental issues has seen an increase (Chang, Hsiao, Nuryyev, & Huang, 2014; Graci, & Doods, 2008). These changes did not go beyond businesses, therefore, they started to affect companies and their decisions. The impact of such a phenomenon is either positive or negative for businesses, which is dependent on their environmental programs and practices. As a result, a lot of debates started to appear around this topic. The popularity of the topic increased further since companies and scholars found out that it has an effect on brand reputation, customer, manager and employee retention, and many more other business variables.

Tourism is considered to be one of the business industries that expands fast. The number of tourist arrivals also increases rapidly day by day. Hotels and the overall hospitality industry are interrelated to the tourism industry. The success and profitability of hotels are highly dependent on tourist arrivals, therefore, brand new trends and transformations also have an impact on this industry. Therefore, hoteliers need to consider all emerging trends to be able to succeed in today's competitive and complex business environment. One of the most discussed topics in the tourism industry is related to the impact of the tourism industry on the environment which is negative most of the time (Chang, Hsiao, Nuryyev, & Huang, 2014). Discussion of the issue in the tourism industry made it very crucial for hoteliers to consider. According to UNWTO, the accommodation industry own over 20% of carbon dioxide emitted by the tourism sector (UNEP and UNWTO, 2012). Noticing a necessity, UNWTO set the target to reduce carbon dioxide emission in the hotel industry which is in line with the global goals of the United Nations, as well as the Paris Climate Change Agreement (UNEP and UNWTO, 2012).

The application of eco – friendly practices started to emerge at the end of the 19th century in the accommodation industry. In the early stages, this was considered to be a social responsibility practice that does not have any ties to business – related variables. Nonetheless, professionals and scholars found out, that those eco – friendly practices have an influence on business variables which may affect the financial situation in the company as well. A lot of big hotel chains including Accorhotels, Hilton Global, Marriott International, and Intercontinental Hotels Group responded to the demand of the modern era that is employing sustainable businesses. Banyan Tree brand of Accorhotels and Rezidor brand of Intercontinental are the examples of eco – friendly hotel businesses. Property level initiatives are as important as global initiatives in order to reduce the problem.

Similar to other parts of the world, awareness of people related to environmental issues also shows an increasing pattern in Azerbaijan. Different businesses started to obtain workshops for employees in order to increase awareness regarding reuse, recycling, and environmental impact in general. As a fact, it can be added, that companies that are operating in Azerbaijan, such as Azersun Holding built one of the biggest factories for paper recycling in Azerbaijan. The company negotiates with different other partner companies to receive used papers from offices and to recycle them. Several hotels mainly in the Baku area also started to increase the number of programs that promote environmentalism. There are a quite number of hotels in Azerbaijan which are more inclined to provide environmental practices. For instance, Fairmont Baku Flame Towers breed their bumblebees, which is a very rare thing to do. Furthermore, as another example, JW Marriott Absheron puts informative flyers in each room to increase awareness of customers, which can be a very tedious action to implement, but very important and this shall be an example to every other

hotel to complete. However, these are considered to be one of the minor, as well as primary steps, there is no hotel in Baku to implement eco – friendly practices to the full extent in order to be able to be called an eco – friendly hotel, environmental hotel, sustainable hotel, or a "green" hotel. As a rule, from the points mentioned above, it can be comprehended that the country moves forward in the direction of environmental practices and sustainable awareness which can have an effect on consumer behavior opting for "green" labels and eco – friendly hotels. However, there is no peer – reviewed research on this phenomenon. Especially, the absence of articles and researches covering the feasibility of "green" hotel development in the Republic of Azerbaijan drew my attention to this gap.

Considering all these facts, comprehensive academic research will be conducted to fill the gap which is absent in terms of researches mentioning the hotel industry of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The main objective of conducting this research is to evaluate the potential of environmental hotel success in Azerbaijan. Basically, the analysis will cover different factors such as the assessment of the public's awareness of the "green" label in hotels, the potential of “green” hotels to become a desired place to stay among consumers in Azerbaijan, and the potential of profitability by taking into account the consumers’ eagerness to pay for “green” hotels over traditional hotels in the tourism sector. Furthermore, alongside the findings, discussions will be provided to develop such hotels in a successful manner.

1.2 Research Objectives and Questions

The decision was made to research this topic with an intention of finding an answer to the question of whether environmentally - friendly hotel development in the Republic of Azerbaijan can be successful. The objectives of the research and related questions are as follows:

- Public’s awareness perspective – To investigate the awareness of hotel managers and consumers in Azerbaijan regarding the “green” practices in the hospitality industry;
- Customer preference aspect – To examine the success of "green" hotels to become popular among customers in the Azerbaijani market;
- Consumers’ payment eagerness – To evaluate how the "green" label may affect consumers’ payment willingness.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Likewise other industries, the tourism industry also became globalized meaning, any changes and transformations appearing in one part of the globe will soon become effective in other parts of the world. Sensitiveness to environmental issues is one such phenomenon. It started to have an effect on consumers and business in the western part of the world, after which it started to spread around the globe. Nowadays, it is considered to be one of the main issues discussed in the travel and hospitality sector that need to be eliminated. Along with customers, hotel businesses also take this seriously since it is beyond social responsibility which can affect the operation of companies in different ways. As a rule, the benefits of "green" practices are way greater than the traditional practices.

It is important to emphasize that the term "green" or eco – friendly indicates obtaining steps to eliminate impacting nature through various ways including recycling and the right treatment of natural resources (Wolfe & Shanklin, 2001). A sustainable hotel refers to a property that takes action and implements special programs to reduce its damaging footprints on the environment (Han, Hsu, & Sheu, 2010). Another research by Rahman et al. indicates that “green” hotels are the organizations working in the direction of decreasing waste, enabling energy efficiency, decreasing water usage, and supporting the well – being of the environment while undertaking business operations (2012).

All in all, the Republic of Azerbaijan has a big room for improvement in terms of the application of "green" practices generally in the country involving different services companies and firms from various industries, as well as, execution of eco – friendly activities in the hotel industry. Hence, the literature review chapter comprises fundamental arguments, as well as, crucial ideas on how the Republic of Azerbaijan can improve the situation in the country concerning the implementation of eco – friendly practices in entire operational sectors including the hospitality industry, and raise the awareness of environmental protection among individuals. For the fact, the literature review chapter covers the numerous concepts of “green” actions and their notions in the hotel sphere, as well as, viewpoints of consumers and directors. In addition, the section contains the Republic of Azerbaijan’s and worldwide tendencies of eco – friendly activities and their application in the lodging area, as well as, vital data and strategic standpoints and angles on which answers will be found.

2.2 Definition of “Green” Practices

Implementing "green" practices, not only in the hotel and hospitality industry but also in every other sector is very important, as the number of consumers looking for so – called activities is going up day by day. B. DiPietro, Cao & Partlow (2013) state in their research, based on the findings of the study of Tzschentke et al. (2004, 2008), that eco – friendly activities belong to practices which preserve the climate, the ecology, as well as, the outputs that are composed by minimal ecological damage since they are formed in a natural and sustainable manner. As a fact, instances of eco – friendly activities involve preserving water, power, electricity, carrying out different reprocessing projects, as well as, utilizing sustainable assets, such as, geothermal power, hydropower, biomass energy, wind energy, and solar energy (B. DiPietro, Cao & Partlow, 2013). According to Tzschentke et al. (2004, 2008), which is cited in B. DiPietro, Cao & Partlow (2013), a number of institutions are attempting to moderate the unfavorable effects that the hotel sector does on the ecology and climate of the planet Earth by carrying out activities which are harmless to the ecology and climate of the planet Earth. B. DiPietro, Cao & Partlow (2013) mention, based on the researches of (Elan, 2009; Hu et al., 2010; Tzschentke et al., 2008), that a few of the activities that have been accepted by the hotel sector are as follows: reprocessing glass, cardboard, cooking oil; fertilizing the soil; buying natural items; implementing water – preserving mechanisms; as well as, in any event, establishing “leadership in energy and environmental design (LEED)” licensed diners in dining companies like Arby's, Chipotle, as well as, Subway.

Rahman et al. (2012) state, based on the results of the study by Bansal and Roth (2000), that the three fundamental reasons for organizations to practice eco – friendly activities to raise environmental awareness are as follows: ambition, legalization, and environmental obligation. Firstly, being ambitious in the market suggests the idea that practicing eco – friendly activities may expand the firms financially and lead to an increase in monetary benefits (Rahman et al., 2012). It is important to emphasize that, making strides towards eco – friendly activities may

enhance extended haul monetary benefits through decreasing financial costs, as well as, through moving the reserve funds to consumers (Rahman et al., 2012). The second point, legalization implies conforming to ecological laws to try not to be decommissioned, as well as, punished with fines (Rahman et al., 2012). Furthermore, legal companies are valid organizations, however, a company may be legal regardless of whether a company is more receptive than passionate about being eco – friendly (Rahman et al., 2012). Thirdly, a company is considered to be environmentally – friendly when it opts to practice eco – friendly activities in light of the fact that this is a more appropriate way (Rahman et al., 2012). Rahman et al. believe all in all, that practicing eco – friendly activities grants a company with a competitive advantage in comparison with rivals nowadays (2012). Furthermore, according to B. DiPietro, Cao & Partlow (2013), the point of carrying out eco – friendly and environmental activities is not enough in general, however, it is a must for companies to implement if they aspire to have an upper hand in the market.

Moreover, eco – friendly activities in the hotel and travel sectors may primarily be connected to the idea of environmentally – friendly travel, as well as, awareness of environmental protection (Chou, Chen & Wang, 2012). According to (Gössling et al., 2009; Krozer, 2008), which is cited in Chou, Chen & Wang (2012), the important point shall be noted that the hotel and travel sectors assume liability for the effect they make on the climate, as well as, commit positively to environmentally – friendly advancement of the universe for the improvement of the community. Chou et al. (2012) state, based on the extensive analytic findings by (Álvarez et al., 2001; Blanco et al., 2009; Eiadt et al., 2008; Enz and Siguaw, 1999) that their experimental researches indicate: the acceptance of eco – friendly practices by the hotel sector lead to monetary profit (Álvarez et al., 2001; Blanco et al., 2009; Eiadt et al., 2008; Enz and Siguaw, 1999), advancements and the upper hand in the market (Goodman, 2000), consumer well – being and devotion for the business (Kassinis and Soteriou, 2003), and also a decrease in carbon dioxide discharges (Bohdanowicz, 2009). Furthermore, in the tourism industry, there is not such a hotel that operates without a diner in it, so as it is implemented in the catering industry, licensed diners have to satisfy several ecological requirements which are as follows: clean water conservation, garbage decrease and reprocessing, environmentally – friendly decorations and objects, eco – friendly feeding ingredients, cardboards, “green” power, as well as, synthetic prevention and contamination decrease (Namkung & Jang, 2013).

2.3 Overview of “Green” Practices in Hospitality

Researches and analyses indicate that hospitality organizations implement eco – friendly practices for a number of intentions (Rahman et al., 2012). According to (Gan, 2006; Juholin, 2004), which is cited in Rahman et al. (2012), the reasons are as follows: monetary profit, reinforcing staff member structural responsibility, confronting social examination, enriched financial sponsor interactions, as well as, overall public moral. Rahman et al. add (2012) that the harmful effect of the lodging sector on the ecology and climate additionally delivers hotels a chance to utilize their reach to endorse business obligation on a significant measure. According to Rahman et al. (2012), hotels may complete the idea by instructing their employees and clients, implementing “green” activities, plus motivating corresponding enterprises like guesthouse contractors. Rahman et al. (2012) indicate, based on the findings of the study of Bohdanowicz and Martinac (2003), that these practices may profit the ecology and climate, as well as, the guesthouse sector, because the industry relies upon the engaging appeal of clean atmosphere.

Despite the fact, that hospitality organizations’ effects on the ecology and atmosphere appear to be moderately visible in the beginning, because of the type of directions, the execution

of eco - friendly principles while presenting hotel assistances is vital, attractive, and beneficial (Hays et al., 2014). Following this, the scholars mention that applying eco – friendly ethics to the hospitality organizations’ administrations implies developing extra worth that offers significant chances to distinction. The technique of eco – friendly administrations can bring about positive progress, when the underlined attributes are genuine, credible, and ecologically – applicable (Hays et al., 2014). Consequently, the academics state that the idea is particularly essential if the clients sense that their needs are satisfied, they get an optimistic inclination for their contribution to ecological safety, as well as, they increase their know – how and period at the hospitality organizations. Additionally, they highly believe that lodging properties ought to progress their informative position on ecological matters in order to draw in future staff members, consumers, plus display "corporate social responsibility" (CSR).

Chang et al. (2014) indicate, based on the results of the analysis by Green Hotels Association (2014), that “green” hospitality organizations are deemed to be environmentally and sustainably specializing companies that execute various projects intended to raise the awareness to preserve the ecology and climate of the planet Earth, to be precise, preserving water and power, diminishing garbage, reprocessing consumer goods (for instance sponges, robes), as well as, restricting items like cardboards. Moreover, discoveries of (Manaktola and Jauhari, 2007; Han and Kim, 2010), which is cited in Chang et al. (2014), point out that these “green” practices of a hospitality organization may be advantageous and gainful for the ecology and climate of the planet Earth, as well as, the lodging properties, since so – called "green" practices lead to a reduction of the organizations' system and power tension, consecutively resulting in expansion of a hotel’s financial income. It is important to highlight that, “green” activities are usually united with different exercises of “corporate social responsibility” (CSR), for example, instructing the staff with the lectures about the significance of the climate and environmental protection, as well as, contribution to the planet Earth's good cause (Chang et al., 2014). The fact that lodging property effectively provides its big efforts to the protection of the ecology and atmosphere is essential to the health and comfort of clients (Robinot and Gianneloni, 2010). Centered on another research, eco – friendly practices categorize hospitality organizations that offer such services as pioneers and front – runners in the business, as well as, enhancing services, thus the client's stay at the hotels (Hays et al., 2014). Moreover, the authors say that implementing eco – friendly activities leads to opportunities to extended haul business growths and its globalization.

2.3.1 Key Figures and International Statistics

The sub – chapter comprises important figures and tables, as well as, principal statistics that indicate strategic and crucial ideas and points on why implementing eco – friendly practices will raise awareness of the environment and ecosystem protection. Nonetheless, it shall be added, that from the scientific studies it is comprehended that execution of “green” activities directly leads not only to the stratosphere and climate improvement, but also brand equity, brand image, and financial developments of an organization (Dixon – Fowler, 2013).

According to Hays et al. (2014), hospitality organizations possess numerous resemblances in terms of eco – friendly practices implementation as shown in (Table 1), even if the lodging properties are situated unlike each – other, as well as, focused on unique divisions respectively.

Nevertheless, Perši et al. (2013) reveal based on the results of their study regarding the awareness of ecological protection of over forty – five hospitality organizations in Croatia that more than 55 percent of hotels consider ecological concerns of ultimate importance in organizational objectives, whereas slightly above 28 percent reflect climate matters as an

intermediate significance (Figure 1). On the other hand, they add that over 40 percent of hotels in Croatia believe that public concerns are of ultimate and intermediate importance respectively (Figure 1).

Moreover, as it is shown in (Figure 2) in Appendix A, Perši et al. (2013) report based on the findings of the poll outcomes, that implementing environmental practices profit hospitality organizations in various ways. To be precise, the authors identify that execution of eco – friendly practices can expand a lodging property’s status in front of their corporate associates, as well as, the method improves the consumer and staff members' reliability and devotion to the hospitality organization (Figure 2). Nonetheless, the researchers additionally inform that the “green” practices application lets a hotel have an edge over its competitors, giving an opportunity to draw more sponsors, as well as, enhancing the excellence of the hospitality organizations’ operating course, acquiring ISO 9001 certificate (Figure 2). Furthermore, the academics point out that another superiority is providing a lodging property with a raise in business competitiveness, as well as organizational efficiency (Figure 2).

Besides, the researchers reveal from the statistical displays that the business existence of a hospitality organization accounts for one hundred percent of significance by hotels in Croatia, whereas its economic performance constitutes for over 65 percent which pinpoints the monetary factor in the ecological statements of a property (Figure 3).

On one hand, the authors indicate that the ecological factor of hotels in the "green" statements consists of the utilization of supplies and water intake, as well as, garbage disposal, all of these elements which accounting for one hundred percent of significance by hotels in Croatia respectively (Figure 4). On the other hand, the authors state that power usage, as well as, disobedience with ecological protocols punishments are put comparably less attention by hospitality organizations, constituting for over 65 percent (Figure 4).

Furthermore, they suggest that the factor of public residents also plays a big role in hotels' ecological statements (Figure 5). To be specific, occupation of residents, additionally health and safety executions (HSE) in companies account for one hundred percent of significance by hotels in Croatia respectively, while donations in the society, as well as, provider connections constitute over 65 percent (Figure 5), (Perši et al., 2013).

2.3.2 Global Trends and International Country Profiles

In this sub – chapter, the eco – friendly practices of diverse international nations will be provided and their inclinations will be evaluated. Additionally, three international countries, to be precise, activities of American “green” hotel, French “green” hotel, as well as, Australian “green” hotel which were analyzed by Hays et al. (2014) containing specific information will be mentioned thoroughly.

Eldemerdash et al. (2013) state that properties labeling themselves as "green" mainly focus on guests who hold sensitivity in the direction of environmental concerns and who are worried about the well – being of the environment, as well as, elimination of these issues. Likewise, according to many scholars, compliance with sustainability is not a one – time phenomenon, it is a non – stop process that needs to keep ongoing not depending on any excuses (Villeneuve and et al., 2017; Kjosev & Eftimov, 2017; Varadarajan, 2014). Successively, Kjosev et al. (2017) state that consumers are keen to see compliance in an ongoing manner, as receiving only property of logo indication as switching to "green" label is not satisfactory for consumers, they are keen on seeing the implementation, therefore, companies especially accommodation industry players need to take it seriously and to start the deep application.

The special “eco – friendly collaboration” project was initiated by an American eco – friendly hospitality organization at the beginning of the '90s, the first lodging property that was examined by the authors, and thus started its application of environmental principles, to say the fact, the particular attention was paid to the wishes of visitors who are inclined to protect the ecology, as well as decrease ecological pollution (Hays et al., 2014). Furthermore, the researchers state that appropriate garbage removal, rational use of resources such as water and power, as well as teamwork with resident citizens are the practices of “eco – friendly collaboration” project, following the idea, this project serves as an excellent instance, as in what way customers and hotel staff members may come together for the common goal of making the world a better place, at the same time, carrying a well – being and entertainment character. It is important to stress that, this project was created based on the data that the investigation discovered, to be precise, on average clients consume over 800 liters of water daily and generate 1 kg of garbage every evening in lodging properties, as well as, most of the garbage comes from cardboards and drink bottles accounting for 65 percent of entire refuse (Hays et al., 2014). Additionally, the academics also indicated that the special “eco – friendly collaboration” project is being implemented all over the world with over 45 hotels located in more than 10 different states, to be precise, among these hotels, there is the most environmentally – friendly guesthouse in the United States of America, that is considered to be a deluxe spa lodging property. Nonetheless, the authors point out that one of the essential activities that this American eco – friendly guesthouse implements is that it takes an active part in instructing the resident citizens and is engaged in a number of activities that raise awareness about the environmental protection, for example, one of such activities is to invite schoolchildren on outdoor trips to nature more than 10 times a year and to inspire open-air studying, at the same time, the hospitality organization additionally applies the reprocessing processes and uses contemporary recycling machine that helps them convert ordinary cooking oil into biofuel, as well as, the guesthouse gathers secondhand accessories for reusing, on the other hand, the paper that is used in the hotel for various purposes, including for corporate tags, is also reprocessed. Another important fact mentioned by the authors is that the contact between personnel and visitors is maintained without using any stuff damaging the atmosphere, in addition, usual lights have been replaced by small luminous bulbs, which are over 75 percent more energy efficient while still producing the equal volume of brightness. All personal hygiene items, as well as, all bathroom appliances in the hotel are not causing any chemical harm, additionally, the lodging property encourages its consumers to reprocess even in their lodgings, and provides spaces for hybrid – vehicles at no extra charge (Hays et al., 2014).

Basically, the academics add that the "Eco – Meet” plan founded by the hotel executives allows them to arrange festivities, symposiums, and corporate gatherings in an environmentally – efficient manner, consequently, enterprises that are inclined towards the protection of the atmosphere, organizing such eco – summits, obtain a distinctive award which confirms their contribution. Moreover, the authors point out that the hospitality organization has flourished in implementing its idea of protecting the environment, as evidenced by many of their projects and received licenses, which also serves as a good advertisement for the hotel, and the assurance of quality appeals more visitors to the property day by day, subsequently, all the point have an important effect on the commercial face of the brand and helps to keep the leading positions in the hotel industry.

The second lodging property that was studied by the researchers, the French eco – friendly guesthouse’s development is the outcome of conveying the proprietors' individual qualities and their endeavors to fulfill the obligation for ecological safety by the way of the guesthouse,

following this, the idea may be recapped like this: the environment is rather more than a perfectionistic way of thinking for people who are inclined towards climate protection, and the hotel's motto is "working together we can create a more sustainable world". It is critical to accentuate that, the lodging property accomplishes the eco – friendly idea by diminishing the necessity for energy utilizing power – preserving lights, short utilization systems, as well as, a reasonable air conditioning device, at the same time, electricity is generally produced through renewable energy means, such as solar cells and making fire, since the managers finance a lot of money in industrial frameworks which collect sun – powered cells' "heat" on radiant periods, with what they warm the swimming baths (Hays et al., 2014).

The third hospitality organization that was reviewed by the authors, the Australian eco – friendly lodging property is the foremost carbon – unbiased guesthouse in Australia and the earliest on the land which was awarded the high – status "Earth Check Silver" credential, additionally to state the frank facts, guesthouse gets the energy through wind energy producers, utilizes electricity – preserving lights that save up to 95% of illumination, as well as, implements the technology of radars that turn the bulbs off in the wake of unoccupied spaces. Besides, freshwater collected from rainfall, as well as, from the cooling machines in the guesthouse's patio is stored in 2 fifteen hundred liters reservoirs in order to be utilized for a number of different purposes including watering the grass and plants, additionally, on the other hand, every visitor creates about 25 kgs of carbon per evening in usual lodging properties, which is almost twice as much compared to the Australian eco – friendly hotel, where consumers create over 13 kgs of carbon per evening (Hays et al., 2014).

From the findings, it can be said that unfortunately, the Republic of Azerbaijan, as a country, as well as, the hotel industry as a whole are well behind the global trends in applying eco – friendly practices and raising awareness for environmental protection.

2.4 Customers' Perspective

To say the truth, the accommodation sector benefits from the environment and its resources, simultaneously, properties of this industry are located in receptive sites (Reynolds, 2013). According to Lashley (1999), which is cited in Reynolds (2013), a lodging firm's capacity to build up upper hand depends on several factors, to be precise, one of them which is the nature of administration experiences, whereas this subject has been rehashed by numerous different researchers. Another subject that is arising is that of society's view of a firm as a dependable citizen. The organization's capability to advance itself as a dependable professional resident has turned into another milestone in the separation war, subsequently, the requirement for hospitality organizations to be believed to be engaged with ecological problems and for them to be incorporated in professional procedures has been increasing day by day (Reynolds, 2013). It is important to underline that, since the beginning of the century, customers expect more from hotels to do in order to eliminate their negative impacts on the environment, so with that purpose, consumer demand moved in the direction of hotels employing "green" practices (Graci & Dodds, 2008), which is an outcome of increased comprehension of environmental issues that gets even more popular over the time (Singal, 2013). Commitment to environmental practices is listed among features that have an influence on consumer decisions that opt for which hotels to stay in (Chan et al., 2008).

Furthermore, Hays et al. (2014) state, based on the results of the study by Baloglu and Millar (2008), that the most essential credits looked for by eco – friendly clients are as per the following: power – preserving lights, water – preserving bathrooms, recyclable sponges and robes,

bedding changes at times when needed, as well as, squander division, at the same time, consumers do not value these not quite eco – friendly actions: bathrooms with more passive water flow, glass or clay cleanser and detergent bottles, that can be used more than once. Nonetheless, interviewees, who are younger than 60 years old, indicate a more grounded eagerness to take a part in ecological projects (Hays et al., 2014). Moreover, researches of (Chan and Ko, 2006; Manaktola and Jauhari, 2007), which is cited in Hays et al. (2014), indicate that clients lean in the direction of hotels having stronger sustainable inclination and eco – friendly activities when they must choose on two similar hospitality spots.

Another key factor from a consumer perspective is consumer's willingness to pay for environmentally – friendly hotels (Müller & Pflieger, 2014). Müller and Pflieger mention in their research that customer's willingness to pay is one of the main features of businesses that highly impacts the pricing strategy of hotels as well as the capacity of sales (2014). Other research by Chang et al. (2014), found out that increased awareness led to consumer's willingness to pay more for “green” products. According to Müller and Pflieger, paying for such products is even more popular in consumer groups referred to as the "lifestyle of health & sustainability" segment (2014). Nevertheless, according to Robinot and Gianneloni, "green" products are considered to be inferior to other products rather than superior most of the time (2010). Similarly, Hays et al. note in their study that consumers accept and understand the presence and effects of environmental issues, yet they are not willing to pay more for eco – friendly products since their priority is their lifestyle and consumers do not prefer to change it easily and pay for inferior quality more just because it is considered to cause less harm for the environment (2014). Müller and Pflieger refer to it as the disparity of spoken and done (2014). However, Baker and et al. (2014) note that there is a positive correlation between consumers' preference of a hotel and a hotel's implementation of “green” practices. Notably, Singal's article indicates that conscious customers are keen to spend approximately 10 percent more on “green” products and services than other consumers (2013). According to Hays et al. (2014), around 75 percent of hotel guests show their interest to enroll in “green” programs of properties. Additionally, the same study reveals that people's socio – economic conditions also affect their decision to purchase sustainable products and services in hotels. In other words, pricing is also one of the main aspects impacting customers' preferences in the direction of “green” products and services (Chang et al., 2014).

According to Hays et al. (2014), firms implement social responsibility practices as a result of stakeholder demand. According to the same study, the main stakeholder group affecting the decision of the company is customers (2014). Nonetheless, Singal (2013) states in his research that, press and investors are the key demanding stakeholders when it comes to the implementation of social responsibility programs and practices. Singal also states in the same research that companies are willing to make their social responsibility practices visible and accessible for the public (2013). That is a strategic move made by companies in order to be able to increase the level of brand reputation and gain competitive advantage by constructing an appealing brand image which in turn will affect consumer preference and loyalty in the direction of the company (Singal, 2013). Graci and Doods (2008) also mention the effects of sustainability on the brand image and reputation of a hotel, as authors emphasize that this is much more essential for properties sited in the sensitive natural environment.

2.5 Employee Perception

It is very important to note that individuals are very picky when it comes to choosing their future employers. It is an undeniable fact that people stay at work a decent amount of time.

Therefore, employees have a desire to be employed by companies that correspond not only to their financial needs but also ethical and moral needs (Glavas, 2012). Companies that are able to provide a combination of both can be considered winners in the marketplace. Providing a good match to employees results in having a highly motivated labor force which in the end contributes to the profitability of the company. Compliance with sustainability is listed among one of the features that create a meaningful workplace for employees (Melissen, 2012). Various researches were conducted to analyze the encouraging influences of sustainability programs on employees (Graci & Doods, 2008; Jankovi & Kriva, 2014). According to Glavas, nowadays people are looking forward to finding meaningfulness to a great extent at workplaces (2012). Therefore, there is an important note by the author that enrollment in eco – friendly practices and programs is more likely to boost employees' satisfaction and well – being along with the fulfillment of their need for meaningful workplaces. Moreover, the researcher claims in his findings that there are three important notes that shall be taken into account by employers in all companies. The first point is that environmental awareness might be a critical trigger of a staff member commitment, but it is going to work at those times when sustainability is included in the heart of the company, subsequently, it shall be pointed out that some individuals are frequently on the outskirts of the firm getting engaged into this trend. Because of that reason, the firm at that point is losing a major opportunity for its workers to get better, yet additionally for the company to prosper overall (Glavas, 2012). Secondly, the author expresses the fact that environmental awareness is not a conventional strategy, since the distribution of extraordinary academic documents will not encourage staff members, but actually, an approach is particular to every individual, so for environmental awareness to be significant, it should be individual. Worth to be mentioned by the researcher that the most ideal approach to engage with significance is no means by mentioning environmental awareness, instead, concentrating on what individuals care about, what might cause them to be comfortable in the company, what they are enthusiastic about and what presents significance for them. Thirdly, as well as environmental awareness is individual, it likewise should be at the corporate form, since environmental awareness is naturally social, individuals shall be a team with not only the managers, also with company's partners consequently, as a result, this particular system makes the employees and firms grow significantly (Glavas, 2012).

Hays et al. (2014) state in their research that there is also a link between sustainable commitment and employees' physical well – being. According to the authors, better ventilation, less interaction with toxic substances, and a more natural environment have an effect on the employee which assists them to boost their performance and productivity.

According to Graci and Dodds, employee retention and increased productivity are some of the main benefits companies receive by going "green" (2008). Similarly, Jankovi and Kriva also state that there is a positive correlation between employee motivation and the application of "green" practices (2014). According to Jones (2010) employee participation and performance can also be boosted, thanks to such practices at workplaces. It is also indicated in Graci and Dodds' research (2008) that such practices have a good impact on the construction of team spirit among employees, since achieving and complying with it creates a mutual objective among staff. Without a doubt, employee retention and motivation create financial benefits for organizations. It is worth pointing out that, since participation in sustainable programs encourages employees to become productive and motivated, it can be concluded that environmental programs and financial success are also positively correlated (Graci & Dodds, 2008; Epstein et al., 2010). According to several studies, most of the times, companies spent financial outcomes of employee enrolment in sustainability to prize colleagues in order to create a culture where people are encouraged to have

compliance with practices and programs supporting environmentalism (Graci & Dodds, 2008; Epstein et al., 2010; Jankovi & Kriva, 2014).

2.6 Financial Perspective

There are two factors why engagement of partners is especially vital to the great progress of environmental awareness activities in hotel and travel management (Singal, 2013). To start with, the hotel industry has a significant ecological impression, as well as, the industry observes openings to decrease the ecological impression by the way of environmental awareness projects, that are provided by hotel sector organizations like the American Hotel and Lodging Association's Green Resource Center, the National Restaurant Association's Conserve activity, and the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (Singal, 2013). Besides, the author adds that considering clients' requests for eco – friendly initiatives, decreasing the ecological effect provides companies an upper hand in the market.

According to Bader (2005), companies should apply for environmental practices and programs in an appropriate and wise manner. It is worth noting that if implemented so, they can not only cover the cost of involvement but also gain financial benefits. To achieve this, there is no need for a long period of time, even in a short period, it is achievable. Long – term advantages of it can be unexpectedly huge (Bader, 2005). There are several financial advantages that commitment to sustainability can contribute to firms, to be precise, one of them is cost efficiency in operations (Eldemerdash & Mohamed, 2013) which will contribute to revenue increase (Bader, 2005). According to Singal (2013), it also provides financial strength, thanks to achieved stability. As an outcome of financial stability, companies become more visible and alluring for investors. The reason behind it is companies' ability to generate shareholder values, thanks to achievement in constant profitability (Bader, 2005). Such businesses are also painless when it comes to financing since they are subject to fewer risks in the long stand.

Nevertheless, according to another study, there is no kind of correlation between a company's commitment to sustainability and its share value (Bird, Hall, Momentè, & Reggiani, 2007). The financial cost of implementation of “green” practices is listed among obstructions for companies to consider (Chang et al., 2014). Chan and Hawking's findings create contradiction to Chang et al.'s findings, where authors highlight that cost of application is not the main obstruction, there are other macroeconomic dimensions that can be considered as an obstacle (2010). Similarly, Bowen states in his research that the financial situation that is present in the company has an impact on implementation decisions (2007). Singal's findings are also in line with Bowen's statements where he mentions that companies are more likely to reconsider or delay CSR – related activities when financial and economic conditions do not hold a positive or increasing trend (2013). According to the same study, some companies do postpone such activities even in presence of a promising future (Singal, 2013).

Another important point is mentioned by Garay and Font where authors claim that the lodging industry is heavily dependent on financial achievement (2012), additionally, Chang et al. consider that implementation of sustainability demands a high cost (2014), therefore, hotels owning better financial positions are more likely to invest in sustainability, compared to others in the industry (Singal, 2013). However, according to the findings of Muller and Pflieger (2014), the cost range of such investments varies based on implemented practices.

On the other hand, Mohammad claims in his research that the capability of such investments to wrap up their expenses is very high (2015). Consequently worth recording that,

such investments can be taken into account as rewarding investments since their advantages are not limited to the outlay of expenses only, they can also bring further advantages for companies (Mohammad, 2015). According to another study, even though the return on investment (ROI) is achievable in the very long run in this type of investment, its advantages carry on for a long time too. According to Dixon – Fowler et al. (2013), small – sized companies are able to obtain more financial advantages while applying sustainability to their business models, compared to large – sized companies.

2.7 Management’s Perspective

To be distinguished and become more visible and strong in the competitive hospitality industry as a hotel is very difficult in today's complex business environment. Worth remarking that practicing environmentalism is also used as a tool that assists hotels to be differentiated in the marketplace. It is not only about creating an image as moral or having compliance with ethical standards. It is also about benefits that such a business model attracts including strong and promising financial performance, positive brand reputation, employee retention, achieving customer loyalty, and many others (Graci & Dodds, 2008; Singal, 2013). There are many types of "green" management practices applied in different hotels and each hotel has its own strategy. It is very important, that hotels create their specific ways of applications in order to find out the most appropriate one for them (Hays et al., 2014). According to the researchers, eco – friendly hospitality organizations should be credible to have the capability to improve their businesses. Moreover, the academics state in their research that there are “direct and indirect” ways of making hospitality organizations’ businesses eco – friendly that should be attempted by lodgings’ administrators with the main purpose of fruitful hospitality organization administration and making clients' stay more enjoyable. Needless to say, hospitality organizations have to focus on both “direct and indirect” activities (Hays et al., 2014). According to the authors, "indirect" ways which point to preserve power and water funds, appropriate removal of garbage, as well as, teamwork effort with the residents are particularly essential, as mentioned points are the noticeable components covering pictures, obligations, and guarantees. “Indirect” activities decrease expenses, as well as, construct eco – friendly hope, thus improving hospitality organizations’ businesses (Hays et al., 2014). Additionally, the researchers recommend lodging properties’ managers to include their “green” titles directly close to their emblems, just as in their contact elements and by way of social network utilized for contact ideas. Furthermore, they believe that active and ecologically taught managers and staff members implement every component mentioned above, improving consumers' stay at hotels.

It is imperative to underscore that companies should also assess their impacts and footprints on the environment. It is not easy to evaluate and measure such impacts (Perši et al., 2013). In Azerbaijan, interest in sustainability and demand from the public for companies to comply with environmental practices is a new trend. Therefore, most companies try to implement it blindly and in an unorganized manner. These include hotels as well. Unlike developed countries such as Canada, Austria, and Germany, there is not much government regulation or any universally accepted guidelines to determine the impact of companies on the environment (Graci & Doods, 2008).

Moreover, Best and Thapa (2013), as cited in (Chang et al., 2014), state that the significance of preserving essential assets can be obvious to hospitality organizations’ executives for various points. According to Chang et al., initially, travel management is frequently vulnerable by the resident landscape (2014). Alternatively, the researchers indicate that lodging directors are

citizens in the native society too, thus they are keen on protecting and appreciating the landscape. Moreover, they add that executives can also be inspired by their eagerness to conserve the landscape for their kids. Chang et al. (2014) mention, based on the findings of (Han et al., 2010), that ecological supervision can be valuable for lodgings too, since it develops their name among consumers, significantly increasing their number. Best and Thapa (2013), as cited in (Chang et al., 2014), indicate that the idea in the previous sentence equips hospitality organizations with an upper hand in the market, as well as, it can present as a huge inspiration for ecological initiatives.

2.8 Azerbaijan’s Country Profile of “Green” Practices

The significance of implementing eco – friendly activities by any country is vital, so European Union (EU) financed and presented the "EU4Environment" project that assists and benefits Azerbaijan and different Eastern partner (EaP) nations with their “green” endeavors (OECD, 2020). Valuable to point out that as time goes by, the country slowly needs to switch from its petroleum extraction profile to sustainable energy expansion to protect its environment and resources, as well as, raise society's ecological safety, and execution of eco – friendly practices step by step presenting and introducing openings with the main purpose of eco – friendly development, as well as, applying instruments to oversee ecological threats and effects more appropriately ("Azerbaijan energy profile – Analysis - IEA", 2020). In addition, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reports that eco – friendly actions must be applied in Azerbaijan's economics since the present mechanisms of development keep on dissolving the supplies of environmental resources, as well as, weaken the reliability of environmental programs that directly affect the financial situation in the country (2020). Moreover, OECD details that the Republic of Azerbaijan contributed to the eco – friendly economics through responsibilities arising from their collaboration with the European Union (EU), as the idea was suggested during the Eastern Partnership Summit Declarations (2020). Furthermore, it was revealed in “Azerbaijan 2020: Look to the future” article that the country strives to raise awareness for climate threats since there are a lot of harms happening to the atmosphere in the country due to petroleum and natural gas mining, thus focusing on the objective to accomplish “green socio-economic” progress by implementing eco – friendly practices (OECD, 2020). Therefore, OECD describes that the main points of the initiative, mentioned above, are as follows: decreasing atmosphere contamination, since “welfare costs” connected to atmosphere contamination through “fine particulate matter (PM2.5)” account for approximately five percent of GDP in Azerbaijan in 2020 which is more than in the European Union (EU) normally constituting for slightly over 3.5 percent (2020). Subsequently, the “fine particulate matter (PM2.5)” is considered to be a climate contaminant index which is a threat for individuals’ well – being, whenever indices are excessive in the atmosphere, and in Azerbaijan “the mean population exposure to PM2.5” is roughly twice greater in comparison with the World Health Organization’s (WHO) regulation which is marginally over twenty to ten $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (OECD, 2020). Next, although the petroleum industry of Azerbaijan constitutes circa 1/3 of the total GDP of Azerbaijan, the government needs to make an expansion of its reach and broaden from the petroleum industry to non – oil sector, since the rates diminish as time goes by and the renewable energy resources, as well as, the eco – friendly practices application are the future of the mankind and the world itself in terms of environmental awareness and protection of the atmosphere (Exec.Order No. 2469., 2021).

Thereafter, OECD (2020) states that Azerbaijan accounted for a joblessness index of around 5 percent in comparison with six and a half percent in European Union (EU), as well as, somewhat over USD 15500 of real GDP per capita in 2018 compared to slightly over USD 37000

of European Union (EU) as shown in Figure 6. Consequently, OECD (2020) specifies that small and medium – sized enterprises (SMEs) in various industries, as well as, providing different services in Azerbaijan, all of which excluding petroleum industry, constitute 56 and 38 percent of entire firms respectively, however all of these organizations provide merely circa three percent to Azerbaijan’s occupation rate totally (Figure 6). In addition, the agronomy industry constitutes for the left 6 percent of all companies in Azerbaijan, contributing to the occupation rate more than SMEs at marginally above 35 percent (Figure 6), (OECD, 2020). As a recommendation, OECD (2020) proposes that the number of investors and customers who value eco – friendly activities grow day by day, therefore, all the companies including small and medium – sized enterprises (SMEs), as well as, agronomy industry may profit from the implementation of "green" practices to protect the climate, as well as, draw more sponsors and clients from all over the world.

2.9 “Green” Hotel Practices in Azerbaijan: Current Situation and Future State

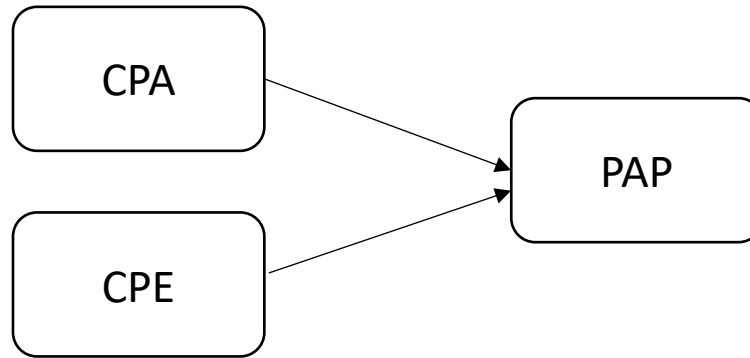
Unfortunately, research on the initiative concerning the application of the "green" label in the tourism industry in Azerbaijan did not give great results due to a big gap of literature, therefore that was one of the main reasons to make an extensive analysis of this issue in the Republic of Azerbaijan and write the final project about this idea to contribute to the well – being of individuals and raise the awareness of ecology and climate protection in the country (OECD, 2020). Despite the fact, that the country lacks the knowledge of the application of "green" practices in the lodging industry, the Republic of Azerbaijan’s site and climate let the country possess the good opportunity for alternative energy progress, thus it can be used in the hotel sector to have huge advantages in reducing atmosphere pollution, as well as, drawing more international clients to travel to Azerbaijan and investors contributing to the country’s economy (Navratil et al., 2019). The Republic of Azerbaijan holds a vast amount of solar and wind reserves, as well as, great potential for hydropower, biomass, and geothermal energy. Consequently considerable to note that, this key point can allow Azerbaijan to develop its scope and extend from the petroleum industry to non – oil sector, thus letting the country diminish the atmosphere contamination, as well as, protect the Caspian Sea from degradation.

Furthermore, concerning the future state of eco – friendly practices realization in the Republic of Azerbaijan, the president of the country approved the decree namely "Azerbaijan 2030: National Priorities for Socio-Economic Development" that states about objectives that shall be completed by the year 2030 including big steps of the shift to greener future of the Republic of Azerbaijan (Exec.Order No. 2469., 2021). One of the chapters of the decree reveals the importance of implementation of eco – friendly practices in all sectors including hospitality to raise environmental awareness and increase the greening index in the country (Exec.Order No. 2469., 2021). Additionally, as it was mentioned above, since Azerbaijan has great potential to develop the activity of alternative energy resources, the state executives thrive to make the country a much greener energy location by the means of "green" technologies function to protect the climate, as well as, attract more customers and international investors (Exec.Order No. 2469., 2021).

2.10 Conceptual Framework

The research question of this thesis was derived from the difficulties primarily associated with the lack of knowledge about “green” hotels. This issue mainly tempted the researcher to look deeper into this topic and conduct the study. To have a thorough analysis of the phenomena, three

variables which are the objectives of thesis are utilized. To this end, the independent variables include the “Customer Preference Aspect” (CPA) and “Consumers' Payment Eagerness” (CPE). It is implied that these two variables directly influence the dependent variable which is “Public’s Awareness Perspective” (PAP). Furthermore, success of the project corresponds with the desired achievement of PAP which in turn depends on the increase tendency of CPA and CPE. Below can be seen the Conceptual Framework demonstration by the researcher:



It is important to put an emphasis on a fact that all businesses around the globe will be judged and perceived based on their reaction in the direction of environmental issues. Needless to say, the trend has already begun, and as time goes by, it will be available in the whole world. As a result, new types of companies and hotels started to emerge as a result of this trend which is called eco – friendly companies, as well as, "green" hotels examining sustainable practices and raising environmental awareness among people all around the globe. Their presence in countries that focus on the development of tourism is very crucial since the number of eco – friendly travelers faces an increase day by day (OECD, 2020). On a high note, such firms, as well as, hospitality organizations’ managers are able to raise current awareness about “green” label practices internationally and in Azerbaijan (OECD, 2020). It is clear, that Azerbaijan is considered to be an oil – based country, and the country’s economy is very dependent on petroleum and natural gas resources ("Azerbaijan energy profile – Analysis - IEA", 2020). Following this notion, since the export of petroleum fossil fuels and other natural resources constitutes over 90 percent of the country's plans, therefore the country's non – oil industry was ignored for a long time so that regulations were not in the focus ("Azerbaijan energy profile – Analysis - IEA", 2020). Even though the Republic of Azerbaijan has strict custom policies, the state tries to expand its reach and broaden from the oil sector to non – oil industry in the last years in order to boost the profit from non – oil sector (Exec.Order No. 2469., 2021). Consequently, from the point of view, eco – friendly hotel development, which is one of the trending and most – wanted sustainability actions, can be one of the strong columns of this strategy (Exec.Order No. 2469., 2021). But most essentially, the product itself is an opportunity with its features; by means of applying sustainability practices, as well as developing eco – friendly hotels can lead to the increase of environmental protection and improvement of managers’ and consumers’ awareness perspective (dependent variable) (OECD, 2020), which is the first and main objective of the project. This point, in its turn, has a direct relationship with the next focus key which is the customer preference aspect (independent variable). Basically, a number of clients looking for sustainability practices, as well as eco – friendly hotels surge gradually (OECD, 2020). Since information about this trend is not in large

amounts in the Republic of Azerbaijan, the reactions to the price of eco – friendly hotels can be an issue that directly damages the representation of such hospitality organizations (Exec.Order No. 2469., 2021). As this issue seeks its resolution, this project will look to research and analyze consumers' payment eagerness (independent variable), which in itself, is the third point that the researcher will be putting much emphasis on and discussing in the chapters. Meanwhile, the oil market fluctuates as time goes by, and Azerbaijan is highly sensitive to the financial crisis that directly affects the economy (Exec.Order No. 2469., 2021). Subsequently considerable to indicate that, this reason shall lead the government to pay more attention to non – oil sector. For the record, as a recommendation, the government and foreign firms shall put more emphasis on non – oil sector, as well as, sustainability practices to increase the number of eco – friendly activities and raise the awareness of environmental protection, as they spent a significant amount of funds for the power industry ("Azerbaijan energy profile – Analysis - IEA", 2020). Moreover, since the number of eco – friendly travelers sees a rise steadily, such environmentally and sustainably specializing companies and hospitality organizations thrive for the enrichment of hotel guest experiences (OECD, 2020). Beyond that, the benefits that eco – friendly practices can bring to the company and the economy as a whole are deemed to be significant. Following this, the development of a unique brand image viewpoint of "green" hotels in the Azerbaijan hotel industry, success feasibility of eco – friendly hotel advancement, as well as, customers' enthusiasm and worthiness to spend funds on such hotels will be analyzed by focusing on relationships of the following objectives:

- Public's awareness perspective;
- Customer preference aspect;
- Consumers' payment eagerness.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This section of the thesis provides information regarding the research approach, the strategy, data collection, and analysis of it. As mentioned above, there was no reliable and sufficient information regarding “green” hotel practices in the Azerbaijani market. Due to that issue, while executing the research, more data sets were found to support the study. Basically, the exploratory research method, as well as, the interpretivist research philosophy were performed via implementation of the inductive reasoning method to incorporate individuals' attention towards the analysis. The primary data, online semi – structured interviews, and open – ended survey questions are directed among hotel managers and customers in order to check insights of consumers in the market and receive more information regarding the potential of success these hotels can achieve. The data collection methods were chosen to be online due to COVID-19 and lockdown complications (Moreno, Fuentes – Lara & Navarro, 2020). Nevertheless worth pointing out that, information concerning the execution of “green” activities in international countries and global trends was obtained from academic papers and articles by wide – ranging academic research in order to strengthen the secondary data (Irwin, 2013). To achieve this, different databases provided by the Maastricht School of Management and ADA University libraries were used, as

well as, other electronic portals that offer academic resources, such as Google Scholar. Furthermore, the thematic analysis method was applied by the researcher to analyze qualitative data.

3.2 Research Approach

In – depth understanding of the problem and research approaches is vital since this factor leads to an interpretation of the research strategy that subsequently lets the researcher comprehend which research approach is more appropriate (Smith, Thrope, and Lowe, 2002). Basically, the researcher selected the interpretivist research philosophy for this thesis due to the fact that the primary purpose of this thesis study was to inspect the perspective of awareness about "green" hotels by customers in Azerbaijan, to say precisely, to realize whether the consumers of the hospitality industry in Azerbaijan have knowledge about the implementation of environmentally – friendly practices in hotels. According to Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2012), phenomenology, as known as, interpretivism research approach lets a researcher comprehend how the organizational process is being conducted in a company by the way of undergoing the phenomena straight in the usual setting of a firm. Following the concept of the mentioned methodology, the researcher tried to assess how educated the lodging customers in Azerbaijan are in terms of "green" activities' application. Moreover, the researcher applied the inductive reasoning method that is a process of obtaining the interpretations which direct to the discoveries reflecting the final philosophies towards the finish of the study (Ghauri & Grønhaug, 2010). Likewise, Bryman & Bell (2011) state that the sequence of inductive reasoning method comprises of remarks leading to outcomes during the research, which eventually deliver concluding ideas. Thus, the researcher managed to gather generic results that first – hand interpretations provided.

3.3 Research Strategy

The exploratory research method is described as a research strategy that is practiced to examine an openly unknown issue, assisting the researcher to obtain different angles and outlooks to the study objectives (Robson, 2011). Similarly, Sekaran and Bougie (2010) claim that the exploratory research design is used while little identified data exist, which in turn suits the study's situation since there is no adequate information regarding “green” hotel practices in the Azerbaijani market. Moreover, the authors add that researches, in which the exploratory research strategy is practiced, can be very useful in terms of acquiring the relevant data sets about a study that is under thorough examination and proceeding findings to develop final concepts. Equally, Wilson (2010) states that the exploratory research method is an appropriate tool to practice when a shortage of data and scarcity of academic articles occur. The researcher highly believes that the exploratory research strategy is the tool that can help to produce richer angles to the particular study topic since no sufficient data sets exist associated with the application of environmentally – friendly activities in the hospitality industry in Azerbaijan.

3.4 Nature of Data

Basically, a difference regarding qualitative and quantitative data research is set by a lot of researchers, thus one of the foremost motives to that is the technique to be practiced concerning qualitative and quantitative data research (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Easterby – Smith, Jackson & Thorpe, 2012). Therefore, the authors point out that arithmetical tools are not practiced in

qualitative data research, unlike in quantitative data research. Likewise, Layder (2013) supports this argument by stating that the fundamental difference between the two methods of research is that unlike academics practicing qualitative data research, quantitative data scientists apply quantification techniques. Moreover, study questions and the project's objectives present angles on the decision of whether qualitative or quantitative data method of research shall be employed (Jankowicz, 2005).

Considering the fact, that one of the key goals of the project was to examine and evaluate the perception of awareness about "green" hotels by consumers in the Azerbaijani market, specifically, to comprehend if the customers of the hotel industry in Azerbaijan have an understanding regarding the application of environmentally – friendly practices in hospitality organizations, the researcher chose to practice the qualitative data research to accomplish objectives of the thesis. Nevertheless, the qualitative data technique is praised to be practiced for the possibilities to obtain required results on questions, such as study issues that concentrate on exploring an individual's knowledge and conduct, as well as, finding conclusions whilst little identified data exist (Ghauri, 2004). Furthermore, the author advises qualitative data technique over quantitative if the research project is problematic to be analyzed practicing the latter approach, so the qualitative data technique is employed. The qualitative data technique was chosen since the researcher aimed to get familiar with the understanding and judgements of respondents regarding the topic. Thus, "Yes or No" type of questions were not interested in, rather the deep visions and comprehensions. Despite the subjectivity and analysis difficulty, qualitative data technique was chosen with the help of online semi – structured interviews and open – ended survey questions.

On the other hand, Bryman & Bell (2011) claim that qualitative data technique is very generalized and personalized, to be precise, qualitative data outcomes can be more of a general outlook, as well as, personal or individual facts rather than specific expertise and details. Although the researcher practiced the qualitative data technique in this project since this tool suits more than the quantitative data research, yet the researcher believes Bryman & Bell's interpretations are accurate since the study revealed more of the researcher's individual comprehensions.

3.4.1 Primary Data Collection

Fundamentally, the researcher opted to exploit primary data that is the research data acquired directly by the researcher regarding the concentration of hypotheses and phenomena exclusively aimed at the project's research question and objectives (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010). Moreover, Quinlan (2011) claims that primary bases offer first – hand data compared to secondary bases, as well as, primary bases verify that the data were primarily obtained. Also, there are several motives on why primary research data are practiced, such as there are no secondary research data or available secondary research data are not suitable for the project (Wilson, 2010). Thus, the situation grants the researcher to state that Wilson's former motive relates to the project since there was no trustworthy and satisfactory evidence concerning the application of environmentally – friendly practices in the hospitality industry in Azerbaijan. The researcher collected online survey responses from 34 hotel consumers, as well as interviewed 6 executives of various hotels, such as Fairmont Hotel Flame Towers, InterContinental Baku Hotel, Fly Inn Baku, Absheron Hotel Group, Shahdag Hotel, and Hilton Hotel. The managers had no less than three years of experience at their respective hotels, besides they held high – ranking positions, such as Sales Manager, Housekeeping Manager, or HR Director. For the fact, the dissertation seeks to synthesize the primary data with already existing international academic literature research conducted from

academic books, papers, and articles worldwide which is the secondary data. Moreover, collection of the data was finalized once the researcher achieved the data saturation.

3.4.2 Interviews and Surveys

The primary research data sets in the qualitative analysis were acquired by the researcher through online semi – structured interviews with executives of different brand hotels, as well as, open – ended survey questions with customers of the hotel industry amid the intention of receiving information regarding the market to analyze the current situation (Cooper & Schindler, 2008). Semi – structured interviews and open – ended survey questions were decided to be online in order to avoid physical interaction due to restrictions because of pandemics with an intention of enabling coziness for the researcher and interviewees (Moreno, Fuentes – Lara & Navarro, 2020). Moreover, semi – structured interviewing methodology is a qualitative analysis tool that comprises rigorous specific dialogues to discover and study standpoints on a certain topic (Lee & Lings, 2008). Furthermore, semi – structured interviews were chosen by the researcher that also enabled to ask further questions in order to receive more clarified information from the interviewees (Hair, Money, Page and Samouel, 2007). Additionally, survey questions were opted to be open – ended by the researcher, since the project requires interpreted qualitative results. Most importantly, the results of online semi – structured interviews along with open – ended surveys helped the researcher draw conclusions for the research.

The researcher had formulated questions (that are shown in Appendix C) for online semi – structured interviews which were exploited on a purposive sampling basis to discover hotel managers’ opinions, as well as open – ended surveys that were practiced on a random sampling basis to find hotel customers’ perceptions regarding the researched topic (Maxwell, 1996). Worth noting, since the project is based on the qualitative research analysis, responses to questions shall not be simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’, therefore accurate questioning practices must be implemented (Lee and Lings, 2008).

3.4.2.1 Pilot Study

First off, a pilot study was conducted by the researcher to examine the relevance of the approach and the answers by respondents, also the method assisted the researcher to get practice with semi – structured interviews. After which, open – ended online questionnaires were collected from consumers of different hotels in the Baku area through e-mails based on random selection. Additionally, the researcher interviewed 6 executives of popular hotels that continued about 20-25 minutes each to be able to get sufficient results. The results showed that some questions were misunderstood or at times answers were not sufficient to proceed with the research. Therefore, the questions were changed after the pilot study and adjusted accordingly to get adequate marks.

3.5 Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis is interpreted as the mechanism of definition, coordination, and the relationship of the fact with the researcher’s approach (Graue, 2015). According to Lee and Lings (2008), methods that can be used to analyze qualitative data in a proper and structural manner are not a lot. The researcher kept his choice on the thematic analysis that is a technique of thorough data examination to identify common themes and indicate the main practical and tactical reasons concerning the researched topic (Boyatzis, 1998). Unlike many approaches that are applied with only particular concepts, thematic analysis is practiced per whichever concept the researcher

opts for, thus, this advantage provides comprehensive and thorough data analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006).

Thematic methodology in qualitative data research comprises three stages which are decreasing amount of data (discovering themes and concepts, picking key points and ideas), demonstration of data (demonstration methodology) and results achievement (Miles and Huberman, 1994). To add, interviews with 6 managers of different hotels, and open – ended surveys collected from 34 consumers provided a considerable volume of information. Based on Braun and Clark’s (2006) thematic analysis method, the researcher made the further actions:

Stage one in research methodology was thus decreasing amount of data by the researcher via "coding" after getting acquainted with the collected information, where the technique began by picking a coding component that can be texts and themes to reach the important results. Following this idea, the researcher practiced themes that were formed from recurrent texts in the records, also broke down themes into primary and secondary parts.

Stage two was a demonstration of data that covers the action of demonstrating the compressed data in a structured way, also the stage is mainly finalized by survey and interview quotes (Eriksson et al., 2008). The researcher highlighted many terms in unique paints referring to unique codes, that were delivering different views inside the script. Below are data coding samples:

Interview extracts

Codes

To undertake the actions to strive to responsibly lessen our impact on the environment. Create more safe working area, prevent the nature from pollution/erosion and pass it to the future generations.

Prevent the nature from pollution

International brands provided reliable working conditions for employees. Each brand conducts pieces of training about environmental safety. There is a special policy of each brand for "green" notion.

Each brand conducts pieces of training about environmental safety

I believe, green practices must be applied in all the possible industries. Global warming and climate change made us understood that we shouldn't take our nature for granted, we must protect our planet. I think green practices applied by hotels is a big step towards the protection of nature.

Green practices must be applied in all the possible industries

Stage three, the results achievement stage helps the researcher to get the needed discoveries, and therefore find results for objectives and study questions through acknowledging themes and applying assessments (Sekeran and Bougie, 2010). The researcher attempted to look for matches among codes, and began creating the themes. Themes were mainly broader than codes, so the researcher combined different codes under individual themes. Below are codes into themes samples:

Codes

Themes

- Prevent the nature from pollution.
- Reducing water consumption and waste management.
- Less damage on our planet.

Environmental Protection

- Each brand conducts pieces of training about environmental safety.
- All departments conduct “green” programs

Informative Approaches

- Green practices must be applied in all the possible industries.
- Green practice is crucial and should be applied by everyone, everywhere.

“Green” Industries

3.6 Ethical Considerations and Research Process Restrictions

During the research process, interviewees and participants reserve privileges, though it is an interview or a survey process (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2011). According to O’Sullivan & Rassel (1999), in order to make an interview or a survey process smooth, as well as, interviewees feel comfortable and relaxed, the interviewer must practice the following policies: enlighten the interviewees about the advantages of the analysis, inform the examinees about their privileges, and consequently acquire their approval. Considering the fact, that the studied theme is not provocative and participants approved the point, company names were revealed (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). Nevertheless, interviewees and examinees reserved many privileges including privacy, so the researcher kept the interviewees’ and examinees’ privacy by practicing categorized digits to classify information extracted from different interviews and surveys (Jankowicz, 2005). Thus, to keep the interviewees' privacy, the following categorized digits were practiced by the researcher: CUS 1-9 – Customer 1-9, HM 1– Housekeeping Manager 1, GM 1 – General Manager 1, SM 1 – Sales Manager 1, SM 2 – Sales Manager 2, RMM 1 – Manager of Repair and Maintenance Department 1, HRD 1 – HR Director 1.

As per restrictions of the research process, one of the main obstacles to conduct the analysis in a proper manner was COVID-19 and lockdown complications, and since the researcher himself tested positive for the virus, it was decided to conduct the research process on an online basis. Secondly, interviewees inadvertently delivered brief responses that produced limited sets of information for the analysis.

4. Findings and Discussions

4.1 Introduction

The research covers the gap in the literature by taking into account the fact that Azerbaijan "green" hotel market has arguably not been researched properly before. Furthermore, the chapter summarizes the key findings extracted from the managers' interviews and customers' surveys, as well as findings' discussions made directly by the researcher regarding the concentration of hypotheses and phenomena specifically aimed at the project's research question and objectives. Synchronously, the discoveries are coherent with the conceptual framework developed by the researcher that uncovers the project's objectives being interconnected with each other, the desired achievement of "Public's Awareness Perspective" depends on the growth trend of "Customer Preference Aspect" and "Consumers' Payment Eagerness". Moreover, the researcher discovered three key themes from the analysis of the findings that are as follows and given in Appendix A (Figure 7): *Environmental Protection*; *Informative Approaches*; *"Green" Industries*. It shall be noted that implementation of theme 2 (*Informative Approaches*) and application of theme 3 (*"Green" Industries*) directly lead to the achievement of the main theme and objective of the thesis which is theme 1 (*Environmental Protection*) as shown in Figure 7.

Previous researches were mainly focused on consumers' perspective. However, some researchers take into account hotel managers' perspective as well. Yet, there are limited numbers of researches where both management and consumers' perspectives are analyzed and the relationship between the two is correlated. Concurrently, the researcher tried to double – check the hotel customers' and managers' responses in order to be able to assess the authenticity of the reactions. The researcher, as a future business professional, would like to contribute to the business industry by analyzing this topic. Azerbaijan, as a country, is focused on the development of non – oil sectors, especially, development of tourism. As a rule, this point gives the researcher a bigger motivation to provide research and findings in this field that cover very important trends that can be contributive for a future research.

4.2 Findings

4.2.1 Managers' Outlook: Local and Global "Green" Tendencies

Considering the fact, that the researcher indicated the angle of hotel management with regard to the application of environmentally – friendly practices in the hospitality industry in the previous chapters, to be precise, what international hotel directors do to have a positive brand reputation, thrive financially, and most importantly contribute to the well – being of the planet, the researcher interviewed executives of several different brand hotels to make an analysis of their answers and find crucial discoveries to the questions observed in this research. Firstly, they were asked the question "What do you understand by the term "green" practices in the hotel industry? Have you ever come across to this term?" To what, the researcher the following responses were received that are provided in direct quotation report:

SM 1 at Fairmont Hotel Flame Towers with a total experience of more than 5 years: *"Each global brand has its own green practices strategy. For me, it is effective usage of water, reducing paper waste."*

HM 1 at InterContinental Baku Hotel with 10 years of experience: *“To undertake the actions to strive to responsibly lessen our impact on the environment. Create more safe working area, prevent the nature from pollution/erosion and pass it to the future generations.”*

RMM 1 at Fly Inn Baku having 5 years of experience added: *“Environmental protection and cost reduction.”*

SM 2 at Absheron Hotel Group who worked 3 years in the organization: *“Saving energy, reducing water consumption and waste management.”*

HRD 1 at Shahdag Hotel with 6 years of experience stated that: *“Eco – hotel or a green hotel is an environmentally sustainable hotel or accommodation that has made important environmental improvements to its structure in order to minimize its impact on the natural environment. These improvements can include non – toxic housekeeping practices, the use of renewable energy, organic soaps, energy – efficient light fixtures, and recycling programs.”*

GM 1 at Hilton Hotel who worked for 10 years there indicated: *“I’ve come across to the term “green” practices. It is mainly implied by the activities that lead to less damage on our planet.”*

All of the managers indicated the significance of climate protection and the application of "green" programs in the hospitality sector, therefore the researcher identified the first theme of the analysis as **Environmental protection.**

In addition to the first question, the managers were asked why they believe the concept of “green” can thrive in the lodging sector in Azerbaijan?

The responses are as follows:

SM 1 shared his opinion: *“I think it can be done within several years after wide advertisement campaigns in Azerbaijan.”*

HM 1 pointed out a noteworthy point in the form of engaging the hotel with the "Green Engage" program adding that: *“Hospitality industry in Azerbaijan supports eco – friendly facilities, thus every worldwide recognized brand hotels adhere to “Green Engage” program as per brand requirements.”*

Moreover, both RMM 1 and SM 2 respectively presented their positive answers indicating that there is a big room for improvement: *“Interest in this field is growing”;*
“It can be implemented.”

HRD 1 added some key thoughts, to be precise, he emphasized that "green" hotels are the future of the hospitality industry:

“I think it will thrive in Azerbaijan, because ecology is a very strong trend, either convictions or a fashion, and caring for the earth has become a goal for many individuals. As a result, eco – hotels have become an increasingly popular alternative in the tourism industry, the increase in demand has led therefore to a large range of hotels with environmentally – friendly options for all requirements.”

GM 1 added his specificity by saying:

“It will help with the protection of climate and environment.”

It should be noted that all of the managers were positive about this inclination.

Following this, the third question was asked by the researcher covering possibilities of Azerbaijan, as a country, to develop and apply environmentally – friendly activities in industries in comparison with the international countries in general: “Why do you think Azerbaijan, in general, is behind global trends in implementation of environmentally – friendly practices in industries (i.e. not only hotel industry)?”

HM 1 mentioned that: *“As a hotelier with 10 years of experience, I have always implemented eco – friendly standard operational procedures in accordance with brand requirements.”*

However, other managers stated the ideas that contradicted above – mentioned point, since SM 1 revealed: *“Compared to developed countries, we still use paper messages and do not consider the effective way of water usage.”*

Furthermore, both RMM 1 and SM 2 correspondingly agreed with SM 1 suggesting that Azerbaijan lacks in the realization of "green" alternative programs: *“Unfortunately, most of the businesses in Azerbaijan are focused on revenue generation and do not think about the implementation of alternative programs.”*

Nonetheless, both HRD 1 and GM 1 accordingly mentioned the importance of assistance from the government: *“It is true for the present. In my opinion, to develop these trends, we need governmental support for the companies who follow green practices. This should include changes in tax legislation, increasing number of informative seminars for hoteliers to better motivate them to use “green” practices widely in Azerbaijan”;*

“In my opinion, the government shall do better in the encouragement of the companies to apply such activities and get benefits in all the industries.”

It shall be added, all of the managers considered that Azerbaijan, as a country, is behind global trends in the implementation of environmentally – friendly practices, except one executive, HM 1, claiming that during his time as a director, he always implemented green activities.

4.2.2 How “Green” Inclination Can Affect Employees’ Job Satisfaction

Basically, organizations that are likely to offer benefits for staff members to match their desires, as well as, care about their well – being, are considered to be front runners in the market. Considering these facts, extremely satisfied personnel can lead to the effectiveness and productivity of any organization, yet, fulfillment in the sustainability of a firm is recorded as a key quality that constructs a trust for the managers on the subject of employee retention. Subsequently, the researcher asked hotel managers about their employees’ current state at their organizations: “How satisfied are your employees working at your hospitality organization? Have they ever mentioned or proposed about the application of the "green" notion?”

To what SM 1 replied: *“International brands provided reliable working conditions for employees. Each brand conducts pieces of training about environmental safety. There is a special policy of each brand for "green" notion.”*

HM 1 highlighted the reputation of IHG Green Engage program saying: *“As per brand standards and requirements, our employees are trained and instructed in regard with IHG Green Engage program.”*

However, both RMM 1 and SM 2 similarly indicated nothing about training sessions for employees stating that their employees are satisfied in their respective hospitality organizations, as well as, they have never mentioned the application of the "green" concept.

In addition, both HRD 1 and GM 1 respectively declared that: *“In hotels which I worked, there was not any special green certificate, but all departments conduct “green” programs. All employees were trained in accordance with the courses about “green” theory and were motivated to be a part of “green” engagement”;*

“They are satisfied, still we conduct international programs for them to develop their knowledge.” The majority of the managers emphasized the importance of training sessions for employees on implementation of environmentally – friendly practices, thus the researcher identified the second theme of the analysis which is **Informative approaches.**

4.2.3 Financial Perspective of “Green” Development

Basically, by means of the shift to sustainability, hospitality organizations are likely to diminish their expenses from functions that can lead to promising financial performance. Considering the fact, that an organization has an assuring monetary functioning, it becomes more attractive for executives and sponsors, since an organization is more secure to invest and can produce high stakeholder standards. Consequently, the researcher asked the following question: *“Do you think applying “green” practices would benefit the hotel from financial aspect?”*

SM 1, RMM 1, and SM 2 all were positive with the idea stating: *“Of course yes. It will assist in reduction of commodity bills and expenses.”*

HM 1 added that: *“Saving energy, water, linen terry reuse policy, reducing the usage of harmful chemicals. Reducing papers by printing double sided also benefits hotels in saving money at every operational aspect.”*

Furthermore, both HRD 1 and GM 1 mentioned valuable ideas and arguments respectively stating: *“I think, the hotels might have financial benefits from financial perspectives, as they do recycling and use less electricity, running water and gas consumption. In addition, if there was governmental support for hotels applying “green” practices, it would motivate hotels more to use environmentally – friendly practices”;*

“Yes. We have saved money by replacing fluorescent lamps with LED lamps. Also, we have been able to reduce water consumption by replacing taps for water with more efficient ones. For example, in the sinks, the tap provided 8 liters of water per minute, however, by changing the caps, the hotel reduced it to 3 liters, as well as, from 14 liters to 8 liters in the showers.”

Needless to say, all of the managers indicated the key position of the switch to the "green" concept and its influence on the financial improvement of hospitality organizations.

4.2.4 Directors' and Customers' Environmental Awareness

Since the final project is mainly based on the findings and results from managers and customers, the researcher attempted to understand the knowledge hotel directors, as well as, consumers possess in regard to ecological protection awareness. Thus, the researcher attempted to verify the hotel directors' responses with customers' in order to assess the legitimacy of the findings, since the topic of public's environmental protection awareness is the first objective of this research.

Subsequently, hotel directors were asked the next question: "Why do you think that there is a lack of knowledge associated with environmentally – friendly hotels in Azerbaijan?"

SM 1 emphasized the point that a country shall be experienced in the hospitality industry to be able to implement a "green" conception in hotels revealing:

"It is only practiced in brand hotels. The majority of local hotels do not know about this strategy at this stage. As you know, the tourism sector is some – kind new for our country compared with other popular destinations. It requires time to know all aspects of hotel operations and use them for financial and reputational benefits."

HM 1 pointed out a noteworthy point about the "green" engage program:

"There are a few 5-star hotels in Azerbaijan that comply with eco – friendly standards. Globally recognized hotel group members are more likely competent with "green" engage requirements."

Moreover, both RMM 1 and SM 2 correspondingly stated: "Propaganda is very weak.";

"The topic is not discussed broadly, and the environmentally – friendly programs are not promoted."

Furthermore, both HRD 1 and GM 1 individually confirmed that: "There is a lack of knowledge about "green" hotels concept, as this trend is new in Azerbaijan";

"Azerbaijan can be thought of as a young country for this trend."

To summarize, the answers of managers demonstrated that Azerbaijan, as a country wholly, lacks knowledge about the "green" concept in the hospitality sector.

Additionally, the researcher distributed an online survey containing open – ended questions that was answered by 34 hotel customers in total.

The question "What do you think of hotels applying "green" practices and how do you feel about them?" was asked, and roughly fifty – five percent of participants mentioned the importance of greening not only in the hospitality industry but also on the whole planet Earth to protect the climate and raise the environmental awareness.

The responses indicated below belong to the consumers of the hospitality sphere:

CUS 1 replied: "Green practice is crucial and should be applied by everyone, everywhere. There is no planet B after all."

CUS 2 added: *"I believe, green practices must be applied in all the possible industries. Global warming and climate change made us understood that we shouldn't take our nature for granted, we must protect our planet. I think green practices applied by hotels is a big step towards the protection of nature."*

CUS 3 supported the arguments of previous responses stating: *"Generally, I am glad that the world is moving towards "green" practices and hotels are no exception. Although these practices are now not generally applied across the world, I believe and hope that soon it will be more wide – spread until it becomes mandatory."*

CUS 11 mentioned: *"In my opinion, implementation of green practices is one of the environmentally – friendly initiatives, as it reduces negative impact on environment. Therefore, hotels using green practices can reduce enormous impact of tourism industry on environment."*

Rest of the participants shared the following respective thoughts on the topic: *"I am indifferent about hotels applying green practices but of course it would be nice if all the businesses were thinking about the environment";*

"I think in today's world, it is crucial to support the green initiatives. As a customer It makes me feel like the hotel is caring about me and my actions thus helping me be more sustainable";

"It gives me more comfortability";

"I do support hotels that apply green practices. I will feel happy to use them."

However, two of the respondents accordingly mentioned the following: *"It does not make any difference to me, since I do not have enough information about this trend.";*

"Nice to have, still I need to be educated concerning this theme."

To sum up, from the answers provided by hotel clients, it can be understood that the majority of the respondents are moderately educated in regard to the trend and put a big significance on environmentally – friendly activities, except for two individuals who do not have much knowledge regarding the discussed subject and need to be trained. The answers of consumers along with the previous responses of hotel managers prompted the researcher to identify the third theme of the project which is **"Green" industries.**

The next question to hotel clients was as follows: "Have you ever heard of international or local hotels implementing activities to raise awareness of environmental protection?"

All of the participants revealed that they have not heard of international or local hospitality organizations applying "green" practices, however, some of the respondents added several vital facts, such as:

CUS 1 stated: *"I have not heard of any local hotels with such activities, but it is surely something that hotels in Europe and the US are integrating. Almost all hotels encourage their guests to hang up their towels to be reused, implement non-toxic products and recyclable packaging. Now that*

there is still a lot more that they could do, but it is a better initiative than doing nothing to contribute to saving our planet”;

CUS 3 added that: *“Unfortunately, in Azerbaijan, very little known about ecological protection, and there are a very few activities held to raise the awareness about it. However, it is now becoming more popular in the more developed parts of the world, therefore if you are simply interested in practices towards environmentally - friendly attitude, it is now easier to access this information through small research”;*

CUS 5 specified: *"Haven't heard from locals. However, it is more common in the international market: water usage, electricity controls, eco – friendly shampoo and other related goods, recycling”;*

CUS 9 indicated: *“I did not hear a specific one, but I do know that general trend is encouraging eco – friendly operations and institutions.”*

CUS 32 added: *“Raising awareness of ecological protection can be in many ways, and through green hotel development, it is one way to do it.”*

The following question was asked to examine the knowledge of hotel consumers with regard to the alertness of environmental protection: "As a client of a hotel and a human being, how aware are you of climate protection, and what is your outlook towards it?"

The respondents shared the following opinions: *“Quite aware, but still educating myself on this topic”;*

“I think it's time that we start to protect our nature since humanity did not care about nature till now. Every year, billions of tons of carbon – dioxide emissions are released into the air that we breathe”;

"As a person, I am very concerned about climate protection and everything related to it. However, as a hotel customer, I am not very aware of "green" activities hotels imply to reassure that the environmental pollution is decreased to a minimum by them”;

"I believe that it is a serious matter and everyone should take responsibility in the protection of the environment”;

"I am moderately informed. I try implementing possible protective actions, however, would not say that I succeed”;

“Not really aware”;

"I am aware of the importance of climate protection, especially for water consumption. Energy sources shall be renewable ones, consumables shall be recyclable. However, how much I do contribute to these protection methods is a huge question mark.”

“Unfortunately me and other citizens of Azerbaijan are not that clear about the best practices of climate protection, but the good thing is that current generation of young people want to support something like this business idea, which is why I strongly believe in probability of success of such enterprise (of course other business aspects should be fulfilled as well).”

From the responses, it can be comprehended that individuals taking part in this survey do realize what environmental protection is, however they need to be educated and trained as hotel clients regarding the reduction of pollution in the atmosphere, as well as, the application of “green” concept in their daily lives including during their stay at hotels.

4.2.5 Consumer Preference Perspective

The researcher specifically put his attention on the feasibility of “green” concept development in the hospitality industry in Azerbaijan. Moreover, the customer preference aspect was chosen by the researcher as the second objective of this final project to make an analysis and find consumer inclinations in Azerbaijan. Furthermore, the researcher included the following question in the online survey: “What is your preference aspect? Would you choose an environmentally – friendly hospitality organization over traditional hotels?”

Basically, from the responses, it was found that despite the fact, all of the respondents stated their concerns about the protection of the environment, their preference of choosing a "green" hospitality organization changes. The majority of the participants do not have an intention to opt for "green" lodging properties for their stay, others are only focused on the price of the hotels. It is true that a room in a hotel shall be affordable to book, still, there is an immense need for the customers to be trained or at least informed to fully understand the importance of widespread switch to the "green" concept. Nevertheless, the mentioned topic touches on the second theme of the project which is *Informative approaches*.

CUS 1 mentioned the following points: *"Green practice is not the only thing that is looked at by most people when they choose a hotel. It all depends on the individual's destination and the purpose of trip. If I go on a business trip and I happen to find an environmentally – friendly hotel located within my preferred range (e.g. heart of the city), and it's reasonably priced, I will definitely go for it."*

CUS 3 added: *"If I had enough recourses and a choice, then I would prefer environmentally – friendly hotels to contribute to ecology protection because as a human being I care about well – being of our planet and I am interested in creating a better place to live for our future generations."*

CUS 9 mentioned: *"I would prefer an eco – friendly hotel over traditional ones. Protecting the environment for the future of human beings is important. Eco – friendly hotels shall cause less damage or even no damage to the environment and encouraging them will motivate and push others to use more eco – friendly practices in their facilities."*

Moreover, CUS 14 agreed with previously mentioned arguments stating: *"It's hard to say something without additional context. I would say that overall if a green hotel offers approximately the same level of service (and other aspects, such as those I mentioned above), as a good 4 star*

hotel (5 star would be great, but let's be realists), I would definitely prefer a green hotel over others."

However, the rest of the respondents declared some alternative views: *"I am not in a position to make such a choice, to be honest, I would choose the one that is cost – effective";*

"Not just because it is eco – friendly";

"I would, as long as the price is cheaper or quality higher than the traditional one";

"Actually, as of today, I am not choosing hotels based on how much they are environmentally – friendly."

Since consumers' payment eagerness is the third objective of the research study, as well as, approximately forty – five percent of the participants touched the price subject, the researcher had correctly included the next question in the survey: "As you may know, prices for staying at "green" hotels can differ. Why would you be willing to pay extra for "green" practices?" Consequently, it was discovered that sixty – seven percent of respondents are not fond of "green" hospitality organizations being expensive, therefore are not willing to pay extra for their stay in such organizations.

Nevertheless, there were participants that had a different approach to the mentioned idea:

"Green practice is not a luxury. It should be omnipresent and accessible. We should not be "paying extra" for our future that is at stake";

"This depends on the resources that I have, if paying extra for "green" practices does not exceed my planned budget, then I would gladly choose it. However, I genuinely think that in the upcoming future, we will not have to choose between 2 options, as more hotels will switch their operational strategies towards more sustainable and ecological development";

"At least this will be my contribution to the environment by helping these to survive compared to conventional ones."

"It's not always the luxury and comfort criteria that determine the price. We have to understand that in our times when caring of environment is of utter importance the "greener" you are the more you can claim for it."

4.2.6 Environmentally – Friendly Development: Key Arguments

Primarily, the researcher's goal was to comprehend what local consumers of the hospitality industry think in regard to the environmentally – friendly development in Azerbaijan, to be precise, what the crucial impacts are that can affect the industry in an effective manner. Bearing in mind the objectives of this final project, the researcher included the following question in the online survey: "Describe several points that come to mind when you think of a "green" hospitality organization?"

It shall be noted, that over fifty – five percent of participants mentioned numerous attractive activities including the application of renewable energy resources by which hotels can reduce damage to the ecosystem:

“Recycling. Saving water. Non-toxic products. Beach clean ups. Animal conservation. Electric cars. Sustainable furnishing. Saying no to plastic. Smart showers. Control of electricity or even using solar batteries”;

“Firstly, I think hotels may use renewable energy to provide the guests with the necessary services. Another point is the usage of materials in every aspect of the service that can be recycled”;

“First thing that crosses my mind is reusable supplies which hotels can offer to their guests as well as renewable sources of energy. At the second step, I would think about reducing the waste which hospitality centers produce to ensure minimum damage to the environment”;

“Using wind power and solar panels to get energy, having electric golf cars, reducing carbon dioxide emissions”;

“Waste management system, solar energy for their power supply, the vegan menu for guests, electrical vehicles in the facility.”

“Ecotourism, protection and increasing of the green areas, water management, waste management.”

Moreover, the researcher’s findings correspond with the answers of local hotel consumers, since the Republic of Azerbaijan has excessive prospective to progress the action of alternative energy resources due to the country’s location and weather possibilities, hence it can be implemented in the hospitality sphere to get vast benefits in decreasing climate contamination.

Furthermore, the researcher attempted to learn hotel customers' opinions in regard to the strategic qualities that "green" hospitality organizations possess.

Responses made the researcher understand that hotel consumers are not completely aware of environmentally – friendly lodging properties' attributes, since more than sixty – six percent of respondents expressed no particular idea, which means they are not educated enough on this topic. Nevertheless, the rest of the participants shared their interesting thoughts:

CUS 1 responded: *“The Earth will be 1.5 degrees warmer by 2050. The ecological breakdown is here. Sixty percent of animals have been annihilated since the 70s. Ice sheets are melting. We cannot afford not to act”;*

CUS 2 mentioned that: *“The “green” attributes are quite important since hotels may have guests from different parts of the world and increase their awareness about the ecological protection”;*

CUS 3 revealed: *“With the constantly increasing demands of the human race, it is important to understand that the planet's supplies are not endless. It is even more important for us to try to save and repair the damage that is done to the planet by previous generations. Environmentally –*

friendly properties are what we all should encourage and support in order to make a world a better place."

CUS 32 indicated: *"Very important to have these kinds of initiatives in Azerbaijan, since we are still a developing country, we need to take example from developed countries."*

4.3 Discussions

4.3.1 Environmental Protection

Factually, from the findings it can be declared that the researcher identified three key themes from the thematic analysis of the findings that are as follows: *Environmental Protection; Informative Approaches; "Green" Industries*. The hotel managers and consumers of the hospitality industry were asked the questions through online interviews and open – ended surveys from different aspects to fully analyze and comprehend the three fundamental objectives of the final project which are public's awareness perspective, customer preference aspect, as well as consumers' payment eagerness. Henceforward after receiving the results, the researcher attempted to crosscheck the outcomes of the results with the three discovered key themes to correspond them with each – other. Hereafter, it shall be added that there is a relationship between the study's themes since the themes of *Informative Approaches* and *"Green" Industries* lead to the central and primary outcome of the research which is the *Environmental Protection* theme. Henceforth, the identified *Environmental Protection* theme by the researcher corresponds with the second objective of the project which is the customer preference aspect. In fact, customers that are not in the groups of environmentalists are also looking forward to seeing environmental practices in hotels (Weissenberg, Redington, & Kutyla, 2008). According to the report of Deloitte, that is cited in Weissenberg, Redington, and Kutyla's study that is held among business travelers, majority, to be precise, 95 percent of survey participants totaling to 1000 indicated the importance of environmental practices for them to be employed by hotels (2008). Unfortunately, the fact of reliance of the accommodation industry on the environment does not affect properties' decision to employ environmental practices often and at the desired level (Reynolds, 2013). Singal (2013) mentions in his study that business travelers highlighted the presence of recycling and careful treatment of natural resources as a decision influencing factor while making preference among hotels which, in this project's case, matched with the respondents' opinions.

4.3.2 Informative Approaches

The findings of the research project proposed the presence of a hole in the application of eco – friendly strategies, as well as, the comprehension of the commercial profits connected with the operation of "green" initiatives. The majority of the hotel managers and consumers declared a large need for the training sessions and educational sessions to be conducted in regard to the application of "green" initiatives in the hospitality industry. Additionally, the discovered *Informative Approaches* theme by the researcher corresponds with the first objective of the project which is the public's awareness perspective. Employee engagement also assists companies to achieve their environmental goals (Jankovi & Kriva, 2014). Similarly, it is indicated by several scholars that consistency and level of dedication in sustainable programs are dependent variables that are affected by the perspective that employees hold in the direction of environmental issues (Epstein & Buhovac 2014; Eldemerdash & Mohammad, 2013; Hays et al., 2014). It is very principal for companies to understand the importance of changing employees' perspectives to

positive regarding these programs (Jankovi & Kriva, 2014) and to transform them to become sensitive to the related category of issues (Epstein et al., 2010). The most difficult part of the puzzle is to create a working culture where a “green” business model is present and applied (Jankovi & Kriva, 2014). It is important to highlight that the scholars’ following views corresponded with the researcher’s findings in this study as employees are the first impression creators of hotel businesses who directly contact with customers (Hays et al., 2014), therefore, there is a necessity for many training sessions for employees and consumers that cover the importance of "green" practices (Chan et al., 2008) that will, in turn, come back as customer satisfaction, since awareness will allow staff members to handle consumer apprehension in a particular field (Hays et al., 2014; Jankovi & Kriva, 2014).

4.3.3 “Green” Industries

The results of the research study suggested that from the management’s aspect, going “green” can lead to a functioning organization’s financial improvement in any industry including a hotel’s profitability in the hospitality sector through a number of activities, such as reducing costs over decreased operational functions, using renewable energy sources or recycling that lead to the revenue growth. Following this, the managers confirmed that going “green” puts hotels in improved financial condition, thus the researcher attempted to link the latter conception of the phenomenon with the idea of consumers’ inclination to pay for “green” hotels and desire over traditional hotels in the industry. It is mentioned, that the most important inspiration for hospitality organizations to apply sustainable activities may be expanding their revenue (Chang et al., 2014). From a point, researches of (Chan, 2008; Best and Thapa, 2013), which are cited in Chang et al. (2014), indicate that shortage of monetary, work, and some administrative assets is a big obstacle for hospitality organization managers to implement eco – friendly initiatives. Furthermore, the researchers mention that the responsibility of staff members generally expands with the presentation of ecological activities, whereas the presentation additionally demands huge monetary financing (2014). From another point, based on the results of (Bohdanowicz, 2006; Manaktola and Jauhari, 2007), Chang et al. state that eco – friendly initiatives which include preservation of power, water, as well as, some different assets may prompt decreased working expenses, subsequently, expanded revenue (2014). Lee and Park (2009), which is cited in Chang et al. (2014), indicate that corporate social responsibility practices, as well as, eco – friendly initiatives are successfully connected with hospitality organizations’ productivity and worth. Additionally, Chang et al. (2014) say, based on the findings of Molina – Azorin et al. (2009), that level of hospitality organizations' ecological practices may emphatically correspond with their productivity. On the other hand, from the hotel consumers' perspective, it was discovered that accepting the "green" concept indicates a more desired place to stay due to motivational influences such as approach regarding climate protection, compared to traditional hotels. Hereafter, this point linked the “*Green*” *Industries* theme with the third objective of the thesis which is consumers’ payment eagerness. Yet, it was found from the responses that participants' constraining influences such as knowledge deficiency, the trouble of access, or budget were among obstacles that made them reluctant to pay extra if asked for a "green" hotel.

4.3.4 Limitations of The Results

Regarding the limitations of the results, it must be pointed out that the writer did not manage to sidestep the bias issue, since the thesis indicated personal views of the writer based on various interesting subjects. Thus, readers may think of various statements regarding the specified

results, hence the discoveries of the study are somewhat biased. Moreover, another problem was COVID-19 and lockdown difficulties, and since the writer himself tested positive for the virus, the interviews were held on an online basis and with 6 hotel managers, as well as the surveys were conducted with 34 consumers which means the information demonstrates the opinions of the minority only. Although the online survey was disseminated on several social media channels as well, however it was challenging to collect data about the researched topic, as people were not willing to participate in the research.

5. Conclusion, Recommendations, and Research Implications

5.1 Conclusion

The study was considered to be worthy to carry out by taking into account the current situation in the Republic of Azerbaijan. It shall be pointed out that when it comes to feasibility, the researcher believed that conducting this research is feasible since there are a lot of articles covering sustainability and “green” activities in international hotels, as well as most importantly, sustainability and “green” concept are what the Republic of Azerbaijan’s tourism and hotel industry lacks. Additionally, having strong hoteliers and managers in the country, as well as, individuals and consumers who tend to put big attention on environmental protection and "green" practices made this study feasible as well.

The researcher started off the project with the extensive literature review research on how global hospitality organizations apply environmentally – friendly practices in international countries including the ideas concerning the hotel management’s approach, employee perception, consumers’ outlook, as well as, financial advantages that “green” concept provides eco – friendly hotels. Moreover, the researcher attempted to make comparisons between the current “green” concept situation in the Republic of Azerbaijan and sustainability application worldwide where large gaps in the literature and processes were discovered. Consequently, the writer endeavored to obtain the qualitative data and analyze the problem by conducting online semi – structured interviews and open – ended survey questions answered by managers of different brand hotels and customers of the hospitality industry in Azerbaijan. It can be concluded that the writer succeeded in achieving the objectives of the thesis via the results gathered from the respondents. To be precise, the awareness of hotel managers and consumers in Azerbaijan (objective 1) was examined and determined that the hotel sector and public in Azerbaijan lack environmental protection awareness, although individuals emphasize "green" hotel preference and managers are aware of improved financial outcomes, therefore informative approaches and training sessions (theme 2) need to be applied. Moreover, the hotel customer preference aspect (objective 2) was investigated and discovered that consumers tend to put a big emphasis on environmental protection (theme 1), though they must be educated more on this topic since this trend is new and not much data is collected for Azerbaijan. Furthermore, the writer drew the conclusion lines from the findings that consumers’ payment willingness (objective 3) varies based on experience deficiency, access limit, and payment inclinations. The deficit of social movement by the public makes it very challenging for hotels to set the price ranges under the market price level set by traditional hotels, which respondents pointed out in the survey since they are unwilling to pay a premium for "green" hospitality organizations. Nonetheless, hotels must become a part of the "green" industries concept (theme 3) and be more active concerning sustainability application in their business procedures to

obtain financial improvement and deliver advantages to the public and atmosphere via “green” activities.

5.2 Recommendations

From the analysis of results, it can be indicated that there is a need for informative methods such as sustainable training for the hotel management, employees, and customers in Azerbaijan. Chen (2009) states that hospitality is a sector that needs large numbers of employees to provide services to constantly increasing hotel consumers that look for eco – friendly activities in organizations. According to the same study, well – defined "green" program strategy course, as well as the whole staff including managers of hotels are essential functions contributing to the environmentally – friendly concept progress. It is recommended that executives organize and manage a sustainability project where employees of every division in a hotel participate. According to Schwab (2008), it is advised to share with staff members and guests the real values and outcomes the former "green" practices projects created to keep employees and consumers optimistic to be a part of such programs. Moreover, it is suggested that "green" hospitality organizations take into account that they need to obtain special environmental documents to be considered as a suitable sustainable spot and attract more customers. Furthermore, it is also recommended that managers of hospitality organizations can take matters into their hands and make their individual investigations by sending out questionnaires to previous hotel customers and collect data about what the consumers think concerning organizations' environmentally – friendly activities. To be precise, this method can help to find out the customers' preference aspect and if the consumers are satisfied with the sustainability and eco – services the companies provide. Besides, hospitality organization managers may profit in regard to the notion of consumers' ecological fears since the idea is discovered to be arguably associated with the eagerness to spend on "green" activities if the price is considerable and the focus group is accurate. In addition, since Azerbaijan is deemed to be a petroleum country, the government and international investors can put more attention on alternative industries, such as tourism and hospitality, as well as sustainability practices to develop “green” concept and raise the awareness of environmental protection ("Azerbaijan energy profile – Analysis - IEA", 2020).

5.3 Research Implications

In terms of research implications of this thesis, considering the fact that a study in regard with the hotels implementing environmentally – friendly concept in Azerbaijan has never been examined, the results can be useful for hospitality organization managers who are eager to switch their hotels from traditional to sustainable companies which can offer “green” activities, however, are doubtful if the consumers are alarmed about environmental protection or not, as well as which actions must be taken to regulate a lodging's strategic planning to generate a competitive advantage. The discoveries on the desired eco – activities can provide the managers with future policies and procedures about which "green" trends consumers think are essential to be offered in organizations.

Basically, future researches on the "green" hotel concept can get contributions from the findings of this thesis, to be precise, the application of renewable energy resources was extensively encouraged by the participants of this project since they stated significant advantages of this method. Hence, implementation of these techniques, such as wind turbines and solar panels can provide future eco – hotels with a competitive edge over traditional hospitality organizations.

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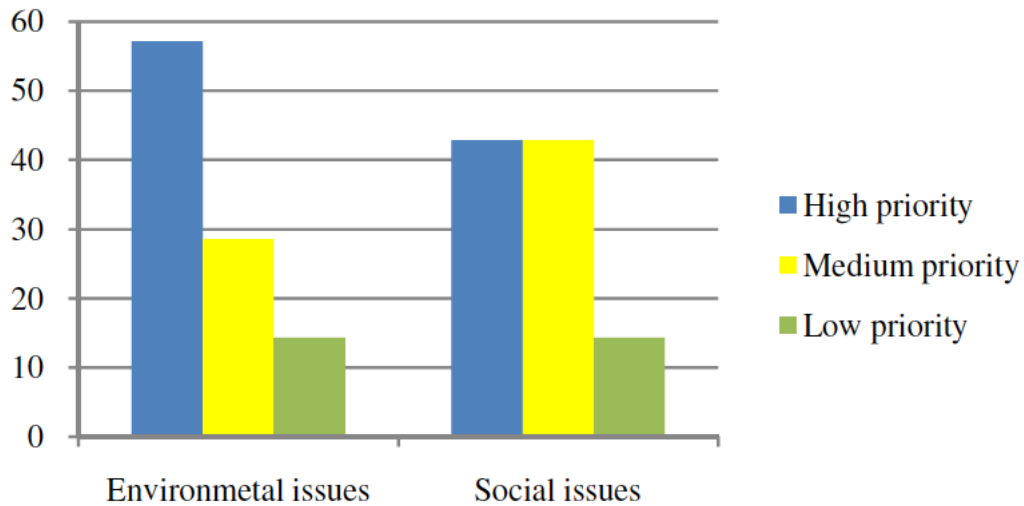
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Appendix

Appendix A. Figures

Figure 1. Environmental and Social Strategic Priorities (Croatian Case)



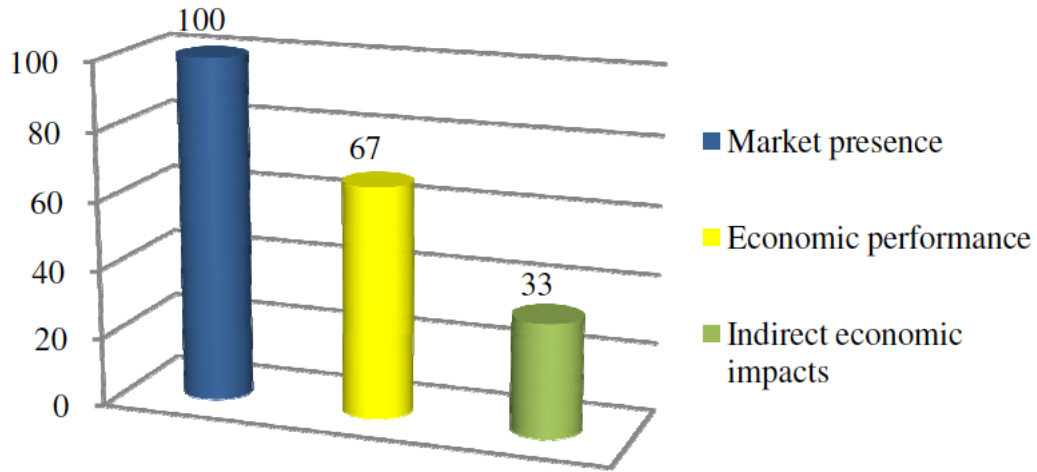
Source: Retrieved from Perši et al. (2013)

Figure 2. Benefits of Applying Sustainability



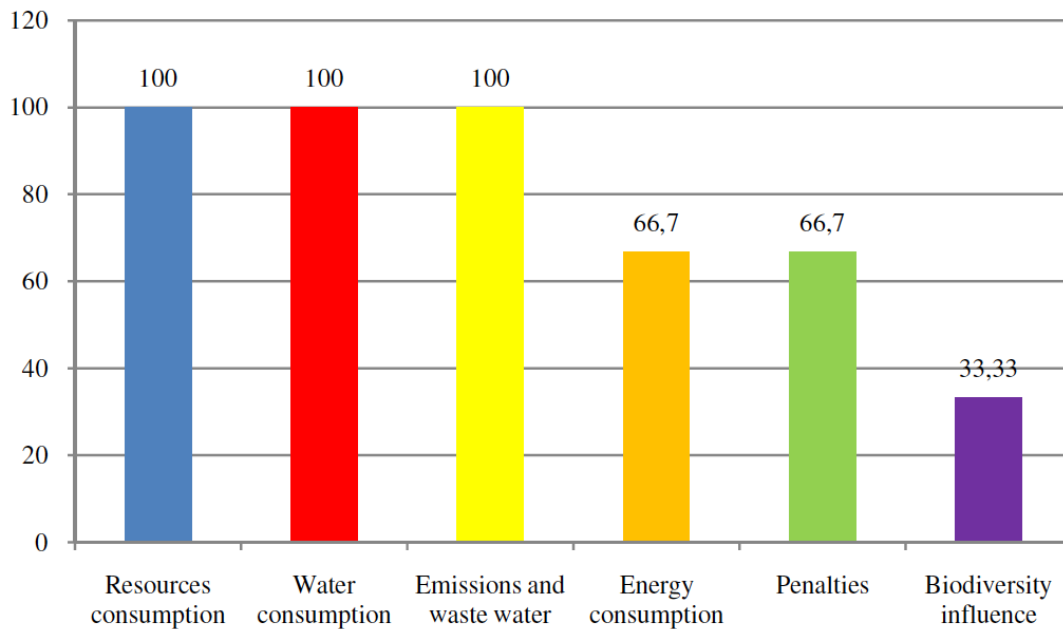
Source: Retrieved from Perši et al. (2013)

Figure 3. Economic Indicators in Sustainability Reports



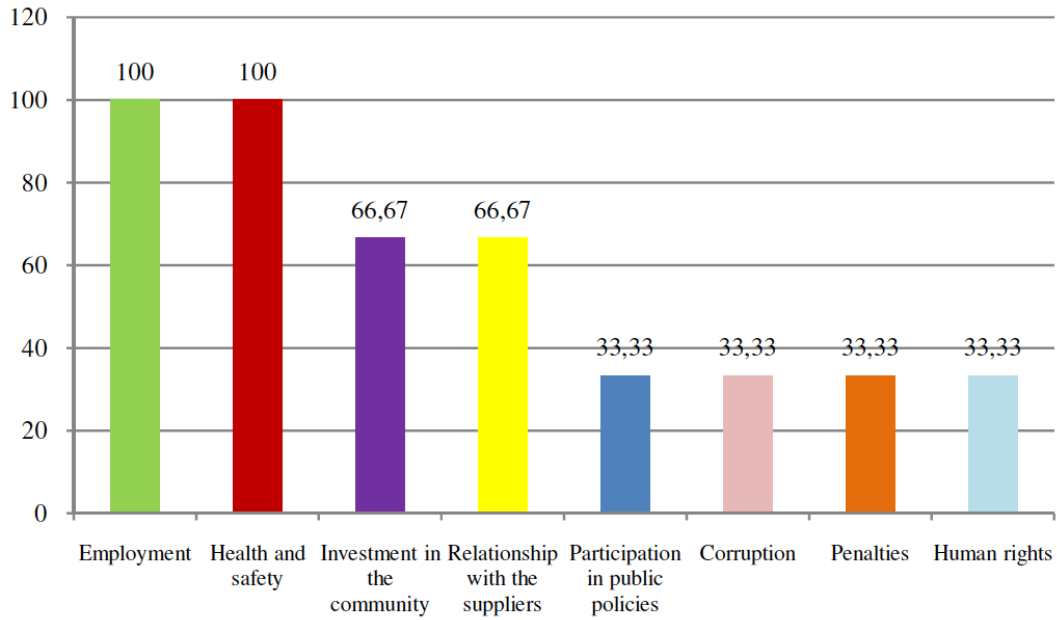
Source: Retrieved from Perši et al. (2013)

Figure 4. Environmental Indicators in Sustainability Reports



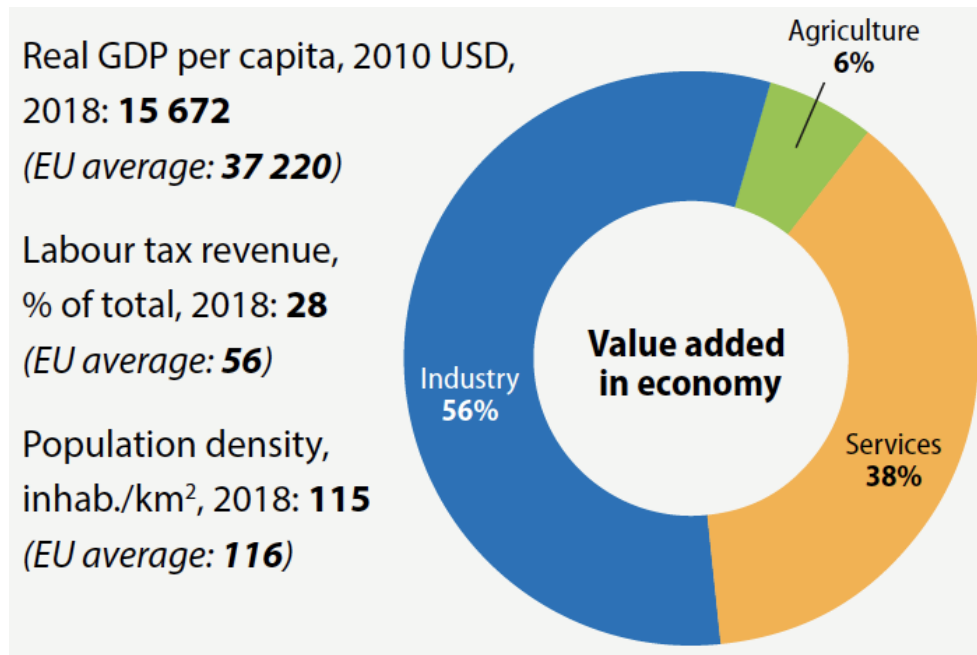
Source: Retrieved from Perši et al. (2013)

Figure 5. Social Indicators in Sustainability Reports



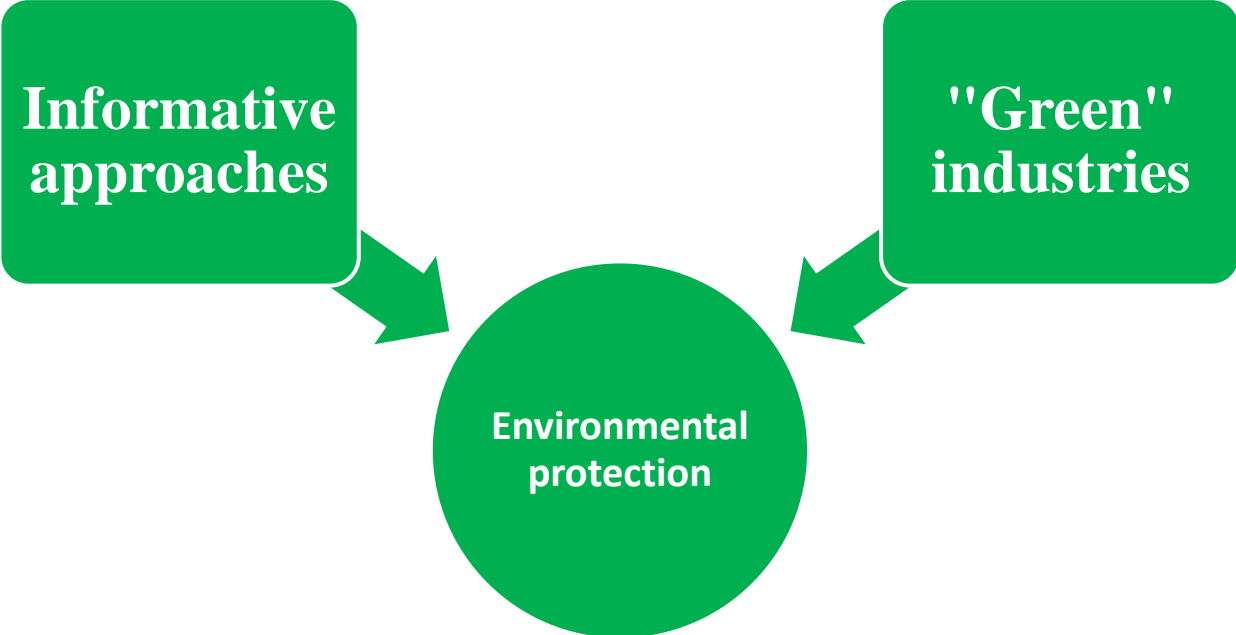
Source: Retrieved from Perši et al. (2013)

Figure 6. Azerbaijan’s Socio – Economic Context



Source: Retrieved from OECD (2020)

Figure 7. Key Themes of The Findings



Source: Made by the researcher (2021)

Appendix B. Tables

Table 1. Goals, Activities, and Results of Greening Hotels

Goals	Activities	Results
Financial – reduce costs	Save water and energy, identify leakage early, effective purchasing system, better isolation, reduce paperwork, low consumption appliances	Long-term saving opportunities, added credibility to green services, costs cut immediately if no financial investment required, awards and certificates
Customers – attract new guests, build loyalty	Green trips, farm trips, green weddings and conferences, organic food, programs to raise awareness and ask for participation	New markets and target audiences, satisfaction of guests, word of mouth, guests feel-good for doing-good
Employees – synergize, satisfy	Green teams, improved flow of information, educational programs for staff	Higher level of involvement and satisfaction of those who are in direct contact with customers
Processes – reduce negative impact on environment	Recycle, reuse, electric vehicles, saving bulbs, faucets, toilets and showers, natural cosmetics and cleaning products, towel and linen changes on demand only, clean energy sources	High initial costs (investments), added credibility and visibility to green services, satisfaction of green guests, differentiation
Brand – add value, boost image	Participation in international programs for environmental protection, donations to local community, neighborhood activities and events, partnerships with local businesses	Donations/investors, certificates, awards, positive PR, credibility, differentiation

Source: Retrieved from Hays et al. (2014)

Appendix C. Interview, Survey Questions, and The Answers

Managers

What do you understand by the term “green practices” in the hotel industry? Have you ever come across to this term?

SM 1 Sales Manager at Fairmont Hotel Flame Towers, In total more than 5 years.

Each global brand has its own green practices' strategy. For me, it is effective usage of water, reduce paper waste.

HM 1 InterContinental Baku Hotel. Housekeeping Manager, 10 Years

To undertake the actions to strive to responsibly lessen our impact on the environment. Create more safe working area, to prevent from pollution/erosion nature and pass it to future generations.

RMM 1 Fly Inn Baku Manager of Repair and Maintenance department, 5 years

Environmental protection and cost reduction.

SM 2 Absheron Hotel Group, Group Sales Manager, 3 years

Saving energy, reducing water consumption and waste management.

HRD 1 Shahdag Hotel, HR Director, 6 years

Eco – hotel, or a green hotel is an environmentally sustainable hotel or accommodation that has made important environmental improvements to its structure in order to minimize its impact on the natural environment. These improvements can include non-toxic housekeeping practices, the use of renewable energy, organic soaps, energy-efficient light fixtures, and recycling programs.

GM 1 Hilton Hotel, 10 years

I've come across to the term "green" practices. It is mainly implied by the activities that lead to the less damage on our planet.

Why do you believe the concept of “green” can thrive in the lodging sector in Azerbaijan?

Sales Manager, Fairmont Hotel Flame Towers, In total more than 5 years.

I think it can be done within several years after wide advertisement campaigns in Azerbaijan.

InterContinental Baku Hotel. Housekeeping Manager. 10 Years

Hospitality industry in Azerbaijan supports eco – friendly facilities, thus every worldwide recognized brand hotels adhere to "Green Engage" as per brand requirements.

Fly Inn Baku Manager of Repair and Maintenance department. 5 years

Interest in this field is growing.

Absheron Hotel Group, Group Sales Manager, 3 years

It can be implemented.

Shahdag Hotel, HR Director, 6 years

I think it will thrive in Azerbaijan, because ecology is a very strong trend, either convictions or a fashion, and caring for the earth has become a goal for many individuals. As a result, eco – hotels have become an increasingly popular alternative in the tourism industry, the increase in demand has led therefore to a large range of hotels with environmentally – friendly options for all requirements.

Hilton Hotel, GM 1, 10 years

For sure, since it will help with the protection of climate and environment.

How satisfied are your employees working at your hospitality organization? Have they ever mentioned or proposed about application of “green” notion?

Sales Manager, Fairmont Hotel Flame Towers, In total more than 5 years.

International brands provided really reliable working conditions for employees. Each brand conducts trainings about environmental safety. There is a special policy of each brand for “green” notion.

InterContinental Baku Hotel. Housekeeping Manager. 10 Years

As per brand standards and requirements, our employees are trained and instructed in regard with IHG Green Engage program.

Fly Inn Baku Manager of Repair and Maintenance department. 5 years

They are satisfied.

Absheron Hotel Group, Group Sales Manager, 3 years

Very satisfied.

Shahdag Hotel, HR Director, 6 years

In hotels which I worked, there was not any special green certificate, but all departments conduct “green” programs. All employees were trained in accordance with the courses about “green” theory and were motivated to be a part of “green” engagement.

Hilton Hotel, GM 1, 10 years

They are satisfied, still we conduct international programs for them to develop their knowledge.

Do you think applying “green” practices would benefit the hotel from financial aspect?

Sales Manager, Fairmont Hotel Flame Towers, In total more than 5 years.

It will assist to reduce commodity bills, reduce expenses.

InterContinental Baku Hotel. Housekeeping Manager. 10 Years

Saving energy, water, linen terry reuse policy, reducing usage of harmful chemicals. Reducing papers by printing double sided also benefits hotels in saving money at every operational aspect.

Fly Inn Baku Manager of Repair and Maintenance department. 5 years
It will definitely benefit the hotel.

Absheron Hotel Group, Group Sales Manager, 3 years
Very advantageous from financial perspective.

Shahdag Hotel, HR Director, 6 years
I think, the hotels might have financial benefits from financial perspectives, as they do recycling and use less electricity, running water and gas consumption. In addition, if there was governmental support for hotels applying “green” practices, it would motivate hotels more to use environmentally – friendly practices.

Hilton Hotel, GM 1, 10 years
We have saved money by replacing fluorescent lamps with LED lamps. Also, we have been able to reduce water consumption by replacing taps for water with more efficient ones. For example, in the sinks, the tap provided 8 liters of water per minute, however, by changing the caps, the hotel reduced it to 3 liters, as well as, from 14 liters to 8 liters in the showers.

Why do you think that there is a lack of knowledge associated with environmentally – friendly hotels in Azerbaijan?

Sales Manager, Fairmont Hotel Flame Towers, In total more than 5 years.
It is only practiced in brand hotels. Majority of local hotels do not know about this strategy at this stage. As you know, tourism sector is some – kind new for our country comparing with other popular destinations. It requires time to know all aspects of hotel operations and use them for financial and reputational benefits.

InterContinental Baku Hotel. Housekeeping Manager. 10 Years
There are a few 5-star hotels in Azerbaijan that actually comply with eco – friendly standards. Globally recognized hotel group members are more likely competent with “green” engage requirements.

Fly Inn Baku Manager of Repair and Maintenance department. 5 years
Propaganda is very weak.

Absheron Hotel Group, Group Sales Manager, 3 years
The topic is not discussed broadly, and the environmentally – friendly programs are not promoted.

Shahdag Hotel, HR Director, 6 years
There is a lack of knowledge about “green” hotels concept, as this trend is new in Azerbaijan.

Hilton Hotel, GM 1, 10 years

Azerbaijan can be thought as a young country for this trend.

Why do you think Azerbaijan, in general, is behind global trends in implementation of environmentally – friendly practices in industries (i.e. not only hotel industry)?

Sales Manager, Fairmont Hotel Flame Towers, In total more than 5 years.

Compared to developed countries, we still use paper messages and do not consider the effective way of water usage.

InterContinental Baku Hotel. Housekeeping Manager. 10 Years

As a hotelier with 10 years of experience I have always implemented eco – friendly standard operational procedures in accordance with brand requirements.

Fly Inn Baku Manager of Repair and Maintenance department. 5 years

Not educated enough.

Absheron Hotel Group, Group Sales Manager, 3 years

Unfortunately most of the businesses in Azerbaijan are focused on revenue generation and do not think about implementation of alternative programs.

Shahdag Hotel, HR Director, 6 years

It is true for the present. In my opinion, to develop these trends, we need governmental support for the companies who follow green practices. This should include changes in tax legislation, increasing number of informative seminars for hoteliers to better motivate them to use “green” practices widely in Azerbaijan.

Hilton Hotel, GM 1, 10 years

In my opinion, the government shall do better in encouragement of the companies to apply such activities and get benefits in all the industries.

Customers

What do you think of hotels applying “green” practices and how do you feel about them?

Customer 1

Green practice is crucial and should be applied by everyone, everywhere. There is no planet B after all.

Customer 2

I believe, green practices must be applied in all the possible industries. Global warming and climate change made us understood that we shouldn't take our nature for granted, we must protect our planet. I think green practices applied by hotels is a big step towards the protection of the nature.

Customer 3

Generally, I am glad that the world is moving towards “green” practices and hotels are no exception. Although, these practices are now not generally applied across the world, I believe and hope that soon it will be more wide – spread until it becomes mandatory.

Customer 4

I am indifferent about hotels applying green practices but of course it would be nice if all the businesses were thinking about the environment.

Customer 5

I think in today’s world, it is crucial to support the green initiatives. As a customer It makes me feel like the hotel is caring about me and my actions thus helping me be more sustainable.

Customer 6

It does not really make any difference to me, since I do not have enough information about this trend.

Customer 7

Nice to have, still I need to be educated concerning this theme.

Customer 8

It gives me more comfortability.

Customer 9

I do support hotels which apply green practices. I will feel happy to use them.

Customer 10

These hotels should reduce their environmental impact through green practices in maintenance, services, logistics, products, and supplies.

Customer 11

In my opinion, implementation of green practices is one of the environmentally – friendly initiatives, as it reduces negative impact on environment. Therefore, hotels using green practices can reduce enormous impact of tourism industry on environment.

Customer 12

It will be attractive for the people who prefer to be eco – friendly.

Customer 13

Positive inclination.

Customer 14

Every enterprise applying green practices is great, especially during global warming.

Customer 15

I think that should be necessary for all hotels to apply green practices.

Customer 16

Very good practice, especially to get a cleaner environment.

Customer 17

It is very important to apply because of its crucial contribution to the awareness of climate protection.

Customer 18

In my opinion, such hotels are working towards a bigger goal than just operating as a hotel, so I feel very positive.

Customer 19

Having a green hotel in Azerbaijan would be a new experience for me which I will be willing to try.

Customer 20

It is a good practice to contribute to the safer environment.

Customer 21

As a concerned human being, I would be happy to know that my actions do not add to the damage already done for our ecology staying at such hotels.

Customer 22

I am looking forward to hotels in our country to move towards “green” concept.

Customer 23

Good initiative, I will be in the first row of participants if they ever need volunteers.

Customer 24

It is better for the environment and future generation.

Customer 25

It is a big advantage for a country to have a green hotel leaning. We shall protect our environment.

Customer 26

Orientation of a green industry development is very crucial for the people and the planet.

Customer 27

Green practices are very valuable to be applied not only by hotels, but also in every sector.

Customer 28

As a human being, I am in favor of this idea for hundred percent. Our country is need of this awareness for a long time now.

Customer 29

Very good attentiveness for having green industries in Azerbaijan.

Customer 30

Application of such practices would benefit the environment and protect it in an appropriate manner.

Customer 31

I feel like the world will survive.

Customer 32

We only have one planet to live on, so we must protect it with any practice we can. I feel very positive about this inclination.

Customer 33

This concept is a must so no more waste or carbon dioxide emission.

Customer 34

I am excited to have such an experience in our country. This news is exciting if we can execute it.

Have you ever heard of international or local hotels implementing activities to raise awareness of ecological protection?

Customer 1

I have not heard of any local hotels with such activities, but it is surely something that hotels in Europe and in the US are integrating. Almost all hotels encourage their guests to hang up their towels to be reused, implement non-toxic products and recyclable packaging. Now that there is still a lot more that they could do, but it is a better initiative than doing nothing to contribute to saving our planet.

Customer 2

Never heard.

Customer 3

Unfortunately, in Azerbaijan, very little known about ecological protection, and there are a very few activities held to raise the awareness about it. However, it is now becoming more popular in the more developed parts of the world, therefore if you are simply interested in practices towards environmentally - friendly attitude, it is now easier to access this information through a small research.

Customer 4

Would have been great to hear.

Customer 5

Haven't heard from locals. However, it is more common in international market: water usage, electricity controls, eco – friendly shampoo and other related goods, recycling.

Customer 6

It is good to know that there are such hotels.

Customer 7

Not fortunate to hear about such matter.

Customer 8

I know what environmental protection is, but this concept is new to me.

Customer 9

I did not hear a specific one, but I do know that general trend is encouraging eco – friendly operations and institutions.

Customer 10

I haven't, that is why I think the idea of starting to implement this will be interesting and ecologically beneficial for everyone.

Customer 11

Actually, I did not hear anything from local hotels, which is sad. Coming to international big hotel chains like Intercontinental, they are using sustainability policies.

Customer 12

I have never encountered.

Customer 13

Trainings are needed to have an idea.

Customer 14

I'm pretty sure there are hotels in the western communities which did something like that, but I haven't heard of it.

Customer 15

I have not unfortunately.

Customer 16

Sadly I have never heard.

Customer 17

I have heard of international practices only, therefore I am expecting our local hotels to apply such activities as well in the future.

Customer 18

Haven't heard from locals. However, expect in the near future.

Customer 19

To be frank, only international hotels apply such activities. Locals need to start such practices too.

Customer 20

Have not heard yet, trainings and workshops are a must about this topic.

Customer 21

I don't have any idea to be honest.

Customer 22

Local hotels shall follow international hotels' steps on this matter.

Customer 23

I don't think there is a hotel in Azerbaijan applying green practices.

Customer 24

I don't have a clue.

Customer 25

I suppose, international hotels might apply.

Customer 26

I did not hear any, might do some small research.

Customer 27

It is a good way to protect the environment.

Customer 28

Local hotels shall begin employing the green practices.

Customer 29

I wish we had such hotels in Azerbaijan.

Customer 30

Have not heard unfortunately.

Customer 31

Expect to see in Azerbaijan in the future.

Customer 32

Raising awareness of ecological protection can be in many ways, and through green hotel development, it is one way to do it.

Customer 33

I think I've heard about such idea, but not in details.

Customer 34
I am not sure.

Describe several points that come to mind when you think of a “green” hospitality organization?

Customer 1

Recycling. Saving water. Non-toxic products. Beach clean ups. Animal conservation. Electric cars. Sustainable furnishing. Saying no to plastic. Smart showers. Control of electricity or even using solar batteries.

Customer 2

Firstly, I think hotels may use renewable energy to provide the guests with the necessary services. Another point is usage of materials in every aspect of the service that can be recycled.

Customer 3

First thing that crosses my mind is reusable supplies which hotels can offer to their guests as well as renewable sources of energy. At the second step, I would think about reducing the waste which hospitality centers produce to ensure minimum damage to the environment.

Customer 4

Using wind power and solar panels to get energy, having electric golf cars, reducing CO2 emissions.

Customer 5

Not polluting the surrounding environment with outputs from hotels.

Customer 6

Lack of waste; higher resource utilization.

Customer 7

Does not pollute.

Customer 8

Less water usage.

Customer 9

Waste management system, solar energy for their power supply, vegan menu for guests, electrical vehicles in facility.

Customer 10

Renewable energy system onsite, smart showers, energy saving systems, sustainable local products.

Customer 11

The organization which using renewable energy, limit water waste, use organic food and supplies.

Customer 12

Recycling garbage, environment protection at higher level, avoid pollution of nature.

Customer 13

1.Responsibility 2.Awareness 3.Persistence.

Customer 14

Cannot think of anything specific, but interactive green area of hotel sounds like a cool idea.

Customer 15

Ecotourism, protection and increasing of the green areas, water management, waste management etc.

Customer 16

Water reduction. Preserving energy. Smart showers.

Customer 17

Renewable energy resources.

Customer 18

Recycling of waste and garbage.

Customer 19

Reusable towels, electric vehicles.

Customer 20

Less outputs from hotels.

Customer 21

Utilization of wind energy, solar panels and other kinds of renewable energy.

Customer 22

Waste and water management.

Customer 23

Recycling of the resources provided by the hotels.

Customer 24

Not using plastic.

Customer 25

Wind energy, solar panels, less water usage.

Customer 26

Avoiding the pollution of the planet.

Customer 27

Non-toxic products. Animal conservation.

Customer 28

Beach clean ups. Sustainable furnishing.

Customer 29

Reusable stuff at the hotels.

Customer 30

Recycling of the waste.

Customer 31

Sources of renewable energy.

Customer 32

Aim to eliminate the negative impact on the environment by saving energy.

Customer 33

Installing energy – efficient appliances.

Customer 34

Implementing renewable energy programs.

What is your opinion about worth and importance qualities related to environmentally – friendly lodging properties?

Customer 1

The Earth will be 1.5 degrees warmer by 2050. Ecological breakdown is here. Sixty percent of animals have been annihilated since the 70s. Ice sheets are melting. We cannot afford not to act.

Customer 2

The “green” attributes are quite important since hotels may have guests from different parts of the world and increase their awareness about the ecological protection.

Customer 3

With the constantly increasing demands of human race, it is important to understand that the planet’s supplies are not endless. It is even more important for us to try to save and repair the damage that is done to the planet by previous generations. Environmentally – friendly properties are what we all should encourage and support in order to make a world a better place.

Customer 4

The most important quality would be having less CO2 emission and not using fuel at all.

Customer 5

It is worth to have eco – friendly aspects.

Customer 6

No idea.

Customer 7

I don't have a particular opinion.

Customer 8

It helps the environment to be green and from business point of view it will have a lesser cost.

Customer 9

Waste management system, recycling procedures, renewable energy sources.

Customer 10

Encourage and prepare people to use more eco – friendly products and places, which helps to fight with climate change.

Customer 11

The importance of these qualities is making the tourism sector healthier and helping environment ecologically.

Customer 12

If we consider hotels accepting tremendous amount of people from worldwide, it is a good chance to increase awareness about this topic.

Customer 13

In the times of globalization and growing tourism environmentally – friendly hotels bring huge value to the table.

Customer 14

The only thing that comes to my mind is applying green practices should not negatively influence on prices, especially in Azerbaijan. If somehow there is a chance to create affordable hotel in Karabagh region, that would be great.

Customer 15

It is very important to change all the spheres to be more environmentally – friendly, not only hospitality.

Customer 16

It is important to have some number of such hotels in our country.

Customer 17

It is a worthy idea, with this concept we can get a better planet for future generations.

Customer 18

Our earth needs protection, so the authorities need to go for this idea.

Customer 19

Not much educated about it, need some research.

Customer 20

In my opinion, environmentally – friendly lodging properties are much needed enterprises for any country.

Customer 21

The initiative of such hotels is a thrilling indication to protect the environment and have greener industries.

Customer 22

No idea to be honest.

Customer 23

Informative activities need to be implemented.

Customer 24

One of the qualities of such hotels is that they can help to avoid global warming.

Customer 25

Valuable to have such hotels in Azerbaijan.

Customer 26

I have no particular opinion.

Customer 27

It is crucial to finally have green hotels operating in our country.

Customer 28

Green hotels can provide important practices such as less water usage and garbage disposal.

Customer 29

Having green hotels would lead to green industries.

Customer 30

Good to have to protect the environment.

Customer 31

Worth qualities are irreplaceable to save the planet.

Customer 32

Very important to have these kinds of initiatives in Azerbaijan, since we are still a developing country, we need to take example from developed countries.

Customer 33

I am happy to hear that Azerbaijan is moving towards sustainability action.

Customer 34

Worth to act and go for an extra mile.

As a client of a hotel and a human being, how aware are you of climate protection and what is your outlook towards it?

Customer 1

Quite aware, but still educating myself on this topic.

Customer 2

I think it's time that we start to protect our nature since humanity did not care about the nature till now. Every year, billions of tons of carbon – dioxide emissions are released into the air that we breathe.

Customer 3

As a person, I am very concerned of climate protection and everything related to it. However as a hotel customer, I am not very aware of “green” activities hotels imply to reassure that the environmental pollution is decreased to minimum by them.

Customer 4

I believe that it is a serious matter and everyone should take responsibility in protection of the environment.

Customer 5

I am moderately informed. I try implementing possible protective actions, however would not say that I succeed.

Customer 6

I would be happy for its integration.

Customer 7

Not really aware.

Customer 8

I am very aware of climate change.

Customer 9

I am aware of the importance for climate protection, especially for water consumption. Energy sources shall be renewable ones, consumables shall be recyclable. However, how much I do contribute on these protection method is a huge question mark.

Customer 10

More organizations and hotels should apply eco – friendly structure as at the moment human – induced emissions of greenhouse gases and the resulting large – scale shifts in weather patterns continue.

Customer 11

Here comes climate change which was triggered by global warming. So, more organizations should become eco – friendly as climate protection is part of our ecological and social responsibility.

Customer 12

It is actual topic now but still I cannot see any considerable changes in the media. Just some countries trying to reduce carbon emissions now due to global warming problem, but they have to take a look at other problems like forests, rivers, seas and animals.

Customer 13

I am aware enough to tell that the front runners of climate agenda are indeed the ones who pollute our world the most. We have to do our best individually not to pollute the environment, but there are things that are out of human reach.

Customer 14

Unfortunately me and other citizens of Azerbaijan are not that clear about the best practices of climate protection, but the good thing is that current generation of young people want to support something like this business idea, which is why I strongly believe in probability of success of such enterprise (of course other business aspects should be fulfilled as well).

Customer 15

I am well aware of the situation around the globe and I think it should be focused more and more through raising awareness.

Customer 16

I am aware, but as of today, I do not know what kind of contribution I would be capable of doing.

Customer 17

I need to be educated through informative approaches, and I would try helping out once in a while.

Customer 18

I am aware, and I would participate in workshops if there are any and obey rules such as recycling and less energy use.

Customer 19

I would be interested to act upon the information that hotels give us.

Customer 20

My outlook is that I am trying to participate in green practices not only during my hotel stays, but also during my normal routine.

Customer 21

Less energy usage and recycling process.

Customer 22

As an idea, I would prefer electrical vehicles or even bikes for transport.

Customer 23

Not aware enough and need to be educated on this matter.

Customer 24

I am very alarmed of environmental protection and I think authorities need to pay more attention on it.

Customer 25

As a whole, all the industries in Azerbaijan shall switch to the green concept outlook and see the fruits for next generations to come. For what it is worth, we have to protect the earth.

Customer 26

Aware to some extent, but still need to be informed about it.

Customer 27

Climate protection is a vital subject concerning the way we treat the planet. We have to protect the environment one way or another.

Customer 28

Haven't heard unfortunately.

Customer 29

I know international practices, but not local ones.

Customer 30

Not much aware sadly.

Customer 31

I am aware of what people do to the environment nowadays and it is obnoxious, they have to be educated on this matter.

Customer 32

Our decisions and actions affect the environment, so we need to take care of it the way we take care of ourselves.

Customer 33

We must take action to keep our environment healthy and sustainable for the future.

Customer 34

I am aware, but I know that a lot of people are not, so they need to be informed about the consequences of being reckless towards the climate.

What is your preference aspect? Would you choose an environmentally – friendly hospitality organization over traditional hotels?

Customer 1

Green practice is not the only thing that is looked at by most people when they choose a hotel. It all depends on the individual's destination and purpose of trip. If I go on a business trip and I happen to find an environmentally – friendly hotel located within my preferred range (e.g. heart of the city), and it's reasonably priced, I will definitely go for it.

Customer 2

Not really, but it would be good if the hotel I chose was environmentally – friendly.

Customer 3

If I had enough recourses and a choice, then I would prefer environmentally – friendly hotels to contribute to ecology protection, because as a human being I care about well – being of our planet and I am interested in creating a better place to live for our future generations.

Customer 4

I am not in a position to make such a choice to be honest, I would choose the one that is cost – effective.

Customer 5

Not just because it is eco – friendly.

Customer 6

I would choose it.

Customer 7

I would, as long as the price is cheaper or quality higher than the traditional one.

Customer 8

Actually, as of today I am not choosing hotels based on how much they are environmentally – friendly.

Customer 9

I would prefer eco – friendly hotel over traditional ones. Protecting environment for the future of human being is important. Eco – friendly hotels shall cause less damage or even no damage to environment and encouraging them will motivate and push others to use more eco – friendly practices in their facilities.

Customer 10

Depends on many aspects such as location, price range, rating etc. As we experience climate change and tons of plastic waste on our planet, I would go for eco – friendly hotels.

Customer 11

I would choose the green hotel, also many hotel guests want to stay in a green hotel, as it allows them to know that they are helping to protect the environment. Having a green certification allows hotels to draw these ecologically – minded guests to their locations. This can help to differentiate brand from less eco – friendly hotels.

Customer 12

I would like to choose the green hotels, but it depends on situation.

Customer 13

I would opt green hotels depending on the activities of the environmentally – friendly hotel. If their activities independent of human factor really bring difference then I would prefer them.

Customer 14

It's hard to say something without additional context. I would say that overall if a green hotel offers approximately the same level of service (and other aspects, such as those I mentioned above), as a good 4 star hotel (5 star would be great, but let's be realists), I would definitely prefer a green hotel over others.

Customer 15

I am a person trying to be an environmentalist.

Customer 16

It doesn't actually matter much for me.

Customer 17

I would choose a green hotel to save the planet.

Customer 18

It depends on the price.

Customer 19

If I knew what exactly a green hotel would provide me with compared to a traditional hotel, based on that I'd make my choice.

Customer 20

Not in the position to choose a place to stay.

Customer 21

If I can afford it, then I'd opt for the environmentally – friendly hospitality organization.

Customer 22

Would be good to stay at a green hotel.

Customer 23

As a new experience, I could give it a try.

Customer 24

I would choose an environmentally – friendly hospitality organization since I want to contribute to make the planet a better place.

Customer 25

Doesn't matter to be honest.

Customer 26

Depends, if I can afford it, why not.

Customer 27

Depends on the location and the purpose of my stay.

Customer 28

I would go for the cost0effective one.

Customer 29

To contribute to ecology protection, I would choose a green hotel.

Customer 30

I'm not principal about it.

Customer 31

As a human being, I would try.

Customer 32

I prefer organic food so if they provide it, I would choose a green hotel.

Customer 33

Affordability is the prime factor for me of opting a place to stay.

Customer 34

Elimination of air pollutants is very vital, so number of eco-hotels shall be increased.

As you may know, prices for staying at “green” hotels can differ. Why would you be willing to pay extra for “green” practices?

Customer 1

Green practice is not a luxury. It should be omnipresent and accessible. We should not be “paying extra” for our future that is at stake.

Customer 2

I would not because of my budget.

Customer 3

This depends on the resources that I have, if paying extra for “green” practices does not exceed my planned budget, then I would gladly choose it. However I genuinely that in the upcoming future, we will not have to choose between 2 options, as more hotels will switch their operational strategies towards more sustainable and ecological development.

Customer 4

I don't prefer spending more money on something I can find an alternative cheaper.

Customer 5

I would, if it doesn't exceed my willingness to pay.

Customer 6

Depends on the margin. If not big - then yes, if big enough - nope.

Customer 7

I would not, since I need to be educated fully about this inclination.

Customer 8

Currently when I am traveling, I look always for the cheaper alternatives.

Customer 9

At least this will be my contribution to environment by helping these to survive compared to conventional ones.

Customer 10

To support their business and encourage other hotels to join being eco – friendly as it leaves huge damage to our climate and eco – systems.

Customer 11

The reasons paying extra for green practice is reducing negative impact to environment. But I don't think the gap in price between traditional and green hotel will be huge, because using green practices can reduce the expenses of a hotel.

Customer 12

All of us can sacrifice our money to save our planet. It is easy to earn money again but not planet. It might be too late.

Customer 13

It's not always the luxury and comfort criteria that determine the price. We have to understand that in our times when caring of environment is of utter importance the “greener” you are the more you can claim for it.

Customer 14

Considering the fact, that medium amount of days of staying in hotels is 10 days or so, I'm pretty sure no one is willing to pay extra if we're talking about Azerbaijan. If you want people to pay extra, think out of box and try to come up with an exclusive idea to promote unique entertainment activities and etc.

Customer 15

I would pay, because the planet earth is our home and we need to keep it under our protection.

Customer 16

I always look for cost-effective places to stay at.

Customer 17

It depends on how much extra I shall pay in comparison with standard prices.

Customer 18

I would pay since it is the least I can do to save the planet and contribute to the protection of the environment.

Customer 19

I would not since my budget somewhat does not allow me to.

Customer 20

I am willing to pay due to the fact that I am an environmentalist.

Customer 21

I am not quite fond of the idea of paying extra money for something I can find a cheaper alternative. So I would probably not pay extra money.

Customer 22

It should not be luxurious, so probably not.

Customer 23

The hotels shall be affordable to stay at, whether they are green or not.

Customer 24

In my opinion, I would pay extra to contribute for greener industries.

Customer 25

I think, if they enlighten me on exactly why staying at a green hotel may cost more, I would consider.

Customer 26

First of all, to decide on that, I need to know about that experience. Since there is no such hotel in Azerbaijan, I am not sure.

Customer 27

I would to try to save the planet.

Customer 28

I don't think I can because of the budget issues.

Customer 29

Need to be educated more on this matter.

Customer 30

Good initiative, so I am eager to pay more.

Customer 31

Most probably no, will look for less expensive places to stay.

Customer 32

I don't think that there necessarily shall be an extra payment. It is not luxury we are looking for, but environmental protection.

Customer 33

If I have enough resources, why not.

Customer 34

Depends on my budget.