



# Barriers to Green Marketing Practices in Hotels and Resorts: A Systematic Literature Review

Jenab Hatim Trivedi<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr. Preeti Mishra<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Amar Vijay Gandhi<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, School of Commerce Management, Dr. Subhash University, Junagadh, Gujarat.  
Email.: zenabtrivedi18@gmail.com,

<sup>2</sup>Professor, School of Commerce Management, Dr. Subhash University, Junagadh, Gujarat.  
Email.: preeti.mishra@dsuni.ac.in

<sup>3</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Management & Commerce  
Darshan Institute of Management, Darshan University, Rajkot, Gujarat.  
Email.: amarvgandhi@gmail.com,

**Abstract:** Sustainable marketing has emerged as the most after sought study globally and in India. The present paper aims to address the challenges faced by hotels / resorts in Gujarat in practicing sustainable / green marketing. The paper aims to study the challenges faced with sustainability practice and how to overcome them. 47 research papers were studied and reviewed.

The findings identified 6 barriers / challenges were studied from multiple dimensions viz, Demographic factors, Challenges within the Organization, Quality and Hygiene Associated Challenges, Challenges related to Sustainable Practices, Challenges related to Implementation of Sustainable Practices, and Challenges related to Customer Acceptance were measured. The suggestions and findings may help hotels and resorts as guidelines to overcome the challenges in sustainable practices.

**Keywords:** Green Practices, Sustainability, Hotels, Barriers, Challenges.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainability has emerged as an obligation for the hospitality industry due to increasing environmental concerns, regulatory pressures from government, and constant changing consumer demands. Those days have gone when the hotels and resorts were evaluated solely on service quality and profitability grounds; instead, their environmental responsibility, ethical practices, and long-term sustainability initiatives have become critical determinants in the competitive age. Green marketing practices, waste recycle practice, corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, and investment into achieving sustainable goals are now viewed as essential components in the day-to-day hotel operations (Yang, Ting, Nimri, & Je, 2026).

Recent studies emphasize that the adoption of sustainable practices in hotel like energy conservation, waste management, and sustainable resource utilization, not only reduces the negative impact on environment but also enhances the brand reputation and customer loyalty. However, the biggest challenge of greenwashing remains substantial, where superficial or misleading information claims on sustainability can undermine the stakeholders trust. To address this concern, researchers have emphasized the need for transparent sustainability reporting and the implementation of a structured green management framework (Brañes, Gamarra, Guillen, & Regalado, 2025). Hotels and resorts that aligns environmentally friendly initiatives with corporate strategy are better positioned in the minds of customers and achieves long-term financial stability while meeting social and environmental obligations (Yadav, 2025).



Additionally, case-based research in the hospitality sector demonstrates that sustainable innovation fosters resilience and adaptability in an increasingly competitive market (Kruesi & Remy, 2025).

Environmental sustainability also extends beyond energy conservation; it also includes water management and wastewater treatment strategies. Effective implementation of such green practices considerably reduces the operational risks associated with resource scarcity and regulatory compliance, particularly in regions that faces severe environmental threats and challenges (Almalki et al., 2025). Environmental certification has also emerged as a key mechanism for beckoning sustainability commitment and building consumer trust. Certified hotels are more likely to adopt standardized environmental practices, enhance transparency, and improve brand credibility, thereby gaining competitive advantages in environmentally conscious markets, and in the eyes of customers (Velaoras, Menegaki, Polyzos, & Gotzamani, 2025). In developing economies such as India, sustainability adoption in hospitality is further influenced by regulatory pressures, infrastructure challenges, and stakeholder expectations, requiring context-specific green strategies (Sarkar, Suhag, & Kumar, 2025).

## 2. Literature Review

The researchers emphasize that sustainable hotel operations enhance environmental performance while improving brand image and customer loyalty (Yang, Ting, Nimri, & Je, 2026) (Kruesi & Remy, 2025). Several studies highlight greenwashing as a growing concern, arguing that superficial sustainability claims undermine stakeholder trust and require transparent sustainability reporting (Brañes, Gamarra, Guillen, & Regalado, 2025). Environmental sustainability initiatives related to water and wastewater management are identified as critical for reducing ecological impact and ensuring regulatory compliance (Almalki et al., 2025). The internal managerial commitment and external stakeholder pressure significantly influence the adoption of environmental practices in hotels (Alhemimah, et al., 2025). Environmental certifications are found to enhance credibility and standardize sustainability efforts, though their effectiveness depends on genuine implementation rather than mere compliance (Velaoras, Menegaki, Polyzos, & Gotzamani, 2025). Emerging innovations such as electric vehicle charging infrastructure are shown to influence guest perceptions and future-oriented sustainability positioning (Hu et al., 2025). Many studies have focused on green tourist behavior, demonstrating that environmental awareness and climate change concern significantly influence tourists' preferences for eco-friendly hotels (Dube, 2025) (Singh & Bhardwaj, 2025). However, barriers including financial constraints, lack of expertise, and limited technological readiness continue to impede sustainability implementation (Fuchs & Shi, 2025). Studies indicate that tourists' environmental attitudes significantly influence satisfaction, loyalty, and revisit intentions toward sustainable destinations (Chen & Tung, 2025) (Wang et al., 2025). Technological advancements such as smart systems and digital platforms are identified as key enablers of resource efficiency and low-carbon emission (Buhalis et al., 2025; Sun et al., 2025). Role of hotel owners and managers emerges as a critical factor, with sustainable leadership positively influencing employee engagement and environmental performance (Kim & Thapa, 2025). The literature study suggests that sustainability outcomes are strongest when environmental initiatives are aligned with strategic planning and stakeholder engagement. Sustainability is a dynamic and evolving process requiring continuous innovation, governance support, and systemic integration.

## 3. Challenges in Green Hospitality

The challenges faced by hotels and resorts practicing green marketing practices continues to face multifaceted challenges spanning from consumer perceptions, organizational capabilities, regulatory complexity, and infrastructural limitations. One major concern that is repeatedly highlighted is consumer scepticism and greenwashing risk. (Brañes, Gamarra, Guillen, & Regalado, 2025). Researchers have observed that environmental knowledge gaps among tourists negatively affect willingness to pay for sustainable services. Challenges like high cost of green technology, certification, and operational adjustments, lack capital for renewable energy adoption, waste management systems, and eco-friendly renovations are the major challenges faced by hoteliers (Velaoras, Menegaki, Polyzos, & Gotzamani, 2025). Studies also reveals that sustainable hospitality relies on expensive certification schemes (e.g., LEED, Green Key etc.), which pose financial and administrative burdens on small and mid-sized properties (Fernandes, Maguire, & Lima Santos, 2025). Consequently, financial barriers widen sustainability performance gaps across markets.

The sector also faces with insufficient governmental support and fragmented regulatory standards. This inconsistency creates compliance uncertainty and complicates long-term sustainability planning (Ng, Hao, & Zhang, 2025).



Challenges in green marketing practices is also viewed from organizational perspective; internal capability deficits hinder effective green marketing strategies. Skill shortages, limited sustainability training, and low managerial expertise in implementing green marketing practices. (Alhemimah, et al., 2025) highlights that lack of awareness amongst staff as a big challenge.

Moreover, infrastructure and geographic vulnerabilities challenge green adoption, particularly for island destinations dependent on tourism. Islands face restricted energy supply sources, water scarcity, import dependency, and fragile ecosystems, making sustainability upgrades both urgent and difficult (Alhemimah, et al., 2025). Climate-related threats further intensify these constraints, elevating operational risks for hotels.

Finally, integration of digital communication and green branding poses strategic dilemmas. While digital platforms provide opportunities for transparent environmental reporting, effective green communication requires consistent content, verifiable data, and stakeholder engagement mechanisms (Yang et al., 2026). Poorly executed digital green branding may amplify scepticism and accusations of greenwashing, thus reinforcing earlier consumer-related challenges.

#### **4. Methodology**

The present study is a Semi-systematic literature review. The Scopus database was used to study the trend from 2011 to 2026. The keywords appeared in the articles title, the abstract, or keywords the article were considered for the final study. The study has only been examined in articles that were focused on green marketing practices in hospitality sector and only research articles were considered for the present study. The study aims to address the research profile of journals, key word occurrence and thematic analysis, and country wise publications pertaining to challenges faced by green hotels. The key words inclusion in search from Scopus database to find the relevant review papers were “Green Hotels”, “Green Marketing”, “Hotels”, “Resorts”.

#### **5. Distribution of Journal Articles**

47 papers were studied for this review after removing the papers that were not aligning with the theme. The 47 articles and the number of papers from each journal were published in the journals listed in Table 1. These 47 papers on the subject of "barriers of green marketing practices in hotel" came from the following journals: "Sustainability (Switzerland)" has published 4 papers on this research “International Journal of Hospitality Management” has published 3 papers, “Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies”, “International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning”, “Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights”, “Rocznik Ochrona Srodowiska”, “Smart Innovation, Systems and Technologies”, “Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes” have published 2 papers each, while “Archives of Design Research”, “Asian Social Science”, “Business Strategy and Development”, “European Business Review”, “Frontiers of Architectural Research”, “Icon”, “International Journal of Energy Economics and Policy”, “International Journal of Sustainable Building Technology and Urban Development”, “International Journal of Tourism Policy”, “Journal of Advanced Research in Applied Sciences and Engineering Technology”, “Journal of Advanced Research in Dynamical and Control Systems”, “Journal of Cleaner Production”, “Journal of Global Scholars of Marketing Science: Bridging Asia and the World”, “Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Cases”, “Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research”, “Journal of Innovation and Knowledge”, “Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities”, “Proceedings of the International Conference on Tourism Research”, “Proceedings of the Summer School Francesco Turco”, “Resources, Conservation and Recycling”, “Springer Proceedings in Business and Economics”, “Sustainable Development Goals Series”, “Sustainable Production and Consumption”, “Tourism and Hospitality”, “Tourism and Hospitality Research”, “Tourism Planning and Development”, “Water (Switzerland)” and “WIT Transactions on Ecology and the Environment” have published 1 paper each.



Table 1: Distribution of journal articles across various journals of the subject domain  
 (Source: Compiled by Author)

<b>Journal Name</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Sustainability (Switzerland)</b>	4
<b>International Journal of Hospitality Management</b>	3
Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies	2
International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning	2
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights	2
Rocznik Ochrona Srodowiska	2
Smart Innovation, Systems and Technologies	2
Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes	2
Archives of Design Research	1
Asian Social Science	1
Business Strategy and Development	1
European Business Review	1
Frontiers of Architectural Research	1
Icon	1
International Journal of Energy Economics and Policy	1
International Journal of Sustainable Building Technology and Urban Development	1
International Journal of Tourism Policy	1
Journal of Advanced Research in Applied Sciences and Engineering Technology	1
Journal of Advanced Research in Dynamical and Control Systems	1
Journal of Cleaner Production	1
Journal of Global Scholars of Marketing Science: Bridging Asia and the World	1
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Cases	1
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research	1
Journal of Innovation and Knowledge	1
Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities	1
Proceedings of the International Conference on Tourism Research	1
Proceedings of the Summer School Francesco Turco	1
Resources, Conservation and Recycling	1
Springer Proceedings in Business and Economics	1
Sustainable Development Goals Series	1
Sustainable Production and Consumption	1
Tourism and Hospitality	1
Tourism and Hospitality Research	1
Tourism Planning and Development	1
Water (Switzerland)	1
WIT Transactions on Ecology and the Environment	1

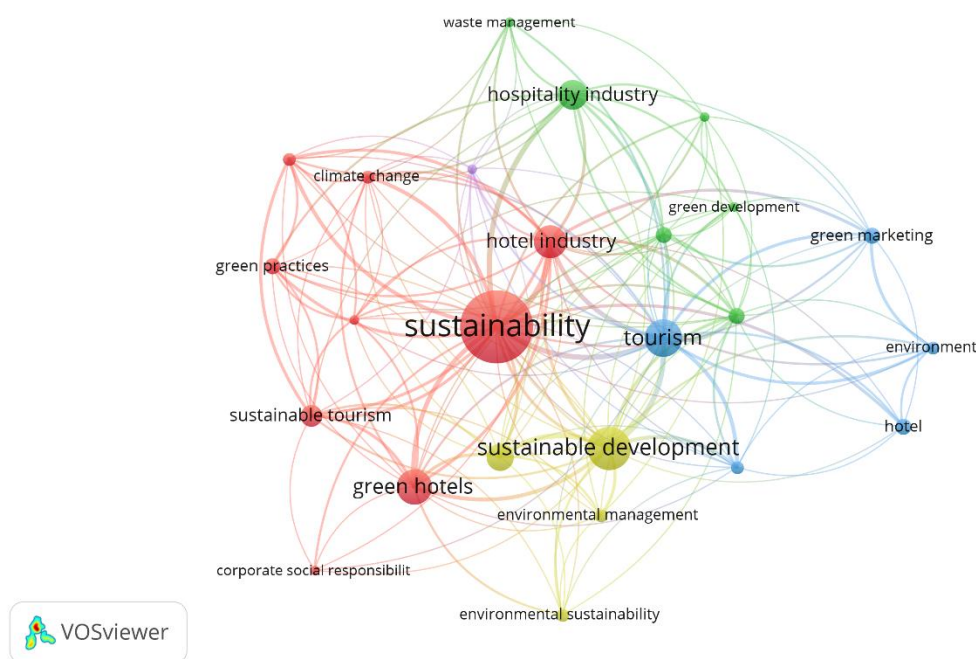


## 6. Keyword Co-occurrence Analysis:

To identify current issues in the research and the potential future research subjects, the analysis of the pertinent terms. A keyword co-occurrence analysis is performed using the VOS viewer, a network visualization software. The analysis of the keywords drives a significant role in producing a meaningful role in the specific domain. Thus, a finding was performed into the total number of keywords from the identified sample of articles. To create the network map and evaluation, 47 sourced papers published between year 2011 and 2026 were considered and have generated a total of 373 keywords from the analysis. Three clusters were created using a network map using the significant keywords.

The Figure 1 shows the Network analysis of Keyword using VOSviewer. The most relevant words sighted in the study were “Sustainability”, “Sustainable Development”, “Tourism”, “Green Hotels”, “Hotel Industry”, “Hospitality Industry”, “Hotels”, “Sustainable Tourism”. “Tourism Industry”, “green marketing”, “green practices” whose frequencies were 27, 15, 13, 12, 11,10, 9, 7, 5, 5 and 5 respective times. With the help of a filter the terms that appeared at least 3 times, those words were identified and were grouped into three clusters. The primary theme(s) of the keywords in the red, green, and blue clusters, respectively, shows sustainability, tourism, and hospitality industry (see Fig. 1). These three clusters prominently display the phrases "sustainability" in red, "hospitality industry" in green, and "tourism" in blue. Cluster-1 represents "hotel industry", "sustainable tourism", "green hotels". Cluster-2 represents "hospitality industry", "green development". Cluster-3 represent “green marketing”, “hotel”, “environment” respectively. These three groups have similarities with respect to green marketing / sustainable practices in hotels.

Figure 1: Network Analysis of Keyword



## 7. Thematic Analysis

The Figure 2 represents thematic mapping analysis, it reveals four distinct clusters representing various thematic maturity and importance. The four clusters ‘motor’, ‘niche’, ‘basic’ and ‘emerging or declining’ indicates their strong conceptual development and centrality the area of research. “Sustainability”, “tourism”, “hotel industry”, “sustainable development”, “green marketing”, “hotel”, “green hotels”, “environmental management” followed by “green hotels”, “tourists’ behaviour”, and “green hotel”, “consumer behavior”, “eco-friendly hotel” were the motor themes driving the research field, while “attitude”, “pro-environmental behaviour”, “virtual reality” were the emerging topics gaining attention.



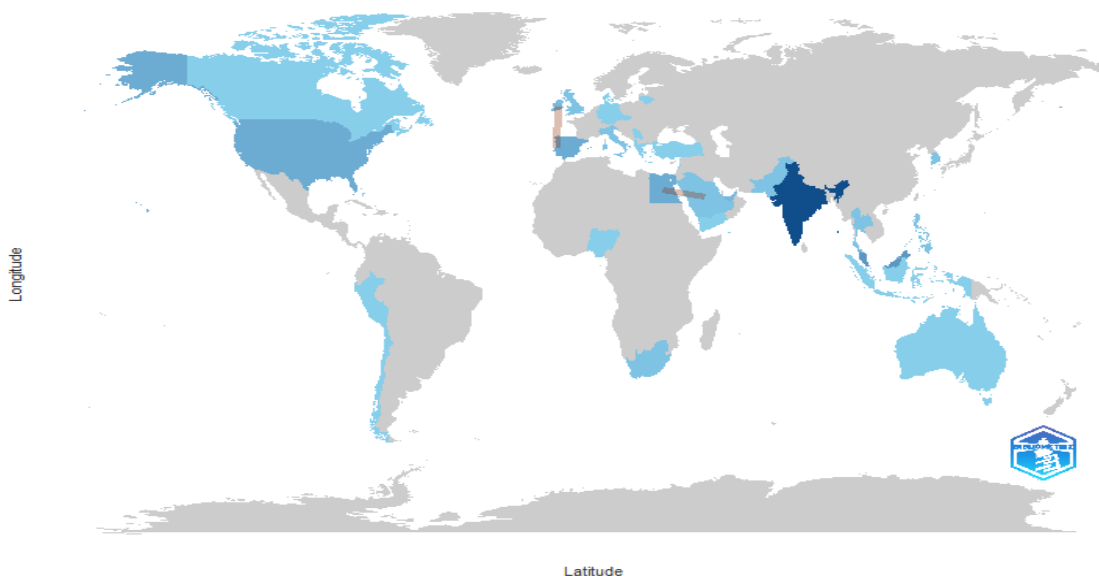
Fig. 2. Thematic Analysis of Keyword



### 8. Country-wise Scientific Production

The Figure 3 represents country-wise scientific production analysis, shows that Malaysia leads with 142 publications, followed by Spain, India, Saudi Arabia, Greece, United Kingdom and Portugal with 101, 73, 34, 21, 18, and 15 scientific research. Ireland, Egypt, USA, UAE, Hong Kong, Lebanon, South Africa, Korea, Singapore, Albania and Turkey had made modest contributions in the present study with 8, 7, 7, 6, 5, 5, 5, 3, 2, 1, 1 scientific production respectively.

Fig. 3. Country-wise Scientific Production



### 9. Conclusion

Green marketing / sustainable practices are seen almost in every sector in today’s world. Hospitality sector is not spared from its purview. The present research aims to study the challenges faced by sustainable / green marketing practicing



hotels and resorts and how it impacts the hospitality industry from customer, owners, employees' perspectives and the drivers that make the industry active. These challenges in hospitality sector can be overcome by instilling trust in the minds of customers thereby building trust, fostering the use of technology for more better experience, training staffs to inculcate practice of green marketing, engaging in innovative practices like customer awareness programs, reward programs, extensive use of digital promotion and campaigns, adoption of green policies laid by government and associations.

## REFERENCES

1. Alhemimah, A., Al Shamlan, A., Jaber, H., Batarfi, M., Abdel Fatah, M., Hussein, M., & Korshem, A. (2025). Green Management Practices and their Role in Achieving Sustainable Development in Hotels: Barriers and Drivers. *Rocznik Ochrona Srodowiska*, 53-69.
2. Brañes, L., Gamarra, M., Guillen, N., & Regalado, M. (2025). Avoiding Greenwashing Through the Application of Effective Green Marketing: The Case of Hospitality Industry in Lima City—Peru. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*.
3. Dube, K. (2025). Climate Change Influence on Green Tourist Behaviour in Rural Destinations. *Sustainable Development Goals Series*, 17-28.
4. Fernandes, J., Maguire, K., & Lima Santos, L. (2025). Sustainable Management Practices in Portuguese Hotels: A Content Analysis Approach. *Smart Innovation, Systems and Technologies*, 227-238.
5. Fuchs, K., & Shi, D. (2025). Barriers towards implementing green practices in Thai boutique hotels: a hotel manager's perspective. *International Journal of Tourism Policy*, 133-148.
6. Kruesi, M., & Remy, D. (2025). Green is the New Black in the Hotel Industry: Optimizing Revenue Through Promoting Sustainability. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Cases*, 134-141.
7. Ng, W., Hao, F., & Zhang, C. (2025). Avatar for hotels green training. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*.
8. Sarkar, D., Suhag, N., & Kumar, S. (2025). Sustainable Practices in India's Hotel Industry: Navigating Challenges and Opportunities. *IGI Global Scientific Publishing*, 337-352.
9. Singh, K., & Bhardwaj, D. (2025). Eco-Friendly Hotels: Analyzing Customer Behavior and Guest Satisfaction. *Emerald Publishing Limited*, 233-247.
10. Velaoras, K., Menegaki, A., Polyzos, S., & Gotzamani, K. (2025). The Role of Environmental Certification in the Hospitality Industry: Assessing Sustainability, Consumer Preferences, and the Economic Impact. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*.
11. Yang, M., Ting, A., Nimri, R., & Je, J. (2026). Deciphering the green hotel enigma: An in-depth analysis of literature. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*.