INFLUENCE OF CONSUMER VALUES AND SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES ON BRAND LOYALTY WITHIN LUXURY HOTELS

BY

TIFFANY ANNE LOW

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Abstract

Despite the recent recession, the economic growth of recent decades has created a group of so-called ‘Global-Elites’ (CeMoRe, 2010). Small in number, but high in net worth and influence they are influential in the creation of, and desire for consumption, often portrayed as luxury, privilege, prestige, and 'class'. The tourism industry has also benefited from growth, with demand predicted to double by the year 2020, reaching an estimated $14.95 billion (World Tourism & Travel Council, 2010). Much of this growth has been at the top end, as Keissling et. al. (2009) note an unprecedented rise in demand for the luxury hotel sector over the past decade. The global elite’s leisure consumption practices require considerable research attention, and yet research into luxury services, such as hotels and associated hospitality services, is greatly undeveloped. Atwal and Williams (2008) note the ability of consumption as a means for consumers to make statements about themselves, and nowhere is this more true than in the world of the Global-Elite, who seemingly having no desire to curb current travel activities (Elliott & Urry, 2009). This may be due to the uncertainty that is felt about future travel opportunities, with environmental decline of natural and heritage attractions paralleled by numerous threats to travel such as peak oil and political instability.

However, in recent years, there has been increased interest in the study of ethical consumption in the tourism arena (e.g. Novelli, 2005; Sharpley, 2006; Lansing & Vries, 2006; Yeoman et. al., 2006). Although there appears to be incompatibility between the concepts of luxury and concerns around ethical consumption and sustainability, this research posits that while current transitions (around travel and tourism) continue towards further unsustainability (Cohen, 2010), ethical consumption may provide an avenue for social distinction and status differentiation in the world of the Global-Elites. In order to adequately understand the behavioural intentions of the Global-Elites, the synergy between consumer values, luxury dimensions and ethical consumption needs to be explored. This research examines the influence of consumer values, as a more universal measure of intent, in relation to ethical consumption in luxury hotels. This research argues that by reducing the uncertainty related to the degree to which consumers (Global-Elites) value ethical consumption, deeper insights into these apparently incompatible spaces and places for ethical consumption will be obtained. Furthermore, luxury hotels will be able to assess the suitability of marketing and communicating such strategies to their customers.

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Bedfordshire.

It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

Name of candidate: Tiffany Anne Low Signature:

Date:

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1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism cannot be explained unless we understand man, the human being

Przeclawski (1996: 239)

1.1 RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

For decades, the benefits of tourism as an economic cure-all and stimulator of societal outcomes have been touted. Examples of often epic failures to do so are abundant, and experts including the United Nations, offer reasons for these failures including “[the] displacement of local and indigenous people, unfair labour practices, corruption of or disrespect for culture and a myriad of other human rights abuses” (cited in Fennell, 2006: 7). Perhaps nowhere are these injustices more visible than in the domain of the wealthy. Economic growth and the perpetuation of the capitalist structure have occurred at unprecedented rates in recent decades. Undeniably, the travel and tourism industry has benefited from these periods of economic prosperity, with the industry representing a direct contribution to global GDP of approximately 3%, and direct spending on leisure, travel and tourism increasing by 49% globally over the past decade from $1,558 billion USD to $3,056 billion USD, and is expected to increase a further 50% in the coming decade, from $3,056 billion USD to $6,301 billion USD (World Tourism and Travel Council, 2012). Destinations such as Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, act as a poignant exemplar of such capitalist prosperity, where despite experiencing the biggest financial downturn since the Great Depression, approximately 25,000 new hotel rooms are expected to be built over the next five years (Hospitalitynet.org 2012), all of which are commissioned by five-star international luxury hotel chains (or their parent companies).

The exact size of the luxury hotel industry relative to the lodging industry as a whole does not yet seem to be quantified, although Kiessling et al. (2009) note an unprecedented rise in demand in the luxury hotel sector over the past decade. As *owners* of capital, our ingrained capitalist desires pervade our society, particularly through our desire for conspicuous and voluminous levels of consumption. Theories of conspicuous consumption (e.g. Veblen, 1899) have allowed us to realise that, as social beings, humans are both conformist and competitive by nature, wanting to simultaneously attain status in the community, as well as assimilate within it (The Royal Society 2012). Competitive forms of consumption allow humans, where goods are both under priced and conspicuous (for example, air travel, package holidays), to form natural points for competition (The Royal Society 2012), while also affording the conspicuousness desired by so many. Humans are constantly trying to compete with each other for status and prestige (Easterlin 2001) and travel and leisure pursuits are no exception. It is in this environment of highly conspicuous travel and leisure that research is warranted.

While research around the luxury goods sector is developing, research into luxury *services*, such as hotels and associated hospitality services, is greatly undeveloped. Luxury brands were estimated in 2006 to be worth some $80 billion globally (Chadha & Husband 2006), and the aforementioned sustained periods of economic growth have undoubtedly increased this figure. Aspirations of companies such as the Jumeirah Group Ltd, a luxury hotel group based in the Middle East, to join the top 100 luxury brands (Lawless, 2010), is indicative of the relentless growth strategies of this sector. In a tourism context, the aforementioned competitive consumption has emanated in the form of conventional mass tourism. Seen as a form of mass consumption, the growth of mass tourism which evolved amongst the industrial working class in Britain, was seen to be a ‘democratisation’ of travel (Urry, 2002). This mass consumption of travel is characterised by a producer rather than consumer focus, with little differentiation between commodities on the basis of season and specific market segments; and a relatively limited market choice (Shaw & Williams 2002).

However, the recently coined, but longstanding trend of the ‘democratisation of luxury’ has led to this form competitive tourism consumption having an ever increasing need for conspicuousness as well. Although small in number, high in net worth and influence are a group of so-called ‘global-elites’ (CeMoRe, 2010). Their actions are scrutinised and emulated by many, and as such their power is considerable. The ‘global-elites’ are influential in the creation of and desire for unattainable and unsustainable levels of conspicuous consumption, which are often portrayed as luxury, privilege, prestige, and 'class' (Elliott & Urry 2010). The size of the tourism and travel industry coupled with the significance, both economic and societal, of the global elites, requires considerable research attention.

The influence that such conspicuous and competitive consumption has on societal and personal values is substantial, and by way of reprisal to the opening quote in this chapter, we must seek to better understand consumer behaviour in this context. Both in a contemporary and historical context, consumers have used consumption practices to make statements about themselves and their identities, as well as to promote a sense of belong to specific class segments (Atwal & Williams 2009: 339). Nowhere is this truer than in the world of the global-elite. Individuals with a high net worth, who exert considerable influence on society, and have seemingly no desire to curb their travel activities; and in fact, quite the opposite have been found (Elliott & Urry, 2010). In its report on the impacts of human population and consumption on the planet, The Royal Society (2012: 9) calls for more research, in both the natural *and* social sciences to focus on “the interactions between consumption, demographic change and environmental impact”. It is imperative therefore, that a closer examination of the consumption patterns of the global-elites is had, not least to determine its physical impact, but also the societal impact upon mass-market consumers.

This research posits that strategies must be found to reduce the direct impacts, both environmental and societal of the super-rich. While current transitions (around travel and tourism) continue towards further unsustainability (Cohen, 2010), alternative avenues for social distinction and status differentiation for global elites must be found. One possibility suggested by this research, is to examine the degree to which sustainable business practices are valued by industry and consumers alike. On the surface, there appears to be a perceptible tension and incompatibility between the concepts of luxury and contemporary concerns around ethical consumption. Synergies between concepts such as longevity, quality and exclusivity have been mooted as potentially compatible characteristics (Kapferer 2010). In recent years, there has been increased interest in the study of ethical consumption in the tourism arena (for example, Lansing & Vries 2006;Yeoman et al. 2006; Weeden 2002, 2005, 2008). Alongside this, much has been made in the media of peoples' concern for both environmental and socio-cultural issues (e.g. Curry 2012; The Economist 2008). However, little academic research has examined whether or not these concerns are genuine, and whether or not any such held values act as drivers of consumer behaviours, such as brand loyalty.

Market research on the topic continues to paint a confusing picture. Research carried out by British retailer Marks & Spencer demonstrated that approximately three-quarters of British consumers are interested in the 'green theme' in some way (The Economist 2008); in contrast, market researchers The Futures Company report that brands who position themselves around sustainability are unlikely to gain widespread appeal, and will rarely be the primary driver of brand choice (Curry 2012). What has been, and largely remains problematic, is how the attitude-intention-behaviour gap in this setting is understood and closed.

In order to adequately understand the behavioural intentions of these consumer groups, it has been suggested that better understanding of consumer values has a role to play in relation to attitude-behaviour theory (Ostini & Ellerman 1997; Weeden 2008; Weeden 2011). The potential for values to affect behaviour through their influence on lower-order beliefs and attitudes has long been recognised (Homer & Kahle 1988), as well as their evaluative uses applications in behaviour selection (Follows & Jobber 2000). The grounding of values in deontological and teleological moral philosophies (Fennell 2006), and the focus of values to reflect what is fair, right or just lead them to be inextricably linked to studies on ethicalities of consumption.

Investigations into how human values are linked to ethical consumption is an area which has been tentatively explored (Madrigal & Kahle, 1994; Muller, 1991; Pits & Woodside, 1986; Thrane, 1997, Weeden, 2011). Although in broader business contexts, ethical practices have generally received considerable research attention, the tourism research agenda has generally lagged. Tourism researchers must usefully interpret, apply and extend "the growing volume of literature on ethics outside the tourism discipline in a way that is meaningful to both researchers and the tourism industry" (Fennell 2006: 285). Because ethical distinctions and values inform *all* actions, there is a need to interrogate and understand the ethical and moral positions of all consumers – for without this understanding of values and morality, the social world cannot be understood (Macbeth 2005). Indeed, different types of tourism hold different ethical viewpoints, and a better understanding of these could be "used to arm decision-makers with the ability to foresee potential benefits and problems in relation to the development of tourism in local and regional contexts" (Fennell, 2006: 285). How these concepts are translated into a tourism and hospitality setting is an issue which has received little attention to date.

In the same way that sustainability has been a widely researched and conjectured topic in the literature, exactly what constitutes luxury is a subjective and on-going debate, and is one which although ultimately contingent upon individual interpretation, has received much attention in the academic literature. Atwal & Williams (2009: 345) discuss an experiential approach to marketing luxury brands, and define its differentiation from traditional marketing techniques as having a focus on "customer experiences and lifestyles, which provide sensory, emotional, cognitive and relational *values* to the consumer". It is anticipated that by examining values such as these, a model which develops a values construct of global elites, will be achieved.

The research questions in this study are concerned with luxury hotel managers' and mass-market luxury consumers' propensity to value sustainable business practices, and whether or not this influences luxury hotel brand loyalty. Although Sharpley (2013) suggests that the expectation of any widespread adoption of any form of responsible tourism would be ignoring the realities of tourist consumption, this research adopts a more optimistic view and holds that tourists, as consumers, can be responsible for the co-creation of both rewarding and responsible experiences, provided they are supported by an industry willing to make the same commitments.

This study has been designed to add to existing academic knowledge in the areas of ethical consumption, marketing and brand loyalty in the broader context of the mass-market luxury hotel sector. It is designed to benefit consumers by presenting their attitudes, values and beliefs to luxury hotel operators, while industry will simultaneously benefit from such insights with respect to strategic management decisions, marketing policies and operational approaches. In addition, the research may also have implications for policy development, particularly with regard to policies on sustainable hotel development. Finally, the industry match-funded nature of the research should also be beneficial to the higher education sector by illuminating the benefits and challenges of working within such structures.

1.2 RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the influence of consumer values and sustainable business practices on brand loyalty within the luxury hotel sector. It assesses how much value guests at luxury hotels place on sustainable business practices. To do this, the research adopts a dyadic perspective to examine the awareness of, and importance placed upon, sustainable business practices from a supply-side perspective, as well as examine whether or not sustainable business practices are met with a demand-side proclivity to patronise hotels which embrace such principles. It further aims to examine how consumer understandings of sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) act as potential drivers for brand loyalty, and ultimately asks whether or not consumers are willing to pay a higher price for such practices, and how this influences brand involvement.

The research explores perceptions, beliefs and values using a mixed-methods approach, and investigates the role of ethical consumption in brand loyalty. Ultimately, the aim of the research is to enhance the theoretical and empirical understandings of how the values construct mediates the relationship between brand involvement and brand loyalty, and determines which values and drivers of brand loyalty play a role in this mediation.

1.2.1 Research Questions

Broadly, the research questions under investigation are:

Research Question 1

Do guests at luxury hotels hold a genuine concern or desire for ethical consumption and sustainability?

Research Question 2

Can luxury hotels incorporate ethical and sustainable elements within their business models? (i.e. are luxury and ethical consumption compatible?)

Research Question 3

Will engaging with such activities create increased levels of brand loyalty?

Research Question 4

Would luxury consumers be willing to pay more to stay at a more ethical and sustainable luxury hotel?

The research adopts a dyadic perspective, whereby the perspectives of hotel managers, representing the supply side, as well as hotel guests, representing the demand side are sought. The importance of this strategy lies in the desire to better understand whether sustainable business practices should be supply-led or demand-driven. More specifically, and to mirror the research approach outlined above, it can be further narrowed to the following set of questions:

Supply **'Hotel Managers'**	**Demand** **'Hotel Guests'**
Do managers of luxury hotels feel their guests would exhibit loyal behaviours toward their business due to the adoption or implementation of sustainable business practices?	Which hotel loyalty drivers can be used to operationalise the PCM staging procedure?
Do managers of luxury hotels believe there is any competitive advantage to be gained from implementing sustainable business practices?	To what extent does the level of value consumers place on hotel loyalty drivers influence their degree of loyalty toward luxury hotels?
What do hotel managers of luxury hotels understand by the terms 'sustainability', 'sustainable business practices' and 'Corporate Social Responsibility'?	To what extent do guests at luxury hotels place value on specific drivers of hotel loyalty, in particular, sustainable business practices?
	What do guests of luxury hotels understand by the terms 'sustainability', 'sustainable business practices' and 'Corporate Social Responsibility'?

The research argues that by examining the degree to which consumers value ethical consumption, and in turn whether or not these factors act as drivers for increased levels of brand loyalty, luxury hotels will be able to assess the suitability of marketing and communicating such strategies. In turn, luxury hotels will be provided with a platform for more innovative and effective target marketing strategies, with the possibility of reaching as yet untapped segments (Bohdanowicz 2005) of this selective, discriminating and powerful segment. This innovative approach will address a clear and substantial gap in the current academic literature, as well as have implications for the luxury hotel industry.

This research has been designed to add to the current knowledge in the area of consumer attitude(s) and values towards sustainability in the context of luxury hotels. The research has also been designed to benefit all research participants: the luxury hotel segment and managers of such establishments will benefit through insights into their consumers' attitudes and values; and consumers will benefit from hotels better understanding consumer demands and desires. Research findings may be further generalizable to the wider hotel industry where recommendations on improving and developing current marketing and operational activities will be made. Academia will also benefit from the research through the critical evaluation of the apparently polarizing concepts of luxury and sustainability, as well as providing research on the area of the consumer values in the tourism and hospitality industry – an area which has received scarce attention to date.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

Chapter 2 provides a contextual backdrop for the research by examining the concepts of luxury and reviewing the research associated with luxury markets to date. By examining the historical incarnations of the luxury concept, this chapter considers the breadth of interpretations that exist, as well as presenting formative theories on the concept including Veblen's (1899) Theory of the Leisure Class and Bordieu's (2010) Theory of Conspicuous Consumption. The chapter then considers luxury in respect of the aforementioned Global-Elites and characterises their behaviour and consumption patterns, before giving consideration to inter-cultural perceptions of luxury, and the role of luxury services in the hotel sector. With the preceding discussion as a backdrop, the chapter then moves to discuss the development of luxury brands, and finally a discussion on brand loyalty and its antecedents.

Chapter 3 presents what some would view as an opposing view, in that of sustainability and ethical consumption in the context of tourism and the hospitality industry. Anchoring research on both sustainability and ethical consumption is the area of moral philosophies which are considered in relation to the ethicalities of consumption. A broad discussion is then presented on sustainability (section 3.2), especially in the context of tourism, and the challenges faced in implementing sustainability (section 3.2.1). It is purported that one of the major challenges in embracing sustainable business practices is attributed to the value, or lack thereof, of ethical consumption. The chapter concludes with a discussion on ethical consumption and the broader values of ethical consumers.

Chapter 4 discusses the concept of personal and consumer values and the role of ethics in travel behaviour. It addresses the role and nature of attitude theory in values formation as well as the externalities and temporal aspects of the values construct. A meta-analysis of extant values studies is presented, from which five formative values models are presented in more detail. The role of values in influencing behaviour is discussed, and the chapter is concluded by the consideration of the role of ethics in travel behaviour.

Chapter 5 presents the research design and methodology. It begins by providing the rationale for research choices through a discussion on researcher ontology and epistemology. The mixed-methods approach is discussed in terms of its suitability for deployment under a critical realist paradigm, as well its pragmatic appropriateness in the context of this study. Details of the particular methods used are then presented, including details on instrument design and development, sampling frame and methods, and data analysis. Details are presented for both phases of the research. The chapter concludes with a discussion on ethical considerations and research(er) reflexivity, where reflexivity in particular is seen as a crucial consideration not just under the critical realist paradigm, but for researchers in general. Discussion on the funded nature of the research and its inherent problems is also presented to help contextualise the research results and offer further substance to methodological choices.

Chapter 6 presents the results of the first of two dyads in the research approach. It addresses the 'supply side' of the equation, whereby the managers of luxury hotels were consulted on sustainable business practices, and the potential value of embracing such activities as a means of driving hotel demand.

In contrast, Chapter 7 presents the quantitative results of the opposing dyad, that of luxury hotel consumers. It addresses the 'demand side' of the equation, and presents the results from an online questionnaire to mass-market luxury consumers. Firstly, it presents an overview of the distribution methods, response rates and respondent profile, including such demographic information as age, gender, income and so on. Secondly, descriptive results are presented on the core constructs outlined in Chapter 5, as well as the results of tests of difference between sub-groups (based on the aforementioned demographic variables). In addition to this, results of correlation analyses are also presented. Finally, the chapter embarks on a section of hypotheses testing via a series of regression analyses. Results of the 3-step staging procedure of the Psychological Continuum Model are presented, and the influences of the questionnaire constructs on the stages of brand loyalty are discussed.

The thesis concludes with Chapter 8 which summarises and synthesises the main findings. It presents conclusions on theoretical, methodological and industry-related contributions of the research. It begins by providing a summary of the research and answers to the main questions under investigation as outlined above. It then presents both the theoretical and practical implications of the research, and by drawing conclusions from the findings, suggests recommendations for both theory and practice. It then considers the limitations of the research, paying consideration to the validity and reliability of the findings, and finally offers suggestions for future research directions.

2 THE IDEA OF LUXURY AND LUXURY BRAND DEVELOPMENT

The term luxury evokes many descriptors – superiority, uniqueness, exclusivity, iconic, expressive; and, has what nowadays seem to be limitless applications and implications. Luxury has been subject to scholarly enquiry in many and varied disciplines including economics (Kemp 1998) and econometric modelling, history, psychology, marketing and consumer behaviour (Dubois et al. 2005; Vigneron & L. W. Johnson 2004). The luxury sector is undoubtedly economically significant, where in 2009, Bain & Co. estimated total luxury revenues to be worth some €160 billion (Kapferer 2010). In a tourism and travel context, Kiessling et al. (2009) estimated that in 2007 approximately 25 million trips per year were attributed to luxury travel, with an average spend of between €7,000 and €14,000 per trip. However, the importance of luxury goes beyond these figures as it drives the aspirational motives of consumerism. Despite the varied research that has already been undertaken, insights into consumer attitudes towards luxury and brand loyalty is still relatively under-explored. This thesis aims to fill a gap in relation to this, specifically concerning the luxury hotel sector. This chapter sets out to examine firstly, some historical and grammatical perspectives of luxury, followed by some more general manifestations and interpretations of the concept. Following this a conceptualization of consumers will be developed, and an examination of the influence of culture on luxury interpretations will be borne out. Finally, this chapter will seek to explore the operation of the luxury paradigm in a service setting, as well as the development of luxury brands and brand loyalty.

2.1 HISTORICAL AND GRAMMATICAL PERSPECTIVES

In its most literal sense, the word luxury derives from the Latin word "Luxus" which signifies "soft or extravagant living, overindulgence and sumptuousness, luxuriousness and opulence" (Dubois et al. 2005: 115). Traditionally, "[luxury] has been associated with exclusivity, status and quality" (Atwal & Williams 2009: 339). The concepts of rarity and scarcity were also noted to be of importance in centuries gone by (Hauck & Stanforth 2007). However, it is not always seen in a positive light, for as far back as Roman times, (Berry 1994) observes the "presence of the potentially disruptive power of human desire" in Roman times which follows through to Christian biblical times where the term '*luxuria*' appears as one of the Seven Deadly Sins. The use of '*luxuria*' in this context referred to the sin of lust, thereby documenting the negative relationship held between lust (desire) and luxury. In a contemporary setting, this negative association can easily be found in marketing campaigns, where the consumption of luxury brands is portrayed as 'wicked' or 'naughty'. Examples of the association of chocolate for example as sinful are evident in commercial products (see Figure 1), as well as recipes such as 'The Devil's Food Cake'. Berry finds that still earlier than this, the Greeks too, used this negative association of luxury with desire as having a pernicious and harmful effect. Stories of extravagant living as far back as the 17th century are recorded telling of elaborate beaded gowns and wigs so tall a ladder was needed to construct them (Thomas 2007). According to Berry however, during this era the belief was still held that a desire for luxury was dangerous, and that it wasn't until the 18th century that this line of thought shifted, where the association between luxury and desire was put in a more innocuous light.

Figure 1 - The Devil's Food Cake - representative of sinful associations with perceived luxury items

In general the trend of the past few centuries has been towards a democratisation of luxury. However, according to (Hilton 2004: 118), 19th century “anti-modernist ideals resulted in a cross-section of cultural and intellectual elites condemning the cheap luxuries of the mass market”, thereby demonstrating the resistance of the era against this democratisation of luxury and towards more exclusive, elitist ideals. Written over 100 years ago, Thornstein Veblen’s *Theory of the Leisure Class* (Veblen 1899), discussed in more detail below, presents a seminal model of conspicuous consumption, theorising that individuals emulate the consumption patterns of those individuals at a higher point in the hierarchy. This theory of conspicuous consumption is reinforced in Hilton’s earlier findings – the ‘intellectual elites’ denouncing the democratisation of luxury, while simultaneously, the lower classes striving to attain a higher position on the social hierarchy.

Moving into the 20th century, a general and steady increase in the development of luxury cars was seen. For example, the 1920s saw the introduction of car manufacturers such as Bentley and Bugatti (see Figure 2), while at the same time the Ford motor company was providing opportunities for mass-market consumption of motor vehicles, and scope for lower classes to improve their position on the social hierarchy.

Figure 2 - The introduction of cars as luxury consumer items in the 1920s

In contemporary society Dumoulin (2007) notes not only a marked increase in the number of luxury brands, but also the development and extension of luxury brands into 'foreign' territories, for example home accessories and hotels (Armani and Versace) (see figures 3 and 4). He notes that "many of the most powerful global players seem to have relied heavily on brand extension and the mass production and distribution of lower-range items to sustain and boost their growth" (p. 27). Arguably, it is these 'diversification' and extension strategies that have moved luxury brands along a premium-to-mass spectrum, towards a greater 'luxurification' of society.

Figure 3 - Fashion branded hotel: Palazzo Versace, Gold Coast, Australia

Figure 4 - Fashion branded hotels: Armani Hotel, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

2.2 General Manifestations of the Luxury Concept

Luxury is a term which has morphed to encompass a variety of meanings and interpretations throughout history. From religious influences to life-changing inventions, what constitutes luxury has been open to a number of influences, and the impact these have on determining the implications and interactions of consumers and consumption experiences must be afforded adequate consideration. There is little evidence of any substantial investigations into luxury tourism, and as such the insights that follow are drawn largely from the marketing and philosophy literature bases.

2.2.1 Necessity versus Luxury

Perhaps the most poignant interpretation of luxury is associated with the dichotomy of necessity versus luxury, particularly in these times of increasing need for sustainable livelihoods. This dichotomy is most aptly described by Berry (1994: 232) who notes that “while everything necessary is needed, not everything that can be needed is thought necessary”. In doing so he highlights the subjectivity around individual interpretations of luxury. What is seen as a basic need in one country, or even social class (water, for example), may be seen as somewhat of a luxury in another country (Vickers & Renand 2003) where one person’s luxury may well be another's functionality (L. Bernstein 1999). A convenience approach to defining luxury can lead us to the same scenario, where owning a car, for example, in a rural or remote area is seen purely as a necessity, whereas city-dwellers with good public transport facilities and high associated costs in keeping a vehicle, could view owning a car as a luxury and unnecessary (Vickers & Renand 2003).

Given the importance of visual display, some interesting insights into luxury can be drawn from the world of luxury fashion. Coco Chanel was quoted as saying "luxury is a necessity that begins where necessity ends" (Thomas 2007: 17), somewhat epitomising the perception of luxury held by the upper classes. Add to this her belief that "luxury lies not in richness and ornateness, but in the absence of vulgarity" (Thomas 2007: 99) and one can conclude that luxury is an inherently subjective term, and in a fashion sense is intended to satisfy shallow and cursory ideals. Socrates even provided interpretations on luxury, noting that "contentment is natural wealth; luxury is artificial poverty" (Thomas 2007: 167), highlighting the, at times, superficiality inherent in the pursuit of luxury.

The majority of luxury typologies are often seen as extensions of existing base products. In the broadest sense of the word "luxury refers to a specific tier of offer in almost any product or service category" (Dubois et al. 2005: 115), albeit the delineation between tiers will remain in line with consumers' subjective interpretations of the luxury concept. Luxury can also be interpreted in line with Maslow's (1970) Hierarchy of Needs theory, in that luxury brands tend to be "modifications of a base product that involves satisfying consumer needs" (Vickers & Renand 2003: 462). Once basic physiological needs are met, second-order safety needs and third-order belongingness and love needs are sought. It is at Maslow's fourth level of esteem needs that aspirations for luxury goods and services are evidenced, where Maslow himself notes the "desire for reputation or prestige, status…importance" (p. 21) amongst others. Coco Chanel's acquiescence in relation to this definition is thus clear.

Likewise, luxury, or the degree to which a brand exhibits luxury, has also been conceptualised as existing upon a continuum. It is Maslow's theory that is used to formulate the basis of Kemp's (1998) necessity-luxury continuum which is offered as a method of defining luxury goods. Further support for the application of Maslow's theory in the definition of 'luxury' is given by Berry (1994) who sees luxuries as refinements of basic human needs such as food, shelter and health care. Examples of such refinements can be found in abundance such as caviar vs fish; a youth hostel vs a luxury resort; and annual visits to a doctor vs regular visits to spas and health retreats. Again, these definitions act to underscore the individual interpretations of luxury.

2.2.2 TRADING-UP AND THE DEMOCRATISATION OF LUXURY

More recently, the term 'new luxury' has arisen, referring to goods which "evoke and engage consumers' emotions while feeding their aspirations for a better life" (Silverstein & Fiske 2003: 48). The consumers of such 'new luxury' goods are estimated include some 47 million households worldwide, and have some $3.5 trillion in disposable income (Silverstein & Fiske, 2003). The notion of 'trading-up' has gained more coverage in recent times (Kiessling et al. 2009) with alternative labels such as the 'luxurification of society' and 'democratisation of luxury' being created to describe a type of middle-market consumerism with aspirations for products which meet their needs (Atwal & Williams 2009), but arguably also an aspiration for products that will assist in elevating their position on the social ladder.

Nevertheless, the democratisation of luxury is not necessarily a new concept. The 19th century belief that the democratisation of luxury needed to be "denounced" is evidence of this concept's existence long before the contemporary focus on the burgeoning middle-classes of countries such as India and China (e.g. Anon 2005; Leahy et al. 2008; Asome 2011). Over the decades, difficulties in defining the term luxury have arisen (Vickers & Renand, 2003), not least due to the speed with which the aforementioned 'democratisation' of luxury has occurred (Hauck & Stanforth 2007). Larger amounts of discretionary income have contributed to a blurring of the luxury definition (Husic & Cicic 2009; Silverstein & Fiske 2003). New definitions of luxury are being formulated including “products and services that possess higher levels of quality, taste and aspiration than other goods in the category but are not so expensive to be out of reach” (Atwal & Williams 2009: 339). What was once only available only to a select few, has now become available to the masses, and therefore lost its status as a luxury item. Vigneron & Johnson (2004) offer a theory of inequality amongst luxury brands. That is, that not all luxury brands are deemed to be equally luxurious. One brand may have a higher perceived level of luxury in one product category, compared with the same brand in a different product category. Porsche, for example, may have a greater luxury image in the car market compared to say perfumes or branded apparel items.

2.2.3 Luxury as Conspicuous Consumption for Status and Esteem

Before the development of models such as the aforementioned (as well as Wiedmann et al. 2007), Veblen (1899) laid the foundations for defining conspicuous consumption in his seminal work *‘The Theory of the Leisure Class’*. In this work, Veblen describes the concept of a lady “consuming food, clothing, dwelling and furniture” as being seen to flaunt the wealth of one’s household with the intention of notoriety. Ultimately, Veblen’s Theory of The Leisure Class is used to refer to the public consumption of goods or services as a means of gaining notoriety, prestige or status among social classes. In contrast however, Kemp (1998: 593) notes “the status of a good as a luxury is partially determined by its natural desirability, and not simply by whether it is an object for conspicuous consumption”. He goes on to say that in this context, the “unproductive consumption of goods is honourable, primarily as a mark of prowess and a prerequisite of human dignity” (p. 61). He further attributes ‘pecuniary strength’ and ‘the retaining of a good name’ to be primarily due to acts of conspicuous consumption. This Theory of the Leisure Class has been adopted more recently in the work of Elliott & Urry (2010) and Beaverstock (2011) who continue to champion its prominence in studying and explaining the behaviour of the so-called ‘Global Elites’ (see section 2.3) .

In line with the competition for status outlined by Shipman (2004), Truong et al. (2008: 190) note similar inflictions result in conspicuous consumption by the lower classes: “while the rich and affluent may consume luxury goods to assert status and membership to the elite class, the modest may consume the same goods to gain status but with a purely conspicuous intention”. A more consumer-centred, and somewhat generalised approach to defining luxury in relation to status and esteem, was offered by Vigneron & Johnson (2004: 486) as being “goods for which the simple use or display of a particular branded product brings esteem on the owner, apart from any functional utility”. Furthermore, in a marketing oriented context, Phau & Prendergast (2000: 124) indicate that luxury brands “evoke exclusivity, have a well known brand identity, enjoy high brand awareness and perceived quality, and retain sales levels and customer loyalty”.

For some, prestige is attained simply through price, with a higher price bestowing a greater degree of status and prestige on the consumer (Husic & Cicic 2009), resulting in labels such as those developed by Vigneron & Johnson (1999), including the ‘Veblen’, ‘snob’ or ‘bandwagon’ effects. They describe them as follows:

- *Veblenian Consumers* - attach a greater importance to price as an indicator of prestige, because their primary objective is to impress others;
- *Snob Consumers* - perceive price as an indicator of exclusivity, and avoid using popular brands to experiment with inner-directed consumption;
- *Bandwagon Consumers* - attach less importance to price as an indicator of prestige, but will put a greater emphasis on the effect they make on others while consuming prestige brands;

Further to these initial three categories which highlight the *interpersonal* effects on prestige consumption, Vigneron & Johnson (1999), recognized the influence of independent factors, prompting them to develop two further categories focusing upon the *personal* effects of prestige consumption practices. The first, *Hedonist Consumers,* represent those who are more interested in their own thoughts and feelings, thus they will place less emphasis on price as an indicator of prestige.

Secondly, *Perfectionist Consumers* are those who rely on their own perception of the product's quality, and may use the price cue as further evidence to support the quality issue. Figures 5 and 6 below summarise these groups.

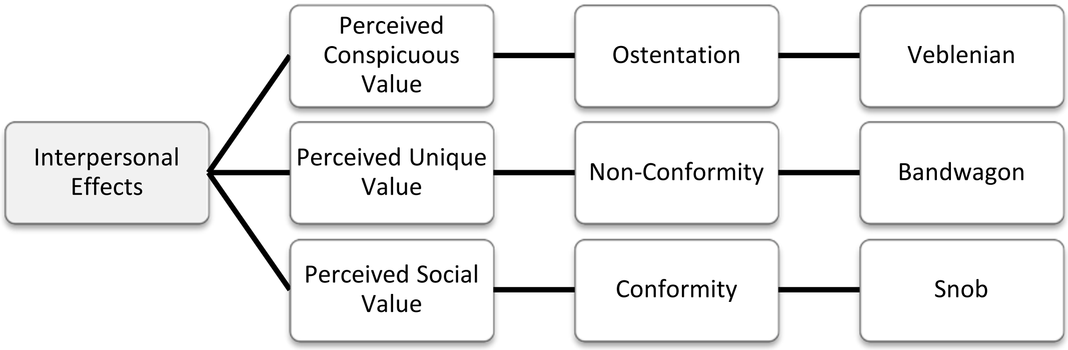


Figure 5 - Interpersonal effects on prestige consumption (adapted from Vigneron and Johnson 1999: 7)

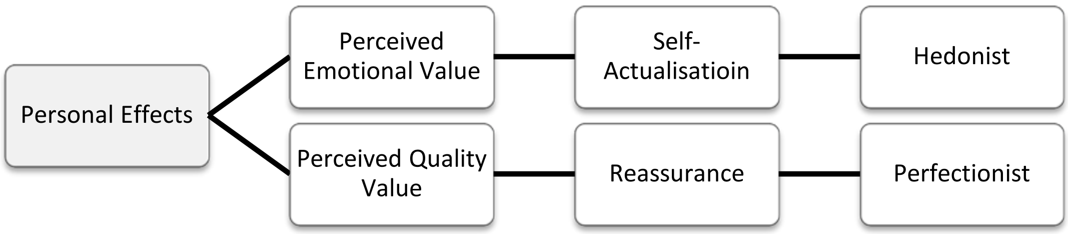


Figure 6 - Personal effects on prestige consumption (adapted from Vigneron and Johnson 1999: 8)

To some degree, the value dimensions proposed by Vigneron and Johnson (2004) echo those of Schwartz (1994b) and those, along with other conceptions of the value construct are discussed in Chapter 4 of this thesis. In line with personal and inter-personal effects outlined above, Bernstein (1999: 50) also talks about an ‘extrinsic luxury’ where the degree of luxury a consumer derives from a product “depends entirely on what the person [consumer] believes that other people [consumers] believe about the product”. This discussion raises a philosophical question as to whether or not luxury exists, or if it is merely a state of mind – a subjective reality; but also draws us back to Socrates’ earlier nod to the artificial poverty that the pursuit of luxury can bestow.

2.2.4 *LUXURY AS RARE, SCARCE, UNIQUE AND EXCLUSIVE*

The concept of luxury as being something rare, scarce or unique is well documented. Dubois & Paternault (1995) give empirical support to Veblen's 'rarity principle', where results pointed to high levels of brand diffusion being linked to adverse effects to "dream" appeal. Phau & Prendergast (2000: 122) echo this principle, holding that "in order to maintain prestige, luxury brands must sustain high levels of awareness and tightly controlled brand diffusion to enhance exclusivity". Their study found that brands such as Cartier, Tiffany and Co, Rolex and Ralph Lauren for example, should tightly control the supply and distribution of their products in order to enhance the Rarity Principle and its so-called 'Dream Value'. Implications for the luxury hotel sector can be drawn, whereby those brands who market their products as rare and scarce, may be well placed to improve Phau and Pendergast's (2000) 'Dream Value', in turn increasing demand. Evidence of luxury hotels promoting the uniqueness of their brand can be seen in the luxury hotel chain Jumeirah, who use the slogan "Stay Different", and the Fairmont Hotel Group who use the adage "Everyone's an Original" as a means of distinguishing their brands (and guests) from others. A more detailed discussion on luxury branding is set out in section 2.5 of this chapter.

As already discussed, inherent in the desire for uniqueness or rarity is the idea of exclusivity and personalised status. The endeavour for these qualities of exclusivity and status can be seen most obviously in the middle-classes where the so-called 'democratisation' of luxury has firmly taken hold. These endeavours, however, are not without their obstacles, with the established upper-classes forcing holders of new wealth to compete and vie for status on their terms, made all the more difficult through the limited reproducibility of items which can be consumed for their symbolic value (Shipman 2004). According to others however (e.g. Vigneron and Johnson, 2004 and discussed in section 2.2.1), the purported 'democratisation' of luxury has led to the deviation of the luxury concept away from its traditional roots, through brand over-extension and the mass-production of readily available accessories which cannot be classed as luxury (Kapferer 2010).

As alluded to in the introduction to this thesis, the perceived incompatibility of luxury with the concept of sustainability is sometimes reached too swiftly. Converging ideas such as longevity and durability can be seen when both concepts are dissected (Kapferer 2010). Deeper analyses reveal that both concepts take rarity as their central concern, and importantly, luxury is something which is inherently resource dependent and therefore heavily reliant upon the sustainability of its resources. Luxury items are built to forgo obsolescence and it is an industry of lasting worth (Kapferer 2010). A survey conducted by the Luxury Travel periodical (June 2008) suggested that 91% of respondents saw obtaining value-for-money as being of the utmost importance in their decision-making process. Again the notions of durability and longevity are brought to the fore. Examples of extended after-sales services are prevalent in the luxury industry – approximately 70% of all Porsche cars built are still on the road today (Porsche Cars Great Britain Ltd 2012), and genuine Louis Vuitton products can be repaired regardless of when they were bought. Arguably, it is these types of additional services that represent added value to luxury consumers (Kapferer, 2010). It is of paramount importance for craftsmen such as jewellers or leather smiths to care for their resources, as their future depends on it. Similarly, hoteliers must recognize the importance of the physical, social and cultural environments in which they operate, for they too depend on the future of these resources to sustain their livelihoods and the uniqueness of their products.

2.2.5 Luxury as Hedonistic and Self-Gratifying

It has been widely recognised in the literature to date, that through their purchase or consumption of luxury of goods or services, consumers seek to satisfy emotional drivers such as sensory pleasure and self-gratification (Klaus-peter Wiedmann et al. 2007; Vigneron & L. W. Johnson 2004; L. Bernstein 1999). In their study, Vickers & Renand (2003: 459) examine luxury goods "as symbols of personal and social identity". At its core, their study focuses on a mix of three dimensions to luxury goods, being functionalism (the consumer need for products that solve or prevent a problem); experientialism (consumer need for products that provide sensory pleasure and/or cognitive stimulation); and symbolic interactionism (consumer need for products that fulfil needs for self-enhancement or "ego-identification"). Through these three dimensions, a predictive model which differentiates luxury goods from normal or 'non-luxury' goods was developed, with the results of the study suggesting some applicability of this model to a luxury service context. In contrast to this, Bernstein's (1999) work describes the transcendence of luxury whereby a dimension of superfluity is added, which is at odds with Vickers and Renand's functionality dimension. This suggests that although consumers look to derive some form of functional utility from luxury products, they are not detracted by some superfluous characteristics.

In their paper identifying emerging concepts on hedonic consumption, Hirschman & Holbrook (1982: 92) define hedonistic consumption as "those facets of consumer behaviour that relate to the multisensory, fantasy and emotive aspects of product usage experience". From this definition, we are led to conclude that luxury goods are not only in pursuit of sensory and emotional satisfaction, but are also likely to draw the consumer into a world beyond reality - satisfaction gained through escapism from everyday routine. In a luxury *services* context, this concept of hedonistic consumption resonates with Beard & Ragheb's (1980) Leisure Satisfaction Scale, and in particular their motivators of psychological, social and relaxation .

Research defining consumer value in terms of luxury consumption concludes that "the consumer's perceived level of hedonism towards a luxury product or service, and its property to satisfy an emotional desire for sensory gratification as best as possible, is positively related to the individual luxury value perception" (Wiedmann et al. 2007: 7). It is hence quite logical, to assume that the increased level of luxury a consumer *perceives* in a product or service, the more likely it is that the consumer will perceive greater satisfaction of their own hedonistic desires.

2.3 LUXURY CONSUMERS AND THE GLOBAL ELITE

Much work has been done examining the behavioural and consumption characteristics of luxury consumers. Less work however, has been carried out investigating their psycho-social characteristics. A poignant quote from the prominent Keynesian economist Sir John Kenneth Galbraith demonstrates this irony well: “Of all the classes, the wealthy are the most noticed, but the least studied”. It is certainly something of a paradox, as Beaverstock et al. (2004) note, that researchers seem to have little to say about the super-rich, despite their influential role in shaping society and the global economy. Before making any attempt to conceptualise this group of individuals, it would be prudent to establish them as a cohort worthy of research.

Despite this academic lag, a growing number of companies, especially in the wealth management sector, are producing reports focusing on this group. The most recent Annual World Wealth Report (Merrill Lynch/Cap Gemini Ernst & Young 2010) classifies those individuals with investible assets greater than US$1 million as ‘High Net Worth Individuals’, whose number were estimated to be 10.1 million individuals in 2008 with a combined wealth of US$40.7 trillion. Media interest including the *Forbes Billionaire* and *The Sunday Times Rich List* has brought this group of individuals into the public eye, and in doing so has made the world of the super-rich partially visible (Beaverstock, 2011). The disparities which have resulted from the recent wave of neo-liberalism and subsequent muting of income redistribution policies are significant, where in 2000 about 2% of the world’s adult population possessed more than 50% of total global wealth (Davies et al. 2008). When placed in this context it is easy to see how sub-industries are emerging the world over, in order to service both the growing number of super-rich, and the mass-markets aspiring to that status, with the tourism, hospitality and associated leisure industries being no exception.

Although little empirical research has been conducted, conceptualisations of the super-rich have evolved over time from Veblen’s (1899) musings on the *Leisure Class*, to almost a century later where Thorndike (1980) wrote of the *Gilded Age* of family dynasties (the likes of the Carnegies, Astors, Du Ponts etc). Later, socio-cultural studies in the UK and USA dwelt mainly on characteristics of inherited, resource-based wealth and the land and the gentry (North 2005). However, a shift has been noted since then, from ‘old money’ to ‘new wealth’ where increasingly the source of individuals’ wealth has come from exorbitant executive remuneration packages and astronomical returns on stock exchanges (Beaverstock, 2011). Occurring simultaneously with this shift was not only major price gains in commodities, but the ‘West’s’ engagement with the emerging economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China, creating “a whole new batch of emerging market plutocrats” (The Economist 2009: 4) who swiftly joined the emerging class of the super-rich.

Although small in number, but being high in net worth and influence are a this group of so-called ‘global-elites’ (CeMoRe, 2010). Their actions are scrutinised and emulated by many, and as such their power is considerable. The ‘global-elites’ are influential in the creation of and desire for unattainable and unsustainable levels of consumption portrayed as luxury, privilege, prestige, and 'class'. (Beaverstock 2004: 405) conceptualised the super-rich in terms of their perpetual movement between nation states, “to the extent that they dwell in global space-time”. Following this, (Elliott & Urry 2010) offered a set of characterising life strategies of the Global-Elites:

i. Detached Engagement (the ability to engage through disengagement and shift from one network to another with speed and agility);
ii. Floating (the collapse of managerially structured routines and the mentality of long-term careers; network-driven and self-interested characteristic);
iii. Speed (the intensity and extensity of their networking mobilities; always on the move, ready to travel at a moment’s notice, adept at navigating the corporate sensation of speed and global shift of movement);
iv. Networked Possibilities (the basis upon which those high in network capital achieve ever higher forms of connectivity with other global-elites via networks, connectors and hubs);

v. Distance from Locality (expressed as distaste for traditional identities and communities as a key social form influencing the making of identities of such global-elites under conditions of a mobile life); and

vi. Mapping of Escape Routes (lives of global-elites is almost exclusively about elsewhere; the dread of immobility penetrates to the roots of the global-elite psyche).

They note the common lifestyle thread of relentless travel, with approximately two weeks out of every month spent travelling. Trends within the super-rich clique have shifted from owning luxury to experiencing luxury, where it is now estimated that the business of providing luxury experiences is worth approximately USD$770 billion annually (Boston Consulting Group Ltd 2012). Recently, a record number of people (3,900 delegates) attended the Virtuoso Travel Week Event in the United States, a week-long luxury travel conference where luxury travel, accommodation and experience suppliers meet with high-end travel agents and purchasers to conduct business (Tjolle 2012). This year's event saw approximately $500 million in travel products and experiences sold, and increases in consumption in the luxury cruise, tours and hotels categories of 30%, 51% and 82% respectively during the period 2009-2011(Virtuoso Ltd 2012). The rate and manner in which the travel characteristics of the super-rich are replicated by the burgeoning middle-classes of society, presents a clear and present danger to the improvement of sustainable development the world over. The size of the tourism and travel industry coupled with the significance, both economic and societal, of the global elites, is demonstrative of the considerable need for research attention in this area.

A difficult group to pigeon-hole, the super-rich "have traits of trans-nationalism, cosmopolitanism and living fast and hyper-mobile lifestyles" (Beaverstock, 2011:4). The lives of the super-rich are articulated well by (Frank 2007: 3):

> …with their huge numbers, they had built a self- contained world unto themselves, complete with their own health-care system (concierge doctors), travel networks (Netjets, destination clubs), separate economy (double-digit income gains and double-digit inflation), and language

> (“Who’s your household manager?”) … The rich weren’t just getting richer, they were becoming financial foreigners, creating their own country within a country, their own society within society, and their economy within an economy.

Almost contrary to the trans-national hypotheses of Beaverstock et al. (2004) and Elliott & Urry (2010), Frank named his hypothetical country Richi$tan, and divided it into four distinct areas: Lower Richi$tan (net worth $1m-$10m, 7.5m households); Middle Richi$tan (net worth $10m-$100m, >2m households); Upper Richi$tan ($100m-$1b, thousands of households); and Billionaireville (over $1b, 400+ households).

Further, it is this collection of individuals who have immense impacts on society on a global scale, both emotionally and environmentally, by way of aspirational shifts from the middle classes. At present, it appears the undercurrent for the sustainability and ethical consumption movement stems from the middle classes, where historical consumer marketing research points towards a marked increase in interest for environmental concerns (B. Moseley, Consumer Trend Analyst, April 2010). According to Simmel (1975), and in line with Bordieu's (2010) Theory of Conspicuous Consumption, the adoption of innovation begins with those of high status, and then trickles down through a status hierarchy as individuals attempt to emulate those above them. It seems plausible then to suggest that without a drive for ethical consumption and sustainability from the social elite, that the longevity of support for this movement is questionable. Current research in consumer trends under the existing economic climate, points toward a shift where “consumers [are] turn[ing] away from fears about the future of the planet, and towards more domestic worries” (The Futures Company 2010: 6). The immediacy of peoples’ concerns over their own wellbeing and existence are demonstrative of the fickle nature of the human psyche, and any wholesale changes to consumption patterns must be borne out of a shift in our universal values.

2.4 INTER-CULTURAL PERCEPTIONS OF LUXURY

Dubois & Duquesne (1993: 37) note that cultural identity plays a powerful role in segmenting the market in relation to luxury goods. They talk of the importance of early anthropological work examining “the ownership, distribution and consumption of goods for understanding the value system of ‘primitive’ societies”, and much of this has since been segmented into the examination of collectivist versus individualistic markets. In particular, Dubois & Duquense (1993) noted the need for research into cultural traits relating to self-achievement needs, as well as those attitudes relating to cultural change. In their cross-cultural study between British and Indian luxury consumers, Shukla & Purani (2012) found that the collectivist market of Indian consumers placed a greater focus on other-directed symbolic/expressive values, whereas the individualistic British market place greater emphasis on self-directed symbolic/expressive values. Results did however point to a weak psychological connection between British consumers and luxury goods, suggesting that the increasing democratization of luxury has led to a number of luxury brands succumbing to the bandwagon effect and losing their ‘luxurious lustre’.

Furthermore, Bian & Forsythe (2012) found that an emphasis on exclusivity in order to avoid similarity would be an effective marketing strategy for Chinese consumers (compared to American consumers) as the luxury brand’s elite usage group would help Chinese consumers convey belonging to a specific social class. In 2006, Chinese consumers were the third biggest buyers of high-end products globally, and associated with this rapid wealth creation are increasing levels of conspicuous consumption (Roberts & Balfour 2006). In contrast, Godey et al. (2012) found that the brand’s country of origin played only a small role in determining luxury consumer purchase intentions, and other factors such as brand, price and guarantee were seen to be more important influencing factors. These recent results paint an inconclusive picture on the role of cultural factors in luxury perceptions and interpretations, and as such any generalizations made on such a basis must be done so with caution.

2.5 LUXURY SERVICES AND THE HOTEL SECTOR

At the core of the hotel sector is the offering of a service product. Although research into luxury product consumption has evolved, very little research looks into luxury experiences and services. In a generic experiential setting Bernstein (1999:49) notes that "the experience of luxury is active and conscious. The person must be aware that he or she is experiencing luxury and must be consciously prepared to experience it as such". This therefore suggests that unless consumers engage in this conscious recognition of luxuriousness, their perceptions of same will be different. That is, luxury brands may be open to (perceived) brand inequalities, if consumers do not perceive them to hold sufficient levels of luxuriousness. Hotels are no exception to this, with numerous examples where passing attempts are made at trying to include perceived luxury services, such as spas, concierge and business centres, in an effort to improve the level of perceived luxury of an establishment.

A further, and perhaps far more conspicuous route to defining luxury, and one which is particularly characteristic of the hotel industry, is through grading or classification systems. Some suggest that hotel grading and classification systems are responsible for causing confusion not only for guests, but also for the industry (Cooper et al. 2008; Cser & Ohuchi 2008). Inconsistencies and variances both domestically and internationally amongst grading schemes are responsible for varying degrees of (dis)satisfaction through the creation of guest expectations. Such grading schemes can also be seen as responsible for providing an expectation of not only the level of quality to be provided, but also of the level of hospitality, or type of experience (Ariffin & Maghzi 2012). That said, it is certainly reasonable to attribute classification schemes in peoples' formation of luxury perceptions. Definitions of various UK grading schemes even make reference to 'luxuriousness' in their definitions (The Automobile Association Ltd 2012; VisitBritain.com 2010), and would therefore lead consumers to make certain assumptions about quality and standards based on their own subjective opinions of what constitutes luxury. Whilst this strategy of grading and classification can be and is adopted in the hotel industry, other more generalised approaches to luxury brand development have also been examined.

2.6 LUXURY BRAND DEVELOPMENT

It can be noted from the preceding discussion that luxury in itself has limited functional elements, and as such luxury itself could be a brand. Thus, the evolution of luxury brand development is examined here. Research and understanding luxury brands is a relatively new pursuit for academics. While research into consumer behaviour and characteristics have previously been carried out (e.g. Dubois & Duquesne, 1993), research into brand development and phases was still understudied in the mid-1990s (Dubois & Paternault 1995). These authors research uncovered a "dream" formula for luxury brands, where it was found that awareness of a brand feeds the consumers' "dream" of attaining that brand, but while purchase enables consumers to realise the "dream" it also simultaneously works to destroy the dream through brand diffusion. It is this paradox which underscores the difficulties many luxury brands face.

The development of a Brand Luxury Index (BLI) by Vigneron & Johnson (2004) attempts to measure the component of luxury in a brand through the segmentation of consumer perceptions into two main categories: Non-personal and Personal perceptions. These are subsequently broken down into Non-personal perceptions of conspicuousness, uniqueness and quality; and Personal perceptions of hedonism and extended self. An evaluation of this BLI scale was undertaken by Christodoulides et al. (2009), where findings indicated the need for further investigation into the psychometric components of the scale, in order for generalisations to be made across cultures. Importantly though, what has been lacking in recent brand development studies, particularly in the luxury sector, is the role of sustainable business practices. As will be discussed in chapter 3, sustainable development is not a new concept, and is one which has emerged and re-emerged since the 1960s (Butler 1999). Despite the earlier discussion in section 2.2.5 of this chapter of the synergies apparent between sustainability and luxury concepts, to date there has been no work which examines the potential role of sustainable business practices in enhancing brand loyalty in the luxury segment, in particular, the luxury hotel industry.

2.6.1 Brand Loyalty and Model Development

Interest in brand loyalty is not new, and has been of interest at least in academic sense for at least four decades (Chaudhuri & Holbrook 2001). Its importance to industry has been linked to improvements in the reduction of marketing costs, greater trade leverage, more new customers, favourable word-of-mouth and greater resistance of loyal customers to competitive strategies (Dick & Basu 1994; Chaudhuri & Holbrook 2001). Like the concepts luxury and sustainability, agreement on the definition of brand loyalty is stilted. As an overarching guide, the concept can be seen as either uni- or multi-dimensional, with two independent dimensions: behavioural and attitudinal (Neale & Funk 2006; Jacoby & Chestnut 1978; Oliver 1999; Uncles et al. 2003). Noted by Neale & Funk (2006) however is the argument that this composite approach (of both attitudinal and behavioural components) does a poor job of predicting loyalty outcomes, and is therefore of limited value. As such, we can decouple these components and examine them individually. A prominent definition offered by Oliver (1999:392) states that brand loyalty is:

> a deeply held commitment to buy or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand-set purchasing despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviour.

This definition focuses heavily on the attitudinal aspect (of the composite approach) of brand loyalty, and draws great similarities to the definitions held around consumer values, their universalism and their ability to transcend situations. It is for this reason that there is believed to be great synergies between these concepts, and their ability to enhance the predictive powers of current brand loyalty models. Indeed, Chauhudri & Holbrook (2001:82) note that this type of attitudinal loyalty involves “a degree of dispositional commitment in terms of some unique value association with the brand”. Furthermore, this goes some way to further cementing the thesis that values act as better predictors of behaviour than attitudes alone. A more detailed discussion around this will follow in Chapter 4 on consumer values.

Contrary to this attitudinal approach, is the other half of the brand loyalty composite – behaviour. Uncles et al. (2003) note this as being the more controversial aspect, given the often grey distinction here between simple repeat purchasing and perhaps the more valued prospect of brand loyalty. Jacoby and Chestnut (1978) conceptualise loyal behaviour as “a phenomenon expressed by a biased, behavioural response, expressed over time, made by some decision-making unit, and with respect to one or more alternative brands in a set of brands” (*cited in* Funk & James 2001:138). Through a study, across a range of 34 different product categories, researchers gathered remarkable amounts of data on purchase behaviour, finding few consumers to be “monogamous” (100 per cent loyal), nor are they “promiscuous” (no loyalty to any brands) (Uncles et al. 1994). Rather, most consumers are viewed as “polygamous” (i.e. loyal to a portfolio of brands in a given product category), and in this sense loyalty can be defined as a propensity to buy a brand, normally as one of several (Ehrenberg & Scriven 1999).

Returning to the composite approach to brand loyalty, it can be argued that the best way to conceptualise loyalty is to allow for the moderation of the relationship between attitudes and behaviour through contingency variables (e.g. individuals’ current circumstances, their characteristics and/or purchase situation faced). Uncles et al. (2003) note the main difference between this contingency perspective and the first mentioned attitudinal approach is the elevation of the contingency variables from that of loyalty inhibitors to loyalty co-determinants. They note that the organisation is more likely to increase loyalty by directly appealing to or adapting for the contingency factors (e.g. offering extended opening hours, taking measures to avoid stock-outs, providing online access etc.). Overlooked however, in this conceptualisation is the aforementioned proposition that values (rather than attitudes) can transcend situations, thereby alleviating adverse outcomes arising from these contingency factors.

Numerous models have been developed to investigate brand loyalty. Of note are the Hierarchy of Effects Theory; Prochaska & DiClemente's (1982) Trans-Theoretical Model (TTM) and Brooks' (2000) Stages of Adoption (adapted from the TTM); Mullin et al. (2000) Escalator Model of Commitment; and finally Funk & James' (2001) Pyschological Continuum Model (PCM). Each will be discussed below for their relative merits, similarities and influences on the final model developed in this thesis.

2.6.1.1 Hierarchy of Effects Theory

The underpinning thesis of the Hierarchy of Effects Theory is that in order for a customer to be motivated toward a desired action (i.e. purchase of a product or service), they must first be made aware of that product/service's existence, second be attracted enough to notice the features and benefits of a given product/service, and third have a desire to benefit from that product or service's offerings (Barry 1982). It is these steps of Awareness, Interest, Desire and Action (AIDA) that formed an early model to explain consumer purchase behaviour. As various iterations of the AIDA model evolved, the Hierarchy of Effects Theory was developed.

These iterations included theories by Lavidge & Steiner (1961) who surmised that consumers passed through the five stages of (i) awareness, (ii) knowledge, (iii) liking, (iv) preference and (v) purchase – these could be grouped under three phases of learning: cognitive (thinking), affective (feeling) and conative (doing). From these, three competing Hierarchy of Effect models were born: Learning Hierarchy, Dissonance Hierarchy and Low-Involvement Hierarchy (Solomon 1996). These three models differ in their temporal aspects with regard to the phases in which learning occurs, the impact of different phases on attitudes towards an object, and the reason for purchasing an object (Funk & James, 2001). The Three Orders Model proposed by Ray (1973) suggested that different circumstances dictated which of the three hierarchies (learning, dissonance or low-involvement) was dominant in a given situation. His theory "sought to identify the appropriate effects ordering relative to the consumer's involvement with a product and the availability of alternative products" (Funk & James, 2001). It is this involvement dimension that influenced the Psychological Continuum Model (see section 2.6.1.2), and ultimately the model this thesis rests upon, by characterising the stage of psychological connection to a brand made by an individual.

2.6.1.2 Trans-Theoretical Model

The Trans-Theoretical Model is a multi-dimensional one which set out to account for behavioural change as well as integrate the competing Hierarchy of Effects models (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1982). This model proposes six stages of behavioural change an individual goes through in order to change his or her behaviour:

1) Pre-contemplation; not ready to change.
2) Contemplation; thinking about change.
3) Preparation; taking small steps to change.
4) Action; overt change for less than six months.
5) Maintenance; overt change for more than six months.
6) Termination; overt behaviour ceases.

As an individual transitions through these stages, they are affected by a set of variables (the processes of change) which include decisional balance (weighing pros and cons of behavioural change), self-efficacy (confidence in one's ability to change) and finally situational influences (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1982). It is this final variable (situational influences) that is hoped to be overcome in the revised model proposed in this thesis through the use of consumer values. The universal nature of values (see chapter 4) would therefore make a provision for the model to transcend different situations, and thus allow for greater replicability.

The combination of the Hierarchy of Effects model and the TTM represent the broader stages of adoption framework, which serves as a guide to explain how people progress through the stages and ultimately modify their behaviour (Funk &

James, 2001). In some ways, the PCM bears similarities to other effects and stage of adoption models in that it proposes that there are different levels of psychological commitment that an individual may form in relation to a given brand, and that phases of learning are operative at different points in time, and this in turn affects an individual's psychological connection. A key distinction of the PCM from other models is its focus on movement between levels, reflecting the fact that a person's attitude toward a brand may change over time, or that they may not progress beyond a certain level.

2.6.1.3 Models of Escalating Commitment

As just discussed, the PCM framework incorporates tools to assess individuals' movement between levels, and as such mirrors some aspects of models of escalating commitment, particularly that of Mullin, Hardy & Sutton's (2000) Escalator Model of segmentation (Funk & James, 2001). Mullin, Hardy and Sutton's (2000) Escalator Model segments individuals on a behavioural basis, while the PCM segments individuals based on psychological processes, such as learning, which can account for differing levels of psychological connection. Furthermore, the Escalator Model also assumes that individuals proceed at the same behavioural pace, and that they only progress upward. The PCM framework however, acknowledges that due to different rates and stages of individual learning, movement between stages of loyalty or commitment are likely to occur at different rates, and that in fact individuals may move both up or down in the model. While Mullin et al. (2000) acknowledge defection from a brand, they do not go so far as to outline how an individual reverses direction and lowers their psychological involvement with a brand. The next section provides a fuller outline of the development and operation of the PCM framework, as well as more detail on the movement of individuals between levels.

2.6.1.4 Psychological Continuum Model (PCM)

As discussed, the PCM framework was borne out of a combination of theories and models, and attempted to overcome shortcomings evident in the earlier models, and provide a more holistic conception of psychological involvement and loyalty to a brand. Initially, the PCM was developed to assess the general parameters which mediate the relationship between an individual and a sport or athlete (Funk and James, 2001). Since its initial inception, the PCM framework has been applied to a number of leisure and sport settings (e.g. Gursoy & Gavcar 2003; Havitz & Dimache 1997), including marathon running (Beaton et al. 2011); celebrity fan involvement & destination perceptions (Lee et al. 2008); sport competitors and touristic activities (Dimanche et al. 1993); golf (Funk et al. 2011); competitive rugby league players and recreational skiers (Beaton et al. 2009); and most recently in a tourism context examining the destination involvement of sport tourists (Filo et al. 2011). So, while the PCM has been used to assess individuals' involvement with sporting and destination brands, it is yet to be applied to the hotel industry, and as such this study is the first of its kind. Although the model has not been tested in this context before, it has previously been noted that "the PCM framework enables the creation of middle-range theories applicable for understanding conceptually distinct behaviours in sport, recreation, tourism and leisure" (Funk 2008: 43). The success of its use in assessing individual psychological commitment to sporting brands (teams), as well as its success in a range of other tourism settings, makes it appropriate for replication in this thesis to hotel brands.

The PCM framework investigates an individual's involvement with a specific brand in relation to four sequential stages: Awareness (I know of this brand), Attraction (I like this brand), Attachment (I am this brand) or Allegiance (I live for this brand). Each stage represents an increased level of psychological connection (i.e. brand involvement) that a consumer may have with a brand (Funk & James, 2001; Beaton & Funk, 2008). The psychological connection at each stage is represented by distinct attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Filo et al. 2011). In order, the lowest level, *brand awareness*, describes an individual knowing about a brand without having any special interest or inclination to purchase it. Brand awareness may be influenced not only by various socialising agents (e.g. media, social media and marketing), but also by cultural influences and other situational factors. The second stage, *brand attraction*, is a result of the product offering an opportunity to fulfil needs or for an individual to receive benefits from its use or consumption based on hedonic or socio-situational contexts, self-efficacy or personal determinants such as age, gender, race or socio-economic status (Funk et al. 2011). Brand attitude formations and associations represent an explicitly formed connection at this stage, as well as purchase intentions and may include the actual purchase. The third level, *brand attachment*, represents a consumer who has formed a meaningful psychological connection with the brand (Filo et al. 2011), and is seen to be more complex and stable than that witnessed at the brand attraction stage (Beaton et al. 2011). At this stage, individuals begin to ascribe functional, emotional and symbolic value to a brand, and consumers exhibiting brand attachment have stronger attitudes about a brand and are less likely to change their preferences (Filo et al. 2011). The final stage, *brand allegiance*, represents a continuous and enduring relationship with a brand. Brand allegiance is one which develops over time and occurs when a consumer believes the brand is congruent with their own values and self-concept. Importantly, this stage is characterised by consumers who display strong positive attitudes toward a brand which influences cognitive processing and is followed by consistent and predictable behavioural intentions (Funk & James 2001). Figure 7 below presents the stages of brand involvement in the PCM framework.

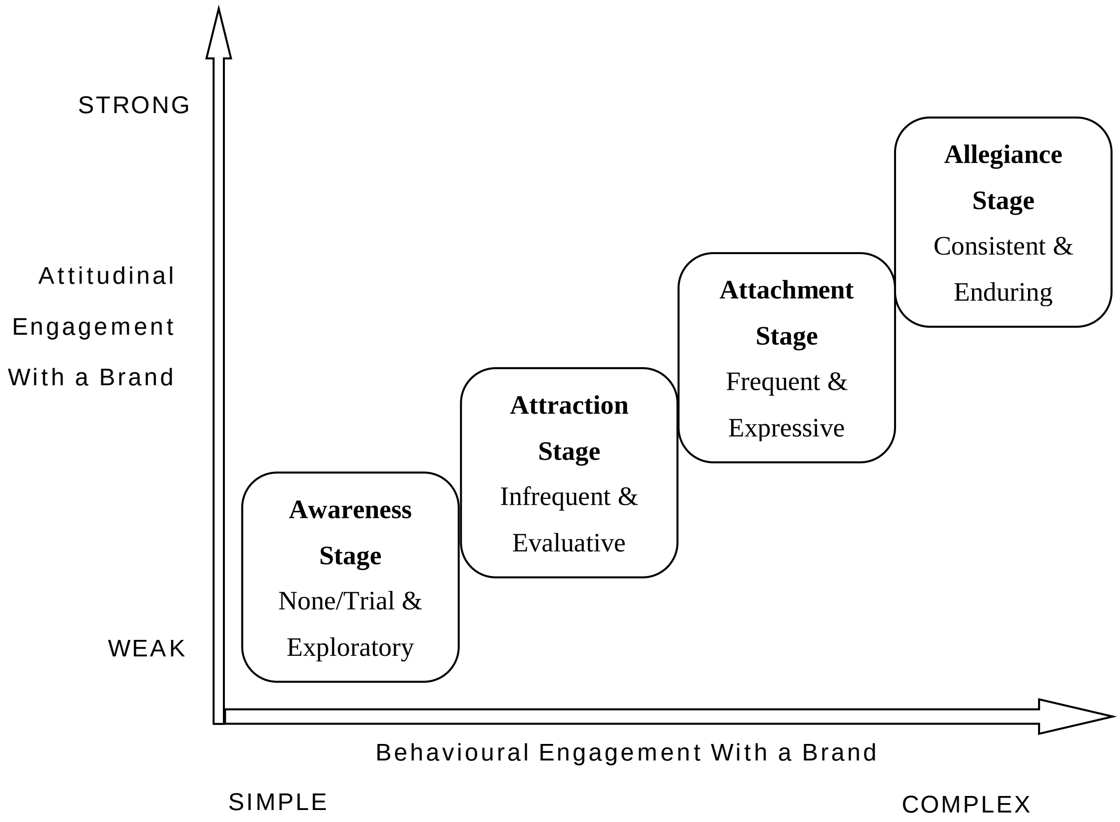


Figure 7 - Stages of attitudinal and behavioural engagement in the PCM framework (adapted from Funk et al. 2011)

As mentioned above, one of the central tenets of the PCM framework is the concept of involvement. Involvement is used to describe the importance an individual places on a broad range of objects including products/services and brands (Kim & Kim 2005). Involvement has also been linked to consumer values (e.g. Lastovicka & Gardner 1978; Li 1997), hence the importance of their inclusion in this model. It is essential that an accurate understanding of the focus of consumer involvement is developed in order to develop meaningful marketing strategies (Filo et al., 2011). Nelson (2005) notes that in the leisure tourism context, place is both a setting for consumption as well as a consumable product of and in itself, and indeed the same can be said for hotels, particularly in the luxury sector. In this era of increasing globalisation and hence competition, it is crucial for marketers to explore consumer involvement with their brand, in order to attract customers who are now more flexible and spontaneous than ever (Vanhove 2001). The obvious implication of these developments is that consumer involvement becomes elusive, and as such its full understanding is crucial.

The involvement construct in the PCM framework is used to stage respondents based on the assertion that it can be used to characterise the stage of an individual's psychological connection to an object or brand (Funk & James 2001). An involvement measure involving a tri-dimensional construct including the dimensions of pleasure, centrality and sign which has been adopted from empirically tested studies to develop an effective staging tool to place individuals onto one of the four PCM stages (Beaton et al. 2009; Beaton et al. 2011; Funk et al. 2011). Whilst this procedure has been applied in a tourism destination context, to date it has not been tested in a hospitality setting.

In the present study, brand involvement is conceptualised using the same three dimensions outlined above, allowing for the application of the three-step staging procedure (see discussion in section 7.8) in a hotel context. By using this approach, respondents will be differentiated according to their distinct profiles based on each of the three hotel brand involvement facets (pleasure, centrality and sign). First, *pleasure*, characterises the enjoyment derived from purchasing a branded product or service. Second, *centrality*, reflects how central purchasing or experiencing a particular brand is to an individual's lifestyle. And third, *sign*, embodies the self-expression value, or symbolism derived from purchasing or experience a given brand. Each of these dimensions are rooted in the leisure involvement literature (e.g. Kyle & Mowen 2005; McIntyre 1989; Beaton et al. 2011) and have all been successfully empirically tested in the leisure context. However this is the first study to test these items in a hospitality setting, and as such their empirical suitability cannot be guaranteed at the outset. Nevertheless, it is believed that given the hedonic nature of the first and third dimensions (pleasure and sign) in particular, and the synergies these have with luxury interpretations that these same dimensions will be appropriate to this study. More specifically, the PCM framework provides better understanding for how different phases of learning are operative and how this influences the strength of psychological connection to a given brand (Funk & James 2001).

2.7 SUMMARY

The literature to date provides a somewhat fragmented, and often highly contextualised conception of the luxury concept. Luxury as a concept is one which has previously been studied predominantly within the broader marketing field, particularly in relation to fashion and other consumable items. However, little work has been done on luxury experiences, although trends indicate the value and desire for them to be ever increasing (Boston Consulting Group Ltd 2012), and it is experiences such as luxury travel and hotels that will play an important role in defining individuals' identities into the future. Through the various manifestations of luxury interpretations presented here, it can be concluded that the interpretation of what does and doesn't constitute luxury is entirely subjective and dependent upon a range of endogenous personal factors, and exogenous societal and situational factors. Chapter 4 will provide a discussion on how values act as influencing factors on individuals' decision-making processes and the role that values play in guiding the aforementioned endogenous and exogenous factors of brand loyalty. Furthermore, a hypothesis will be offered on how they might influence the individual operationalisation brand loyal behaviour. The next chapter will provide a discussion of sustainability and ethical consumption and demonstrate how the two concepts are not as far removed as is commonly thought.

3 Sustainability, Ethical Consumption and the Hospitality Industry

Human social life cannot be understood apart from the deeply held beliefs and values that in the short run, at least, motivate and mobilize our transactions with each other and the world of nature.

(Harris 1989)

This chapter examines a somewhat paradoxical position to the preceding chapter on luxury, and focuses on the concepts of sustainability and ethical consumption and their relationship to the hospitality industry. In doing so, it takes the position that ethical consumption acts as the practical application through which consumers exercise their understandings of sustainability, and through the act of consumption itself, learn the meanings of what it is to act morally and ethically. To give context to sustainability in a tourism setting, as well its practical application through the various routes of ethical consumption, it is important that a discussion on the definition of sustainability in a general sense is had. Not because definitions are lacking in the literature, but because there are so many. It is obvious that the highly subjective nature of the term has led to a plethora of definitions from academics and policy makers, causing bewilderment to industry stakeholders and consumers alike (Butler 1999; Holden 2000; Mowforth & Munt 1998; Pforr 2001). When the concept of sustainability has been applied to the tourism industry, it would seem that any of the aforementioned definitions have been used at will, without concern given for their contextual appropriateness and suitability. Inherent in this haphazard application of definitions are problems which have arisen which need to be considered as does the value placed on sustainability by consumers. First though, this chapter will consider some of the grounding theories of sustainability, particularly in respect to moral philosophy and the ethicalities of consumption. The second half of the chapter will turn to the broader concepts of sustainability and ethical consumption and the challenges facing their implementation in a hospitality context.

3.1 Moral Philosophy and the Ethicalities of Consumption

Studies of human nature tell us that morality is part of our innate make-up, a quality which allows us all to have a conception of what is right and what is wrong (Fennell 2006). Often our behaviour in the context of right and wrong is a product of the tensions which exist between who we are as individuals and the subjective norms of society. These tensions between individual and collective aspirations are not new however as modern codes of ethics owe much to classical thinkers from both the West and East. Aristotle argued that a collectively derived code of ethics is needed as guidance within society, while Socrates asserted that it is our duty to continually challenge what is right and wrong within our societies. This section will examine some of the more salient theories of ethics which in turn will provide a foundation on which to discuss more specific aspects of ethical thought, specifically in relation to consumption practices. In particular, discussion will be had on teleological theories, relating to utilitarianism and hedonism, in comparison to deontological philosophies.

Ethics, as a branch of philosophy, covers an extensive body of literature spanning some 2,500 years (Fennell 2006). Some suggest that theories on moral philosophy can be divided into two groups – theories that privilege the right and theories that privilege the good (Barnett et al. 2005), otherwise characterised by teleological and deontological philosophical standpoints (Barnett et al. 2005; Fennell 2006). Theories of the *good* focus primarily on which outcomes to promote when deciding upon an appropriate course of action. They are consequentialist by nature and define a course of conduct with specific reference to the desired outcomes. It is for this reason that they are referred to as teleological, deriving from the Greek word *telos*, referring to one starting by specifying an end, and can perhaps be summarised through the more contemporary maxim “start the way you mean to end”.

Theories of the ‘good’ are encapsulated by philosophical standpoints known as utilitarianism (Barnett et al. 2005). These are philosophies which advocate practices which maximise the overall sum of happiness to the greatest number of people. The philosopher Peter Singer argued that consequentialist theories (i.e. utilitarianism) are more realistic in terms of what they set out to achieve due to the fact that starting with goals or end points means that judgements of actions will always depend upon contextual factors. Oftentimes, consequentialist theories are applied to ethical consumption under the assumption that ethical decision making occurs through a process of rational calculation and decision-making (Barnett et al. 2011). This is of course often inherently flawed, as it assumes there is the possibility of collecting, collating and analysing a set of alternatives prior to taking action. We can see therefore that utilitarian philosophies might have applicability and relevance to collective goals, but are considerably problematic as models for personal decision-making. Perhaps of even more importance is the fact that questions around deciding *what* the end goal should be remain unanswered. Related questions concerning which goals are worthy of pursuit, how they are decided upon and by whom, are examples of the complexities which may arise from adopting such standpoints.

Implicit in the utilitarian approach is an acceptance that there is a single measure of what “good” is, and in the context of ethics what “acting ethically” entails. These are assumptions which if assumed could result in the carrying-out of the ‘wrong’ behaviour, or the right behaviour to wrong standards. Indeed, taken for granted in consequentialist theories then, is the assumption that all humans perceive the same experiences and material goods to bestow equal amounts of happiness upon us. The theory of hedonism, as alluded to in Chapter 2, regards pleasure, (or happiness if you will), to be the goal that renders participation in an activity, or consumption of a good, worthwhile. The opposing master of pleasure however, pain, is equally important to consider. Yet the supreme difficulty comes in attempting to quantify pleasure and pain, and ergo determining what is pleasurable, and what will therefore bring the greatest amount of happiness. Another setback of utilitarianism is its inability to consider social justice (Fennell 2006). The central thesis of utilitarian philosophies is to maximise happiness for the greatest good, even at the exclusion of minorities, in order to secure the greatest benefits. Obvious examples of this in both a tourism and development context can be seen in the displacement of local communities to make room for hotel development and/or the associated infrastructure. Ergo, the happiness of the fortunate majority will outweigh the misery of the unlucky few. Or, when viewed in the context of luxury, the opposite can occur, where the happiness of the privileged minority outweighs that of the majority.

Deontological, or duty-based approaches, however, differ from consequentialist approaches, whereby they define actions rather than goals in themselves. They define what the right action is regardless of its contribution to human happiness or other favoured goals (Barnett et al. 2005). In his Theory of Justice, Rawls (1972) asserted that teleological theories such as those described above, implied that it is justifiable to exploit some people, or to limit their rights, in pursuit of a more general utilitarian benefit. His theory assumes a plurality of views regarding which constitute ‘the good’, as this is henceforth guided by ‘the right’ actions. Rawls defended this priority of ‘the right’ over ‘the good’ as a means of ensuring collective definitions of the right do not come at a cost to basic individual liberties, as he implies occurs in teleological theories. The question raised here however is over whether or not it is possible for individuals to rationally adjudicate their own actions as to whether or not they conform to an abstract principle of universalisation. Importantly then, Rawls’ work highlights this tension between the multiplicity of personal values and ethical positions with the degree of unity required to pursue collective outcomes and decisions (Barnett et al. 2005). In a sense, this is asking people to consider whether or not their actions are ‘the *most* right’ – something which will always differ given individuals’ frames of reference. Further to this, Fennell (2006) notes that through deontological studies, there is recognition the judgements and decisions must be based on some higher authority, and that there should be some universality to the ‘rules’ which ordain how persons should act. With the rise of globalisation, and the arguably smaller world in which we currently live, questions surrounding where our individual duties originate from are raised. Who sets the rules? How is this decided? Do some people have special rules and guidelines over others? If so, why?

Essentially, both of the previous philosophical standpoints are flawed, and a more considered approach is needed to understand what guides our behaviour. Consequentialism demanded "that the rightness of actions be judged entirely on the goodness of consequences" (Barnett et al. 2005: 13), while deontological philosophies hold that the 'goodness' of outcomes be guided by the rightness of our actions. The comparison between the two demonstrates that both philosophical standpoints are impractical, as they end up presenting models of ethical consumption that are inflexible, leaving little room for the complexities and ambivalences of ethical decision-making. The concerns outlined previously can be demonstrated through two examples. Firstly, the work of (Hobson 2002; 2003), concerning the sustainable consumption agenda, observe that the success of such agendas, many believe, relies upon the exposure of the public to scientific knowledge, which in turn will trigger changes to consumer behaviour. This assumption however pays no heed to the multitude of ways in which goods act as important symbolic emblems in the lives of everyday people. As discussed in Chapter 2 (section 2.2), the role of consumption of luxury goods and services is not, and cannot be seen as an act with purely functional and utilitarian motives. Right or wrong, material products do more than simply meet basic needs – "they serve to facilitate interpersonal interactions, [provide] senses of personal identity and worth, or as a means of creativity" (Barnett et al. 2005: 14). The tendency of sustainable consumption policies and agendas to ignore the social aspects of consumption, account for the difficulties seen in attempting to change consumer behaviour patterns (Jackson & Papathanasopoulou 2008). To illustrate, The Royal Society, in 2012, published its first substantive offering on the topic of human population and consumption impacts on the planet. Two main points can be drawn from the report- firstly, that it has taken the entirety of the 350 years of The Society's existence to publish such a report; and secondly, that the report does little to acknowledge the social factors at play which influence consumption. In fact, one of their four key recommendations notes that:

> The most developed and the emerging economies must stabilise and then reduce material consumption levels through: dramatic improvements in resource use efficiency, including: reducing waste; investment in sustainable resources, technologies and infrastructures; and systematically decoupling economic activity from environmental impact.
>
> (The Royal Society 2012)

Although the report presents a chapter on consumption and its drivers, including elements of habit, conformism and competition, the importance of this in the wider context of the report is not evident. The report seemingly fails to link these social elements of consumption to the broad and significant impacts they have on resource consumption and (un)sustainable living patterns. The main argument presented in this thesis is that consumption behaviours cannot depend solely on either consequentialist or deontological philosophies, which fail to account for these consumption nuances. What might be needed, according to Barnett et al. (2005: 14) is “an approach that is more sensitive to the experiential horizons of ordinary consumers, and in particular to the ways in which certain sorts of ethical conduct are already embedded in everyday consumption practice”.

A second example demonstrating the impracticalities of consequentialist and deontological theories lies in the areas of causality, responsibility and power. Young (2003) talks of the failings of the increased conspicuousness of sweatshop factory conditions to actually change consumer behaviour. The notion that bringing into view a chain of consequences, as a means of changing consumption behaviour is an overly simplistic one. Young notes that “this notion of responsibility tends to elide important distinctions between being causally responsible for events, being a beneficiary, and being in a position to actually change outcomes” (Barnett et al. 2005: 14). A narrowly consequentialist understanding of moral reasoning implies that we should all act in a manner wholly oriented to collective outcomes. While on the surface this super-altruistic perspective appears favourable, in the long run, if we were to all act as pure do-gooders, we may end up worse off due to the unsustainable levels of self-sacrifices resulting in a reduced level of overall happiness (Parfit 1984), and perhaps lower levels of innovation and invention. Fundamentally, the overarching argument here is that by simply appealing to peoples’ sense of self-sacrifice or altruism , or a wholesale abandonment of self-interested concerns, is probably not the best way to change consumption practices. Somewhat more balanced consequence-sensitive deontological arguments which might suggest that rights, being the primary concern of deontologists, have both instrumental and intrinsic value are needed. That is, that rights are not only valuable intrinsically, but because of the goals which they allow people to pursue (Sen 1987).

Importantly, (Fennell 2006: 56) notes that ethical systems and codes are "frequently developed for the purpose of delineating a shared set of values", but that complications arise when moral rules differ from one culture to another. Interestingly, this is at odds with the preceding discussion on values, where it has been suggested that there are universal elements in the construct of human values (Schwartz 1994b). What in fact might affect cross-cultural developments of ethical guidelines is the placement of values and ethics within the consumption context. Devinney et al. (2010) question the pervasive extent of individuals who behave according to their values and norms (which according to the above discussion provide the basis for their moral codes) independently of the context in which they find themselves. A more detailed discussion on values and their construction is provided in Chapter 4.

Similarly, Fennell (2006) notes ethics as being concerned with what is right or wrong; good or bad, whereas, morality, deriving from Latin (as opposed to Greek), refers to patterns of conduct and rules of action. In doing so, morality can necessarily so, be considered a kind of reflective ethics, where after deliberating over the rightness or wrongness of actions, their inclusion in a code of ethics can be considered. The discussions on morals and ethics are often confused and intertwined (Guy 1990), and where one concept ends and the other begins is oftentimes unclear. This uncertainty is aptly captured by Millar & Yoon (2000) who write that "ethics are rules, but morality is more than rules". The ambiguity of commentary such as this provide little wonder as to why such levels of uncertainty exist, and indeed why conceptual ambiguity around ethics, once placed in a consumption context, still exist (Devinney et al. 2010). For the purposes of this discussion, time will not be spent splitting hairs on differentiating these concepts. Rather it will be taken that ethics and its associated discourse can be placed under the broader branch of moral philosophy.

Morality is noted as being social in its origin and function, and something which acts as a set of guiding principles, both for the individual and the group (W. K. Frankena 1963). Parallels and lessons can be drawn from *Tragedy of the Commons* (see section 3.2 below), where a code of ethics may be seen as beneficial in mediating the use of a common shared resource. Encapsulated in this is the aforementioned concept of utilitarianism, or 'the greatest good for the greatest number'. In the late 17th century, utilitarianism manifested itself through calculus formulated by Jeremy Bentham, whereby pleasure and pain units were estimated in order to calculate positives and negatives of a given decision (Fennell 2006). The work of McAvoy (1990: 70) suggests that an appropriate environmental ethic for parks and recreation would be to use a "moral goodness standard where good activities are those that add to the health and well-being of the individual, the society and the environment". Problematic in this suggestion is the practicalities of determining what is good and bad about certain activities, for whom, and in what environments (Fennell 2006). Added to this, and perhaps even more pertinent in the context of luxury hotels, would be the difficulty in considering people's rights and freedoms to pursue activities within the confines of the law. By prioritizing certain activities as 'good', there is a risk of violating people's rights at law to pursue the same. Implicit in this discussion are the compounding difficulties and complexities of cross-cultural interpretations of good and bad and right and wrong, as well as international laws and regulations pertaining to different states.

3.2 SUSTAINABILITY

In its most primitive form, sustainability (in the form of conservation) was evidenced many thousands of years before the birth of Christ where the elite were granted exclusive access to animals and grasslands in protected nature reserves in Mesopotamia (Butler 1991). These ideas were taken up by Alexander the Great and other Europeans and subsequently taken back to the continent. Hardy et al.

(2002) discuss the romantic vision of the 19th century and note the alignment of conservation movements with sustained periods of economic expansion. They note that these occurrences are arguably due to people reacting to materialistic values. Late in the 19th century, not long after European colonisation of Australia, the country's first national park, the Royal National Park, was established in Sydney and provides an example of "growing recognition that areas should be preserved for future generations to use" (Hardy et al. 2002: 476).

It is widely accepted that the modern concept of sustainable development originated via the Brundtland Commission in 1987 where sustainable development was defined as being "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED 1987: 43). As Liu (2003: 460) highlights, the Commission placed an important focus on the fact that this definition of sustainability did not hold any implications of a fixed state of harmony, but rather that it should be a "dynamic process of changes". Thus, the form of capital can change over time, whilst stock and opportunity is equivalent. Sustainability is recognized to be a contested concept and one that is "socially and politically constructed and reflects the interests and values of those of involved" (Mowforth & Munt 2003: 18).

The minimal influence that the Brundtland Report has had however is noted by Holden (2009), particularly in relation to decisions relating to the 'use' or 'non-use' of nature – the supply and demand elements of tourism. The definition proposed in the Brundtland report brought to the fore two additional elements that had not been duly considered in earlier discussions – that is ethics and equity (Butler 1999). The belief held by many of today's generation is that the Brundtland definition propositioned sustainability as a new and ground-breaking concept, perhaps because of its focus on ethics and equity, but more cynically because sufficient time had passed since the environmental movements of the 1960s and 1970s that the term had been forgotten, and hence appeared to be re-born (Butler 1999).

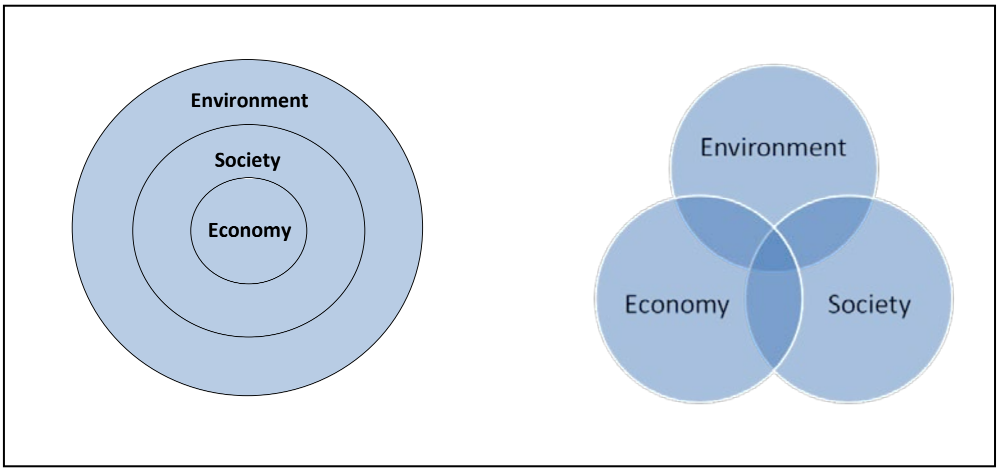
In an attempt to operationalise the definition of sustainable development arising from the Brundtland Commission, many authors have summarised sustainability as a concept that rests on three pillars: economic, ecological and social environments (Pforr 2001). Bramwell et al. (1996) however, propose a definition with seven dimensions of sustainability: environmental, cultural, political, economic, social, managerial and governmental. The inclusion of dimensions such as political, managerial and governmental pose difficulties however, as discussed throughout this section, these groups of stakeholders are generally regarded to be at fault for abusing the underlying ethos of the term. Wang, Cater, & Low (in press) note the highly politicised and contested nature of sustainable development both when government and non-government organisations are involved in the redevelopment process.

A more philosophical approach to defining sustainability is supported by a number of authors whereby it is advocated that a holistic and global approach must be adopted (Richard Sharpley 2000), that is, that sustainability cannot be separated from the value systems of those involved in its implementation and the societies in which they exist (Bramwell et al. 1996). This is echoed by Pforr (2001) who notes the value orientation that sustainable tourism represents, and believes that greater participation and co-operation between governments, industry, communities and academia will lead to greater legitimacy of political decisions.

It has been suggested that sustainable development in itself is not something which *can* be defined, due largely to the fact that the inclusion of the political environment in its definitions leave it open to interpretation by those with political power (Holden 2000). Some difficulties in the interpretation of sustainability definitions however have emerged. Weaver & Lawton (2002) highlight the 'steady state' implications with the idea of sustainability, juxtaposed against the growth implications inherent with development, as being mutually exclusive. Other difficulties which lie in the interpretation of the term arise when efforts are made to translate it into management and planning actions. Further discussion on this point will follow later in this section.

Over time however, models have been developed which attempt to demonstrate a progression towards sustainable development. Baker, Richardson, Young, &

Kousis (1997) offer a ‘Ladder of Sustainable Development’ where the first rung of the ladder is referred to as the ‘Treadmill’ approach – a model focused on the accrual of material possessions and pursuing wealth creation. The second rung on the ladder refers to a model of ‘Weak Sustainable Development’ where an attempt is made to integrate some environmental concerns with capitalist growth goals. The third rung on the ladder is referred to as the ‘Strong Sustainable Development’ model which advocates that environmental protection be a precondition of economic development. The fourth and final rung of the ladder, is the ‘Ideal’ model, a kind of enlightenment where it is believed that nature and non-human life have an intrinsic value, which extends beyond their usefulness to humans. Echoing this model of weak versus strong sustainable development is the work of Opio-Odongo (2003), who contrasts the three central tenets of sustainable development into two models (see Figure 8). Rather than viewing each component as a separate pillar, he suggests the adoption of an integrative approach where each aspect overlaps the others, where the ultimate goal is to realise a level of sustainability represented by the centre of the Venn diagram.



Weak Sustainability Strong Sustainability

Figure 8 - Weak versus strong sustainability (adapted from Opio-Odongo 2003)

In his seminal article, *The Tragedy of the Commons*, Hardin (1968) describes a situation, originally outlined by a mathematical novice, William Forster Lloyd, in a relatively primitive pamphlet in 1833, where individuals all acting independently, solely and rationally consulting their own self-interests, will ultimately deplete a shared limited resource – even when it is clear that it is in no-one's self interest to do so. Despite criticisms from human behaviourists, this economic scenario has been widely applied in an environmental sense, but is perhaps less commonly applied to the alternative socio-cultural dimension of sustainability. In a tourism context, it has been argued that the various interests of a tourist destination can be loosely grouped into four categories: host population, tourist guests, tourism organisations and the natural environment (Cater 1995). Through a mutual reliance on each other, all four of these groups have common aims, to ensure long-term sustainable development of their destinations, although the potential for each of these groups to act independently of each other and consult only their own self-interests is likely, and in fact common, ultimately to the detriment of themselves and their peers. Cater (1995: 22) underlines the fact "that the major role players in tourism all have a stake in sustainable tourism and that their present and future interests are in many ways tied to one another and to sound environmental practice". For example, on the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, tourism operators are actively involved in monitoring the health of the reef as they recognise that its future health is integral to the longevity of their tourism product (Cater & Cater 2007).

Understandings of sustainability have been developed under a wide range of disciplines and industries. For the sake of clarity in the progression of defining the research problem of interest, it is acknowledged here that the literature discussed in this section may be perceived as largely 'main-stream' and predominantly from the tourism literature. Whilst it is acknowledged that sustainability has been examined in other areas including the wider sustainable development body of literature, development studies, environment and engineering for example, the context of luxury hotels in this study provides the locus for engagement with the predominantly tourism-focused literature.

3.2.1 *TOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*

The concept of sustainable development has been widely applied to many industries with a degree of recklessness which fails to define the term in the context of the industry in question (Butler, 1999). When applied to the tourism industry, it would seem that these attempts have been fruitless and perhaps futile, due to the ability of the term to be “variously interpreted or appropriated” (Sharpley 2003: 325). Sharpley calls for a global and holistic approach to be taken to the implementation of sustainable development in a tourism context, and this notion is echoed by (Butler 1998: 28) where the idea of tourism being able to achieve sustainable development “independently of other activities and processes is philosophically against the true nature of the concept, as well as being unrealistic”. This raises the question of whether or not attempts by the tourism industry alone to implement sustainable practices are indeed futile. Recent attempts to bring international governments and legislators together at a conference regarding the global effects of climate change (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 2009) resulted in little more than yet *another* accord being produced which has been viewed as being vague, heavily caveated, and not legally binding. With an ostensible lack of leadership from governments worldwide, it is little wonder that an air of reluctance and apathy can be sensed in not only the tourism industry.

Further scepticism regarding the application of sustainable development to the tourism industry is brought to the fore by Mowforth & Munt (2001: 25) who note that “sustainability is to sustain profits of the tourism industry; used by social classes to retain distinctive holidays; and used by host communities to exclude outsiders”. While this somewhat negative approach to sustainable tourism has some truths, it can be argued that these ‘uses’ are in fact legitimate. Economic profitability is a widely acknowledged goal of sustainability, and indeed acknowledged by the same authors (Mowforth & Munt 2001: 111) as being “not a condition which competes with other aspects of sustainability. Rather, it can be seen as equally important a condition in its own right”. Without maintaining the financial viability of tourism businesses, including hotels, the livelihoods of many millions of people around the world would be at stake. Arguably given their premium pricing strategies, luxury hotels are well (if not the best) placed to be able to afford the implementation of business practices which contribute to the other goals of sustainability, that of environmental and socio-cultural sustainability.

Further, the use of sustainability to retain distinctive holidays, can be used to refer to the methods used by social classes to differentiate themselves from lesser classes, through both a social element (ecotourism is seen to be better than package tourism) and a spatial element (the Brazilian rainforest has more kudos than a Gambian beach) (Bordieu 2010; Mowforth & Munt 2003). As sustainability becomes the new buzzword, receiving ever increasing media attention, it too is used as a tool for establishing differentiation amongst social classes.

When consideration is given to host communities, Mowforth & Munt (2003) highlight the widely touted idea of tourism as being a beneficial cultural exchange for all parties involved. Problems arise however where a lack of communication, influencing power relationships between the community and local legislators, as well as between national governments, INGOs and international companies, arise. Problems resultant from the imposition of tourism onto host communities include the displacement and resettlement of local communities, as well as the ‘zooification’ of local tribes people where a process of dehumanisation leaves them with little power or dignity (Mowforth & Munt 2003). At the crux of this discussion is the issue of control, where host populations must be allowed to have a voice in the direction of their development and choose not to develop tourism if that is perceived to be a more sustainable option. Empowerment however is rare (Timothy 2007), and frequently tokenistic empowerment is the most that is achieved. This highlights one of a many number of challenges which face the successful implementation of sustainability in tourism. Section 3.2.2 below discusses further challenges in respect to each of the three components of sustainable tourism.

3.2.2 CHALLENGES FACING SUSTAINABILITY AND TOURISM

Voluminous quantities of policy documents, planning guidelines, statements of 'good practice', case studies, codes of conducts and various other bureaucratic documents have been produced in an attempt to apply sustainable development to the tourism industry (Sharpley 2000). Sharpley later goes onto note that the implementation of sustainable tourism has been hindered, largely, buy stakeholders who are reluctant to take responsibility for their own actions – sustainability is often seen to be someone else's problem (Sharpley 2013). These attempts at operationalising the concept of sustainable tourism are futile however, if the effective dissemination of information is not achieved. Ruhanen (2008) notes that poor methods of diffusion and knowledge transfer strategies can be linked to the lack of application of sustainability to the tourism public and private sector stakeholders.

3.2.2.1 Economic Challenges

The importance of economic sustainability is often overlooked in the literature, for the more ethically appealing pursuits of ecological and cultural sustainability. Whilst both of these pursuits are undeniably vital in achieving a holistic sustainable approach, to overlook the financial viability of tourism operations is arguably, to place little importance on the livelihoods of host communities. There are obvious ethical questions which are raised when discussion arises around the profitability of organisations and their subsequent distribution of wealth. The unfortunate abuse and misappropriation of wealth is still too common, but without businesses operating under financially viable conditions is to risk the existence of a tourism industry in a given destination. This applies to both a relatively small scale context, for example, sea-kayaking in Thailand (Shepherd 2002) or on a larger mass-tourism scale in destinations such as Cancun, Mexico (Cater & Cater, 2007), and Dubai, UAE.

A growing body of literature around the formation of strategic alliances as a means of succeeding in the competitive economic environment is forming which also has implications for the implementation of sustainable tourism. A lot of attention has been afforded to failures of strategic alliances, however little research, especially that of an empirical nature, has examined the reasons behind those failures (Evans 2001). From these shortcomings, Evans notes that research has since begun to focus on the role and scope of alliance formation in promoting improved performance. Alliances and their loyalty programs can reinforce the desire for status and esteem (discussed in chapter 2) among consumers, as well as contribute to the democratisation of luxury, where for example the commercial airline Virgin has through its loyalty program announced partnerships with luxury hotels including Palazzo Versace in Australia, Virgin Limited Edition properties and Hamilton Island on the Great Barrier Reef (see figure 9 below). Nevertheless, Evans (2001) also concludes that while success may be achieved through the formation of alliances in the short to medium-term, long-term sustainability between defined partners is more elusive due to the combining cultural, managerial, political, economic and legal factors. In addition, alliance-forming behaviour may result in a lack of control over the implementation of sustainable practices. Conversely, alliances may lead to transformations in normative behaviour among consumers and operators if shared values in sustainable business practices are communicated effectively.

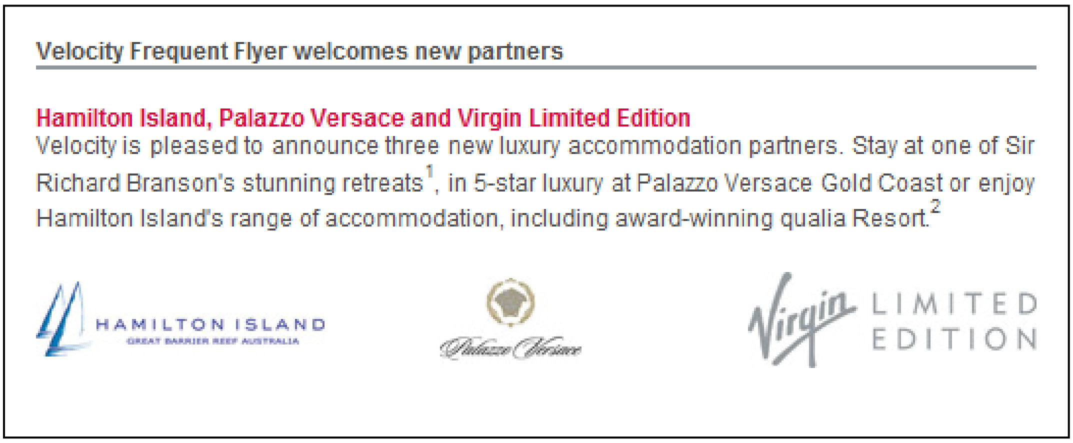


Figure 9 - Example of alliance forming behaviour between mainstream airline and high-end luxury hotels

3.2.2.2 Social and Cultural Challenges

A major problem associated with the social aspect of sustainable tourism is related to social capital. Mowforth & Munt (2003) raise an interesting point regarding the ‘host’ communities of tourist destinations. They present an argument suggesting that implied in the term ‘host’ is a willingness on behalf of the community to actually accept guests, as well as an assumption that they hold some degree of influence over the level and type of development their community engages in. This idea of *willingness*, or lack thereof, to host can to an extent be explained by stages of tourist development outlined by Mathieson & Wall (1982), where a transition from euphoria to xenophobia is suggested. They suggest that in the initial stages of development the potential benefits that investors and visitors will bring to the host community result in enthusiastic responses from the local population. A shift in attitudes however, can arise as expansions in services and facilities to meet tourist demands are realised and a more antagonistic mind-set ensues, which may eventually reach xenophobic proportions. This has also been explored in the oft used (and critiqued) Doxey’s Irridex of host community attitudes (Mowforth & Munt 2003).

The relationships, especially the balance of power, between host communities and other stakeholders such as national legislators, government bodies as well as international stakeholders (such as tour companies) are also a feature of sustainability which can be easily exploited. Many poorer, developing countries do not have the financial or political power to make decisions, which results in other stakeholders making decisions which often do not have the host communities’ best interests at heart (Timothy 2002). It should be cautioned, however, that a positive relationship does not always exist between the degree of input from the local community and the degree of a schemes’ supposed sustainability (Mowforth & Munt 2003). This can be attributed firstly to the differences in interests of those at the helm of the decision making process – the political attractiveness of promoting sustainability objectives may be a convenient mask behind which governments can hide – when in reality the concept of sustainable tourism may represent an objective that is unachievable in practice (Sharpley 2000). Secondly, the downplayed relationship between local input and sustainable outcomes can be attributed to the inequality in power relationships mentioned earlier between national governments, INGOs and international organisations. These imbalances are likely to produce local élites who aim to exploit their knowledge and position and are often the recipients of leaked tourist spending (Mowforth & Munt 2003; Timothy 2002; Milne 1998). For example, a significant number of high-end luxury hotels in Dubai are owned by the Dubai Holding Company plc, a global investment holding company which is majority owned by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, also the current ruler of Dubai.

3.2.2.3 Environmental Challenges

It is concerning that some 20 years after the Brundtland report was commissioned, that the lack of support in advocating sustainable tourism by international agencies is nominal (Holden 2009). This places little motivation on smaller individual stakeholders in their pursuit of more sustainable business practices, when major international bodies have not made any progress over such a substantial time-frame. This lack of leadership and control has arguably resulted in the all too uncomplicated ability to exploit natural resources due to their 'zero-price' – that is, where there is no monetary cost placed on natural resources, as well as being characterised by open-access, they are often over-used and abused, without any direct consequences (Holden 2009). Added to this, are findings such as those produced by (Claver-Cortes et al. 2007) where no significant difference was found in the relationship between the performance levels achieved by hotels (measured in financial terms as well as occupancy levels) and their degree of environmental proactivity. Arguably, findings such as these will only exacerbate the propensity of hotels and other tourism businesses to improve their 'sustainability profile' in a purely marketing context.

Various attempts at mitigating environmental problems have been made, although anything with some level of credence is yet to materialise. Systems such as the "Polluter Pays Principle", a system of environmental use taxes have shown very little in the form of a marked change in industry attitudes and behaviour (Holden 2009). Alternative methods for alleviating tourism's negative environmental impacts is to consider approaches such as 'price control' and/or 'quota control' methods (Holden 2009), as well as the de-marketing of a destination, which although enjoying some success, do rely upon government intervention in the market place – something which most governments are reluctant to do.

Also along a marketing vein are suggestions recently emerging around the idea of selective marketing to ‘green’ consumers (Dolnicar & Leisch 2008; Dolnicar & Matus 2008). It is suggested that such segmentation be based on explanatory variables (such as psychographic, behavioural and socio-demographic characteristics) in order to identify groups of tourists who have previously exhibited pro-environmental behaviour. A problem lies, however, in that very little has been researched concerning the viability of such segments and whether or not they are in-fact “substantial enough to represent a useful target segment” (Dolnicar & Matus 2008: 314). They suggest that empirically, little is known about the managerial value of such a target group. In the related context of responsible tourism Weeden (2011) recognises the limited understanding there is of motivational values and calls for further research in this area, particularly in larger studies with a more diverse group of consumers. It is in respect to this that this thesis aims to make a contribution.

However, the sincerity of this interaction is questioned by some authors whose belief are that the concept sustainable tourism is used little more than as a convenient marketing hook (e.g. Buckley, 2001; Buckley, 2007; Butler, 1999; Mowforth & Munt, 2003; Sharpley, 2000; Weaver & Lawton, 2002). Eco-labels are one method often used by tourism suppliers and service providers as a marketing tool and a form of gaining increased credibility. The issue of trust and authenticity in relation to eco-labelling is not one which is unfounded. Buckley (2001) notes several criteria which must be evident in an ecolabel in order to be meaningful to customers including firstly the need to be part of an accredited scheme administered by a reputable organisation, and secondly to have a set of defined and transparent criteria by which it can be measured, which in turn will lead to the prevention of its abuse. However, he points out that the amount of weight consumers will place on ecolabels are influenced firstly by how much the consumer cares about the environment, and secondly how realistic the differences are between labelled and unlabelled products and services. The benefits realised through ecolabelling schemes are presented by somewhat of a double-edged sword whereby if consumers pay a premium for a product or service they believe to be environmentally superior, they want it to mean something. Equally, a manufacturer or service provider will only be willing to adopt an ecolabel should the perceived benefits outweigh any associated costs (Buckley 2001).

The proliferation of eco-labels and certification schemes has led to confusion among consumers and tourism operators over the past decade (Font & Buckley 2001). Currently over 70 schemes exist (e.g. Green Globe, Green Key), mostly devised in the northern hemisphere (and Australia), and with this volume of schemes one might argue that those with vague and lax guidelines are abused by tourism operators to portray an image of environmental responsibility. In general, eco-labels currently have “low penetration, low reliability, low consumer recognition and considerable uncertainty in environmental outcomes” (Buckley, 2001: 23). There are however attempts being made to improve and develop labelling practices into a more holistic approach, with the genesis of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council and their Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria. The criteria aim to not only acknowledge the ecological responsibility operators have, but also the “positive and negative economic and cultural impacts of tourism” (Anon 2012).

Nevertheless, it is of considerable interest why green marketing approaches have enjoyed such success, especially when considering the lack of research conducted into the increase in popularity of ecotourism and sustainable tourism and the implicit or explicit green credentials of operators (Sharpley 2000). In fact, the commonly made assumption that increased environmental awareness leads inevitably to a greater propensity to consume greener products or services is unfounded, and a general lack of consistency is noted amongst the limited research (Sharpley 2000). This lack of uncertainty can be attributed to a significant lack of tools available to measure impacts of so-called sustainable practices, let alone actual longitudinal research that has been conducted to measure the effects of such practices. A greater degree of restraint is called for by Butler (1999) who notes that any claim by businesses as being sustainable is premature, at best, and possibly inaccurate.

It is not only eco-labels who suffered an abusive fate. The field of green marketing (also referred to as sustainable or environmental marketing) can also be questioned on what seems to have been the squandering of opportunities due to a lack of focus on the core issue (Peattie & Crane, 2005: 367). They go on to note that “the practical implementation of green marketing has often worked on the assumption that greening was what customers wanted (or at least professed to want)”. It seems that marketers, or perhaps higher-level management, have (ironically) viewed that the way through the sustainability crisis, created in the first instance by excessive and unsustainable consumption, is to promote yet more consumption, by persuading consumers to focus their attention on the attainment of green products. This is promoted by consumer society rather than focusing on non-purchase behaviours, as suggested by Peattie & Crane (2005), as product-use, sharing, maintenance and disposal. The concept of having, using or providing ‘less’ is often deemed a less attractive option, and one historically which would dissolve status and social standing. As highlighted in section 2.2.5, luxury and exclusiveness could return to their conceptual roots by embracing the idiom ‘less is more’ and in doing so develop a more sustainable business model. In a luxury hotel setting, as well as low impact, this would embrace the idea of promoting fewer or limited numbers of guests, affording greater exclusivity, and thereby simultaneously generating demand for the luxury experience as well as assisting in elevating the social status of those consuming such an experience.

3.3 ETHICAL CONSUMPTION

If we are to have some chance of putting into place principles of the sustainability agenda, then ethical consumption is one means of doing so. Taking its roots from sustainability (Weeden 2005), ethical consumption extends to decisions around consuming (or not, through the use of boycotts) a particular brand of product because of religious, spiritual, environmental, social or some other motive (Harrison et al. 2005). From increased environmental awareness over the past three to four decades, ethical consumers were characterized as a group of consumers with predominantly environmental concerns, but this has since expanded to relate to those who also have deep-seated concerns for the Third-World (Shaw et al. 2000). Other aspects including animal welfare, oppressive regimes and armaments are also considered to influence the ethical consumer

(Shaw et al. 2005). Commonly, ethical consumption is used to refer to consumers of Fair Trade products, who are predominantly concerned with addressing the "injustices of conventional trade" (The Fairtrade Foundation 2011), through achieving better prices for suppliers, achieving local sustainability and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers in the developing world. An area (as mentioned in section 3.2 above) which is often ignored, is that of financial sustainability and longevity of businesses. The central tenet of the Fair Trade movement to achieve fair and equitable prices might well help in achieving goals related to financial sustainability by reducing pressures on profit margins through determining pre-set levels on revenue streams for suppliers. Some work exists in a tourism setting on the concept of Fairtrade Tourism (Centre for Leisure Tourism and Society 2008), although problems still remain, similar to those discussed in section 3.2.2.3 on ecolabelling, where a cohesive wholesale approach to the concept is yet to be adopted.

Difficulties, however, do exist when attempting to more precisely define ethical consumption. Defining ethics, or something that is 'ethical', as something which is morally right or wrong (as in the Oxford English Dictionary), results in value-laden interpretations, "as opposed to a well defined, generally recognised moral principle" (Devinney et al. 2010:5). Indeed when ethical consumerism is thought about in the context of non-consumption (Harrison et al. 2005), it is something of an oxymoron to suggest that one can continue to consume, especially material goods, in an ever-increasing yet ethical manner. This thought is echoed by Michaelis (2006) who suggests that the ethics of modern consumer societies are at odds with the aims of sustainable development and consumption, particularly when ethics is considered in respect to its roots in various traditions and religions.

Whilst some consumers use the influence of their spending power to boycott certain brands or products based on the motives mentioned above, others are what (Szmigin & Carrigan 2006:608) refer to as voluntary simplifiers. These are people who, seeing a society possessed by materialism "feel galvanised to modify their lifestyles to seek a more meaningful existence". Indeed it is a luxury for those of us in the developed world to discuss downshifting, and to be able to make choices regarding to what extent we might downshift or simplify our lives (Miller 2001) when often there are portrayals in the media of a polarized society where we are represented as either shopping addicts or self-righteous simplifiers (Szmigin & Carrigan 2006).

To talk of the evils of consumption is a sign of condescension when there are people desperately in need of more consumption, more food, more clothes and more pharmaceuticals (Miller 2001). Furthermore, the study of consumption as text through the philosophy of socioeconomic constructionism, demonstrated by Marxist theory and Mannheim's Sociology of Knowledge, reveals how we as humans make-meaning and construct knowledge from our participation in socio-economic activities (Hirschman & Holbrook 1982). According to Shaw & Riach (2011) ethical brands attempt to represent their consumers as authentic, provide a sense of self-identity and allude to one's social positioning within the arena of consumption. To dismiss consumption as a purely worthless and unproductive activity is a view which is naïve, and in itself is unconstructive and unsustainable.

To distinguish then, between voluntary simplifiers and ethical consumers, is to acknowledge the goal of each group independently. Voluntary simplifiers are those who are consciously choosing to reduce their levels of consumption, whereas ethical consumers are attempting to refine their consumption, in line with the aforementioned social and environmental concerns (Shaw & Newholm 2002). For ethical consumers it is impossible to ensure that all consumers uphold their ideologies, and as such it is inevitable that their consumption behaviour is likely to have some anomalies (Szmigin & Carrigan 2006).

Ethical consumption does however face much criticism being labelled "too broad in definition, too loose in operationalisation, [and] too moralistic in its stance to be anything other than a myth" (Devinney et al. 2010:9). The inability of academics, and policy makers alike, to develop a concrete definition of the concept has led to much subjectivity in its interpretation, as well as uncertain ground on which any substantial empirical conclusions can be drawn. Devinney et al. (2010:10) suggest the development of a new term Consumer Social Responsibility (C_NSR), defined as "the conscious and deliberate choice to make certain consumption choices based on personal and moral beliefs". How this revision makes any attempt at narrowing current definitions of ethical consumption is debatable, and in addition raises many philosophical questions relating to justice. Whose personal and moral beliefs should choices be based upon, how is this decided, and are they *right* moral beliefs to be following?

The same criticisms of those pursuing to 'green-wash' their brands have been levelled at ethical brands too. Critics have argued that the transformative nature of ethical consumption messages have been lost as a result of the adoption of ethical values by marketers to use for their own ends, and as a result focusing on the concept consumer sovereignty, whereby the interests of consumers are placed above those of the producers (Shaw & Riach 2011). Criticisms levelled at initiatives such as the Fair Trade movement have included calls of 'ethical-mainstreaming' signalling the "beginning of the demise", where consumers who pay a premium for such branded products are status-seekers whose bourgeois consumerism is only fuelling the very system it claims to reform (C. J. Thompson & Coskuner-Balli 2007).

Indeed, this constant negotiation and reinforcement of the consumer system is hermeneutically important. In order to navigate the morally hazardous world around us, humans are often forced to consider their ethical nature and engage in a decision-making process. Fennell (2006) sees this moral decision-making process as a way of restoring the ethical equilibrium to the body through the arbitration of cognitive and/or physiological processes. Ethical decision-making can be defined as "the process of identifying a problem , generating alternatives, and choosing among them so that the alternatives selected maximise the most important ethical values while also achieving the intended goal" (Guy 1990:157).

3.3.1 *ETHICAL CONSUMER VALUES*

As noted earlier, difficulties in defining what *is ethical* have arisen, and arguably still exist through the lack of consensus amongst the literature. On the whole, the study of ethical consumption has taken place largely under the business discipline, and in trying to establish itself as a solid science, theoretical business-based frameworks have removed elements such as intentionality, and therefore ethics and morality, from their conceptions (Tenbrunsel & Smith-Crowe 2008). Whilst, they note, this may be acceptable (and logical) for the natural sciences where biological cells for example, are unable to make value-judgements, it does not make sense in the study of management – a field, necessarily so, riddled with intentionality and choices (Tenbrunsel & Smith-Crowe 2008). Political philosopher, Michael Sandel talks of the value-neutrality in public discourse and notes that (financial) markets, through their provision of goods and services, enable us to be non-judgemental about values, and at times value-laden products or services. He notes:

> ...economics has cast itself as a value-neutral science when, in fact, it should probably be seen – as it once was – as a branch of moral and political philosophy
>
> (Sandel cited in Aitkenhead 2012)

His discussion highlights the fact that financial markets afford us the opportunity to forgo public debate about the meaning of goods, and in many ways allows us to be non-judgemental about values. With this in mind, it stands to reason that the inclusion of values in the study of ethical choices and decision-making is a logical and indeed necessary one. It is therefore important that this study considers what normative values are in the context of ethical consumption, as to not do so would be "promoting a non-normative morality, suggesting that such considerations are irrelevant to the study of business and ethics" (Tenbrunsel & Smith-Crowe 2008:551).

Over time, a number of methods and models of moral reasoning and ethical decision-making have been theorised and presented. The most prominent include Kohlberg's (1969, 1981, 1984) model of moral development; Gilligan's (1982) ethic of care; Trevino's (1986) person-specific interactionist model; Martin's (1998) framework for ethical conduct; Haidt's (2001) social intuitionist model; Schumann's (2001) moral principles framework; Malloy et al.'s (2000) comprehensive approach to ethical decision-making; and Theerapappisit's (2003) model of Buddhist ethics. The most relevant to this study, and arguably one of the most comprehensive models of ethical decision-making in the literature is Hunt & Vitell's (1986) general theory of marketing ethics (see figure 10 below). The model attempts to explain the decision-making process for situations that have perceived ethical content and in doing so brings together theory from areas of moral philosophy, general behavioural research, probability and situational constraints (Hunt & Vitell 1986). As outlined in the introduction to this thesis, a central aim of this research is to use and interpret this growing body of literature on ethics, which exists largely outside the field of tourism, in a way that is both meaningful to the academy, but has practical relevance to the industry (Fennell 2006). However Fennell (2006) notes that to apply solely ethical decision-making models to a tourism (research) situation, researchers must hold a complete base of knowledge on that situation, and given the closed, restrictive environs of the luxury hotel sector, this would have been a difficult and probably futile task. It is for these reasons that on this occasion moral and ethical decision-making models have not been pursued in this study. Rather, in order to balance the above outlined aspirations, it was seen as important to firstly maintain and strengthen the focus on ethical consumption research in the tourism field, but to do so through the pathway of brand loyalty (discussed in chapter 2). Since consumers express their consumer values (including sustainability) through loyalty, this will thereby present industry with a set of tangible and pragmatic research outcomes.

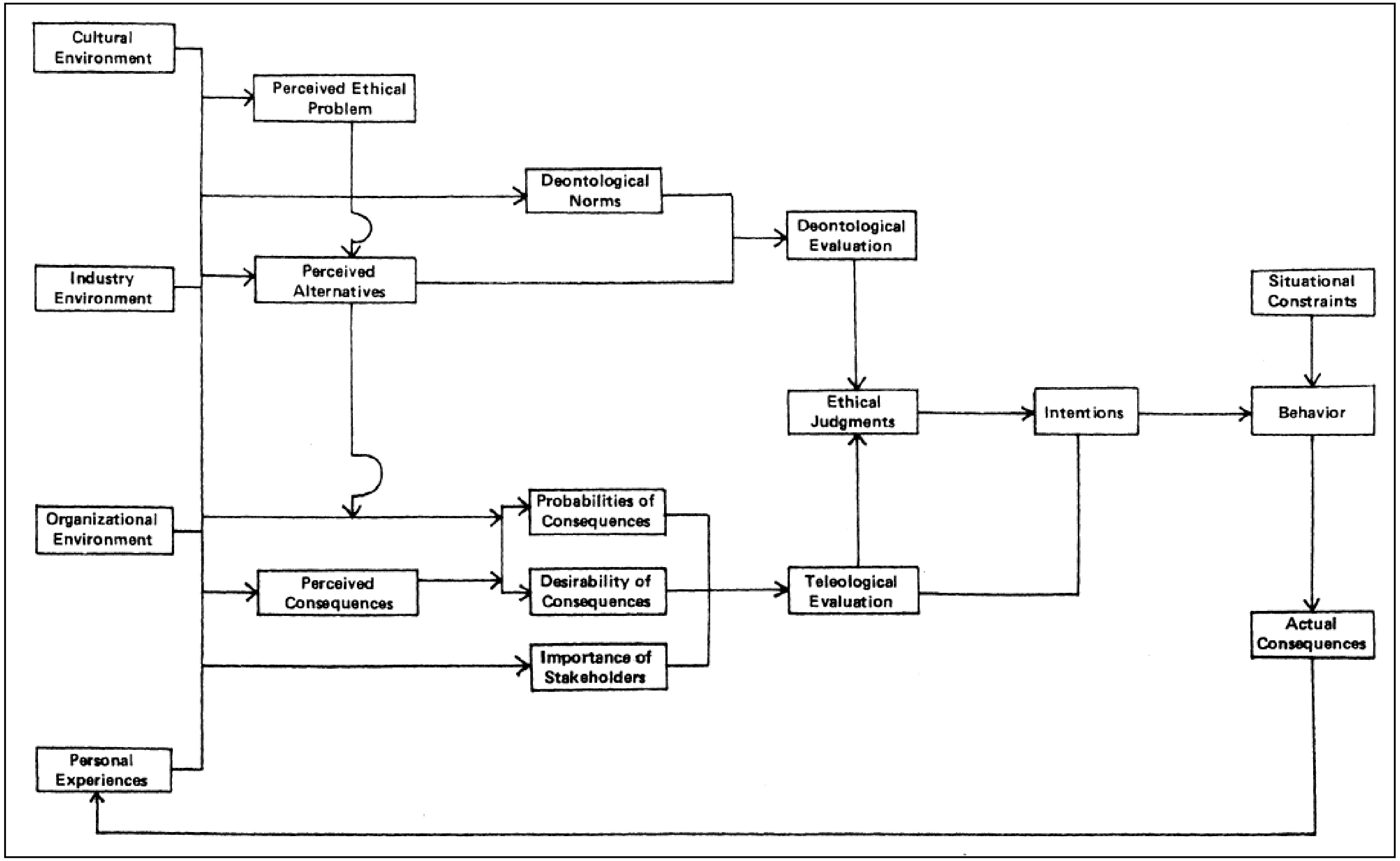


Figure 10 - General theory of marketing ethics (Hunt and Vitell 1986: 8)

In a tourism setting, ethical consumption pays particular attention to developmental aspects of communities. It is a theme predominantly developed in the West “in response to global economic concerns about the impact of mass tourism, and is an attempt to manage tourism for the benefit of all stakeholders” (Weeden 2005). In a tourism context, ethical consumption, whilst sharing the same three central tenets of sustainable tourism, that is to achieve socio-cultural, economic and environmental equity (Weeden 2002), various forms of sustainable tourism, such as eco-tourism, responsible tourism or community tourism may all operate under different ethical standpoints (Fennell & Malloy 1999). Tourism presents a set of unique ethical considerations compared to other industries where Walle (1995) notes firstly, the term ‘progress’ is not a central or unifying term amongst tourism theory and ethics; second, that the product that tourism offers may be undermined or destroyed by initiatives undertaken by the industry; and third, that the needs of all tourism stakeholders must be addressed when developing policy and strategy (see table 1 below). He calls for tourism scholars to become more cognisant of work undertaken on ethics and corporate responsibility in a more general sense, and in doing so avail themselves with better ways of negotiating and communicating with a variety of people (A. Walle 1995). Over 10 years later, Fennell (2006) maintained this call for tourism scholars to embrace true interdisciplinarity in their research in relation to tourism ethics, where thoughts and ideas should be coordinated by a higher level concept.

Table 1 - Special ethical considerations for tourism (Walle 1995: 266)

Tourism Perspective	Social Obligation	Social Responsibility	Social Responsiveness
'Progress' is not inevitable nor inherently beneficial	Since the concept of 'progress' is not inevitable or inevitable, we should not place an over reliance upon it in our strategies and tactics.	Tourism has a responsibility to encourage development which meshes with the local environment and culture, not in accordance with a universal concept of 'progress'.	Since progress leads to concomitant changes to culture and the environment, tourism strategy should be appropriate and mitigate its impact.
Tourism can be undermined by pressures of the industry	Change wrought by tourism might undercut the industry. Such potentials should be prevented and mitigated when doing so is a good tactic.	Tourism causes negative impacts and pressures on people and the environment which should be mitigated.	The industry has both practical and ethical reasons to respond to impacts on the environment and local people.
All relevant stakeholders need to be considered when strategies are forged	Government regulation and loan conditions might demand responding to the needs of all relevant stakeholders.	Tourism should respond to the needs of various stakeholders which are impacted on by the industry.	The industry should anticipate future impacts from various sources and respond in proactive ways.

In an attempt to synthesise the material on tourism ethics in a more holistic fashion, Fennell (2006:340) presents a framework of tourism ethics (see figure 11 below)

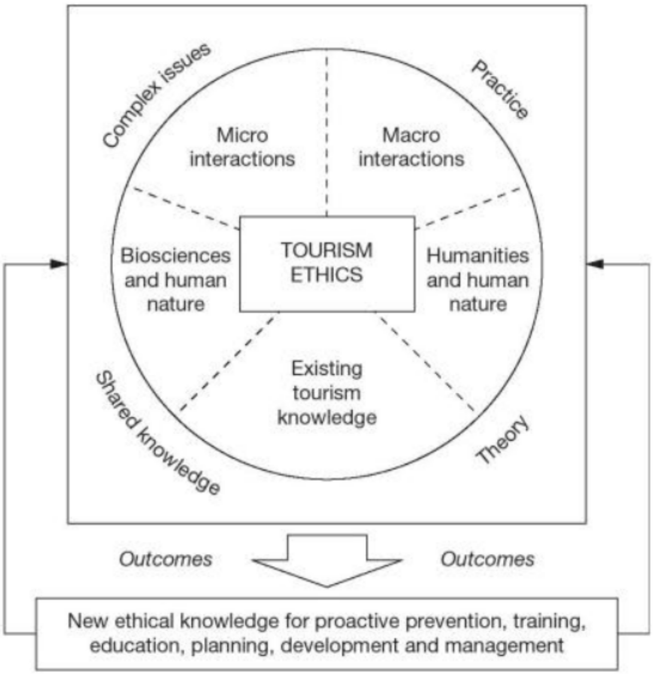


Figure 11 - Framework for tourism ethics (Fennell 2006: 340)

Fennell's framework takes into account the broad, complex and multi-faceted problems of tourism (represented by the outer square), while the inner circular realm presents five main areas which are said to cover the main aspects of ethics and tourism from both the perspective of industry and tourism research. The resulting rectangle at the bottom represents the new ethical knowledge that emerges from research and investigations which take account of the preceding elements.

3.4 SUMMARY

As a backdrop to discussing and understanding the role of sustainability, ethical consumption and the philosophical viewpoints which underpin it were presented in this chapter. Ethics has historically been presented under the two overarching categories of teleological and deontological philosophies. Whilst the contrasting positions of these 'theories of the good' with 'theories of the right' provide fertile ground for understanding consumer behaviour, further work is needed to uncover the pervasiveness of consumer who behave according to their own personal values, independent of the situational context in which they find themselves.

The socially and politically constructed concept of sustainability was discussed, along with the economic, socio-cultural and ecological challenges it poses when placed in the development context. Peattie & Crane (2005) claim there to be a proven lack of understanding about sustainability among consumers, and one might argue that this has arisen from the proliferation of jargon, schemes, labels and marketing paraphernalia. Bramwell & Lane (1993:4) note a ‘limousine environmentalism’ common in the USA “where lip service masks a lack of positive actions” - this sentiment is echoed by many others (Butler 1999; Mowforth & Munt 2003; Sharpley 2000). This type of evidence ratifies suggestions that consumer value of sustainability is still only skin-deep, and that further investigations are needed in order to better understand consumer motivations around brand involvement with sustainable brands. Chapter 4 presents a more detailed discussion of consumer values and their formation, as well as extending this discussion on ethics to consider it role in consumer values.

4 CONSUMER VALUES AND THE ROLE OF ETHICS IN TRAVEL DECISIONS

Forming the crux of this thesis, the concept of consumer value is one which deserves primary focus and investigation. The broader field of consumer behaviour, attitudes and their formation form the key focus of this chapter. Although of interest to researchers in the fields of psychology (Reich & Adcock 1976) and marketing (Holbrook 1996), the nature of values and their differing typologies and constructs is an area which has only undergone continual and thorough investigation in the past decade or so. Ongoing debate and little consensus between practitioners regarding the concept acts as a catalysts for further exploration of the construct (Woodall 2003). Indeed, the recognition of the importance of moral values in influencing human behaviour, and the relative lack of investigation in the realm of consumer behaviour research (Bagozzi et al. 2002) provides additional impetus for this research project.

This chapter will discuss the concept of consumer value, commencing with differentiating values from attitudes, examining Attitude Theory and subsequently addresses how values are formed. Importantly, discussion will focus on the causality between values and behaviour and the directionality of influence. The various typologies and dimensionalities of contemporary consumer values literature will then be discussed, as well as highlighting externalities to consumer value and value detractors. Finally and most importantly, the consumer value literature will be illuminated within the tourism and hospitality setting with particular attention paid to the role of ethics in consumer values.

4.1 ATTITUDE THEORY AND VALUES FORMATION

Attitude formation has a long and complex theoretical history, and as far back as 1935, was seen to be the "most distinctive and indispensable concept….in social psychology" (Allport 1935: 198). The discourses on attitude theories may well constitute a thesis in themselves, yet still the importance of providing a brief discussion here on some of the key points is imperative to aid a clearer and more accurate understanding of the content and structure of human values.

Most researchers seem to concur that an attitude is "a state of readiness, a tendency to respond in a certain manner when confronted with certain stimuli" (Oppenheim 1992). Broadly, an attitude is the tendency to think, feel, or act positively or negatively toward objects in our environment (Banaji & Heiphetz 2010), and similarly, others refer to attitudes as an "individual predisposition" (Antonides & van Raaij, 1998: 197). All of these definitions seemingly refer to external influencing stimuli related to oneself. Attitudes shape our identities, guide our actions and influence how we see other people (Fazio & Roskos-Ewoldsen 2005), and as such, it would be difficult to overstate their significance both in academic research, as well as their implications on consumer behaviour.

Literature suggests that attitudes consist of three components – the cognitive component (a reinforcement of beliefs); the affective component (emotions or feelings towards an object); and the behavioural component (particular behavioural intentions towards an object) (Banaji & Heiphetz 2010; Oppenheim 1992). It is the synchronisation of these components that might allow us to predict people's behaviour towards certain objects or situations (Bernstein et al. 2000). So what of the purpose of attitudes? Considerable research attention has been devoted to investigating the function of attitudes (see for example Smith 1956; Shavitt 1989), and Stainton-Rodgers (2011) notes four main functions of attitudes which have emerged from the research. First, attitudes have been found to serve what might be said to be their primary function of objective appraisal, whereby attitudes function as schemas, bringing together different elements into a connected whole. Second, attitudes have an instrumental function, which according to Stainton-Rodgers (2011: 233) "helps steer behaviour in functional ways". Third, expressing attitudes allows a person to identify with, and be identified by, others who share similar values to theirs, through the elucidation of values inherent in one's own attitudes. Finally, Rodgers notes that attitudes function as a means of maintaining one's self-esteem by adopting particular attitudes to distance themselves from some people, and align themselves more closely with others. It is important to note that attitudes will generally serve a number of different functions simultaneously, and that the salience of these functions will be different between people (Shavitt 1989).

The directional influences between attitudes and behaviours are an important consideration, as these give bearing on how we understand attitude formation, as well as subsequent routes to attitude change. There are several factors which can be linked to consistency between behaviour with the cognitive and affective components of attitude (Bernstein et al. 2000). First, when individuals see an attitude as being important and relevant to their lives, their behaviours are more likely to be consistent with their beliefs and emotions toward a subject. Holt et al. (2012) note that attitude-behaviour consistency increases when one consciously thinks about one's attitudes before acting. That is, a greater awareness of our attitudes is likely to have a greater influence on our behaviour. Second, consistency is more likely to be achieved when the behavioural component of an attitude is in line with subjective norms (or perception of how others expect us to act). Third, and finally, the degree of perceived control an individual has over a given behaviour will likely give rise to attitude-consistent behaviours (Bernstein et al. 2000). Seminal theories including Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour attempt to explain and link these conditions, where our intention to engage in a behaviour is strongest when we have a positive attitude toward the behaviour, when subjective norms support our attitudes, and when we believe the behaviour is under our control. (Stainton-Rodgers 2011) points out that in order for attitudes to predict behaviour, five principles should be applied:

1. The behaviour must be at the same level of specificity as the attitude;
2. The attitude must be held with sufficient strength to influence the behaviour;

3. The behaviour tested must be salient to the attitude at the time of testing;
4. There must be sufficient opportunities for people to act in response to the attitude; and
5. Social desirability effects need to be excluded.

(Stainton-Rodgers 2011)

While some of these conditions appear to be somewhat common sense, the exclusion of social desirability effects would seem to be ineffective. Any attempt to make generalisations and draw conclusions about behaviours would be futile, given that individuals would not themselves exclude social desirability in their day-to-day actions. Despite the overwhelming application of Ajzen's theory to a variety of contexts, there are still strong grounds to believe that the relationship between, and influence of attitudes, on behaviour may be a two-way street.

Much of the uncertainty around attitudes and the predictions of behaviour arise from contradictions to the aforementioned conditions. In particular, a prominent study by psychologist LaPiere in the 1930s on prejudicial behaviour, suggested that attitudes are not necessarily predictors of behaviour. Two significant theories give support for the claim that behaviours can influence attitudes. The Theory of Cognitive Dissonance (Festinger & Carlsmith 1959) suggests that people strive for consistency in their cognitions, and when two or more cognitions contradict one another (from carrying out a certain behaviour), an uncomfortable state of tension arises, referred to as 'cognitive dissonance'. In order to restore a balance, or to reduce the level of cognitive dissonance, people are likely to change one of their cognitions, or add new cognitions. That is, their attitude is likely to change to be more in line with the behaviour carried out. Behaviour that is *inconsistent* with one's attitude is referred to as counter-attitudinal behaviour, and produces cognitive dissonance (if we perceive our actions were freely chosen, and not coerced) (Holt et al. 2012). It is this counter-attitudinal behaviour which produces attitude change.

Similarly, Bem's (1972) Self-Perception Theory asserts that we make inferences about our own attitudes by observing how we behave (Holt et al. 2012). In other words, simple observations of how we may have acted infer how we must have felt in order to have behaved in that fashion in the first instance (Holt et al. 2012). While the Self-Perception Theory is better suited to making predictions under certain conditions (for example, when people either have no prior attitude toward an object or when the discrepancy between their attitude and behaviour is slight), and the Theory of Cognitive Dissonance is better suited for predictions under others (for example, when attitudes are strong and clearly defined and the inconsistency between attitudes and behaviours is larger and more important to a person's self-concept) (Bernstein et al. 2000). The important point to note here is that both theories agree that behaviour can influence attitudes. This is exhibited to some extent in Barr et al.'s (2010) study on sustainability practices when on holiday, which found that whilst most people are comfortable practicing and participating in a range of environmental behaviours around the home (suggesting that their attitudes towards doing so are congruent with such behaviours), the transference of such behaviours to tourism contexts is problematic. This might suggest that a degree of 'cognitive dissonance' exists between attitudes and behaviours towards sustainable practices whilst on holiday, and that individuals' self-perception of their own behaviours is different while they are on holiday compared to when they are at home.

However the consensus on the relationship of attitudes to values seems to be somewhat blurred. Some see values, along with goals and motives, as a sub-species of attitudes (Bagozzi et al. 2002), while others see values as the key influencers of attitudes and subsequent opinions (Oppenheim 1992). In their theory on attitudes and their predictive power on behaviour, Ajzen & Fishbein (1980) present the Theory of Reasoned Action, which is based, rather importantly, on the assumption that human beings are rational thinkers "and make systematic use of the information available to them" (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980: 5). They argue that, generally speaking, humans give thought to the implications of their actions before engaging in a given behaviour, hence the theory's title. It is this core assumption that has caused debate around the predictive validity of the model, as numerous examples can be provided demonstrating the inherent *irrational* nature of human beings. Saul (1995: 4) for one, talks of the 'narrow' and 'unthinking' world of economic theory (one which is based primarily on the same assumption of behavioural rationalism), which, he says, has been unsuccessful at making civilization better – not so much through the lack of take-up by policy-makers, but through the fact that the advice has proven to be poor in practice (Fennell 2006). In contrast to the rationalist model put forward by Ajzen and Fishbein, Oppenheim (1992) emphasises a more complex approach to the attitude-value relationship, suggesting that linear models of measurement provide no proof of model fit, and therefore may not be entirely appropriate forms of measurement.

4.2 VALUES – AN AXIOLOGICAL PHILOSOPHY

The formation of values takes its historical praxis from the philosophical line of enquiry of axiology (Perry 1954; Brightman 1967; Frankena 1962; Holbrook 1999). Concerned primarily with the *theory of value* (Hartman 1967), axiology is of particular relevance to the fields of marketing and consumer research, although apparently a field which is largely ignored by marketing scholars (Holbrook 1999). It is generally acknowledged, however, that values do differ from attitudes, and as such have considerable influences on the decisions we make in daily life. Historical insights into the conceptualization of value-related choices can be drawn from 18th century utilitarian discourses on the balancing of ‘pleasure’ and ‘pain’ (Woodall 2003), where pleasure and pain act as determinants as to whether or not individuals engage in certain activities, and whether or not those activities are inherently ‘good’ or ‘bad’ (see section 3.1 for discussion). However, these insights were limited in terms of telling us *how* value-related choices might be made. In the middle of the 20th century, Kluckholn (1951) defined a value as a “conception, explicit or implicit…of the desirable, which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action”. Frondizi (1971) explored the role that object qualities play in our decision-making processes and identifies consumers seeking out product and service attributes in order to bring about the best advantage to their lives. Stemming from this, Woodall (2003: 21) describes values as a “personal perception of advantage arising out of a customer’s association with an organisation’s offering”. He notes that ‘use value’ and 'exchange value' have been found to inform what, for most of us, the concept of value appears to mean.

Pivotal to the development of research in this area is Rokeach (1973: 5) definition of value as "an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state experience". This definition hails from the psychology literature, but has also had influences on consumer behaviour and marketing research. Its reference to either personal *or* social preferences is important to this study given the psycho-social characteristics of luxury hotel guests (see chapter 2). By way of extending this definition, (Schwartz & Bilsky 1987: 551) describe values as "concepts or beliefs [that] pertain to desirable end-states or behaviours, transcend specific situations, guide selection or evaluation of behaviour and events, and are ordered by relativistic importance". It is this relativistic implication of consumer value which is important to the interpretation of the luxury concept discussed in Chapter 2, and which highlights the subjective nature of both terms. Later definitions seem to draw from those already discussed where Holbrook (1999: 5) refers to consumer value as an "interactive, relativistic preference experience".

4.3 VALUE TYPOLOGIES AND DIMENSIONALITIES

As alluded to earlier, the development of values literature has taken shape over the past five decades or so. Table 2 below provides the results of a meta-analysis of a selection of studies on values in the literature. As noted earlier, the study of values has been undertaken in various disciplines including psychology and marketing, and to a more limited extent in tourism. Given the limited exploration of values in the tourism discipline, the studies presented in the table below, are not strictly related to travel and/or tourism, but are representative of a range of disciplines and subject areas from which this thesis draws upon, and in which values studies have taken place. The most widely applied theories, and ones which are of most relevance to the context of this study are those proposed by Rokeach (1973), Kahle (1983), Schwartz (1994a) and Holbrook (1999), and will be discussed in more detail in the sections following. Schools of values research appear to have adopted one or other of these key theories. Figure 12 at the end of the meta-analysis presents an evolutionary representation of the studies below and their links to the major theories they adopted.

As can be seen from the table below, the majority of studies attempt to measure value as a multi-dimensional construct, particularly studies carried out in the past decade or so. This situation is perhaps indicative of the increasing maturity of study in this area, but also highlights the lack of research undertaken in the area of values. Boksberger & Melsen (2011: 233) conducted a review of values literature in the context of the services industry and concluded that “the perceived value of services is a combined assessment of consumers’ perception of benefits and sacrifices, including quality and price, for a variety of perceived value dimensions with original behavioural intentions and customer satisfaction playing a role in overall evaluation”. They note the importance for future research to investigate the interaction of perceived value with core marketing constructs, and the examination of mediating factors in determining a holistic understanding of perceived value. As such, this study addresses both of these points by incorporating the concept of consumer (perceived) values with the branding model the Psychological Continuum Model (PCM – see section 2.6.1), as well as incorporating sustainability as an additional determinant of perceived value, thereby providing a much broader understanding of the values construct.

Table 2 - Meta-analysis of literature examining studies of values

Author(s)	Study Context	Dimensions	Model/Theory Upon Which Research was Based
Vinson et al. (1977)	Examination of values and consumer behaviour in relation to brand choice, product class and product attributes.	Exciting Life Equality Self-Respect Forgiving Intellectual Logical	Bither & Miller (1969)
Sheth et al. (1991)	An examination of consumption values used as predictors as to why people do or do not smoke.	Functional Value Conditional Value Social Value Emotional Value Epistemic Value	n/a
Richins (1994)	Examination of the public and private meanings of possession and how value is attributable to possessions through the understanding of meaning.	Utilitarian Enjoyment Representations of Interpersonal Ties Identity & Self-Expression Financial Aspects Appearance Related	Holbrook (1994)
Schwartz (1994)	A theory of universal aspects in the structure and content of human values	Universalism Benevolence Conformity/Tradition Security Power Achievement Hedonism Stimulation Self-Direction	Rokeach (1973)
Karp (1996)	Values and their effect on pro-environmental behaviour.	Schwartz's (1992) Scale of Values (consisting of 56 items)	Schwartz (1992)

de Ruyter et al. (1997)	Value-based approach for measurement of service quality in the hotel sector.	Emotional Practical Logical	Hartman (1967)
Holbrook (1999)	Examination of values as a relativistic, interactive preference experience.	Efficiency Play Excellence Aesthetics Status Ethics Esteem Spirituality	Hilliard (1950)
Mattila (1999)	Examination of business travellers evaluations of luxury hotel services	Sense of belonging Warm relationships with others Self-fulfilment Being well respected Fun/enjoyment Security Self-respect A sense of accomplishment Excitement	Kahle (1983)
Oh (1999)	Examination of service quality, satisfaction and customer value in the hotel industry.	Value received (uni-dimensional construct)	Woodruff (1997)
Schultz & Zelezny (1999)	A multinational study on the relationship between values and environmental attitudes.	Self-direction Stimulation Achievement Hedonism Security Benevolence Universalism Conformity Power Tradition	Schwartz (1992)
Allen (2001)	Details a method for uncovering the direct and indirect influences of human values on	Self-direction Achievement	Rokeach (1983)

	consumer purchase decisions.	Hedonism Security Benevolence Universalism Conformity Power	
Sweeney & Soutar (2001)	Development of perceived value scale in retail purchase context.	Emotional Value Social Value (enhancement of social self-concept) Price Value Quality Value	Scale developed from data collected in focus groups.
Kim et al. (2002)	Examination of the relationship of consumer values, needs and purchase behaviour in two Asian apparel retail markets.	Sense of belonging Warm relationships with others Self-fulfilment Being well respected Fun/enjoyment Security Self-respect A sense of accomplishment Excitement	Kahle (1983)
Petrick (2002)	Development of a multi-dimensional scale for measurement of perceived value in a tourism and leisure context.	Perceived Value of a Service: Behavioural Price Monetary Price Emotional Response Quality Reputation	Zeithaml (1988)
Petrick & Backman (2002)	Use of values as predictors of golfer's intention to revisit	Acquisition Value Transaction Value	Grewal et al. (1998)
Thøgersen (2002)	Study to examine the emergence of a sustainable consumption pattern that is influenced by individual value priorities.	Social power, Authority, Wealth, Power, Successful, Ambitious, Influential, Achievement, Pleasure, Enjoy Life, Hedonism, Protecting the Environment, A world of beauty, Unity with Nature, Social Justice, Equality, Universalism, Helpful, Honest, Responsible, Benevolence.	Schwartz & Bilsky (1990); Schwartz & Bilsky (1987)
Woodall (2003)	Examination of temporal aspects of value.	Exchange Value	n/a

		Intrinsic Value Use Value Utilitarian Value	
Al-Sabbahy et al. (2004)	Examination of perceived value in the context of hotels, hospitality services and restaurants.	Acquisition Value Transaction Value	Grewal, Monroe, and Krishnan (1998)
Duman & Mattila (2005)	Demonstrates the role of selected affective factors (i.e., hedonics, control and novelty) on value in the context of cruise vacation experiences.	Novelty Control Hedonics	Otto (1997); Otto & Ritchie (1995)
Lin et al. (2005)	Conceptualisation of customer perceived value, in the context of eTailing.	Monetary sacrifice Web-site design Fulfilment/reliability Security/privacy Customer service	Zeithaml et al. (2000)
Lindeman & Verkasalo (2005)	Examination of the reliability and validity of the Short Schwartz's Value Survey (SSVS)	Self-direction Stimulation Achievement Hedonism Security Benevolence Universalism Conformity Power Tradition	Schwartz (1994)
Shaw et al. (2005)	Exploration of values pertinent to ethical consumers in decision making and the nature of their influence in grocery consumption contexts.	Self-direction Stimulation Achievement Hedonism Security Benevolence Universalism Conformity Power	Schwartz (1994)

		Tradition	
Tsai (2005)	Exploration of antecedents and consequence of personal orientation towards luxury-brand consumption.	Self-directed pleasure Self-gift giving Congruity with internal self Quality Assurance	Theoretically founded Personal Orientation towards Luxury-Brand Consumption (PO-LBC) model, developed by author.
Watkins (2005)	Examination of LOV in context of Japanese tourists.	Fun and enjoyment in life Warm relationships with others Sense of accomplishment Self-fulfilment Security Self-respect Being well respected Excitement Sense of belonging	Kahle (1983)
Gallarza & Gilsaura (2006)	Investigation of the dimensionality of consumer value in a travel-related context, and exploration of the relations between consumers' perceptual constructs such as perceived value, satisfaction and loyalty.	Efficiency Service Quality Social Value Play Aesthetics Time & Effort Spent	Holbrook (1999)
Sanchez et al. (2006)	Measurement of overall perceived value of a purchase, where the tourist evaluates both consumption experience and the purchase experience.	Functional Value of Travel Agency (Installations incl. aesthetics and appearance) Functional Value of Personnel at Travel Agency (professionalism) Functional Value (Quality of tourism package) Functional Value (Price) Emotional Value Social Value	Sweeney & Soutar (2001)
Sparks et al. (2007)	Examination of customer-derived value in the timeshare industry.	Convenience Value Location Value Relaxation Value Social Value	Holbrook (1999)

		Fun and Enjoyment Value	
Sparks et al. (2008)	Investigation of the value that consumers derive from ownership of timeshare holiday products.	Relaxation Gift Status Quality Product Flexibility Fun New Experience Financial Worth	Holbrook (1999) Woodall (2003)
Mulyanegara & Tsarenko (2009)	Influences of values and personality on preferences in the Australian fashion market.	Internal Values Interpersonal Values	List of Values (LOV) Kahle & Kennedy (1989)
Wiedmann et al. (2009)	Consumption behaviour toward luxury goods.	**Financial Value** Price Value **Functional Value** Usability Value Quality Value Uniqueness Value **Individual Value** Self-Identity Value Hedonic Value Materialistic Value **Social Value** Conspicuousness Value Prestige Value	Hirschman & Holbrook (1982)
Williams & Soutar (2009)	Examination of relationships between value, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions in an adventure tourism context.	Functional Value Value-for-Money Emotional Value Social Value Novelty Value	Sweeney & Soutar (2001)
Mehmetoglu et al. (2010)	Tourism behaviour based on value-based segmentation of a (Norwegian) population.	**Materialism-idealism** Prefer risk and excitement Missing commodities Impress other with things **Traditionalism-Modernism**	Norwegian Monitor Approach (Dalen 1989)

		Opinions should not be expressed Solve problems in own country first Established ways of doing things are best	
Narasimhan et al. (2010)	Examination of the antecedents of values through the examination of a personal values system from ancient Indian texts.	Existential beliefs Integrity Action Inner Peace	
Durvasula et al. (2011)	Values in the context of the provision of higher education services.	Service Personal Value (SERVPAL): – Service value to peaceful life (SVPL) – Service value providing social recognition (SVSR) – service value related to social integration (SVSI)	Rokeach (1973) and Kahle (1983)
Sparks et al. (2011)	Using the timeshare resort sector as a context, study explores the ways in which consumers, grouped according to their timeshare ownership stage, perceive value.	Convenience Family Financial Value Flexibility Fun (on-site) Activities Gift Giving New Experiences Quality of Accommodation Rest & Relaxation Socialise Status & Esteem	Holbrook (1994)

Weeden (2011)	Responsible tourist behaviour	**Self-transcendence** Universalism Inner-peace/Spirituality Benevolence **Conservation** Conformity Tradition Security **Self-Enhancement** Hedonism Stimulation **Openness to Change** Self-direction Achievement Power	Schwartz (1992)

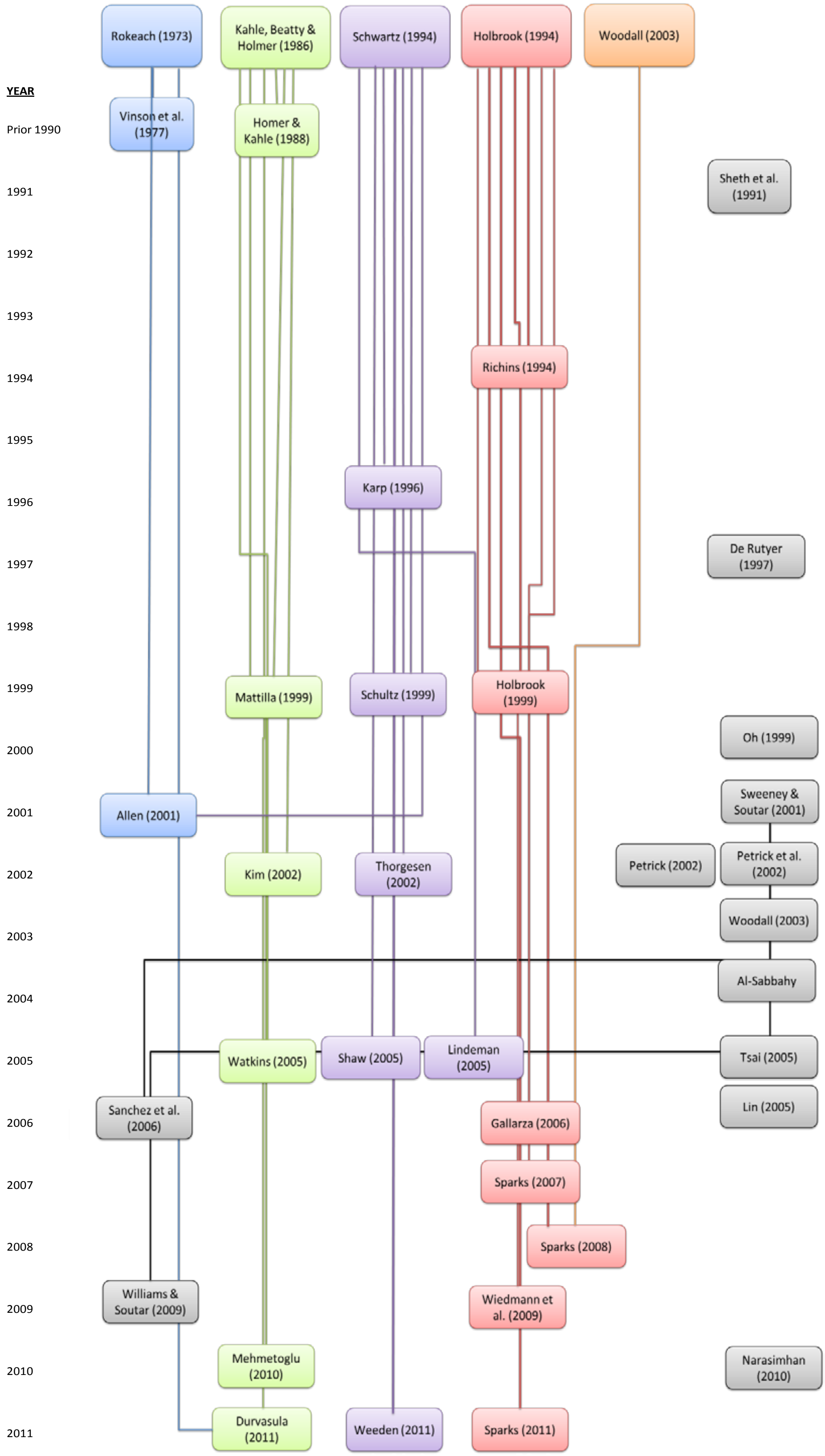


Figure 12 - Meta-analysis of literature examining studies of values

4.3.1 ROKEACH'S VALUE SURVEY

The measurement of consumers' values has been of interest to researchers for some time. One of the most prominent of these measures is Rokeach's (1973) Value Survey [RVS], which offers two distinct groupings of values: instrumental(means) and terminal(end) values. Rokeach defines values as:

> *Enduring prescriptive or proscriptive beliefs that a specific mode of conduct (instrumental value) or end state of existence (terminal value) is preferred to another mode of conduct or end state.*

(cited in Mayton et al. (1994: 3)

Crucially, the RVS argues that once a value is learned it becomes part of a value system, and it is this system that is used by the individual as a guide to behaviour (Follows & Jobber 2000). The RVS uses the 'Values and Lifestyles' [VALS] instrument to test a list of 36 values, split equally between the two aforementioned categories. An important point made by Rokeach relating to the structure of value relations was that, whilst others later (e.g. Schwartz, 1994) went on to develop theories around the relationship of values, it was Rokeach whose intuition followed that "at least some types of values (e.g. moral vs. competence; personal vs. social) might be interdependent because they stand in opposition to one another" (Schwartz, 1994:23).

Although the RVS has been used previously in values research (e.g. Munson (1984), it has also faced a number of criticisms, partly because of the difficulty respondents face in ranking such an exhaustive number of values and the time taken to do so (Homer & Kahle 1988; Madrigal & Kahle 1994), but more importantly because of the relevance, or lack thereof, of the RVS in a consumer context (Madrigal & Khale, 1994). In addition to this, the inability of the RVS to create a 'value system' led Schwartz & Bilsky (1987) to devise such a system. They argued that impacts of values upon attitudes and behaviours could be more effectively measured by creating a values system, rather than by simply ranking a list of individual value items. Indeed Rokeach (1973) himself suggested an approach, but on which he never elaborated, which was to "classify values according to the societal institutions that specialise in maintaining, enhancing and transmitting them" (Schwartz 1994: 20), and it was this approach that acted as the catalyst for Schwartz's Value Survey (see section 4.3.3)

4.3.2 Kahle's List of Values

Originally developed at the University of Michigan, Kahle's List of Values (LOV), was formulated from the theoretical bases of Feather's (1975), Maslow's (1970) and Rokeach's (1973) work on values (Kahle, 1983). The LOV was seen as an alternative to the Values and Lifestyles (VALS) methodology developed by Mitchell (1983), which had largely industry-focused applications, and as such very little in the way of publically available results. The LOV consists of nine values being self-respect, security, warm relationships with others, sense of accomplishment, self-fulfilment, sense of belonging, being well respected, fun and enjoyment in life, and excitement (Kahle et al. 1986). Kahle designed the LOV to address the shortcomings of RVS, and to "provide a more parsimonious measurement of personal values" (Watkins & Gnoth 2005: 226). The value items used in the LOV were derived from Rokeach's (1973) list of terminal values, and since its inception has been applied in various contexts including opinion leadership (Gregory M. Rose et al. 1994), gift-giving (Beatty et al. 1993), conformity of dress (Rose et al., 1994), business travellers' evaluation of luxury hotel services (Mattila 1999), fashion and retail apparel (Kim et al. 2002; Mulyanegara & Tsarenko 2009) advertising preferences (Kennedy et al. 1988), sport participation (Shoham et al. 1998) and the provision of higher education services (Durvasula et al. 2011). The LOV method allows researchers to ask subjects to identify their two most important values, rank the values, or evaluate them through paired comparison or rating (Kahle et al. 1986).

The first major study of the LOV was in America where 2,264 adult Americans were surveyed, with the author suggesting "many hundreds of findings from that research provide evidence of the validity of the LOV" (Kahle et al. 1986: 406). Further research carried out by the same authors concluded that the LOV was: more accurate in predictions of consumer behaviour trends; was more easily administered; and provides fewer opportunities for discrepancies in communication compared to the VALS methodology. Although the aforementioned studies used the LOV, Kahle (1983) noted the need for further cross-cultural studies, and nominated his theory as a viable candidate. In their work studying Japanese tourists' behaviours, Watkins & Gnoth (2005) concluded that the LOV scale was not cross-culturally invariant, and as such was not replicable in international settings. Due to this finding, it is believed that to be able to meaningfully progress research in this area, a more significant contribution to values research is found in Schwartz's Value Survey outlined below.

4.3.3 *SCHWARTZ'S VALUE SURVEY*

Schwartz's Value Survey (SVS) made its first appearance in Schwartz & Bilsky (1987) research into extending the RVS (see section 4.2.1), by exploring the extent to which the facets, domains, exemplary values and structural relations between values represents peoples' use of them. This was done by examining the spatial representations of the relations among values. Essentially this theory attempted to view values as cognitive requirements of three universal requirements: (i) biological needs; (ii) interactional requirements for interpersonal coordination; and (iii) societal demands for group welfare and survival. From this, eight motivational value domains were theorized and tested (enjoyment, security, social power, achievement, self-direction, pro-social, restrictive conformity and maturity).

Schwartz & Bilsky's initial study was based on a sample of Israeli and German subjects, and the findings revealed, somewhat unsurprisingly, that people "discriminate among values according to a priori specifications of goal type, interests served and motivational domains" (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987: 550). An attempt was made by the authors in 1990 to improve the generalisability of the model through cross-cultural replication. A study across five countries resulted in the same value domains as previously studied emerging. Two important conclusions were reached through this study – firstly, that further investigations using values lists (such as Rokeach's) are unlikely to yield any different results than if the eight value dimensions defined here were used; and secondly, that the model presented (re)presents values free from any everyday context, thereby affording them a probable level of significance when investigating human behaviour. Of course, this study called for greater breadth of investigation across more cultures and countries, and in 1994 Schwartz presented results from a study of 44 countries, where the current list of ten values were found to be emergent. Table 3 below describes each of the ten value items found in Schwartz's model, and applied in this study (see Chapter 5).

Table 3 - Schwartz's (1994) value domains

Power: social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources
Achievement: personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards
Hedonism: pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself
Stimulation: excitement, novelty, and challenge in life
Self-Direction: independent thought and action – choosing, creating, exploring
Universalism: understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature
Benevolence: preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact
Tradition: respect for, commitment to, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion impose on the self
Conformity: restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and to violate social expectations and norms
Security: safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self

While Schwartz did not claim this list of values was exhaustive across all cultures, he asserted that it was possible to assign any item from existing lists of values into one of the ten value domains listed above (e.g. Rokeach 1973; Munro 1985; Levy & Guttman 1974). The research continued by not only examining the content of human values, but by also examining the structure of their relations.

Schwartz proposed a structure across two basic bipolar dimensions – Self-Transcendence to Self-Enhancement; and Conservation to Openness to Change. Competing value types emanate from the centre, while those which are more closely related are in close proximity going around the circle. A diagrammatic representation of Schwartz's structure can be seen in Figure 13.

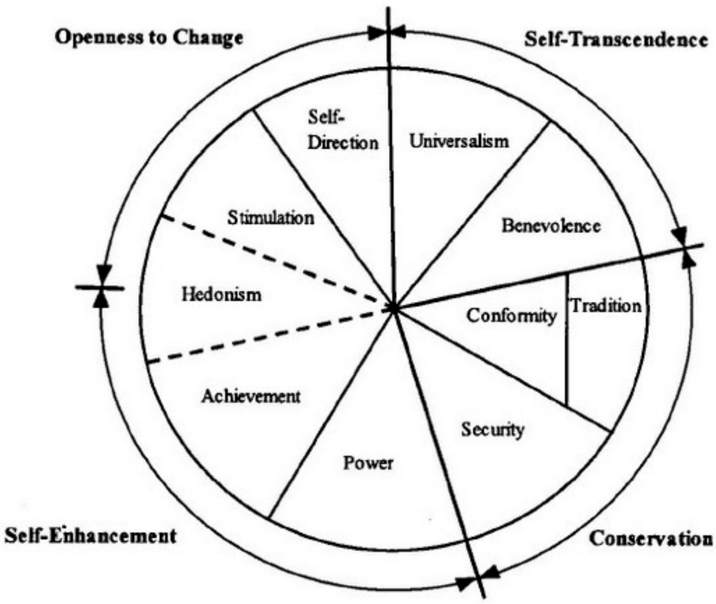


Figure 13 - Theoretical model of relations mong motivational types of values (Schwartz 1994)

A number of shared motivations are emphasised through the examination of the adjacent value types. The shared emphases as outlined by Schwartz (1994) are listed in Table 5. The partitions used by Schwartz are for conceptual convenience, and he notes that the divisions represent decisions about where one fuzzy set (of motivations) ends and another begins. He goes on to note that the motivational differences between value types are continuous rather than discreet, and this is evidenced by the dotted lines either side of the Hedonism domain, indicating it's relation to both Achievement and Stimulation. Additionally, the location of

Tradition outside Conformity is indicative of the single motivational goal these values share – that of subordination of self in favour of socially imposed expectations.

As noted earlier, Schwartz did not make outright claims for the universality of all ten value domains, but did suggest near universality for the four higher order value types and their organisation into a two dimensional structure depicted above. Whilst it is not within the remit of this research to examine the outright cross-cultural replicability of the ten value items, it does seem that this model would be appropriate to use in other management and marketing contexts, such as on the one at hand, within a single national context.

Table 4 - Values structure and relationship between value domains (adapted from Schwartz 1994)

(a) power and achievement – both emphasise social superiority and esteem;

(b) achievement and hedonism – both focus on self-centred satisfaction;

(c) hedonism and stimulation – both entail a desire for affectively pleasant arousal;

(d) stimulation and self-direction – both involve intrinsic interest in novelty and mastery;

(e) self-direction and universalism – both express reliance upon one’s own judgment and comfort with the diversity of existence;

(f) universalism and benevolence—both are concerned with enhancement of others and transcendence of selfish interests;

(g) benevolence and conformity—both call for normative behaviour that promotes close relationships;

(h) benevolence and tradition—both promote devotion to one's in-group;

(i) conformity and tradition—both entail subordination of self in favour of socially imposed expectations;

(j) tradition and security—both stress preserving existing social arrangements that give certainty to life;

(k) conformity and security—both emphasize protection of order and harmony in relations;

(l) security and power—both stress avoiding or overcoming the threat of uncertainties by controlling relationships and resources.

However, when Schwartz's model was considered in context specific scenarios the value-system structure and relationships were challenged. Work by Weeden (2011) examining responsible tourism and ethical consumption concluded that the structure of relationships proposed by Schwartz was not representative of this particular group of consumers. Figure 14 depicts the revised model.

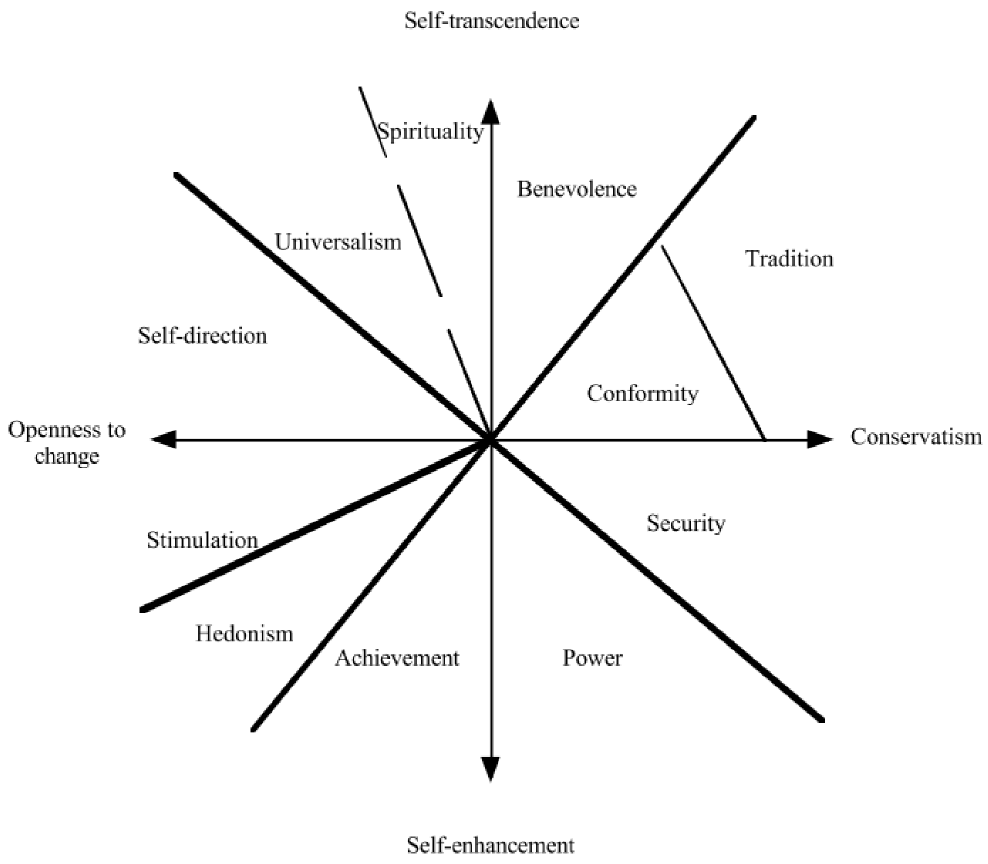


Figure 14 - Values structure for responsible tourists (Weeden 2011)

The revised model, based upon her findings from interviewing ethical consumers, suggested that Schwartz's model be altered to position Power, Achievement and Self-Direction in the Openness to Change dimension, while Universalism, Spirituality and Benevolence value constructs remain within the Self-Transcendence dimension. Additionally, the Self-Enhancement dimension was altered to include only the value constructs of Stimulation and Hedonism, while Conformity, Tradition and Security continue to make up the Conservatism domain. In particular, Weeden (2011) notes the fundamental importance of changes to self-direction, power and achievement, in the context of ethical consumers, who have very different interpretations to that of Schwartz's initial conception of these items. So, whilst in a traditional setting Schwartz's suggested relationships seem plausible, it is difficult to anticipate what might occur to either the original typology, or Weeden's revised model, when placed in the context of luxury consumers. Schwartz & Bilsky (1990) themselves advocate the need for context specific investigations to develop, refine and gain theoretical clarity into the structure of values. Weeden (2011) echoes this call, highlighting the need for further contextual studies on values within the domain of tourist behaviour, as well as incorporating aspects of ethical consumption, responsible tourism and a greater focus (amongst others) on achievement and power values. Undoubtedly the examination of values amongst luxury hotel guests, an area which is yet to be investigated, will provide both interesting and useful insights for the continual development of our understanding of the values construct, as well as build a platform of knowledge to aid industry decision-making processes and stratagems.

4.3.4 HOLBROOK'S VALUE TYPOLOGY

Holbrook (1999) offers one of a few consumer value typologies (see Table 5), where three dichotomies are presented as a 2x2x2 cross-classification. He defines consumer value as an "interactive, relativistic, preference experience" where the relationship of consumers to products (subjects to objects) operates relativistically (that is depending on comparisons made, between people and among situations) in order to determine preferences that form the crux of the consumption experience.

Table 5 - A typology of consumer value (Holbrook 1999: 12)

		Extrinsic	*Intrinsic*
Self-oriented	Active	EFFICIENCY (Convenience)	PLAY (Fun)
	Reactive	EXCELLENCE (Quality)	AESTHETICS (Beauty)
Other-oriented	Active	STATUS (Success, Impression Management)	ETHICS (Virtue, Justice, Morality)
	Reactive	ESTEEM (Reputation, Materialism, Possessions)	SPIRITUALITY (Faith, Ecstasy, Sacredness, Magic)

Holbrook explains the difference between extrinsic and intrinsic value as the former pertaining to its functional or utilitarian instrumentality where it might serve as a means to accomplishing some further purpose; and the later occurring when a consumption experience is appreciated as an end in itself. Of importance though is the distinction where axiologists (e.g. Lewis 1946: 414; Abbott 1955: 40) all agree that intrinsic value can only be derived from a consumption experience rather than a specific object. This distinction bears particular importance when the context of this present study is considered, where hotels, especially luxury ones, are frequently patronised due to their intrinsic experiential value.

A further distinction in Holbrook's Value Typology is made between self-oriented and other-oriented value. Self-oriented value defines a consumption experience which is undertaken selfishly or prudently – for one's own sake; other-oriented value however is consumption which looks beyond the self, and is valued for the sake of the 'other' or for the effect it might have on some third party. The third component of the typology to be discussed is that of active versus reactive value, where value is considered to be active when "it entails some physical or mental manipulation of some tangible or intangible product" (pg. 11). It refers to things being done by a consumer to, or with a product. Conversely, reactive value is obtained from apprehending, appreciating or admiring some object – that is, things done by the product or in conjunction with the consumer in a given consumption experience.

Holbrook refers to each of the dimensions (Extrinsic/Intrinsic and Self-Oriented/Other-Oriented) as potentially continuous dimensions, with the possibility of various gradations in between. By presenting the key dimensions in a tabulated format, we are able to present eight logically distinct types of values. The value types seen to be of *most* relevance to this study are shaded in grey below.

Table 6 - A typology of consumer values (Holbrook 1999: 12)

		Extrinsic	*Intrinsic*
Self-oriented	Active	EFFICIENCY (Convenience)	PLAY (Fun)
	Reactive	EXCELLENCE (Quality)	AESTHETICS (Beauty)
Other-oriented	Active	STATUS (Success, Impression Management)	ETHICS (Virtue, Justice, Morality)
	Reactive	ESTEEM (Reputation, Materialism, Possessions)	SPIRITUALITY (Faith, Ecstasy, Sacredness, Magic)

4.3.5 WOODALL'S VALUES

Woodall (2003) offers a five-pronged definition where the dimensions of Marketing Value, Sales Value, Derived Value, Net Value and Rational Value are combined under the umbrella of Aggregate Value. Alongside this, temporal typologies of consumer value are also discussed and noted that different extents of customer value apply from preliminary search/anticipation through to final disposition (Woodall, 2003). Woodall (2003) talks of the combination of 'Desired' and 'Expected' value combining to relate to the consumer *pre-purchase* position and implies that consumers have preconceptions before engaging in the consumption act; second, 'Transaction', 'Acquisition' and 'Exchange' value combine to imply a state of value at the real-time consumption point; and finally, 'delivered', 'Received', 'Use' and 'Post-purchase' value all imply an after-use/experience value domain.

Interacting with these definitional dimensions, are four influencing factors identified by Woodall (2003): the customer (e.g., demographics, experience); consumption (e.g., situational); product (e.g., recognised attributes); and market (e.g., competitors). These temporal aspects are echoed by Al-Sabbahy et al. (2004) who, although discussed in an economic sense (i.e. value for money), suggest that the proposition of perceived value can influence customer purchase intentions as well as post-purchase behaviour such as their intention to recommend and return. In a tourism context, the ambiguity of value constructs has been noted and attributed largely to the number and variety of users of the term (Murphy et al. 2000). This ambiguity and indeed subjectivity found resonance with Sanchez et al. (2006) who note that it varies between customers, cultures and at different times. In their research into perceived value, Duman & Mattila (2005) note that hedonics are directly and positively linked to greater levels of perceived value, though it is recognized that this is not surprising given that human behaviour is intrinsically pleasure-seeking (Hirschman & Holbrook 1982).

4.4 The Role of Values in Influencing Behaviour

One aspect which has received relatively little attention in the academic literature is that of the causal relationship between behaviour and value formation. It is argued that major life incidents, such as marriage, births and deaths can influence the way humans behave, in turn influencing their value orientations.

In their study concerning the prediction of environmental attitudes, Schultz & Zelezny (1999) found support for values as influencers of attitudes. Their study applied Schwartz's (1994) Universal Values Scale to two already developed theories being the New Environmental Paradigm (NEP) (Dunlap et al. 2000) and (Thompson & Barton 1994) ecocentrism - anthropocentricism scale.

Anthropocentric ideas are those concerned with *human* benefits or goals, where environmental protection is seen to be important because of the long term impact it might have on other people. Conversely, ecocentric views are those attitudes which centre upon “the inherent value of the natural environment” (Schultz & Zelezny 1999: 255). They talk of the inseparability of humans from nature, and the fact that conservation is important because humans are *part* of nature. From this, an interesting finding was noted where, Schwartz’s (1994) Self-Enhancement value of ‘Power’ was found to be negatively related to eco-centrism, and positively related to anthropocentricism. Power, as Schwartz defined it, related not only to social status and prestige, but also to the value placed on control or dominance over people and resources. Its link to the anthropocentric ideals defined above might be explained through a belief that individual effort and behaviour might result in an ability to preserve (control) natural environmental resources.

It is thought that values influence behaviours through their influence on lower-order attitudes and beliefs (Homer & Khale, 1988). In their work on the influence of values on ethical decision making in an organisational context, Fritzsche & Oz (2007) found there to be a positive contribution of altruistic values but a negative contribution of self-enhancement values to the ethical decision-making process. Whilst they recognise other factors such as organisational culture may be at play, their study does provide support for linking values to (ethical) behaviours.

4.5 THE INFLUENCE OF ETHICS IN CONSUMER TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR

By way of reprising to the earlier discussion in Chapter 3 on ethical consumption, and following from the preceding discussion on values, it has been demonstrated that values and ethical consumption are indeed related (Antonides & Van Raaij 1998). To many, the study of ethics, particularly in relation to one’s own consumption practices is an area which provides some discomfort, not least because it challenges our behavioural tendencies, but primarily because most of us are uncomfortable with being told what to do. Experience tells us that this is no more true than in the academic arena, where the agendas of researchers (investigating ethics) are often seen to be lofty and idealistic, whereas industry are frequently of the belief that an ethical or moral approach will be bad for business (Fennell, 2006).

Research on ethics is a developing area with a reasonable focus afforded to it in the tourism arena over the past decade. Like the concept of sustainability, the areas afforded the greatest attention are those of environmental ethics (Holden 2003; Holden 2009) and socio-cultural ethics (e.g. Centre for Leisure Tourism and Society 2008; Cater & Cater 2007b), and in this respect, ethics can be seen to pervade all aspects of society, both the developed and developing world, in time, space and circumstance (Fennell, 2006).

It is suggested here that the application of ethics to the wider tourism discipline owes its genesis to the hospitality management sector, given hospitality's relationship to service and business (Wheeler 1994). Organisations such as the International Institute for Quality and Ethics in Service and Tourism (IIQUEST) have been established with the intention of bridging the divide between ethics and issues related to community relations, rights of guests, sexual harassment and so on (S. Hall 1993). Whitney's (1990) research talks of the ethical dissonance between ideological aspects versus the operational aspects for hospitality managers, and nods to the inherent challenges faced with the Agency Theory (the array of conflicting goals from people with interests in a single financial asset).

Some see the concepts of tourism (more specifically the hedonistic virtues of tourism) and ethics as incompatible, and blame the contemporary ethical imperative currently pervading the industry as responsible for removing the fun, adventurous, pleasurable and hedonistic qualities of the tourism experience (Fennell, 2006). Some commentators take an extreme position of a rise in ethical concerns:

> The moral baggage associated with travel now threatens to shackle a spirit of adventure for travellers young and old. As travel has become a focus for moral codes, something has been lost along the way.
>
> (Butcher 2003: 141).

The reality of tourism's impacts realised by Butcher above is a harsh one, and perhaps one that most of us find hard to accept. Work by Tearfund (2000) concludes that tourism forces us, through its impacts to examine a number of ethical questions:

> Tourism is not just an economic transaction or a series of activities which can be isolated from everyday life or from their impact on people. The very fact that we travel to another culture and come into direct contact with the people there raises a number of ethical issues. Do local people want tourists visiting them? What are the working conditions in the tourism industry? What change does tourism make to family relationships and values? Where does the money go – who benefits? What are the environmental consequences of travel? Does travel to a particular place support democracy and human rights, or undermine them?
>
> (Tearfund 2000: 5)

Despite these concerns, this analysis of tourism seems somewhat idealistic, and in reality, particularly that characterised by the Global-Elites, tourism is often seen as a set of transactions and activities that *are isolated* from everyday life. The idiosyncratic features of the Global-Elites (see section 2.3) described by Elliott & Urry (2010) are demonstrative of the base from which this lack of connectedness to the destinations we visit arises. This is also echoed in work on tourist enclaves by Edensor (2000) for example. Stemming from this, and explained by Bordieu's (2010) Theory of Conspicuous Consumption, an apparent lack of connectedness is emulated by mass-market luxury consumers in their desire for increased levels of status through a higher position on the 'social ladder', so concerns with the host contingencies of place are eclipsed by concerns with a global status. This phenomenon will be investigated further in this research through the examination of consumer values in luxury hotels and examining whether or not values for sustainability influence brand loyalty. That is, do luxury consumers (especially mass-market) support businesses that embody more connected forms of tourism outlined above?

Values, it is said, act as the basic premise of ethics, and these are often directed towards living entities as the foundation for what we view as right or wrong; good and bad (Fennell, 2006). They presuppose an entity that acts to achieve a goal in the face of alternatives – where there are no alternatives, there are no goals, nor values. In a tourism setting, the role of intrinsic values especially (discussed in section 4.1) becomes an important one when questions such as ‘What is the value of a person, community or a society?’ are asked. When we value something intrinsically, we are able to accept the entity by its own merits, and thus avoid any sort of rational calculation (Fennell, 2006). It is this intrinsic value of people and communities that is often seen as undervalued by tourists, giving rise to conflict between tourists and hosts. As Fennell (2006) discusses, local hosts are often given a misguided interpretation of tourists, which whilst on holiday, is often not representative of their values at home. Additionally, consumption patterns of hosts are altered to reflect that of the tourists, whereby foreign commodities which are scarcely desired before their introduction, remain tantalizingly unattainable to host residents. This demonstration effect is responsible for direct and indirect socio-cultural impacts on tourism destinations, resulting in the desire for consumer durables such as televisions, radios or mobile phones (Cooper et al. 2008). It is the ethics of such phenomena which gives rise to criticisms levelled upon the tourism industry as a whole. It was Deusenberry (1967) that pointed out that the demonstration effect is stronger the larger the gap between the ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’, as well as the greater the awareness of the gap. International tourism is a pervasive agent in communicating this awareness (it is not the only agent of course, for other agents such as the influence of media etc. must be recognised), not least because the tourists are there in person, often flaunting their consumption patterns. The size of this gap will arguably be even greater within the luxury hotel sector. For example, the ability for guests to shower when coming off the beach at luxury resorts, in full view of local residents who were rationed to one bucket of water a day due to water shortages, is illustrative of the profligate use of resources such as water. Countless other examples exist in the luxury hotel sector including hotel swimming pools, watering of golf courses and so on. Several Non-Government Organisations are running a campaign regarding water use in hotels (The Travel Foundation 2012; Tourism Concern 2012).

In line with these outcomes of tourism activity, is the development of corporate mentalities which focus on trends, and that which the corporation is selling is what should be of most importance to the wider population. This is true not only for general consumerism, but also more specifically for tourism where numerous lists, awards and compilations tell us what is hot and what is not; where to be seen and so on (Conde Nast Traveller 2012). These somewhat frivolous concerns only form part of the bigger picture. Saul (1995) talks of a world where an unwarranted reliance on corporatist ideals has encouraged us to become passive and conformist individuals and adore self-interest, thereby denying the public good. Any recent concept of corporate responsibility has to challenge decades of orthodoxy such as that of Friedman (1970) (*cited in* Lee & Park (2009)) who argued that because the corporation is an artificial being, it does not have any responsibilities of a social nature, beyond acting without deception or fraud. It was later suggested that business has but two responsibilities (Levitt 1979); the first, to obey elementary rules of everyday civility, and the second, to seek material gain. His rules are played out in the battlefield of business where "like a good war it should be fought gallantly, daringly, and above all, *not* morally" (Levitt, 1979:141). Of course these arguments have subsequently been challenged and countered through arguments based on stakeholder theory, where it is observed that all stakeholders have intrinsic value and thus have a right to be treated as an end in themselves (Fennell, 2006). Walle (1995) argues that because of the inherent uniqueness of tourism products, it cannot follow the universal strategies employed by mainstream business:

> Tourism is not a generic industry since it uniquely impacts on the environment, society and cultural systems in ways which require a holistic orientation within a broad and multidimensional context. Contemporary business ethics, however, has been slow to embrace such a holistic perspective. Historically, the focus has been on the organisation and its customers. Impacts on third parties (externality issues) have often been ignored.
>
> (Walle, 1995:226)

Walle developed a framework on social obligation, responsibility and responsiveness to illustrate how the tourism industry's uniqueness might be subsumed (Table 8).

Table 7 - Ethical orientations: a comparison (Walle 1995)

	Social Obligation No. 1 (Friedman)	***Social Responsibility no. 2 (Davis)***	***Social Responsiveness (extension of no. 2)***
General Overview	Legal and profitable.	Current social problems responded to.	Future social and/or environmental problems are anticipated/addressed.
Choosing Options	The sole consideration aside from profit is legality.	Decisions respond to social issues that overtly need to be addressed.	Decisions based on anticipation of future needs and/or social problems even if they do not impact or are caused by the firm.
Strategies evaluated with reference to	Is the strategy legal? Is the strategy profitable?	Has the organisation responded to problems and issues that have emerged as significant?	Future problems are addressed even if the organisation is not directly causing them.

Nevertheless, there is still doubt over whether ethics can be claimed to be an essential ingredient to business success. While there are numerous examples of organisations (across a range of industries) that have achieved success by acting ethically, the status quo appears to be that ethics is more of a barrier than a catalyst to achieving business goals (Fennell, 2006). The late 1980s and early 1990s saw the escalation of the green marketing movement into tourism. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, the concept of sustainability is intended to capture the three dimensions of ecological/environmental, social/cultural and financial sustainability. Holden (2003) argues that, despite the conservation-centric policy statements of the 80s, the rationale of the current ethic is (primarily) concerned with the economic and social well-being of communities, rather than recognising the rights of nature. He adds that there is little evidence to suggest any great concern for a new (environmental) ethic by the majority of tourism stakeholders, with the exception perhaps of the 'eco-warrior' minority or some NGOs (Holden 2003).

That said, and indeed because of such claims, it is necessary to conduct marketing-type research, such as in this thesis, to gauge the (perceived) importance and value of ethics in tourism (Fennell, 2006). It is important to heed caution however, as by its very nature, the use of ethics as a competitive advantage is problematic, and in doing so we risk losing the very basis of ethics being good for their own sake. We then wind up in somewhat of a self-fulfilling prophecy where, if ethics cannot (and should not) be used to gain a competitive advantage, they become an afterthought, and secondary to the real job of selling for money. The business success of those wishing to be green on the basis of demand alone has also been questioned:

> There frankly is little support for the notion that green marketing translates into business organisations and practices that yield significantly improved, sustained environmental performance. More often than not, 'green' consumer preferences are insufficiently focused, or focusable, in terms of being able to induce fundamental changes in practices and stakeholder relations that yield indefinite commitments to enhance environmental performance. Typically, green marketing aimed at capitalizing on green consumer sentiments is fleeting, leading to tendencies toward the eventual subversion or abandonment of green production practices.
>
> (Johnson 1998: 264)

This sentiment is echoed by (Sharpley 2013) who notes that in a tourism context, evidence remains low regarding the importance of environmental concerns to consumers in relation to actual holiday purchase behaviour.

4.6 SUMMARY

The concept of consumer values is a complex and multidimensional one, yet given its centrality to consumer behaviour, it remains contested and open to conjecture. The role that attitudes play in influencing behaviour has been readdressed since the introduction of Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour, predominantly due to its condition of social desirability effects being excluded. In examining the behaviour of humans, and especially those partaking in luxury consumption experiences, the effects of social desirability on attitude formation and subsequent behaviours is too significant to simply exclude as a model assumption.

In support of this, the use of values as an explanatory means for attitude formation and behaviour selection has been suggested. Whilst in a psychological setting, research on the values construct has developed, its application to other settings, particularly those of an experiential nature such as tourism and hospitality settings has only been tentatively explored. Reliance thus far has remained predominantly with the seminal theories of Rokeach (1973), Khale (1986), Schwartz (1994) and Holbrook (1994), and on the whole little reasoning was evidenced for the adoption of one theory over another.

In this study, compelling arguments are presented for the use of Schwartz's model given its theoretical strengths including the near universality of the model, its cross-cultural replicability and previous use in related contexts, as well as its practical strength of concise survey administration. The examination of values in relation to specific consumer segments (e.g. Weeden 2008; 2011) has previously demonstrated that the *content* of Schwartz's model remains largely universal, but highlighted some variability in the *structure* of values. In doing so, existing research has highlighted the need for further research in the area of applied values. Of particular importance is the exploration of values in relation to core marketing constructs (Boksberger & Melsen, 2011), and relatedly, how values influence given consumer behaviours such as brand involvement and brand loyalty. Taking this as the core contribution to knowledge for the study, Chapter 5 sets out the methodological considerations for executing research into this topic and discusses the ontological, epistemological and paradigmatic influences which have shaped the research design.

5 METHODOLOGY

The research questions of this study are concerned with a dyadic evaluation of both the amount of perceived value guests place on the sustainable business practices of luxury hotels, as well as the degree to which managers of luxury hotels perceive their guests valuing such practices. The outcome of achieving these aims will be the development of a model to predict which constructs and their variables (as outlined in section 5.4) will contribute to understanding the level of involvement consumers have with luxury hotel brands. The research framework for this study was developed by undertaking a review of the literature on these issues.

The research for this study is divided into two research phases. Research phase one was concerned with determining how much importance the hotel industry (i.e. owners and senior management) place on sustainability. Research phase one has three associated research questions which will be discussed later in this chapter. This first research phase employed qualitative research techniques. The second phase of research focused on measuring how much consumers (guests) of luxury hotels value sustainable business practices. This second research phase used quantitative methods to investigate four research questions. This phase of research also sought to determine whether or not consumers (guests) of luxury hotels are willing to pay more for a hotel which adopts sustainable business practices.

The purpose of this chapter is to present the methodology employed in this study, by examining the various elements of this multi-faceted research consideration. Elements discussed include the theoretical framework of the study, researcher positionality, sampling frame, sampling method, instrument design and development, instrument administration and the procedures employed for data analysis. Furthermore, the procedures for selecting and adapting instruments for this study are discussed. The first step was to establish a research problem(s) and then carry out a full review of the current literature to provide support for the research problem, as well as further highlight gaps in the academic literature. From here, the conceptual framework for the thesis was devised, and associated research questions were developed. The next stage involved making methodological choices on how best to investigate each question, and then instrument selection, adaptation and design took place, along with piloting and testing of instruments. The final stage in the research process was to analyse the data and present findings.

The research methodology went through several iterations, reflected in changes to the researcher's positionality which is discussed below (see section 5.1). It was the initial intention of the researcher to carry out a purely quantitative project, however limitations to this method including the inability to gain a deeper level of understanding of responses led the researcher towards a triangulated approach, and to include a qualitative interview phase. This decision evolved largely through a process of reflective research contemplation, and was influenced by the researcher positionality considerations discussed below.

5.1 Epistemology and Positionality

Before detailing the epistemological stance of the research, it is important to contextualise the research by outlining here the researcher's own academic journey and institutional background. In doing so, the elements of reciprocity and reflexivity are dealt with at the fore, providing a foundation on which subsequent research(er) decisions are based (Jennings 2001). In describing firstly the researcher's academic journey and institutional background, the ability to account for the 'social situatedness of the self' is important (Jennings, 2001:116). The author first gained exposure to the hospitality industry through undertaking a bachelors' degrees in business and hotel management, coupled with practical experience of working in the hospitality industry at a 'six' star luxury hotel. Academic interest in the field stemmed from employment as a senior research assistant at an Australian university, involved in research on consumer values in the context of timeshare resorts (Centre for Tourism Sport and Service Innovation

2007-2010). The duality of these experiences meant that the researcher was initially influenced by an intention to pursue positivistic research and felt it was important to adhere to its associated values of reliability and validity. Engagement with a wide body of literature in the realms of human geography (Cater 1995; Elliott & Urry 2010; Rice 2010), management studies, critical tourism studies (Sharpley 2000; Sharpley 2013; Buckley 2001; Buckley 2007; Weeden 2011; Holden 2009) and consumer psychology and behaviour, challenged this original objective position, and altered the original positivist approach to understanding. In addition, months prior to the conception of this thesis, the author was made aware of work carried out by a prominent lobby group regarding sustainability and luxury consumerism, which also spurred the development of this thesis (Bendell & Kleanthous 2007). The reflective developments in the researcher's epistemological stances are depicted in Figure 15 below. At the commencement of the research, and being influenced significantly from previous professional roles, the researcher held a predominantly quantitative position, however continuous engagement with literature from the wide breadth of disciplines consulted in this study led the researcher to T2, and eventually settling at T3. Suffice to say that, whilst engagement with other epistemological stances did occur, it was the researcher's own professional and social 'situatedness of self' that determined the final epistemological position.

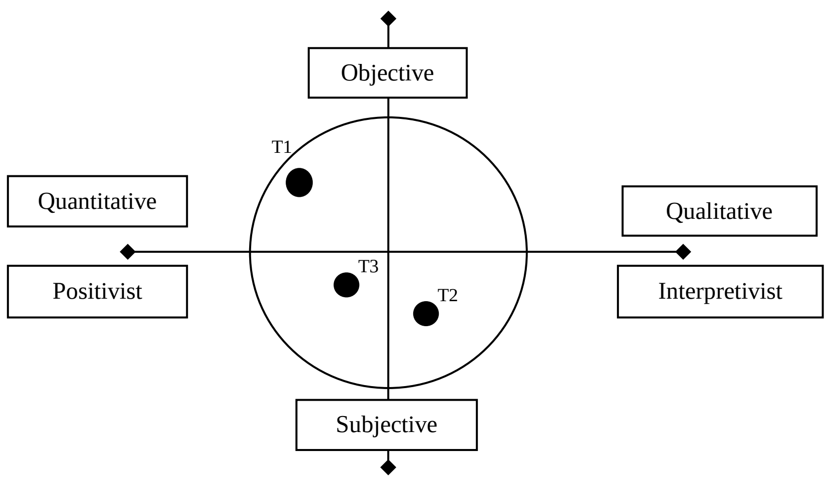


Figure 15 - Reflective researcher positionality journey (August 2009 - May 2011)

The issue of reciprocity is one of significant importance for this project given its ‘sponsored’ nature. It should be acknowledged here that half of the funding for this research was provided by the Lord Forte Foundation, the charitable arm of a luxury hotel company, which may arouse questions of objectivity versus subjectivity. With the preceding discussion on academic and prior working experience as a background, it should be noted that the decision on the topic for this research was based on the researcher’s own experience both within the hospitality industry and academia, and was not one that was prescribed by the sponsoring body. Further discussion on the nature of industry-funded research and its impact on researcher autonomy are provided in section 5.6

This research adopts a quasi-objective epistemological view, with influences from management and business studies, the relatively ‘new’ social geography discourse and the even more relatively recently defined field of tourism studies (encompassing the related field of hospitality management). The neo-realist paradigm under which this research is carried out, and discussed more fully in section 5.2.1, has evolved from two main theorists, Bhaskar and Harré (Blaikie 2007), who over time have agreed to disagree on the structure of their ‘ontological furniture’. In some respects, these disagreements have resulted in the epistemological grounding of critical realism balancing, sometimes uncomfortably, between the objective positivistic theories of Bhaskar and the subjective-constructionist views of Harré. The ontological position of critical realism is one which deviates from the traditional positivist viewpoint of universal truths, and holds that truths are indeed fallible, and are a product of historical and social constructs (Jennings 2001). This at least, both seminal philosophers agree upon. Disagreements arise however when one considers the possibility of researcher bias, something which only one with a subjective epistemological viewpoint would acknowledge (i.e. Harré). At the risk of conflating the notions of epistemology and paradigm (although the two are inherently linked), a discussion outlining the standpoints of the two aforementioned seminal theorists will be made more fully in section 5.2.1.

The balancing act between the objective positivistic and the subjective-constructionist viewpoints can be explained by adopting the epistemological view of neo-realism. In line with Jennings' (2001) points above, it rejects the strict view of empiricism that the establishment of within phenomena and between events provides the basis for explanation. Instead, it holds that the establishment of regularities is just the beginning of explanation and that what must happen is to locate the structure or mechanism that has produced the pattern or regularity. Maxwell & Mattapalli (2010) also support this marriage of epistemology to paradigm and note the potential of the realist paradigmatic standpoint to unlock much of the philosophical tension currently surrounding it. They go on to say that, while a number of substantive mixed-methods studies exist, relatively little attention has been paid to the realist paradigm in relation to the mixed-methods approach.

Keat & Urry (1975) explain that in neo-realism "a scientific theory is a description of structures and mechanisms which causally generate the observable phenomena, a description which enables us to explain them". Blaikie (2007) provides a table of possible ontological and epistemological relationships, shown in table 9 below. This table not only shows the link between depth realists and neo-realism, but also demonstrates the mid-way point neo-realism (see Section 5.2.1) adopts between empiricism and constructionism, in turn providing a common ground for the disagreements between Bhaskar and Harré.

Table 8 - Combinations of ontological and epistemological categories (Blaikie 2007: 26)

	Epistemology					
Ontology	*Empiricism*	*Rationalism*	*Falsification*	*Neo-realism*	*Constructivism*	*Conventionalism*
Shallow Realist	✓					
Conceptual Realist		✓				
Cautious Realist			✓			
Depth Realist				✓		
Idealist					✓	
Subtle Realist						

The need to develop a logic and strategy for answering research questions goes well beyond the ability to choose appropriate methods for collecting and analysing data. What is needed is an appropriate research strategy which provides a framework for answering the ‘what’ and ‘why’ questions (Blaikie 2007). As noted above, neo-realism seeks to distance itself someway from the objectivist standpoint of the positivist researcher, regarding truths as entirely fallible as well as being socially and historically constructed. Blaikie presents four strategies where the two conventional models of top-down and bottom-up research approaches are presented (inductive and deductive), along with the alternative models of retroductive and abductive strategies.

The retroductive approach aims to investigate the social world by discovering underlying mechanisms in order to explain observed regularities. Being linked to ‘depth realism’, it is sensitive towards a modified version of neo-realism. In seeking to establish which mechanism(s) provide the best explanation in a particular context, the retroductive strategy first calls for an observed regularity to be documented and a model built upon, then a subsequent description of the context and possible mechanisms at play. Therefore, in seeking to understand the extent to which luxury hotel guests value sustainability through ethical consumption practices, and in turn exercise brand loyalty behaviours, the retroductive approach was deemed appropriate. In this context, the observed regularity manifests itself in the increased levels of unsustainable mass consumption, but accompanied by increased levels of ‘green’ marketing which might suggest increased levels of concern around sustainability. It was however hypothesised that given the lack of concrete evidence to suggest a genuine concern for sustainable business practices (Peattie 1999; Sharpley 2013), that sustainability would have little influence on brand loyalty behaviours. Thus, a model was proposed to explain the role consumer values (seen to remedy the attitude-behaviour gap) play in predicting brand involvement (specifically in the context of luxury hotels).

One of the main concerns in the development of the retroductive research strategy is associated with the logic of inquiry and the development of initial models.

Blaikie (2007) notes that the requisite logic of discovery to be used in this strategy involves the use of a kind of ‘disciplined scientific imagination’ where the skills of a creative imagination, intuition and even guesswork should be employed. Furthermore, Kincheloe (2001) argues that the ‘bricolage’ (Denzin & Lincoln 2000) of qualitative research, and related subjective epistemologies, is one which cultivates difference (in the researcher) and is a spark to researcher creativity. Figure 16 below provides a summary of the retroductive steps:

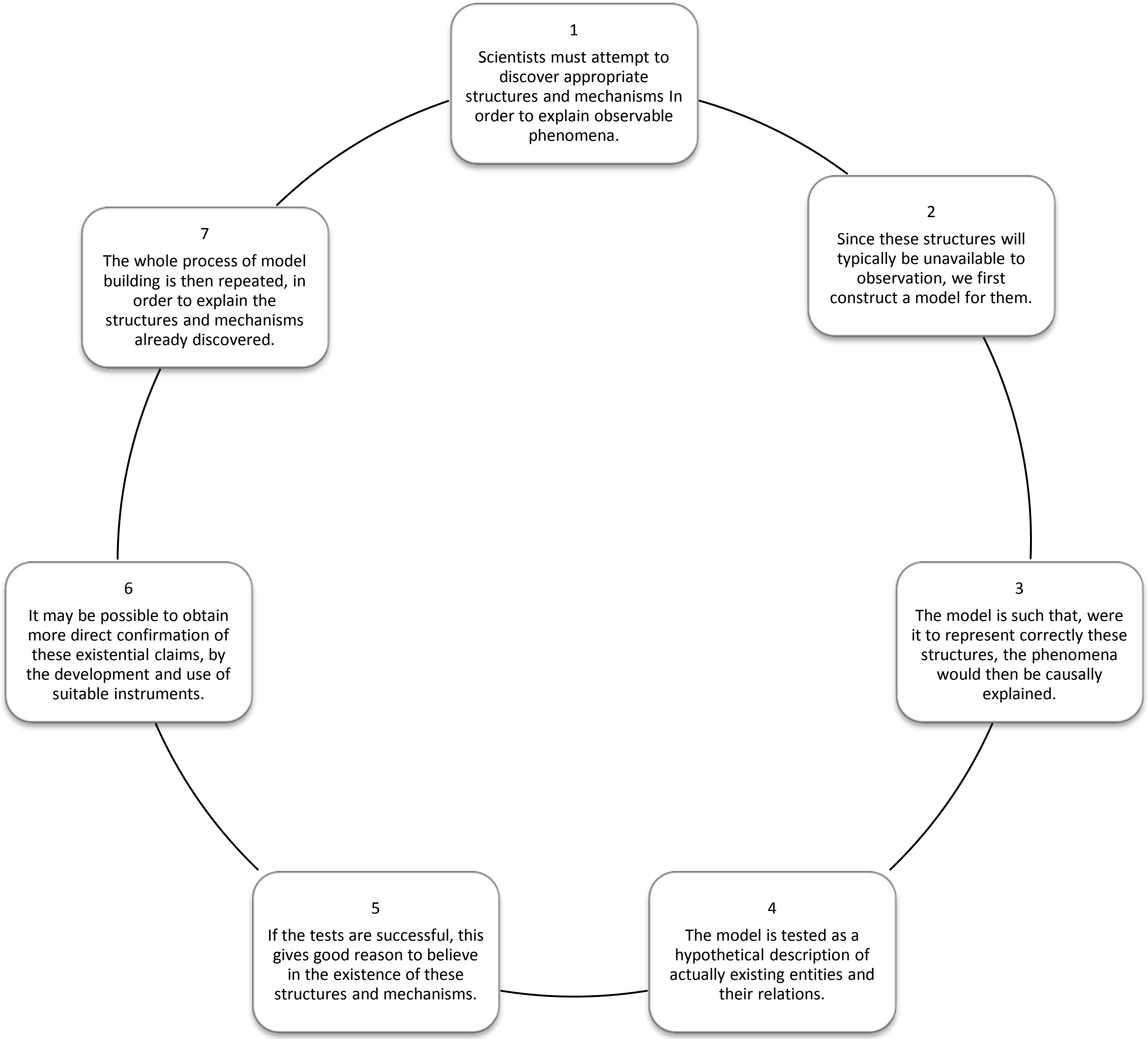


Figure 16 - Retroductive research strategy (Blaikie 2007: 83)

5.2 MIXED-METHODS RESEARCH

Mixed-methods research has emerged almost as a distinct methodology in its own right over recent decades (Creswell & Clark 2011). The historical development of tourism research provides a pertinent starting point to understand the evolution of mixed-methods research. Based upon the initial conception of tourism being a panacea for economic growth and development, early research, and arguably much of what has followed, was grounded heavily in the epistemological pursuit of objectivism, and influenced heavily by positivism and post-positivism (Jennings 2001). Alternate approaches such as those influenced by constructivism, interpretivism and participatory approaches were largely marginalised as 'speculative' and less scientific approaches to inquiry (Halfpenny 1982). More recently however, the qualitative methodology has gained support particularly through the critical turn in tourism studies (Ateljevic et al. 2007) and the dismissive approach to qualitative studies is no longer accepted (Phillimore & Goodson 2004). This shift in understanding grew largely from a shift in the research diet, from tourism being seen as a source for economic (re)generation and a force for 'boosterism', to studies which focus on tourism as a sustainable, decommodified and ethical pursuit (Jennings 2001).

The long-running quantitative vs. qualitative debate has provided fertile ground for lively conjecture on the topic of methodologies. Eventually, the academy and researchers within it, acknowledge that both methodological perspectives were valid and should be chosen on their own merits (Walle 1997). What was proposed however was that these traditions should exist in isolation, and their potential for interconnectedness was not acknowledged (Walle 1997). The idea of mixing method(ologie)s emerged at around the same time of Walle's work, with a great deal of focus on attempting to define and describe what mixed-methods research is or was (Creswell and Clarke 2011). Happily, (Greene 2007: 20) offered a definition which draws from the dyadic epistemological positions discussed previously, and sees mixed-methods research as:

> ... [research] that actively invites us to participate in dialogue about multiple ways of seeing and hearing, multiple ways of making sense of the

> social world, and multiple standpoints on what is important and to be valued and cherished.

She goes on to point out that the primary purpose of conducting a mixed-methods study is to better understand the complexity of the social phenomena being studied, and in doing so, one engages with a plurality of philosophical standpoints and a bricolage of paradigmatic positions. In his highly regarded chapter on ‘Post-positivist critical multiplism’, (Cook 1985: 22) advocates the need for a plurality of perspectives in research, especially when faced with varying degrees of scientific uncertainty:

> In a world where one way of conducting research was universally considered to be “correct”, scientific practice would be easy. Researchers would simply do what is correct. It is the current absence of total certainty about what constitutes correct practice that leads to the advocacy of multiplism in perspectives and methods.

That said, the realisation of the main aim of this thesis, as outlined in Chapter 1, paying particular regard to the number and diversity of actors in the defined area of research, could only be achieved by adopting a multiplicity of methods. For real understanding of the complexities of this topic, as well as to achieve industrial agency from the findings, no one method would suffice. Gray (2009) notes the usefulness of mixed methods where there exist a number of different research questions, which lend themselves to difference methods and research instruments. Mixed-methods research, according to (Newman et al. 2003), serves a multitude of purposes including, but not limited to, prediction; adding to the knowledge base; measuring change; understanding complex phenomena; testing new ideas; and generating new ideas. Broadly speaking though, the purpose of mixing methods is to develop a ‘better understanding’ of the phenomena being studied, but can be further refined into five more specific purposes including: for the purposes of triangulation (for corroboration and validity), complementarity (for deeper understanding of *different* facets of the same complex phenomena), development (of subsequent methods), initiation (to achieve divergence or dissonance), and expansion (of scope and range of study) (Greene et al. 1989 cited in Greene 2007). For as Downward & Mearman (2004) note, the critical realist tradition renders the need for triangulation in order to capture different, but related layers of reality. In this study, 'better understanding' will be achieved through the use of mixed-methods primarily for the purpose of initiation. Thus, the epistemological and methodological stances adopted in this research allow for different layers of reality to be captured and synthesised.

Commonly, researchers talk of using mixed-methods somewhat dismissively for the purpose of triangulation[1], when in fact the intention of mixing-methods was not to increase construct validity (Greene et al. 1989 cited in Greene 2007). Traditionally, triangulation is intended as a way of achieving corroboration or convergence between results from multiple methods (Greene 2007). Initiation on the other hand "represents the most generative of the purposes for mixing" (Greene 2007:102) by evoking paradoxes, contradictions and divergence, all of which are useful in achieving fresh insights, original understandings and new perspectives on a given phenomena. Whilst ideologically, we might hope for a tourism industry where providers work in unison with tourists, destinations and governments to achieve a harmonious coexistence, it is well documented (see for example Sharpley, 2013) that this is currently not the case, and as such mixing-methods purely for the purpose of increasing construct validity in this instance would have been futile. Instead, purposively mixing methods with intention of initiation allows us to examine differences and contradictions between various stakeholders in question.

Although the aforementioned discussion on epistemological positions, suggests an objective stance, it does not go so far as to say that the researcher is entirely separated from the subjects, especially when the critical realism paradigm has emerged, in part, from the constructionist stances of Harré (Blaikie 2007). To fail to acknowledge the potential for research bias is paramount to accepting that the "objective mind has been cultivated by as if it was detached and immune from any bodily impressions" (Tribe 2006: 363). Whilst a pursuit of pure objectivity cannot be claimed under such a position, the researcher does however recognise the

[1] Greene et al. (1989) conducted a study of 57 mixed methods evaluation studies and reviewed each one of its descriptions of mixed-methods purpose. Triangulation as the stated purpose for mixing methods was the dominant stated rationale.

disordered nature of research, and acknowledges the influence this might have on the process.

5.2.1 THE CRITICAL REALISM PARADIGM

The fluidity of research paradigms, and the Geertzian “blurring of genres”, has arguably led to the boundaries between paradigms shifting (Lincoln & Guba 2000: 167). They talk of the “great potential for interweaving viewpoints, for the incorporate of multiple perspectives and for borrowing or bricolage”. The degree of commensurability between paradigms is a debate which still ensues, and it is often asked whether or not it is possible to blend elements of one paradigm into another so that in a sense, the ‘best of both world(view)s’ can be presented (Lincoln and Guba 2000). Cautiously, they agree in principle with this principle, so long as the axiomatic elements of a paradigm are similar, or resonate strongly between them. For instance, they suggest elements of postmodern critical theory fit comfortably with elements of constructivist and participatory paradigms. Commensurability only becomes an issue, they suggest, when researchers wish to ‘cherry-pick’ among axioms of conflicting paradigms, where they are found to be contradictory and mutually exclusive.

Whilst it is important to acknowledge that an awareness of socially focussed groundings is certainly important (Lincoln and Guba 2000), this constant shifting of goalposts means that the alignment of the researcher to a particular paradigm is at best complicated and at worst a minefield of philosophical arguments and debates which often have little practical bearing on the research. Indeed, Greene (2007:53) calls for researchers to leave to one side the theoretical and philosophical debates around incommensurability and philosophical purity, and “get on with the work of applied social inquiry by intentionally and thoughtfully employing the full extent of our methodological repertoire”. While Miles & Huberman (1984: 54) echo this call to action in a rather more simplistic fashion, Greene insists that arguments such as these in abstract form are better left to the ‘experts’ in favour of “active engagement with the diversity of philosophical assumptions and stances in the dialogic form”. That said, this section does not aim to provide a definitive dialogue on the philosophical positions of the founding fathers of critical realism, but rather tries to contrast the two positions, compare their key philosophical positions and discuss how these influence the methodological choices informing this study.

This thesis argues, with the aforementioned discussion as a backdrop, that the degree of luxury brand loyalty hotel guests exhibit, as predicted by their value construct and the value they place on sustainability through exercising ethical consumption, can be adequately examined under a post-positivist paradigm (as defined by Lincoln and Guba, 2000), but more specifically, embody the characteristics of a critical realism paradigm – represented as a paradigm in its own right by Jennings (2001)[2], due largely to its manifestations in the extant tourism literature (e.g. Downward 2005; Gale & Botterill 2005). Critical realism, whilst taking its grounding in the hard/natural sciences (Jennings 2001), as in the positivist tradition, the key difference lies in the ontological position of the two paradigms. Whilst positivism holds that truths and laws are universal, critical realism (and post-positivism) acknowledges that truths are fallible and often are a product of historical and social contexts (Jennings 2001). As described in section 5.1, neo-realism holds that the establishment of regularities is just the beginning of explanation, and that locating a structure that produces a pattern or regularity is what characterises neo-realism. It is Jennings' (2001) historical and social contexts which scaffold our existence, and enables us to better understand such patterns or regularities. Furthermore, while both these paradigms adopt an objective epistemology (the relationship between the researcher and that which is known), they both, unlike positivism, acknowledge the potential for researcher bias in the investigation (acknowledged in section 5.2 above). The critical realism orientation also has at its core a somewhat radical slant, where it is important not just to explain the world, but also to change it (Alvesson & Skoldberg 2009).

As alluded to above in section 5.1, Bhaskar (1978) develops his views on critical realism from the ontological position of a *depth* realist, and suggests three ontological domains: the *empirical* domain (the world as we experience it through our senses); the *actual* domain (events, both observable and unobservable); and

[2] Lincoln and Guba (2000) include Critical Realism as a subset of post-positivism.

the *real* domain (processes that generate events). Central to this ontology is the overarching aim which is to bring understanding to observable phenomena with reference to the underlying structures and mechanisms (Blaikie 2007). Such structures are classified differently by (Bhaskar (1989) who notes that social structures do not exist independently of the activities they influence nor of the social actors' conceptions of what they are doing. Furthermore, these social structures are also less enduring than natural ones.

Keat & Urry's (1975) earlier description of neo-realism (see pg. 119) however allows for the cancelling or negating effect when competing mechanisms result in no observable changes (Blaikie 2007). Bhaskar (1978) argued that social objects cannot be studied in the same way as natural objects, however that they can be studied scientifically as social objects. Although many would argue them to be positivist by nature, many studies in the field of behavioural and social psychology for example, adopt this perspective of studying humans scientifically as social objects.

The work of Harré differs considerably from that of Bhaskar due largely to the social constructionist underpinnings of the former, and the Marxist groundings of the latter (Blaikie 2007). Harré's position, as described by Blaikie (2007:149) is that:

> the first stage of the process of realist natural science is to produce, by 'exploration', critical descriptions of non-random patterns – to extend what is known by common observation – and, by 'experiment' to check critically the authenticity of what is thought to be known. In carrying out explanation, a scientist may have some idea about the direction in which to go, but no very clear idea of what to expect.

In line with Jennings (2001) above, we can see that the potential for researcher bias is emergent more so in Harré's position, due largely to the constructionist approach adopted and through the critical descriptions of common observations. As such, it is accepted here that while it is almost impossible to write the researcher out of the research (Ateljevic et al. 2007), it is not an objective that is actively pursued as part of this thesis as it has been in others' work.

Importantly Harre (1970) notes that due to social mechanisms in general being different from the phenomena they explain, these mechanisms often become the subject of further study. To adequately explain the principles under which these mechanisms operate, the formulation of new models is required. This is something embodied by the retroductive research approach outlined in section 5.1, as well as one which is depicted in Downward & Mearman (2004) applied model of critical realism (see Figure 17). Importantly, the diagram underscores the function of triangulating between methods and linking the resultant insights gained from the use of different research methods. Triangulation in this diagram captures the retroductive logic of critical realism, and through the combination of methods, an understanding of the phenomena in question can be developed.

The key difference between the two positions of Bhaskar and Harré lies in the causality of social structures. Bhaskar holds that social mechanisms do *not* emerge out of human activity, rather they have their origins in the past, and as such the agency of social objects act upon pre-existing structures. With this in mind, he asserts that the autonomous nature of social structures allows them to influence human behaviour, therefore being analogous to the role of causal mechanisms in the natural sciences (Blaikie 2007). Harré on the other hand refutes this causal efficacy of social structures, primarily on the basis that if social structures are conceived as abstract reifications, then how can one attribute them to having influence on human agency?

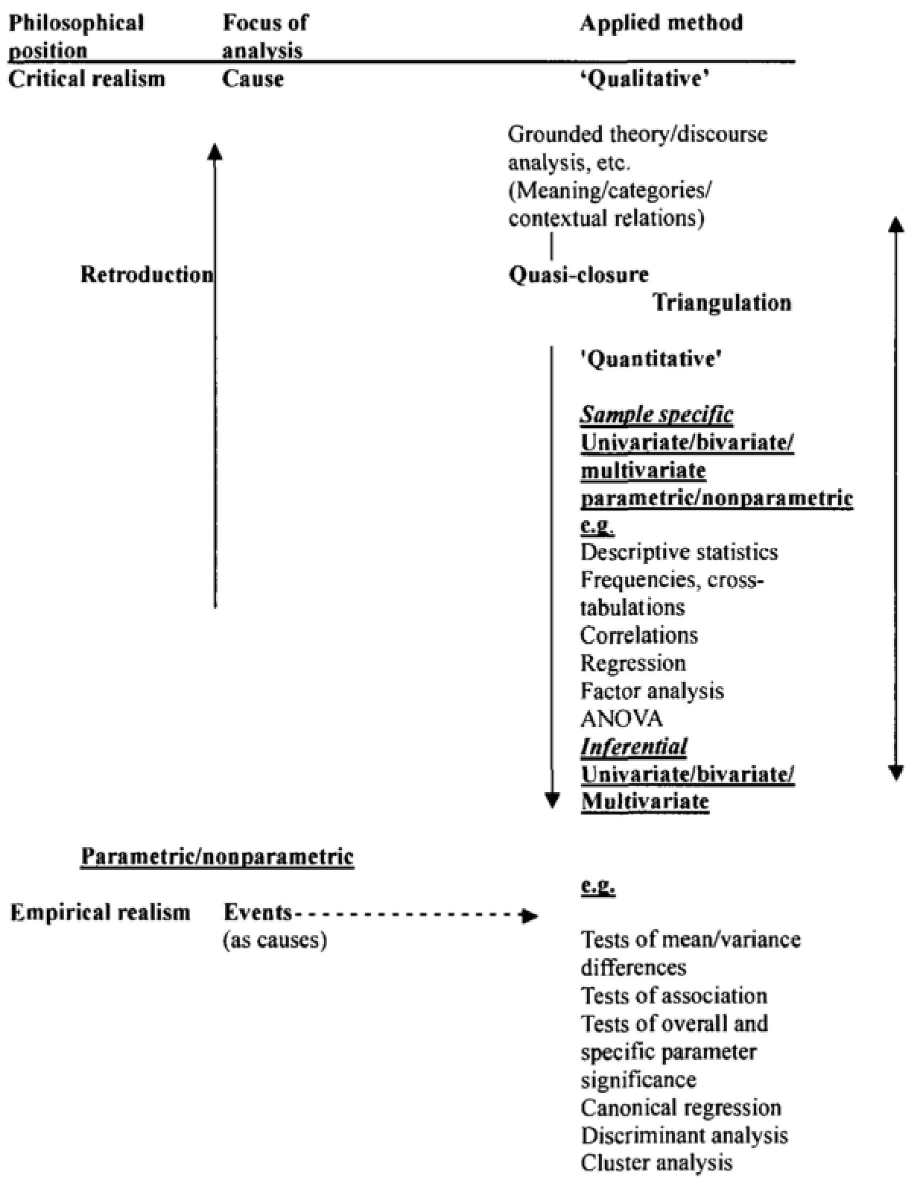


Figure 17 - Applied critical realism (Downward and Mearman 2004)

Further to this, and of central relevance to this thesis, is the idea that critical realists are said to accept the reality of mental states and attributes (of social objects), and the importance that these have in terms of causal explanations. This, Maxwell and Mittapalli (2010) suggest, is a position that both traditional positivist and constructivists often reject. This awareness of mental states and attributes is inherently linked to the concept of values outlined in Chapter 4, and by having an awareness and deeper understanding of these human traits might allow us to better understand the motivations of ethical consumption and their links with brand loyalty.

By way of a reprisal to this point, Figure 18 below summarises the decisions researchers must make on any research project. Blaikie (2007) notes that the ‘messy’ nature of research often necessitates the need to move backwards and forwards (as represented in this diagram) before research decisions can be finalised, hence the omission of a starting point in the diagram. The underlined text represents the choices made in relation to this thesis. In line with this diagram, Hall (2000) describes how tourism and the environment constitute ‘meta problems’ being as they are characterised by highly interconnected planning and policy issues. Henceforth, it is also poignant to be reminded of the ‘messy’ nature of the topic under investigation and the complexity of considerations involved.

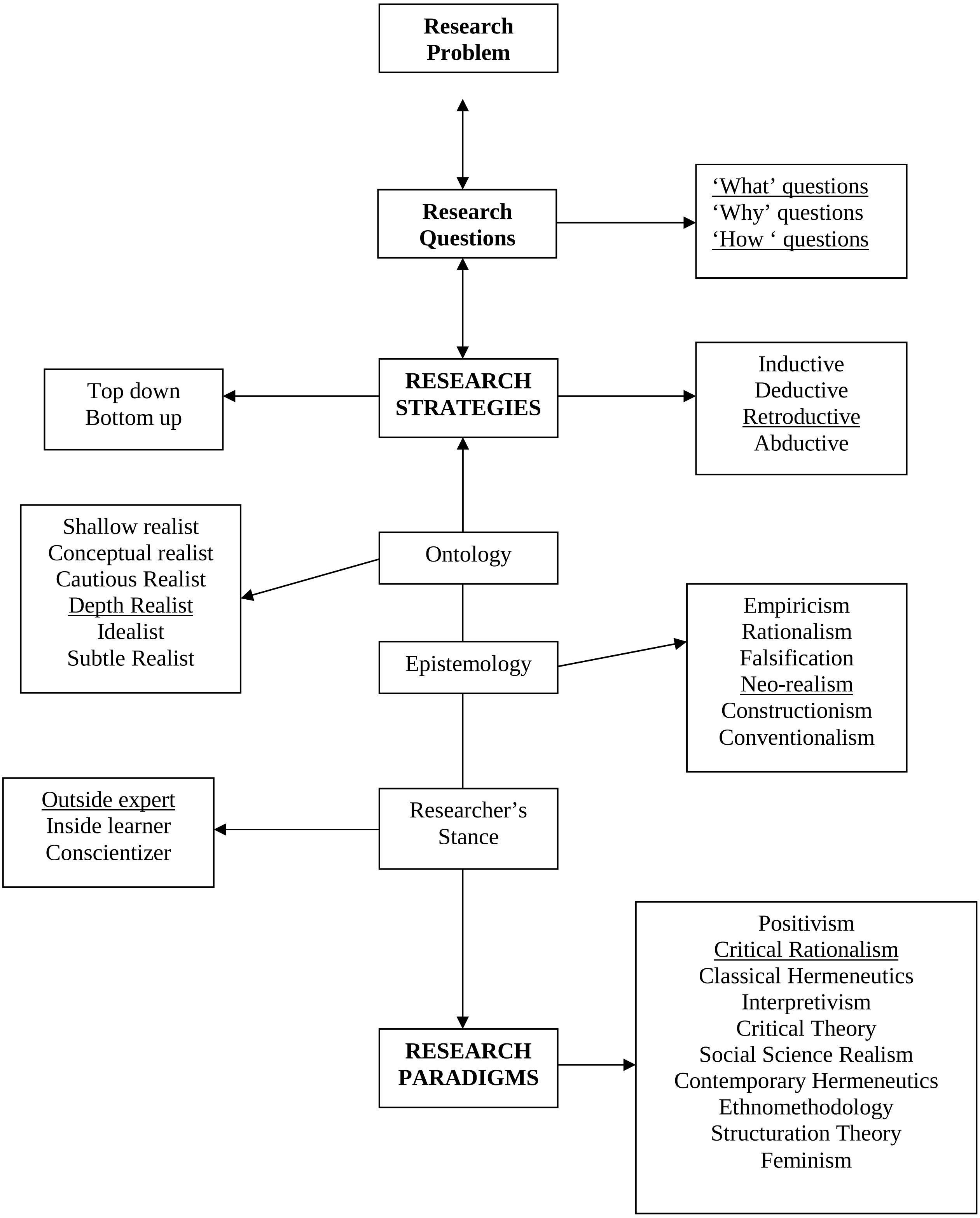


Figure 18 - Researcher choices (Blaikie 2007: 27)

In considering the design for this research, a recursive and iterative approach has been adopted (see Figure 19). The inherently 'messy' nature of research, as well as the use of a retroductive research strategy (as described in section 5.2), allows for not only the continual evolution of hypotheses as the research progresses (Veal 2006), but also facilitates the "link between understanding one's own research and selecting the appropriate methods to investigate the questions that are derived from the purpose" (Newman et al. 2003: 169). They argue that :

> there is an iterative process between considering the research purpose and the research question. [From] this iterative process...decisions about methods are made. [Further] we make the case that when the purpose is complex (as it often is), it is necessary to have multiple questions, and this frequently necessitates the use of mixed methods.
>
> *Newman et al. (2003:169)*

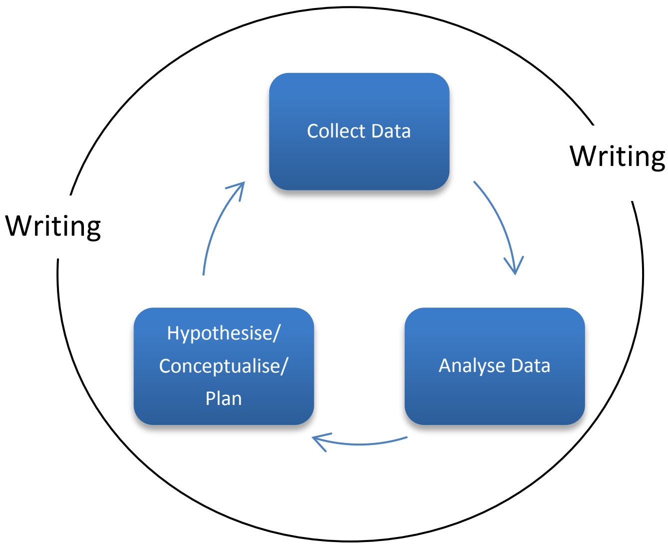


Figure 19 - Recursive research approach

Echoing this rationale, the research was designed in two phases – first, examining the supply-side perceptions of luxury hotel managers around the issues of sustainability, corporate social responsibility and ethical consumers; and a second phase, focusing on the demand-side issues of sustainability acting as a driver of brand loyalty by examining the level of value consumers place on such issues. It was anticipated that the findings from the first phase would generate some interesting and potentially unexpected perspectives and issues which could then be used to inform the second questionnaire phase. In the adopted retroductive research approach to this study, the possibility of collecting more data, and repeating the hypothesizing and model-building process was available should the need arise. Both phases consisted of a number of research questions, outlined in the proceeding sections, and the study adopted a mixed-methods approach to investigate these research questions. Justification for the adoption of this approach was provided in section 5.2 of this chapter. However, by way of further elaboration on the execution of a mixed-methods approach in this particular study, various levels of triangulation were developed (as proposed by Jennings, 2001). Triangulation, or the mixing of theories, methods and sources of data is more likely to allow us to "overcome the biases, generalizability or restrictions intrinsic to any single methodology and makes the widest use of any data or observations" (Faugier & Sargeant 1997: 794). The reason for adopting triangulation, as noted in section 5.2. has not been to increase construct validity, rather it was adopted to illuminate paradoxes, contradictions and divergence. This is echoed by Robson (2002) who notes the value of triangulation for overcoming threats to research validity. In support of this aim, the *types* of triangulation employed in this project have occurred at four levels: data triangulation, methodological triangulation, theoretical triangulation and interdisciplinary triangulation. Figure 20 provides a graphical representation of the triangulated layers of research.

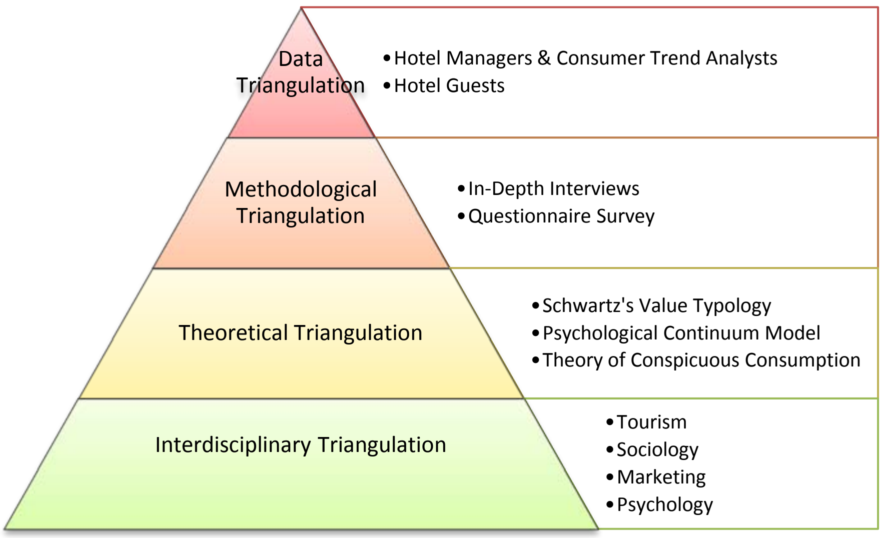


Figure 20 - Layers of research triangulation

In the case of this research, interdisciplinary triangulation will involve drawing theories from different disciplines, and is particularly relevant for tourism given its multidisciplinary nature. Theories for this project have been examined across the fields of psychology (e.g. Schwartz & Bilsky 1987; Schwartz & Bilsky 1990; Schwartz 1994b), marketing (e.g. Funk & James, 2001), sociology (Elliott & Urry, 2009) and tourism (e.g. Filo et al, 2011). Theoretical triangulation involves the use of different theories or perspectives to analyse the data, and this is demonstrated through the amalgamation of theories in the proposed research model. Methodological triangulation consists of the use of different methods to solve a research problem, and in this case, the use of in-depth interviews and a questionnaire survey are used. Finally, data triangulation of industry marketing materials, in-depth interviews conducted with consumer trend-analysts and hotel managers will be considered alongside questionnaire survey results of hotel guests. These multiple layers of triangulation provide the basis for a strong and robust research framework.

5.3 RESEARCH PHASE 1

The first research phase aimed to investigate how much importance the hotel industry places on the concept of sustainability, CSR and ethical consumption practices. It was deemed important to adopt a qualitative approach to this phase of the study in order to gain a deeper understanding of how managers of hotels understand the concepts of sustainability and CSR and how they perceived these concepts to be valued by their guests. In particular, the use of in-depth semi-structured interviews was seen to be the most effective way of eliciting opinions and perspectives on these topics(Bohdanowicz 2005; Vernon 2000; Bohdanowicz & Zientara 2008). The research for this phase was conducted using qualitative methods, which seeks rich information from relatively few cases rather than more limited information from larger numbers of respondents (Veal, 2006). This view is echoed by (Peterson 1994) who notes this depth-over-breadth approach provides for wide-ranging information.

The use of interviews as a qualitative research method is widely accepted, and Mason (2002) suggests a number of reasons for using interviews including the ontological and epistemological positions supporting such modes of inquiry, of which this research does. The ontological position of the critical realist paradigm holds that truths are fallible and often are the product of social contexts (Jennings, 2001), a further reason for conducting qualitative interviews (Mason, 2002). In addition, Mason also suggests that the conceptualisation of oneself as active and reflective counts as another reason for selecting qualitative interviews, as does the use of interviews as a form of methodological triangulation (discussed in section 5.3). Jennings (2005) points to the use of in-depth and semi0structured interviews as usually being incorporated in the exploratory phase of a larger research project. A detailed discussion on the suitability of adopting reflective research practices is provided in section 5.6. It is also suggested that interviews can be used as a means of conducting exploratory work before conducting a quantitative study (Robson 2002). As mentioned earlier, it was anticipated that the findings from the first phase would generate findings which could then be used to inform the second questionnaire phase. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews offer a flexible route for investigation where, although predetermined questions are devised, the researcher is able to include and omit relevant questions where applicable, as well as changing question wording and providing explanations where necessary (Robson, 2002).

Where the primary aim of the research is to elicit meaning and understanding of a concept, as it is here (see section 5.4.1), then the use of interviews are generally effective (Mason 2002; Robson 2002; May 2011). Qualitative research is grounded in the belief that people directly involved in a situation, in this instance hotel managers in the act of managing hotels, are best placed to describe their experiences, feelings and thoughts on that situation (Veal, 2006). For this reason it was felt that a qualitative component would provide a means of establishing understanding on the research questions outlined below.

5.3.1 *PHASE ONE RESEARCH QUESTIONS*

Research Question 1.1: Do managers of luxury hotels feel their guests would exhibit loyal behaviours toward their business due to the adoption or implementation of sustainable business practices?

Research Question 1.2: Do managers of luxury hotels believe there is any competitive advantage to be gained from implementing sustainable business practices?

Research Question 1.3: What do hotel managers of luxury hotels understand by the terms 'sustainability', 'sustainable business practices' and 'Corporate Social Responsibility'?

5.3.2 *INSTRUMENT DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT*

In designing the interview instrument, consideration was given to a number of points including structure, length, phrasing of questions, as well as the more traditionally positivistic expectations of reliability, generalisability and validity. Although the later three aspects are principles generally associated with the natural sciences, they are not irrelevant to social inquiry of this nature, particularly given the epistemological and paradigmatic underpinnings of this project. Before moving on to their discussion, further elaboration on the design of the interview is needed.

The content of the interview questions was derived predominantly from a survey of the academic and other relevant literature, as outlined in chapters 2, 3 and 4. In addition to this, interviews were also carried out with two industry trend and innovation analysts to ascertain a contemporary perspective on these issues. These interviews acted as a kind of exploratory pilot study, where existing market research on green consumerism was used to form the basis for discussion. These interviews performed the role of contextualising future responses from hotel managers in the broader domain of current consumer (sustainability) trends. Furthermore, interviews with marketing and trend-analysis professionals were thought to provide powerful insights into both general consumer perceptions of sustainable business practices as well as methods by which companies communicate sustainable strategies to their consumers. It is arguably through such marketing communications that consumers develop their frames of reference for perceived value judgments.

Interview design considered a number of factors including avoiding long questions, double-barrelled questions, questions involving jargon, leading questions and biased questions (Robson 2002; Mason 2002; Gray 2009; May 2011). Consideration was also given to the ordering of questions, as well as a variety of suitable follow-up questions (or prompts and probes) depending on the possible responses from interviewees. Following the initial draft of the interview schedule, it was analysed for phrasing, flow and leading or biased questions by a psycholinguistics scholar. As a form of 'ice-breaker' question, the interview started first by asking interviewees about their experience in the hotel industry and the guest mix at their hotels. It then carried on to ask managers about their perceptions of luxury, their understandings of sustainability and ethical consumption and whether they saw these terms as differing in any way. Following this, interviewees were asked for their opinions on whether or not sustainable business practices were compatible with luxury hotels, and if so, whether or not they could act as effective means of achieving competitive advantage. Following the initial drafting of the interview questions, and as mentioned in 5.4.2.3 below, the interview was pilot-tested to check for validity and reliability.

The majority of interviews were conducted in the hotel manager's place of business, usually in their offices, however some telephone interviews were also conducted. Interviews lasted on average between 30 and 50 minutes. Maintaining the interest and attention of interviews after about half an hour was difficult, particularly in a business environment when many other distractions were evident. As such, it was important to build rapport with interviewees, and where possible were conducted face-to-face to aid this process. Interviews were recorded for later analysis, and interviewees were informed of this both prior to their acceptance of conducting an interview, as well as immediately before the interview took place. Permission to record was explicitly asked for before each interview started and was recorded on the audio file for record-keeping purposes. As mentioned, it was important for as many interviews as possible to take place in a face-to-face setting, although logistics and resources sometimes resulted in interviews being carried out over the phone. It was initially felt that face-to-face interviews would be more effective in generating rich and full responses from interviewees. However the presence of a voice recorder did undoubtedly detract from the openness and richness of the exchange (Platt 2002). That, coupled with the somewhat sensitive commercial nature of some of the questions being asked meant that perhaps more honest responses were achieved in the telephone interviews. Data supplementary to the interviews was also collected and took a variety of forms, from reflective discussion with my supervisor (recorded in formalised meeting logs), to notes kept in journals or jotted on the interview schema as the interview was being carried out (Low & Everett in review). The reflective period after each interview was seen as important to recall any comments that may have been made before or after recording had commenced; to help recollect thoughts and reactions to interviewees' responses; as well as to inform and develop interview questions as the research progressed.

5.3.2.1 Reliability and Validity

Although some scholars (Robson 2002) would argue that qualitative data should not be tested for reliability, validity and generalisability in the same way as quantitative data, it was deemed relevant to present a discussion based primarily on the critical realist philosophy underpinning this research. Reliability is intrinsically related to accuracy and requires us to ask how accurate our methods and techniques are (Mason, 2002). In other words, does the instrument measure what it set out to measure? (Robson, 2002). At a technical level, the semi-structured nature of the interviews in some ways preclude it from formal reliability testing (Robson, 2002), however consideration must be given to the resulting issues of bias to achieve generalisability from our findings (Mason, 2002). One method to overcome this is to provide an audit trial including interview questions, coding structure and data analysis (Robson, 2002). Another method to overcome researcher bias is suggested by Ahern (1999) as 'reflexive bracketing' whereby the use of reflexivity can identify areas of potential bias. This reflective approach was adopted throughout the course of the research and notes on this and appropriateness given the paradigmatic underpinnings of the research are presented in section 5.6 of this chapter.

The related concept of generalisability refers to the extent to which you make some broader claim on the basis of your research or analysis (Mason, 2002; Gray, 2009). Outlined in section 5.3.3, the population of interest was somewhat limited, and in turn the sample size for interviews is also small. This highlights an obvious limitation to the study, and claims that findings from this phase of the research are generalisable to the wider luxury hotel industry cannot be wholly supported. It does not however bring into question the validity of the findings, nor the relevance they have to both further academic research and industry governance decisions. A further consideration, and according to Robson (2002) perhaps a more critical one is that of credibility. He suggests that instead of concerning ourselves with the operationalisation of positivistic terms of reliability, generalisability and validity in the qualitative field, that instead we should be assessing whether or not there is sufficient detail on the way the evidence is produced for the credibility of the research to be assessed (pg. 109). It is intended that through the presentation of audit trail material mentioned previously, the presentation of reflective narrative (see section 5.6) and the clear acknowledgement of limitations (see chapter 8), that the credibility of this study is established.

Validity is the final concept to be considered in relation to the instrument design, and in essence holds that you are "observing, identifying or measuring what you say you are" (Mason, 2002:39). It is often held the validity depends upon reliability (Gray, 2009) and if so, we must be confident in the reliability of our findings. Discussions on the validity of research findings are forums for lively debate, where even in the realm of positivist research, the concept of validity is regarded as flawed (Lincoln and Guba 2000). Questions need to be asked around whether or not findings are sufficiently authentic, and whether or not researchers would feel secure enough within themselves to make policy or legislative reforms based on their findings. There is a need then to be sure that concepts can be identified or observed as we intend, and in turn how well the method and data source illuminate the concepts in focus (Mason, 2002). According to Gray (2009) the issue of validity in semi-structured interviews can be directly addressed by ensuring that the question content concentrates on the research objectives. To achieve this, a pilot interview was carried out with a luxury hotel manager local to the researcher's base (see section 5.3.2). This provided a means by which the interpretation of questions could be examined, as well as providing a process for checking question phrasing and use of appropriate, non-biased language.

5.3.3 SAMPLING FRAME AND METHOD

Sampling frame refers to a list or set of directions for identifying the target population for the research, or a list, or resource of population elements (Malhotra 1999; Mason 2002; Gray 2009). One problem associated with the use of sampling frames in qualitative research is that there may not be a sampling frame available (Mason, 2002). In this study, it was noted in Chapter 2, the inconsistencies in global hotel ranking schemes, which contributed to the difficulties in devising an appropriate sampling frame. A further critical issue for this aspect of the research was the problem of access, and in part, this forms some basis for the decision to employ a purposive sampling approach. Discussed later in this chapter in section 5.6, significant barriers were faced in the form of industry gatekeepers, which made the strict adherence of any formal sampling frame impossible. There is a great dearth of literature relating to appropriate sampling procedures for hard to reach populations (Hall, 2011), and it is acknowledged predominantly within the human geography literature that there are considerable challenges around gaining access to elites (Richards 1996; Herod 1999; Sabot 1999; Feldman et al. 2003; Desmond 2004; M. B. Smith 1956; Morris 2009; Rice 2010). As such, the adoption of any prescriptive, positivistic sampling frame was deemed unsuitable.

The chosen sampling method for this study was a purposive sampling strategy, which aimed to utilize industry partnerships to obtain access to both interviewees and questionnaire respondents. Purposive sampling is commonly used in grounded theory studies (Robson, 2002), and involves the researcher deliberately selecting respondents based on a particular characteristic (Robson, 2002; Gray, 2009), which in this study involved being a manager of a five star (or higher) hotel. Partnerships with various luxury hotel brands, in addition to the one sponsoring the project, were sought for the study, as well as from individual hotel managers. In total, three (including the commercial operation of the sponsoring body) international luxury hotel chains were approached, consisting of 25 hotels, and a further two independent luxury hotels. A total of 6 interviews were completed equalling a response rate of approximately 27%. Although this would appear low for a qualitative study, some important points should be addressed. Firstly, as alluded to in the discussion already, gaining access to and sampling this population was problematic and a reflexive discussion on this is presented in section 5.6. Second, it should also be noted that equal weighting was not intended for both sets of qualitative and quantitative results; as such, the interview data generated from phase one of the research, whilst not necessarily generalisable does provide some interesting insights, and illuminates the, at times, differing opinions of managers in this sector.

Table 9- Summary of hotel responses

Hotel	Company	City	Country	Response
The Lowry	Rocco Forte Collection	Manchester	UK	No response
Brown's Hotel	Rocco Forte Collection	London	UK	No response
The Balmoral	Rocco Forte Collection	Edinburgh	UK	✓
The Charles Hotel	Rocco Forte Collection	Munich	Germany	No response
Villa Kennedy	Rocco Forte Collection	Frankfurt	Germany	No response
Hotel de Rome	Rocco Forte Collection	Berlin	Germany	No response
Le Richemond	Rocco Forte Collection	Geneva	Switzerland	✓
Hotel de Russie	Rocco Forte Collection	Rome	Italy	Accepted, but later declined
Hotel Savoy	Rocco Forte Collection	Florence	Italy	No response
Hotel Astoria	Rocco Forte Collection	St Petersburg	Russia	Accepted, but later declined
Augustine Hotel	Rocco Forte Collection	Prague	Czech Republic	No response
Medinat Jumeirah	Jumeirah	Dubai	UAE	✓
Burj Al Arab	Jumeirah	Dubai	UAE	✓
Jumeirah Beach Hotel	Jumeirah	Dubai	UAE	Invitation declined
Jumeirah Creekside Hotel	Jumeirah	Dubai	UAE	No response
Jumeirah Emirates Towers	Jumeirah	Dubai	UAE	Invitation declined
Jumeirah Zabeel Saray	Jumeirah	Dubai	UAE	No response
Jumeirah Carlton Tower	Jumeirah	London	UK	No response
Jumeirah Lowndes Hotel	Jumeirah	London	UK	No response
Ynys Hir Hall	Relais & Chateaux	Egwls Fach	UK	No response
Royal Crescent	Relais & Chateaux	Bath	UK	Invitation Declined
Huka Lodge	Relais & Chateaux	Taupo	New Zealand	No response
Luton Hoo	Elite Hotels	Luton	UK	✓
Palazzo Versace	Independent	Gold Coast	Australia	No response

The aim of purposive sample is not to achieve a representative sample, rather it sets out to sample people who can usefully offer some perspective on the research question (Churchill & Iacobucci 2005; Parasuraman et al. 2004). There is a recognition that, with purposive sampling, the process of sampling, data generation and data analysis are dynamic and interactive (Mason, 2002), and as such the use of a purposive sampling strategy is cognisant with the recursive approach being adopted in this study.

5.3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

A key conflation grappled with by researchers is that of interpretation and whether or not we are interpretatively rigorous. In the realm of the positivist and neo-positivist researcher, validity is arguably achieved through the rigorous application of method, and the need to implement such strategies as reliability, validity and generalisability (section 5.2.3). It is through the simultaneous application of interpretative rigor and the rigorous application of method, that critical realists are cursed with trying to strike a balance between the two. The key strength in the adoption of a critical realist paradigm is the recognition that truths are fallible and are often a product of historical and social contexts (Jennings 2009). The preceding chapters of this report have demonstrated how the observed regularity manifests itself in increased levels of unsustainable mass consumption, but are accompanied by increasing levels of 'green' marketing. This observed phenomenon was explored in this first phase of the research with hotel managers, where similar concepts are then tested in the second phase of the research (see section 5.4).

As mentioned in the previous sections, a recursive research approach has been adopted for the qualitative phase of the project, and as such interview transcripts were analysed concurrently whilst other interviews were taking place. Not only did the results from the interviews inform future interviews, but they also informed items asked in the second phase on-line questionnaire. The qualitative software package NVivo9 (QSR International 2012) was used to carry out the analysis of interview transcripts, which allowed the researcher to draw out relevant themes. First, a 'coding detail' method was used (Bazeley 2007: 69) which involved a "detailed, slow reflective exploration" of the interview transcripts. This method allows for patterns to emerge in what participants are saying. Carried out concurrently at this step was the ‘fracturing’ or ‘slicing’ of data (Bazeley, 2007) which allows the researcher to code sections of the transcript to one or more headings. This is in part informed by Straus' (1987) coding paradigm, whereby the researcher should be asking questions about what interactions, conditions, strategies or consequences relate to an initial code of the text. Following this, nodes were then refined and re-categorised into broader groups to assist in answering the research questions outlined above. In this sense, some *a priori* coding took place, whereby key words and phrases from the research questions were used to thematically group the coded text.

5.4 RESEARCH PHASE 2

The second phase of the research focused on the demand-side aspects of brand loyalty through the examination of the level of value consumers place on such issues as sustainability and CSR. This phase used quantitative methods, specifically, an on-line questionnaire survey of luxury hotel guests. This phase of the research used the Psychological Continuum Model (PCM) developed by Funk & James (2001), as a means of assessing brand loyalty in luxury hotels. Of particular interest to this phase of the research however, was assessing how much value consumers placed on various aspects, especially sustainability and CSR. This second phase of the research sought to examine consumer value of mass-market luxury tourists. Through the work of Elliott & Urry (2010) and (Beaverstock et al. 2004) for example, it is argued that the Global-Elite are responsible for creating aspirations for both conspicuous and unsustainable levels of consumption. By examining the value constructs of mass-market luxury consumers it will possible to evaluate in part whether or not their motivational drivers are represented by the same value domains as characterised by the Global Elite (see section 2.3). Figure 21 illustrates the component elements of the research model for this phase of the project. While the theoretical evolution of the consumer value models and the PCM have already been presented in Chapters 2 & 4, the following discussion expands on the mechanics of the model, and the specific constructs employed in the questionnaire.

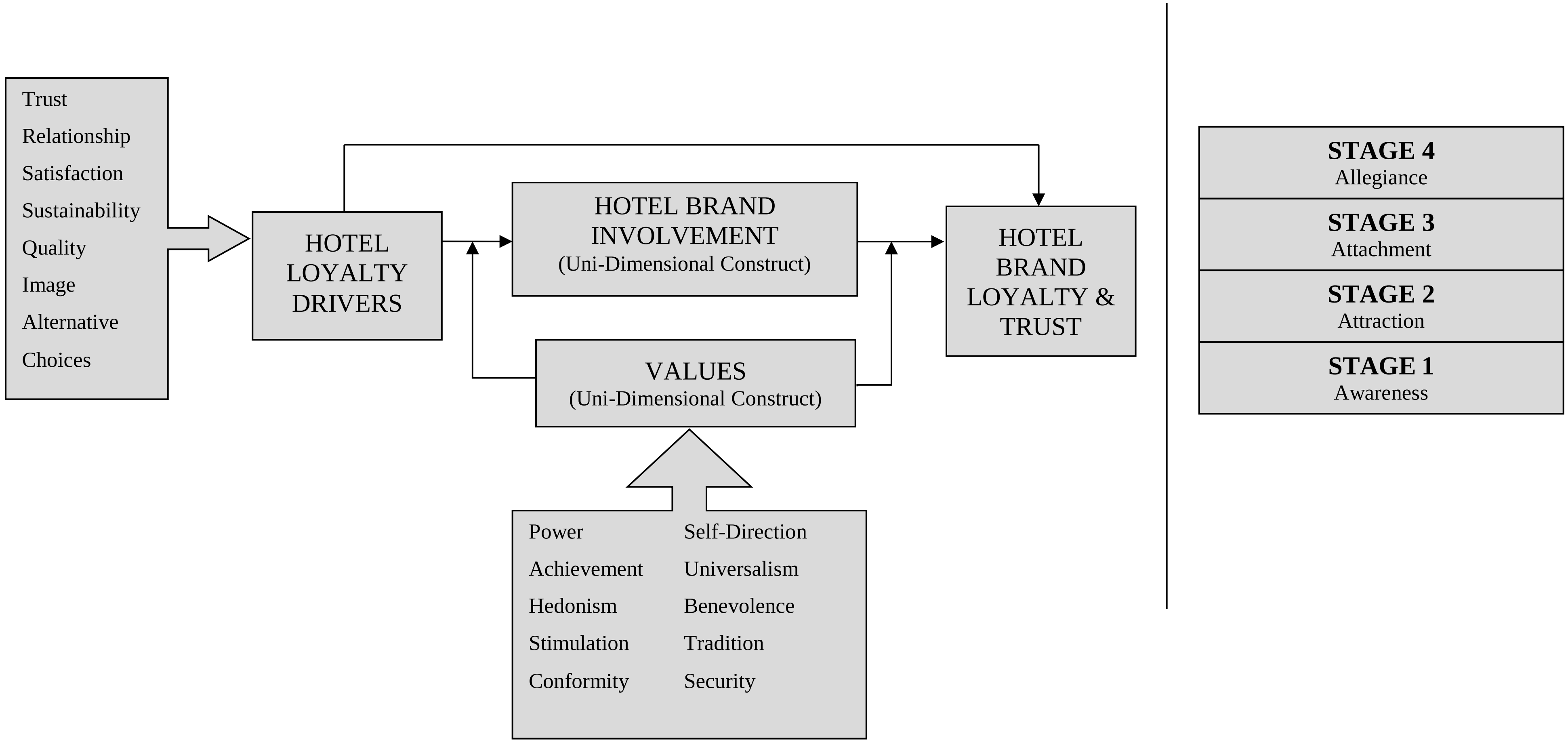


Figure 21 - Model to predict prominent values and drivers of hotel loyalty according to level of involvement with a brand

5.4.1 PHASE TWO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Question 2.1: Which hotel loyalty drivers can be used to operationalise the PCM staging procedure?

Research Question 2.2: To what extent does the level of value consumers place on hotel loyalty drivers influence their degree of loyalty toward luxury hotels?

Research Question 2.3: To what extent do guests at luxury hotels place value on specific drivers of hotel loyalty, in particular, sustainable business practices?

Research Question 2.4: What do guests of luxury hotels understand by the terms 'sustainability', 'sustainable business practices' and 'Corporate Social Responsibility'?

5.4.2 INSTRUMENT DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

The overarching aim of this phase was, in essence, to assess consumer behaviour and motivations, where associations of likelihood, and measures of prediction were sought, a questionnaire survey was deemed appropriate. Aside from the guidance provided through the study's paradigmatic framework adopted, questionnaires aim to describe or explain the characteristics of population through the use of a representative sample, and have obvious benefits of being a rapid and inexpensive way of generating data and discovering characteristics on the population in question, (May, 2011). Of course, the earlier principles of reliability, generalisability and validity are critical to this method of data generation, and along with the considerations on sampling frame, sampling method and data analysis, are discussed below.

The nature of online surveys affords them a number of advantages over more traditional paper-based approaches including the speed at which data can be collected, the ability to incorporate effective contingency questions, direct data entry into analysis software and the ability to achieve a wide geographic reach (Sue & Ritter 2012). Whilst these were all considerations for this phase of the research, of particular importance was the degree of anonymity an online questionnaire affords the respondent. Questions were asked not only on consumer behaviour and opinions, but about behaviour and opinions on a socially and politically sensitive topic. The issue of socially acceptable and desirable responses was acutely obvious, and the ability of online surveys not only to provide anonymity, but also to distance (physically and morally) the respondent from the researcher was felt to be an important step in gaining more reliable data. Other approaches to collecting the data were considered, including the use of in-room paper-based questionnaires. Because of the reasons outlined, as well as issues concerning the reluctance from hotel managers to participate in this form of data collection, and logistical implications of questionnaires being delivered, collected by hotel staff and returned to the researcher, and how this would influence response rates, meant this option was rendered unviable (see section 5.6 on gatekeepers for further discussion).

There are however disadvantages of using online surveys. Namely, a reliance on (costly) survey software, the possibility of coverage bias whereby respondents are targeted by too many other digital surveys causing overload and reduced response rates (Litvin & Kar 2001; Sue & Ritter 2012). Further to this, increasing concerns over privacy laws (for sending questionnaire invitations) and data security (for receiving questionnaire responses) were also considered to be possible disadvantages (Gray 2009), but not aspects that were insurmountable. The survey was constructed and disseminated using the web-based platform 'Qualtrics' (www.qualtrics.com). This particular software package was chosen over others due largely to the number and style of questions available in it. The researcher had also seen this software used successfully in previous research on sport tourists' involvement with a destination (Filo et al. 2011) which used the same PCM framework employed in this research. The aforementioned obstacle of data security was overcome by a single-user licence to the software being purchased, meaning that the researcher was the only person who had access to the questionnaire design and the subsequent results collected. The issue of respondent privacy is addressed in section 5.4.4 below, and further ethical considerations to the research as a whole are discussed in section 5.6. Ultimately though, while these limitations are still evident, internet-based surveys can "present advantages over traditional modes of data collection if it is used for specific populations that are known to be Internet savvy" (Aoki & Elasmar 2000: 3).

As previously mentioned, the questionnaire has been developed from the combination of Schwartz's Value Typology (1994) and the PCM (James & Funk, 2001). The questionnaire consisted of four key constructs which were to be measured: Hotel Loyalty Drivers, Involvement, Consumer Values and Hotel Brand Attitudinal Loyalty (see sections 5.4.2.1 – 5.4.2.4). Each of the constructs are discussed below. Questionnaires were developed as a means of testing the model presented in Figure 21 above, and consisted predominantly of closed-ended questions, Likert-type scales, attitude response statements and ranking questions. In particular, there were two major advantages of using closed-ended questions in the questionnaire – firstly, to avoid the overly laborious task of analysing and coding open-ended questions, which may not result in any more valuable responses to the researcher than well-constructed closed-ended questions (Mason, 2002); and secondly, response rates of closed-ended questions tend to be higher, and given the nature of the sample for this research, such styles of questions are therefore deemed appropriate (Veal, 2006). Figure 22 below represents the process that was followed in the development of the questionnaires, and shows that once the questionnaire had been finalised, a phase of pilot testing (see section 7.1) and preliminary analysis was undertaken to ensure reliability and validity of scales. The results from this are presented in Chapter 7.

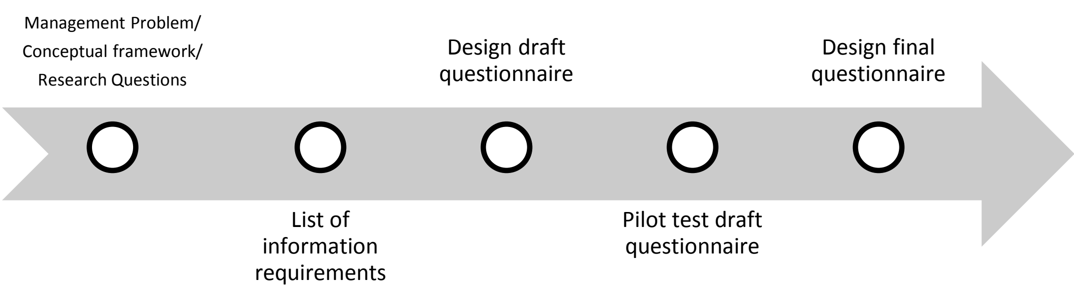


Figure 22 - Stages of questionnaire design process

5.4.2.1 Construct 1: Hotel Loyalty Drivers

This construct attempted to measure the degree to which each of these factors influenced customers' loyalty at luxury hotels. The broader loyalty construct used in this phase is said to consist of two aspects – attitudinal and behavioural (Gounaris & Stathakopoulos 2004). The Hotel Loyalty Drivers construct discussed here was included in the model design to obtain information on behavioural loyalty (construct 4 examines attitudinal loyalty). At the crux of this construct is the desire to measure, not a guest's propensity to revisit a hotel, but *why* they would likely do so. Inherent in the concept of loyalty is the idea of commitment (Bowen & Shoemaker 1998), whereby it is argued that increasing an individual's resistance to change (through a number of antecedents), increased commitment and loyalty can be achieved (Pritchard et al. 1999). In addition, the Hotel Loyalty Drivers construct will be used in the PCM algorithm for group segmentation. This measure of behavioural loyalty and commitment was measured through seven items on a 7-point Likert scale (see Figure 23) which were derived from the broader extant literature on loyalty, being Trust, Relationship, Satisfaction, Sustainability, Quality, Image and Alternative Choices.

Thinking about your most recent stay at a Thomson Holidays luxury (5 star) hotel, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement to the statements below:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disgaree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
I trust the staff and management of this hotel							
My relationship with this company has a great deal of personal meaning							
Overall, I am satisfied with this hotel							
The adoption of sustainability policies at this hotel is important to me							
This hotel was of the highest quality throughout							
This company has a positive image							
If there were other hotels of a similar standard available, I would still choose this hotel							

Figure 23 - Hotel Brand Loyalty Drivers Construct survey question

5.4.2.2 Construct 2: Hotel Involvement

Central to the PCM is the concept of involvement, (see Chapter 2 for full discussion). Involvement here is conceptualised as a multi-faceted construct representing the degree to which visiting luxury hotels becomes a central component of their life and providing both pleasure and symbolic value. Involvement was operationalized through the three aspects of (1) Pleasure (the positive affect elicited by staying at a luxury hotel); (2) Centrality (how central a particular brand of luxury hotel is to their lives); and (3) Sign (the degree to which staying at a luxury hotel provided symbolic capital and acted as a vehicle for self-expression). Each dimension was assessed via three questions to improve construct reliability using a 7-point Likert scale format (see Figure 24). From this, each involvement element is used to operationalize the PCM framework through the use of the staging algorithm developed by Beaton et al. (2009). Further discussion on the mechanics of the staging procedure is provided under section 7.7.

Thinking about your most recent stay at a Thomson Holidays luxury (5 star) hotel, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement to the statements below:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disgaree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
I really enjoyed visiting this hotel							
Lots of my time was organised around visiting this hotel							
Visiting this hotel really allowed me to be myself							
Visiting this hotel was pleasurable							
A lot of my life was organised around visiting this particular hotel							
Visiting this hotel says a lot about who I am							
Visiting this hotel was very interesting							
Visiting this hotel played a central role in my life							
When I stayed at this hotel, others could see me the way I wanted them to see me							

Figure 24 - Involvement Construct survey questions

5.4.2.3 Construct 3: Consumer Values

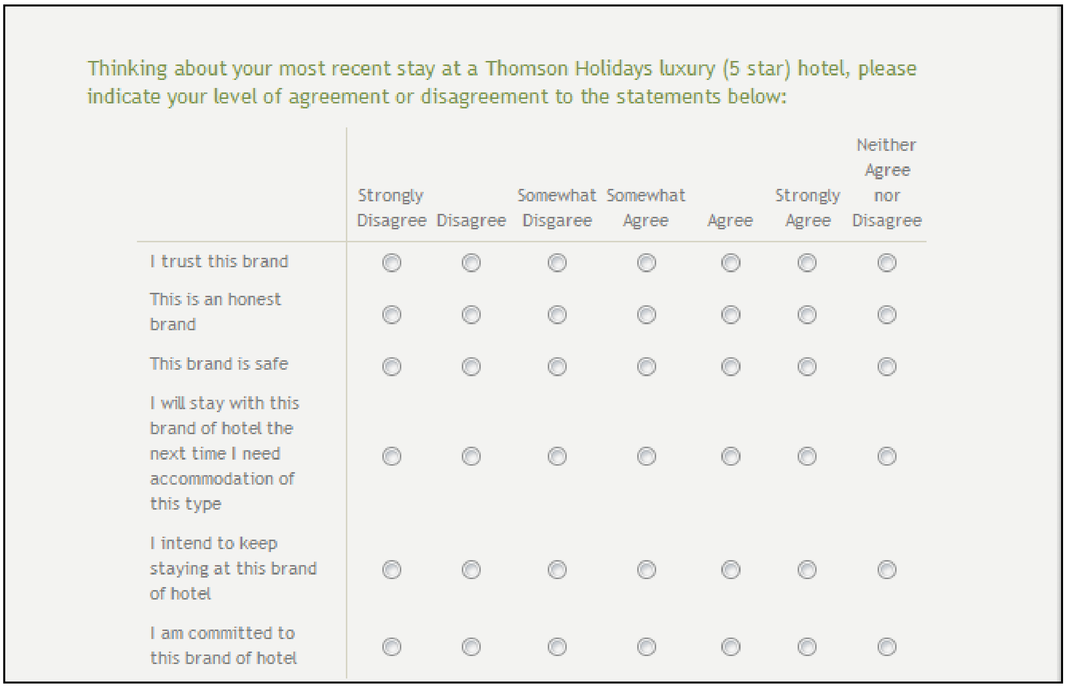
Derived from the earlier discussion (Chapter 4) on consumer values and attitudes, the Consumer Value construct aims to assess the degree of importance people place on individual items in a set of universal values (Schwartz's Value Typology, 1994). The inclusion of values in the overall research model for this phase was predicated on the definitional characteristics of values being those concepts or beliefs which guide desirable behaviour (Schwartz & Bilsky 1987). As one of the existing constructs was examining behaviour, then the link to values has to be worthy of investigation. Furthermore, consumers' propensity to exhibit loyal behaviours can be characterised (through maximizing their resistance to change) by the extent to which they identify with important values and self-images (Pritchard, Havitz & Howard, 1999). As discussed in Chapter 4, Schwartz's Value Typology is widely used as a comprehensive, cross-culturally applicable system of values. The typology consists of 10 value domains, and a 7-point Likert scale was used to assess the relative importance respondents placed on each value domain (1 = Principle opposes my lifestyle to 7 = Of supreme importance). Table 10 lists the value items and the description given to them in the questionnaire.

Table 10 - Consumer Value Construct survey items

Item	Description
Power	Social power, authority and wealth
Achievement	Success, capability, ambition, influence on people and events
Hedonism	Gratification of desires, enjoyment in life, self-indulgence
Stimulation	Daring, a varied and challenging life, an exciting life
Self-Direction	Creativity, freedom, curiosity, independence, choosing one's own goals
Universalism	Broad-mindedness, beauty of nature and arts, social justice, a world at peace, equality, wisdom, unity with nature, environmental protection
Benevolence	Helpfulness, honesty, forgiveness, loyalty, responsibility
Tradition	Respect for tradition, humbleness, accepting one's portion in life, devotion, modesty
Conformity	Obedience, honouring parents and elders, self-discipline, politeness
Security	National security, family security, social order, cleanliness, reciprocation of favours.

5.4.2.4 Construct 4: Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust

This construct focuses on the attitudinal aspects of hotel brand loyalty and hotel brand trust. It aims to examine the decision-making process behind purchasing a particular brand over another similar brand. It is intended that this construct will provide a good indication as to the driving factors in the overall decision-making process, and will provide information about future intentions and intended purchasing behaviour. Inherent in this construct is the element of trust, which provides an in-depth analysis of the utilitarian factors that drive purchase decisions. The items in this construct also place respondents in a position to think about a particular brand against competing brands in their product categories. Each dimension (Hotel Brand Loyalty & Hotel Brand Trust) was assessed via three items in order to improve construct reliability using a 7-point Likert scale format (see Figure 25).


Thinking about your most recent stay at a Thomson Holidays luxury (5 star) hotel, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement to the statements below:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disgaree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
I trust this brand							
This is an honest brand							
This brand is safe							
I will stay with this brand of hotel the next time I need accommodation of this type							
I intend to keep staying at this brand of hotel							
I am committed to this brand of hotel							

Figure 25 - Hotel Brand Loyalty and Hotel Brand Trust Construct survey questions

5.4.3 INSTRUMENT VALIDITY

The concepts of reliability, generalisability and validity are discussed below. These concepts have already been introduced in relation to the first phase of the research above, and although their implementation was different in the first phase, the broad definitions remain the same. As such, the proceeding sections will not provide definitions, but will focus simply on the practical execution of the concepts for this phase of the research.

5.4.3.1 Reliability

Reliability in this phase of the research was concerned with the extent to which measures from an instrument or construct are internally consistent (N. K. Malhotra et al. 2012). The internal consistency and reliability of scales in quantitative studies is frequently tested by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient, and ranges from 0 to 1. Alpha coefficients can be used to rate the reliability of factors from either dichotomous or multi-point questions (i.e. Likert-type scales). The benchmark typically quoted for the social sciences was developed by Nunnally (1978) who suggests that a score of ≥ 0.50 is sufficient evidence of internal reliability. He goes on to note that scores of ≥ 0.70 suggest strong item covariance. Results of these reliability tests for this questionnaire are presented in chapter 7.

5.4.3.2 Generalisability

The probability that the results are representative of the larger population is referred to as generalisability (Veal, 2006). As noted earlier, the level of response rates plays an important role in confirming the generalisability of these results. While response rates for on-line surveys are generally acknowledged to be lower than their paper-based counterparts (Cook et al. 2000), it was felt that given the size of the sampling frame (see section 5.5.4), the results could go some way to providing relevant and insightful findings. Strictly speaking though, it should be remembered that results from *any* study only relate to the subjects involved at the specific time and place that the research was carried out (Veal, 2006). As such, conclusions drawn from this study, like any other, primarily relate to the sample at hand. Further studies would need to be carried out, at a different time and place, to guarantee the reproducibility of results, and therefore the accuracy of any such conclusions.

5.4.3.3 Validity

Earlier it was noted that validity related to "observing, identifying or measuring what you say you are" (Mason, 2002:39), and in this phase of questionnaire research, validity can be sub-divided into two categories of face validity and construct validity. Face validity, refers to whether or not the concept being measured is being done so appropriately (Sarantakos 1998), that is, that in addition to being pragmatically and statistically valid, it should appear practical and relevant to the test – it should not only be valid, but appear valid. Jennings (2001) notes that if the questionnaire does not *appear* valid, then respondents will have difficulty reconciling the need for particular questions to be asked. Whilst it was not one of the main aims of the research to investigate and deconstruct respondents' understandings of sustainability and CSR, asking questions around this certainly contributed to improving the face validity of the research.

Construct validity on the other hand holds that any measure which encapsulates several indicators should be theoretically sound (Jennings, 2001). It also refers to the degree to which inferences can legitimately be made through the operationalisation of theoretical concepts on which the construct was based(N. K. Malhotra et al. 2012). The construct validity of this instrument was demonstrated in the preceding sections discussion on questionnaire constructs.

5.4.4 SAMPLING FRAME & METHOD

The sampling frame for this phase of the research was luxury hotel guests (as defined in chapter 2), but operationalized in the sampling method (section 5.5.5) was those people who had stayed in a 5-star luxury hotel in the defined 12 month period from December 2010 to December 2011. To draw an appropriate sample from this frame, a partnership was formed with TUI (UK & Ireland) (hereon referred to as TUI), and the cooperation of TUI with the research was seen as suitable in achieving the research aim (section 5.6 provides further discussion on access to research participants and the role of gatekeepers). As part of their agreement to participate, it was arranged that a report outlining the results of the study would be provided upon conclusion of the research. TUI were asked to stratify their database of customers based on the criteria outlined above.

From the preceding discussion it is evident that the sampling strategy used in this phase of the research was that of a stratified random sampling method. This strategy involves drawing a sample from a company's specified stratum (Gray, 2009), where members of that sub-group share a specified characteristic (Robson, 2002). In this case, while the population of interest were guests who had stayed in luxury hotels, of particular interest were those who had carried out their visit within the defined 12-month period. The main reason for this was that it was felt that customers would be more able to accurately recall and reflect on their stay if it had occurred within the preceding 12 month period. It should be noted that there may be a perceived lack of control that the researcher had over the selection of respondents. Due to privacy laws including the Data Protection Act, mentioned earlier, the cooperation of TUI hinged on their being able to select and contact the respondents internally, so that no personal information of their customers was released to any third parties. It is not believed that this would have any fundamental impact on the findings, particularly given the sample size of 20,000 customers. Response rates are discussed fully in chapter 7.

As discussed in section 5.5.2, upon completion of the questionnaire instrument, an initial phase of pilot testing was carried out. According to May (2011) it useful to gain a sub-set of the sample and elicit their opinions and responses. The main aim of this pre-testing phase was to check that the survey worked, both from a technological and empirical perspective. From the main sample of 20,000 customers, a sub-set of 1,000 customers were selected to test the questionnaire. The responses collected from this did not show any significant errors in the operation of the questionnaire, and preliminary checks on construct validity were positive. Further details on the analysis of this pilot study are presented in Chapter 7.

Following this initial phase of pilot-testing, the main sampling was carried out. The remaining 19,000 customers were sent an e-mail with a brief overview of the study and an invitation to participate via a link to the survey. The e-mail was sent internally by TUI, from an internal e-mail address created for the purpose of this research. During the mail out of the main questionnaire link, it became apparent that the link to the survey was incorrect, and that respondents were being directed immediately to the prize draw without being directed to the questionnaire. Upon realising this, TUI were contacted and asked to cease e-mailing customers, and a revised e-mail was sent with a new link to the questionnaire. This had an obvious impact on the response rate of the survey, and details of this are provided in Chapter 7.

5.4.5 DATA ANALYSIS

The results from the questionnaire were analysed using the statistical software package SPSS19.0. Broadly speaking, data analysis consisted of the following steps. First, descriptive statistics were generated for each facet of hotel involvement and hotel brand trust and loyalty. Second, the convergent and discriminant validity of hotel involvement were tested. Third, the three-step staging procedure for the PCM was implemented to allocate the sample into the four stages of the PCM framework (awareness, attraction, attachment or allegiance). A discussion on the staging procedure is presented in section 7.x. Finally, a series of regression analyses were conducted in order to determine the mediation effect of Schwartz's value construct on the model. The explanatory significance of various other components of the model were also tested.

5.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RESEARCH(ER) REFLEXIVITY

5.5.1 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In accordance with the University Research Ethics Committee, this research was designed to meet all ethical considerations set out and approved by the Committee. According to the (Health Research Authority 2012) the primary purpose of maintaining ethical principles and associated guidelines for research involving humans is "to protect the rights, safety, dignity and well-being of research participants". This research was developed in line with the Economic and Social Research Council Framework for Research Ethics (ESRCUK 2010). This framework has six key principles which are addressed here in turn. The first principle considers research design which ensures integrity and quality, and it is held that through the preceding discussion in this chapter that both of these were achieved. The second principle relates to that of informed consent where researchers and participants alike should be fully informed about the purpose, methods and possible intended uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails, as well as any potential associated risks. For phase one of the research, participants were provided with an information sheet on the study (see Appendix 1), and their explicit consent was obtained at the start of each recording. For phase two of the research, respondents were provided with information on the study, including their ability to withdraw at any stage, both in the text of the e-mail and on the first screen of the on-line questionnaire. The third principle addressed confidentiality of research findings and the associated anonymity of research participants. In the first phase of the research, as a condition of participation, confidentiality of findings was guaranteed and all results (presented as direct quotes or otherwise) have been anonymised. As discussed earlier, in the second phase of research, the use of an on-line survey of hotel guests, as well as the dissemination of e-mail invitations by TUI, allowed for confidentiality principles to be adhered to and the anonymity of responses to be achieved. The fourth concerns voluntary participation and the absence of coercion in the recruitment of research subjects. In neither phase was coercion used, however in phase two of the research, participants were invited to enter a prize draw for a £50 Amazon gift voucher as an incentive to participate. At all times however, it was noted that their participation was voluntary, and that they could withdraw at any point without harm or penalty. The fifth principal holds that harm to research participants must be avoided, and at no point was this considered to be a possibility in this research project. Finally the sixth principal concerns disclosure and conflicts of interest. That is, that research should be conducted independently and any such conflicts of interest should be disclosed.

5.5.2 RESEARCH(ER) REFLEXIVITY

Importantly, Lincoln and Guba (2000) talk of reflexivity (a process of critical reflection on the self[ves] and the dualities one faces when conducting research) as something which may be problematic for the (neo)-positivist researcher, particularly with respect to maintaining objectivity. It is here that this somewhat strict positivist stance needs to be softened for the critical realist researcher, and it is through the axiomatic elements, that this softening can be achieved. While both post-positivists and critical realists aspire to research which is value free, critical realists will give consideration to the emancipatory role of research (Jennings 2001). As such, for the researcher to engage in critical self-reflection, should not be seen as an obstacle to achieving this objective end, but rather a way of verifying that the reconciliation of the various selves has occurred in a way that has allowed for an objective research process and account of research findings.

Reflexivity, according to Lincoln and Guba (2000:183), is "the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher". They note that reflexivity causes us to consider the dualities we face through the research process as teacher and learner, and inquirer and respondent. The multitude of roles we bring to the research process can, according to Reinharz (1997), be categorized into three broad areas: research-based selves, brought selves and situationally created selves. She argues that each self comes into play in its own distinct way throughout the research process, each with its own unique voice. Often these 'selves' are enacted simultaneously, and as such the critical realist researcher can find themselves confronted with what seems like a 'Jekyll and Hyde'-type complex, pushing and pulling at neatly formed ideas and values. Reinharz (1997) urges the researcher to question themselves, and examine how binaries and paradoxes brought forward into the field shape our research-based selves as well as how they might influence the discovery process which unfolds during the writing-up of research.

Qualitative research in particular was once characterized as the twin process of "writing up" (field notes) and "writing down" (narrative), and almost implicit in this conception are the difficulties which emanate in this process. Richardson (2000) notes that writing is a stage of discovery, both of the subject and sometimes the problem, but also a stage for discovering the self – in all its manifestations. Problems, and arguably benefits, often associated with such postmodern inquiries including "more dynamic, problematic, open-ended and complex forms of writing and representation" (Lincoln and Guba 2000:184) are seen as problems which don't affect the neo-positivist researcher. Can we be so simplistic as to assume that this plurality of selves only manifest themselves in the researchers concerned with the likes of social construction, interpretivism and phenomenology? In the same way positivist researchers are criticized for not embracing multiple realities in the research, the opposite criticism can be levelled at post-modern researchers who might assume that the researcher journey of a positivist inquirer is a smooth one. The practical execution of a research project, is one still fraught with problems, both ethical and logistical. In their table (Table 6.5), Lincoln and Guba (2000:173) note that reflexivity for the positivist and post-positivist researcher is something of an obstacle in achieving the requisite levels of objectivity. Is this to say that positivist researchers should not, or cannot, embark on a journey of critical self-reflection? Surely the reconciliation of multiple selves must help in verifying the validity of the research, as well as affirming the appropriateness of the research method with the research problem.

An important issue concerning control (of the research) is raised by Lincoln and Guba (2000), who note that for conventional inquirers, that is those researching under a positivist framework (and to some extent post-positivists), control is quite comfortably separated from the issues of voice, reflexivity and textual representation, as it is held that each of these elements claim to the threaten the rigor (objectivity and validity) of the research. In line with the preceding paragraph however, the blurring of paradigm boundaries has made this less of an issue for the so-called 'new paradigm inquirers', particularly when the concept of research(er) reflexivity can be sufficiently accounted for.

5.6 Industry-Funded Research, Gatekeepers and the Social Control of Research

As with any research, a number of challenges were faced in relation to the execution of the research strategy, however the industry-funded nature of this project led to a number of issues related to the social control of research. Engaging in the above discussions on reflexivity gives cause to reflect on this associated issue of control of research, and to give consideration to the consequences of engaging with this type of research program. The discussion that follows points to a number of challenges that were faced by the researcher whilst conducting this research, and in doing so offers explanation and justification for decisions that were made, as well as highlighting some of the broader implications of engaging in industry-funded research.

The desire to blend academia and industry accentuates issues around access and associated barriers to conducting industry focused research, which often are largely ignored (Okumus, Altinay and Roper, 2007; Feldmann, Bell and Berger, 2003). Often, the problems underlying industry-funded research, (for example, Broadhead and Rist 1976), is the presumption that a degree of engagement is achieved with the sponsoring body. The ways in which gatekeepers exert power and influence upon the researcher (and at times the researched), has a significant impact on the social control and direction of research, as well as evoking feelings of marginalisation in the individual researcher from the resultant tensions between industry and the (perceived) 'blue-skies research' of the academy (Tribe, 2010). The power and influence of industry gatekeepers on academic research is a topic which is rarely legitimised as being worthy of research and discussion in itself. The social control of research raises questions about the emotional labour of early career academics and the importance of retaining academic integrity when, at times, it seems to dissolve within commercial pragmatism and unrealistic expectations.

While the personal challenges we face as researchers have been discussed previously (e.g. Everett, 2010), an area that has received relatively little attention in the tourism arena to date is the issue of access. Access issues associated with researching marginalised groups and ethnic minorities are well documented (e.g. Altinay and Wang, 2009; Lugosi 2009; Cole, 2005; Miller, 2004), however research on negotiating access in a corporate industry environment is more limited (Feldman et al., 2003). Much of the discussion around access issues are provided by experienced researchers, and offer little assistance to early career academics. Challenges and hurdles are presented merely as tactical issues (Gummesson, 2000), and the onus is often placed on the researcher, rather than the researched. Outsiders are not always welcome when they are seeking to investigate what are perceived to be awkward or sensitive issues (Ofkumu et al., 2007), and even less so when the researcher enters the organisation at a level above the researched

(Burgess, 1990). Tribe (2008) talks of a position of privilege that academics hold, attributable to their spatial and temporal situatedness which sustains their (powerful) position and authority. In the formative years of early-career researchers however, and particularly for those engaged in industry-funded research, power is elusive and negotiations with gatekeepers over access to research participants reinforces this power*(less)* position of early-career researchers.

5.6.1 EMOTIONAL LABOUR

There is little empirical evidence providing in-depth understanding on the emotions of early career researchers (Hubbard, Backett-Milburn and Kemmer, 2001), although there is recognition of the emotional labour involved in the research process, both implicitly (e.g. Kleinman & Copp, 1993; Everett, 2010) and explicitly (e.g. Adams, 1998; Chesney, 2001). Emotional labour is generally understood to be "the effort a person invests in expressing or coping with his or her emotions so as to achieve objectives pertaining to his or her work" (Nutov and Hazzan, 2008:2). The researcher journey is one that can result in "loneliness, powerlessness and confusion, and, quite possibly, some suffering at the hands of those being studied'' (Lee 1993:120). The 17th century philosopher Descartes lauded the disassociation between cognition and emotion through his infamous quote "I think, therefore I am", and in doing so, encouraged researchers to remain objective and disconnected from the research topic so as to reveal the truth. In general, there is support for researchers to make note of moods, feelings, doubts and worries within field journals and diaries as a means of identifying and acknowledging the self as an ethnographer (Kleinman & Copp, 1993; Lutterell, 2000; Jarzabkowski, 2001). Jarzabkowski (2001) calls for further explicit recognition of emotional labour in research as it may prove beneficial for analysing both the research(er) experience and in constructing representations of the data collected. Figure 26 below identifies factors which, through industry-funded research projects, can contribute to emotional labour within early career researchers.

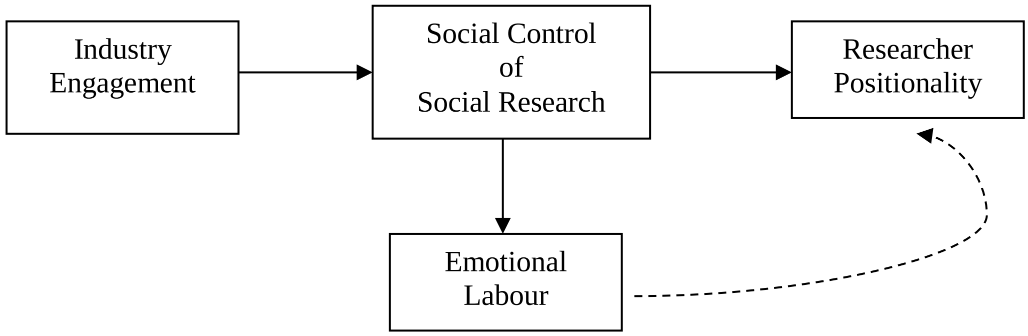


Figure 26 - Conceptual framework of influences of industry engagement with research

The physicality of conducting research is something which has not gone unrecognised, although the influential role this has on the research outcomes is often relegated to the side-lines, and curiously deemed to be somehow less important than the results themselves. The physical practice of research is found by many to be a tiresome, exhausting and lonely experience (Everett, 2010), and a far cry from the uncomplicated and orderly processes we are guided by in the majority of academic methods texts. Seldom is the mental welfare of researchers taken into consideration, and how well they are equipped to deal not only with the physical downsides such as fatigue and environmental constraints, but also the emotional and psychological challenges including rejection and the constant need to justify and validate research ideas to various stake holders.

The work of Cliff and Ryan (2002) can be used to parallel these research experiences, who talk of the gatekeeper role adopted by travel agents when tourists contact travel agents. In the same way travel agents “identify and open the portals to the far-off-land” (pg. 93), key industry actors have closed doors to those at the geographic core of society. While the service encounters between tourists and travel agents form the basis of how consumers will judge the business (Cliff and Ryan, 2002), these same ‘moments of truth’ are experienced in industry-focused researchers, where interactions (or lack thereof) are pivotal in determining whether to continue with the same approach, or if a change of tact is needed. The impact this has on the emotional endurance of researchers is obvious, but the influence these kinds of barriers place on the autonomy of the research direction, and academic integrity of the research are less so.

5.6.2 INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

Although this project gained the support of the external funding partner through their awarding of a scholarship, their willingness to participate in, and actively engage in the research process did not materialise. The discussion that follows focuses on issues that arose from the data analysis which include gaining access to industry and the involvement and participation of industry with research.

5.6.2.1 Access to Industry

Given that the funding body had agreed to sponsor the doctoral research (and the present topic specifically), it was assumed that the issue of access would be largely unproblematic. However, in the absence of a representative from the charitable arm of the funding body after the recruitment of the researcher, gaining access to relevant staff in the commercial arm of the funding body proved challenging. Strategies for gaining access to research subjects at an institutional level as well as an individual level tend to have full disclosure implicit in their execution (Shenton and Hayter, 2004), though the experience of this fieldwork raises questions around the effectiveness of this strategy. Pragmatic questions such as whether interviewees should be given a 'full and accurate' or abridged interview guide; or whether a realistic or more appealing shorter timeframe for the interview be given are often cast aside as less important decisions. However, the impact these have on gaining access to an organisation and the data generated are unquestionably significant.

Attempting to reconcile tactics to gain access, with considerations of academic rigour and integrity is rarely a happy marriage, especially when faced with a direct lack of support from the commercial arm of the funding body. In no uncertain terms, the doctoral researcher was told that "...we are definitely not prepared to allow you any communication with our customers... and any extra requests would bring overkill and be counter-productive to our promotional efforts" (Correspondence with hotel company Chief Executive Officer, June, 2010). Problems also arose around the ongoing commitment to the research and the associated logistical arrangements that were necessary to conduct the interviews.

On occasions, managers had accepted the request for interviews, but subsequent attempts to make arrangements were met with non-committal responses, and even cancellation of meetings when international travel arrangements had been made.

The role and influence of gatekeepers in controlling access to research participants is not widely published on, even though Broadhead and Rist had noted in1976 that strategies for managing the pressures of gatekeepers were poorly developed. Attempts at recruiting other organisations for this project (to supplement the commercial arm of the PhD's sponsor) resulted in a multi-layering of gatekeepers.

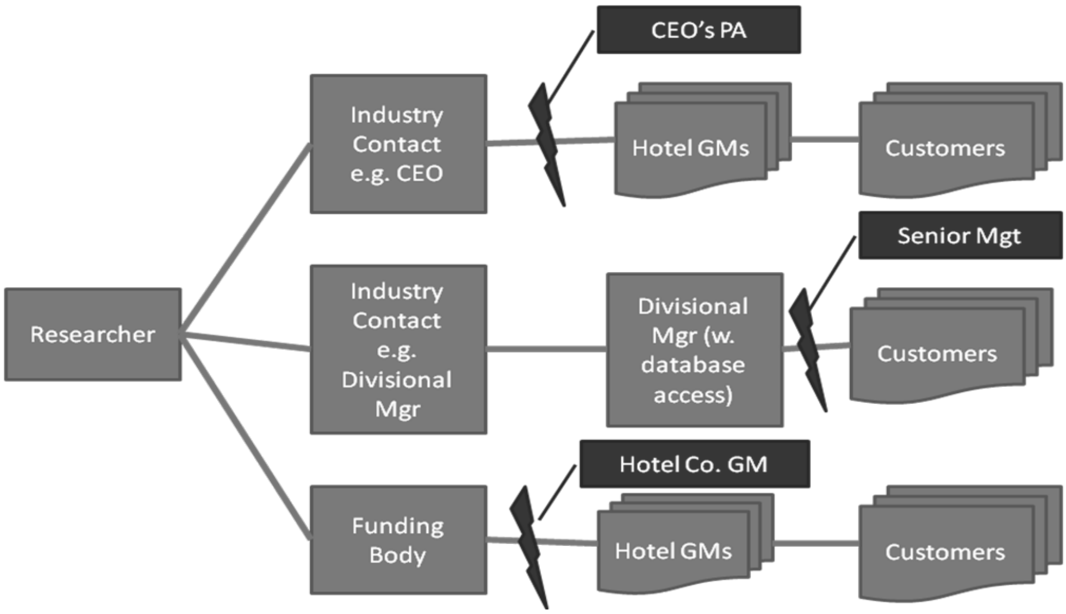


Figure 27 - Temporal interceptions of gatekeepers in research process

Gatekeepers were evident at a number of levels, both in a temporal sense and in their level of seniority within the organisation. Some gatekeepers emerged early on in the research, and came from a very senior position within the organisation. In other instances, even where direct and personal contact had been made with the company Chief Executive Officer, the gatekeeper came in the form of a personal assistant, and other lower level managers (the names of those quoted have been changed for anonymity and confidentiality). The interference of gatekeepers abetted feelings of frustration and desperation.

5.6.2.2 Participation from Industry

The aim of this research project being, in part, to explore the propensity of luxury hotels to adopt ethical and sustainable business practices, was one which was met with some trepidation from hotel managers. Emphasising the importance and significance of the research, as well as the degree of anonymity and confidentiality with which it would be carried out, to those who were to be interviewed was a difficult and intricate process. In particular, problems arose where managers of the for-profit organisation valued their time too highly and in the absence of a head-office directive to cooperate, many chose not to participate. From an initial e-mail sent from within the commercial arm to all thirteen hotel general managers within that chain, only one response was received. Upon a further follow-up e-mail being sent, one further response was received. So while the organisation as a whole had agreed to the premise of its general managers being interviewed at the recruitment stage, the absence of any firm head-office directive on engagement with the research meant managers were free to participate, or not.

When access had been obtained to a second luxury hotel company directly via the Chief Executive Officer, the absence of any head-office directive to participate meant there was little incentive for hotel managers to do so. Although this particular hotel company did not have a vested financial interest in the research, the offer of furnishing them with a report of aggregated results from all participating organisations did not appear to be enough of an incentive to engage fully and meaningfully. Ironically, even though the funding body *did* have a vested financial interest, this was *still* not incentive enough to engage meaningfully, and in turn raises questions about.

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Purpose of meeting was primarily to encourage the participation of the hotel company in the research project, and emphasise the need for more engagement from the sponsoring body. Notes from the meeting were as follows:

- *He didn't acknowledge/agree that sustainability was a concern, and was unconvinced by the need for concern in this area;*
- *He believed that sustainability was a nuisance/hassle for business;*
- *He felt that sustainability/ethical consumption was something that needed to be consumer driven (rather than supply driven), and that the hotel would not be a leader in the hotel industry in this respect;*
- *He did not believe that sustainability was something that their guests do, our would (ever) demand;*
- *remained uncommitted in relation to me interviewing the managers identified in the business proposal;*
- *Remained very hesitant about surveying guests, even though strategies to minimise impact of guest experience were outlined in the business proposal*

Figure 28 - Excerpt from supervision meeting log

Although the external funding partner was willing to fund research into Corporate Social Responsibility and ethical consumption in luxury hotels, and while increasing pressures are placed on businesses in all industries to engage in more Corporate Social Responsibility activities, it could be suggested that funding arrangements such as this are implemented simply as a veneer for community engagement. Whether (and how) industry needs, and rigorous academic tourism research can be compatible, remains to be seen.

5.6.3 SOCIAL CONTROL

In seeking to understand how social forces shape research projects, one of the most disabling elements of engaging with industry lies in the social control of research. Social control in this project manifested itself in three key areas: the impact of social control on positionality, research design and academic autonomy.

5.6.3.1 The Impact of Social Control on Positionality.

As already discussed in this chapter, the research has afforded numerous, and somewhat unexpected opportunities, to reflect on the adequacy of the research design, the dimensionality and susceptibilities of positionality, and ultimately the suitability of the research strategy. The importance of acknowledging positionality is evidenced by the inevitable influence it has over our own choices – it is the way in which we personally encounter research, and the way our personal biographies inform our investigative persona (Everett, 2010). In doing so, we refer to the broader social context in which we exist, and create an awareness of the social 'situatedness' of ourselves, influenced by elements such as our gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, class and age (Jennings, 2001), and as such provides a foundation on which subsequent research(er) decisions are based.

Perhaps one of the most prominent issues when conducting a research project on luxury hotels is the issue of class as described by Bourdieu (2010). As part of the greater middle-class of Western society, the researcher often felt that her position on the social ladder was viewed as somewhat inferior to the hotel managers being recruited; a curious position to find oneself when it was not even the Global-Elites themselves that were being accessed, merely the people who serve them! Like their guests, these managers are people who are rich in network capital and move in corporate and social circles quite distinct from our own (Personal field notes, October, 2010). This was felt most acutely when conducting research in the United Arab Emirates, where the conspicuous and unreservedly ostentatious displays of wealth and status made the researcher feel most inferior. At times, and somewhat even more surprising, was that passing comments from academic colleagues revealed that they somehow saw the researcher as occupying an elevated position in comparison to them, simply because of the research topic.

Evidence of the influence of gender in research is abundant, and it is certainly true in this case that gender influenced this research. Some authors talk of being in a privileged position because of their gender (Everett, 2010) and gaining positive experiences because of it. In this instance however, the methodological dichotomy of polarizing the researcher and the researched onto a 'powerful/powerless' continuum, based on aspects such as nationality, generation, age and reciprocity (Thapar-Björkert and Henry, 2004), held resonance with this experience. Gender in this instance was certainly a contributing factor to my somewhat powerless position in the male-dominated industry of hotel management. Ordinarily, it is recognised that the privileged position researchers hold in relation to the dissemination of research findings affords them a position of power (Thapar-Björkert and Henry, 2004), and ultimately this degree of power still remains, however factors in addition to gender (e.g. age, nationality, social class and status), all led to feelings of frustration and angst.

It was clear that in an interview setting, as well as at the recruitment stage, the researcher's gender, age and to some extent nationality influenced the responses provided by interviewees, as well as the degree of power which they exercised over the process. In fact, Denscombe (1998, p. 208) notes that such aspects are almost impossible to disguise, and as such influence the way interviewees are likely to respond. While some authors are acknowledging the importance of the social lens through which we gaze (e.g. Everett, 2010), we must also remain cognisant of the lens through which our research subjects view us and our research.

5.6.3.2 The Impact of Social Control on Research Design.

Lashley (2011) has argued that the emergence of social control on research design has arisen from diminishing levels of value the industry place on educational collaboration on research and a general lack of importance attached to, or understanding of, research by industry. Tourism and its allied industries in particular, are characterised by a transient and largely unskilled workforce. For example, Lashley (2011) notes seven out of eight hospitality managers hold no qualification above school level, and consequently, they place little value on collaboration for educational or research purposes.

Furthermore, the number and influence of gatekeepers in the research design for the doctoral project has had an impact. The initial design took theoretical cues from the work of Elliott & Urry (2009), and focused on the super-rich Global-Elites, a group whom the funding partner served through their chain of exclusive luxury hotels. Cleverly though, through theirs, and other luxury hotel chains', non-participation in the research project, the methodological design of the research was re-engineered. Rather than the focus of the research being on luxury hotels and the value Global-Elites place on sustainable business practices, the focus was shifted to interpreting the values of the mass-luxury market and assessing their value constructs as brand loyalty drivers. At the crux of such alterations, is the issue of academic freedom and autonomy. Behrens and Gray (2001:196) note that "applied" research is where there is the greatest potential to influence the perceived extent of academic freedom, but that "the burden-of-proof should be on those who believe that industrial support....will distort or corrupt our educational institutions and their core values". This lack of engagement and participation from industry is indicative of the types of influences such industry collaborations have on academic freedom and autonomy. Similarly, when industry bodies did engage, recruitment was generally only achieved if the research instruments could be altered or manipulated. Lengthy amounts of correspondence were sent backwards and forwards between various gatekeepers, tweaking and adjusting survey questions, altering the layout, and in some cases including additional questions which *they* felt to be relevant to the research. Questions are raised as to whether or not it is possible to create a truly autonomous position from which to undertake rigorous industry-funded research, whilst remaining within a sound epistemological, methodological and importantly, ethical framework.

5.7 SUMMARY

The following diagram presents a diagrammatic representation of the methodology, and illustrates the informing components of the research design and approach. The following chapter presents a discussion of the findings from the research.

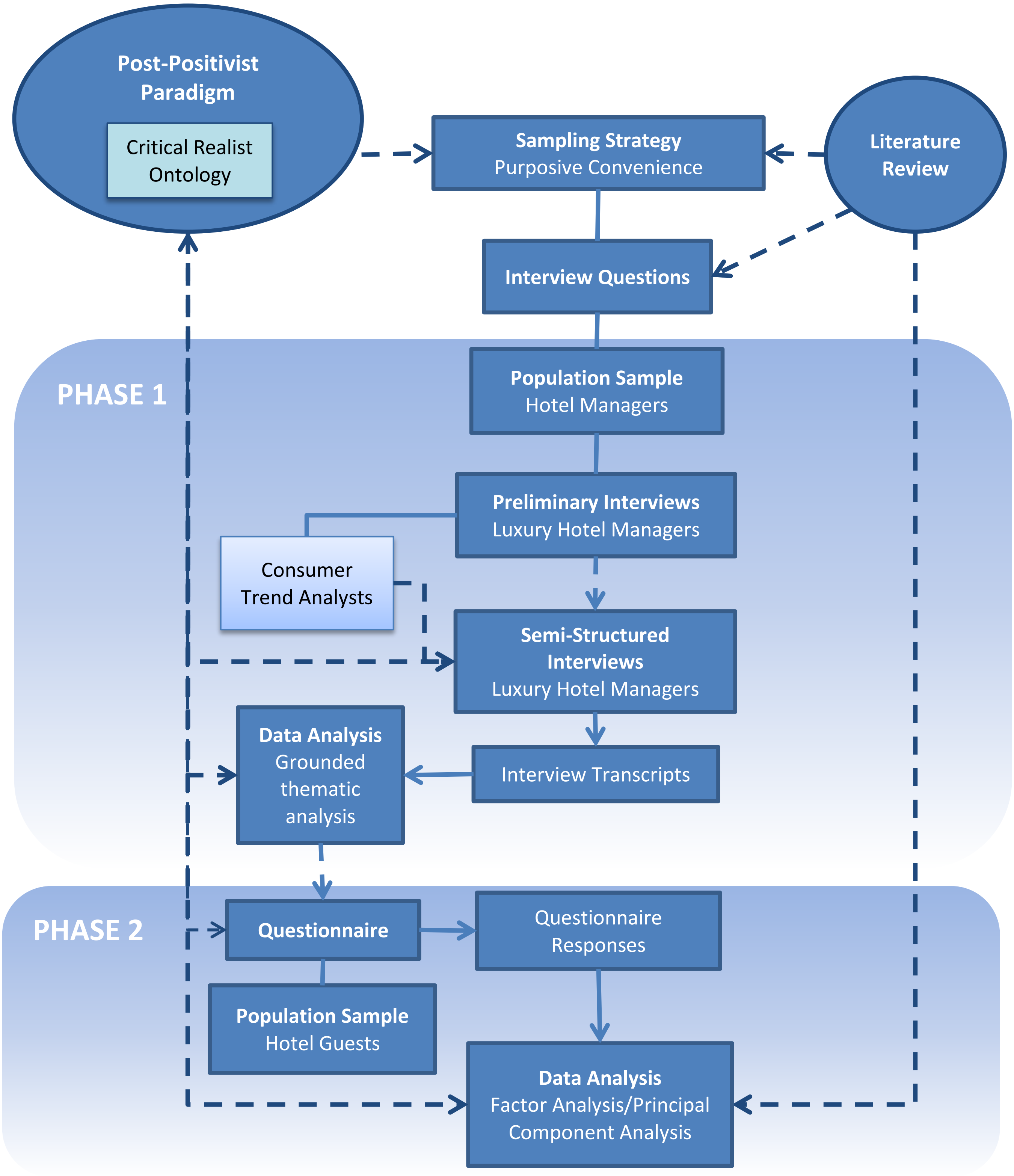

Figure 29 - Research roadmap

6 MANAGERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SUSTAINABILITY: EXAMINING THE CASE FOR SUPPLY DRIVEN POLICIES

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents findings from the first phase of the research focusing on the supply side of luxury hotels. Using the research questions presented in section 5.3.1 as a guide, this chapter presents data that contribute to understanding these research questions and is split into three sections: understandings of sustainability, ethical consumption and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and how this contrasts to definitions of luxury; scope for competitive advantage from implementing sustainable business practices; and perceptions of sustainable business practices as drivers of consumer choice and loyalty.

As outlined in chapter 5, pilot interviews were conducted with two trend analysts and consumer insight professionals. These were incorporated as exploratory methods of data generation, and helped inform and refine questions asked in the main interview phase. In this chapter, any data from these interviews are represented by either Trend Analyst 1 (TA1) or Trend Analyst 2 (TA2), and are used as a method of comparing and contextualising market research with academic research. Data presented from interviews with hotel managers, for the sake of brevity, will hereon in be referred to simply as 'managers'. In line with the research ethics policy adopted, no identifying information will accompany their statements. This is of particular importance in this research given the size of the sample. In some instances, English was not the first language of interviewees, and as such some grammatical modifications to quotations have been made, and in such cases block parentheses are used to indicate this.

At the outset of the interviews, managers were asked questions about their personal experience in the hospitality industry and their role within the hotel, as well as some details of their hotel including the guest mix between business versus leisure travellers; average length of stay, and geographic market of guests. As outlined in chapter 5, these questions were aimed as "ice-breaker" questions, but also assisted in contextualising their responses to subsequent questions. The order of these questions was generally influenced by the development of the conversation, and was allowed to emerge in a more inductive style.

Although most managers were not certain on all details at the time of interviews, on average, the hotel managers interviewed held between 20 and 35 years experience working in the hotel industry, almost exclusively in high-end luxury hotels. Five interviewees were male and one was female. The mix of guests' purpose of stay varied considerably depending on the location of the hotel, and as such so did the average length of stay. Those hotels located in cities, plus one resort hotel, had an average length of stay of approximately two nights, whereas the remaining resort hotel had an average length of stay of approximately ten nights. Again, differences in guests' country of residence varied depending on the location of the hotels. The resort hotels reported a large number of guests from the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China), but in particular from Russia and China. Hotels located in cities reported mainly domestic, European or North American guests. All hotels catered predominantly for couples, with two having child-friendly facilities.

6.2 LUXURY

6.2.1 DEFINITIONS

It was firstly seen as important to gain an understanding of the managers' perceptions and definitions of luxury, not least so that these could be contrasted with their understandings of sustainability, and furthermore their views on the perceived importance of these strategies. In addition, this also enabled for a comparison of definitions of luxury *goods* outlined in chapter 2, thus illuminating differences between these definitions and those of luxury *services*.

Managers defined luxury from both a functional perspective where one manager noted that "guests look for location, comfort, service and quality F&B outlets, in that order". Similarly:

> They want the luxurious environment, the large rooms and bathrooms and the flat screen TV and the amenities and all of that is a part of it.

However, aesthetics were also deemed as an important part of the luxury product:

> It's style, we've got the art of simple luxury which is sort of the tag line that we use, but in reality what it really represents really works. So people like it because of its style, people come here and say wow I love this eclectic mix of antiques from the old hotel and this modern furniture that has been chosen and there's all this that works into it.

> [The hotel was a...] Rococo design, very heavy design hotel with a much older clientele, so average age was very much old. We've now become much more fresh, much more lively, elegant, [and] luxurious. The average age has changed completely. So the people who are identifying themselves with luxury represents are a different group than they were before.

Thus, it was noted that not only must hotels keep pace with design trends and innovations to be considered luxurious, but youthfulness also played a role in design insofar as attracting the desired clientele. Paradoxically, the same manager also commented on the role of history, suggesting that perhaps luxury brand value can take time to develop but that it is also coupled with the aforementioned need to remain design and trend conscious.

> Of course - the other part is the product itself, people choose you for the style, the location, we've got historical value here which is very important.

The role of conspicuous consumption and it's part in image formation and projection, is one that was also identified by managers as important to guests. It was noted that factors such as image played a role in both defining luxury, but also as a driver of guest choice:

> When a client is choosing to go to an establishment because of that… So it's the identity and how a person identifies and what he feels is luxury, what he likes, what appeals to his eyesight.

> It represents he'll look at the facilities, the style, the décor certain things that appeal to him and what he likes so his tastes.

The style and design aspects of the hotels were also significant in illuminating the relationship between luxury and embodiment. It appeared that sensory elements such as touch and feel were important in defining the luxury concepts:

> [Luxury is] what appeals to his eyesight and his touch and feel so and that's what the collection's done very well.

The literature review (see Chapter 2) discussed various elements of the luxury definition relating to luxury goods, however the current literature remains largely silent about this embodied aspect, which is perhaps more unique to the experiential nature of hotels. One reason for this may be the lack of research into luxury services, such as hotels. Central to hospitality is its experiential nature, and in a luxury setting the experience is enhanced and *embodied* through elements such as 'fresh' towels, 'crisp' linen and 'soft' pillows. In some respects this ties to some of the work on luxury as being hedonistic by nature, where consumers have been noted to consume luxury goods or services because of emotional drivers such as sensory pleasure (Wiedmann et al. 2007; Vigneron & Johnson 2004; Bernstein 1999). It is the role that sensory pleasure plays in endowing status, prestige and esteem on guests that is of note in this instance.

In line with these experiential definitions, the luxury hotel (experience) was also seen as one which centred around the provision of service to guests:

> Well luxury above all in hotels is really, it's the style of service, and the way you come across to your clients which makes a difference… so it's how close you get to your customers and the relation that you establish with them.

In some respects, these aspects resonate with Berry's (1994) definition of luxury as a refinement of basic human needs, which in turn links with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory. On two levels this can be seen; first, that the luxury experience is meeting (and exceeding) the basic physiological needs of things like food and water through the provision of additional services; and secondly, that through this extension of service, Maslow’s fourth order Status and Esteem needs are being met, that might not exist in lower status hotels.

Another resounding element of the luxury definition was that of time. Time was highlighted by most managers, and was seen as something which differentiated them from other sectors of the hotel industry. It allowed for greater personalisation, the ability to provide guests with new experiences and privacy.

> My personal definition of luxury is the amount of time you allow your staff to spend with guests. The more time you allow your staff to spend with guests the more time you allow them to personalise the experience. To really come after the wishes of our guests, and not rush through the experience.

> I think luxury is giving time back to the guest that are staying with us, I think the, the pace of life, and the pressures which are brought to bear on people both in their workplaces and their leisure time means that generally people are time poor and people are looking for new experiences and I think it’ll give time back to our guests.

> For me luxury is a definition of understanding the guest's time, the focus on space and privacy, and the understanding of not necessarily what you can't get at home but what’s important when you come away.

These ideas of service and time underscore emergent concepts addressed in Chapter 2. The symbolic value of luxury is noted by Shipman (2004) who talks of the production of symbolic capital through the consumption of items with limited reproducibility. It is this characteristic irreproducibility of the hotel product that affords consumers of these unique experiences such levels of status and esteem. The levels of personalisation, and the amount of time given to guests is unlikely to be reproduced at lower status hotels, thus providing greater levels of status and esteem for luxury hotel guests.

6.3 SUSTAINABILITY

6.3.1 DEFINITIONS

As in section 6.2, it was seen as important to gain an insight into managers' perceptions and definitions of sustainability, not least so that these could be contrasted with their perceptions of luxury, but also to gauge levels of perceived importance of these concepts. In addition, it also enabled a comparison of definitions and understandings with those reported in the academic literature in chapter 3. This section has been structured to align with the core themes of environmental, socio-cultural and economic sustainability in the academic literature.

Environmental Sustainability

Parallel to the previous section, managers were also asked about their understanding of sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Definitions of what sustainability meant varied, from the pragmatic, where one manager noted that "sustainability is something we all have to embrace and get used to", but more often than not were centred on environmental concerns. Also evident was an emphasis on intergenerational equity:

> Sustainability ultimately means that you utilise the environment in such a way that the products, materials, water, whatever it is that is utilised to make a hotel run, can be reutilised, can be reintroduced into nature and somehow recycled and then be reused. Or, that whatever you use has a minimum impact in terms of damaging the environment.

> I think it's making sure that we minimize the impact that we have on the environment you know in order to… in order to I guess safeguard the property and the estate for future generations. So having a perhaps a long term perspective in terms of the developments and the decisions that we make, rather than purely thinking about sort of immediate requirements.

> Sustainability is working as a person or as a company or as a group of persons to make sure that the environment in which we live is preserved or maintained in the current state as its in.

These definitions clearly present the environmental focus placed on sustainability by most of the managers. They largely did not recognise the social or, somewhat interestingly, the economic elements of sustainability proposed in definitions in the academic literature. There is an overwhelming consensus in the literature that sustainability, via its conception in the Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987), is a concept which rests on the three pillars of environmental, social and economic sustainability (Pforr, 2001). Whilst not immediately drawing on the same concepts identified in the academic literature, the definitions provided by managers do however hold some points worth commenting on. The first definition presents a clear utilisation perspective, with the focus being on what raw materials might be used in the production process, and does not consider ancillary resources such as human labour or financial capital. The latter two definitions broaden somewhat to include the idea of preservation. Interestingly, the last definition relates to the 'steady state' implications noted by Weaver & Lawton (2002), where there is a supposition that environments and/or societies should remain unchanged.

Extending this preservation and conservation theme, and in contrast to earlier definitions on luxury which alluded to ideas of redesign and contemporary styling, other hotel managers commented about what could be referred to as a kind of 'architectural sustainability':

> I think also one thing we have got a good track record on is what I sort of mentioned earlier about the tradition of the hotel and taking a long term perspective, the way in which we have sort of taken existing properties and preserved those and also the gardens and grounds is something which I think would demonstrate and lead to a more sustainable approach rather than sort of knocking down and creating something new.
>
> So that's also another aspect of it, so there's the environmental part and then there's the preservation of the world we're in which is not just, ahh, not just, to say we need green grass and trees.

Some resonance can be found here with the conceptualisation of luxury being rare, scare or unique. The pursuit of preservation, particularly of historical establishments, could go some way to achieving these dimensions of luxuriousness, and thus emphasises the synergies between luxury and sustainability.

For one manager, sustainability was seen as a very personal pursuit, and the wider implications of societies' collective actions did not seem to be acknowledged:

> It's very basic for me, I'm a father, I've got children, if I can live out in the countryside and have green grass and everything and not have highways and skyscrapers and factories around, well that's my legacy to them if that's what I'd like to be able to do.

This perspective seemed to suggest that because this manager was in a somewhat privileged position to be able to afford the type of environment he desired, the actions taken (or lack thereof) of his hotel and others in a commercial sense, were not his responsibility.

Other environmental interpretations of sustainability saw it as an issue that was more applicable in certain environments compared to others. One manager saw sustainability to be much more important in an island environment as opposed to other environments:

> An island environment, you really can damage these environments pretty quickly with cutting down the trees and somehow conceptualise more than now being in the desert. Yeah like in the Maldives as a guest you actually are obligated to take your own garbage off the island. So if you bring let's say a bottle of [skin] cream, and it's empty – you have to bring it back. Which is pretty radical if you think about it. But of course in that fragile environment, with these islands that are self-sufficient with everything they do in terms of energy production, consumption, waste disposal…you are in this archipelago you have to be extremely environmentally [conscious].

This quote is illustrative of both a conceptualisation of sustainability being for 'other environments', 'other people', or 'other hotels', as well as a lack of understanding of ecological aspects of their own local operating environment.

Economic Sustainability

Although no interviewees explicitly mentioned the economic or socio-cultural aspects of sustainability in their own definitions, they were probed to elicit their views on the importance of these aspects. Firstly, examining the economic pillar of sustainability:

> I think the operator needs to look at sustainability from the point of view of how he can work more economically. People make money out of garbage you know!
>
> Sustainability applies to many other concepts in businesses. How sustainable is the business concept? You'd like to say there's a sustainable bottom line approach i.e. not a short-term profit mentality, but a long-term profit mentality, differentiating between good profits versus bad profits.
>
> I think certainly from the financial aspect is perhaps unchanged in terms of having to ensure that you are able to support the demands of the business in terms of incomings and outgoings, that sort of basic fundamental facts of business haven't really changed at all. I think actually a lot of environmental and sustainability initiatives perhaps sort of reawaken people to the opportunities that exist to make significant cost savings.
>
> Today sustainability means saying that you're going to return to the society that you're in a certain amount of your profit, or make reserves. To continue to do that, then at one point or another you're going to have an impact on service and quality of service.

These interpretations of sustainability demonstrate an awareness of the cost-saving opportunities of engaging with sustainable business practices, but lack any deeper considerations around financial sustainability. In their definition of economic sustainability Mowforth and Munt (2003: 103) talk of achieving a level of economic gain from the activity which caters for and mitigates the effects of tourists' presence or offers income appropriate to the inconvenience caused to the local community. So it seems that managers' interpretations of economic sustainability largely failed to align with many of the points made by Mowforth and Munt (2003), and instead seem to refer more to the financial *viability* of their businesses. Certainly, in the last quote, the 'saving' function of businesses for future reinvestment into the community somehow meant a compromise in quality or service. For many this may appear to be a rather shallow form of engagement. Whilst at odds with Mowforth and Munt's (2003) definition, ensuring the financial viability of such hotels (by maintaining the desired levels of service and quality) should be given more credence. Failure to do so could result in local destinations missing out on much desired tourism outcomes such as multiplier effects, for example. In addition, an element missing from both the academic and managerial discourses is the need for a closer examination on aspects of economic sustainability of supply-chains and sustainable sources of financing and capital. Consideration should also be given to the growth rates, and rate of returns expected from investors as an influencing factor of economic sustainability.

Socio-cultural Sustainability

Secondly, interviewees were also asked about the perceived relevance and importance of socio-cultural aspects of sustainability to them. In a broader commercial sense, social sustainability is seen to be an emerging area of concern for consumers, where TA2 noted:

> I think the reason why the social stuff is a little bit more difficult is that the green stuff can be measured in terms of emissions and things like that. The social stuff very much I think ties in with reputation and there's different ways of looking at the how a company impacts on that stuff. So the green stuff you know definitely had its moment and I think that lead to a real tipping point after the Stern review and after hurricane Katrina and now of course moving, I actually think now the social dimension is becoming quite important and that's being triggered by things like the banking crisis, people asking you know about responsibility about reputation and I think that's a good thing.

So, although TA2 pointed out that in a Western setting there are opportunities for engaging with the socio-cultural dimension of sustainability, the destination that some of these interviews took place, meant that questions around socio-cultural sustainability were quite a sensitive topic. Much of the work considering the socio-cultural aspects of sustainability focuses on community benefits (e.g. Mowforth & Munt 2003), or community empowerment (e.g. Timothy 2007). Further, it is oft assumed that host communities benefit from factors such as employment opportunities and that when such opportunities are taken by outsiders, only negative outcomes are achieved. One hotel manager did however comment:

> We do a lot, I believe that [We] do an awful lot and I think as well even in terms of our workforce the education that we give them, I think… I keep saying to myself, "My goodness...". I mean, many, many of our colleagues arrive and maybe don't have a good grasp of the English language and maybe don't have any computer skills and so on. So not only do we ask them to work but we will educate them as well. And I think 2,000 colleagues, at x% of turnover a year, of course they go back to their

> homes, the skill base they've left with not only from a hands-on point of view but also from a literary perspective is significant. So I think hotels do have a very big part to play in development.

The opportunities that might be realised for such workers in an increasingly globalised world are tangible. Of note here is that not only does the possibility of multiplier effect outcomes in the host community remain, but that the 'behind-the-scenes' efforts this particular hotel made in relation to its employee training were also recognised. Whilst these ancillary benefits are obviously provided to benefit the hotel and its operations, the benefits this type of training brings to individuals upon return to their home country should not be dismissed.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

To gain clarity on the perceived differences in terminology used in both and academic and commercial setting, managers were asked to give their understanding of the term CSR. When asked about CSR it was clear that managers associated the socio-cultural aspects of sustainability with this concept:

> Social responsibility for us is the community in which we are in which we operate and which helps us make the money that we're making

> I see it being very much in the context of our local community and as I mentioned earlier to you, we take a long term approach, you know for that reason the contribution to the economy by way of our charitable foundation is quite important to us because we don't operate independently of the community in which the hotels are located and you know we do have a policy of encouraging local employment wherever possible as well.

It is clear from these definitions, placed alongside the earlier discussion, that managers identify their social responsibilities with the term CSR, rather than sustainability. Obvious reasons for this can be seen in the title.

The benefits of engaging in CSR activities were varied, with one manager stating simply:

> It's basically, it's...I'd say it's a social statement, a social statement in a town .

What was meant by the phrase 'a social statement' is unclear, but may perhaps be related to the following interpretation:

> If you were in a town like London now that would be… might not have any effect whatsoever I mean here obviously it's going to have some interest by local authorities it's going to just show that we are a responsible company and we've chosen them cause they're our neighbours, not for any other reason.

Other benefits of engaging with CSR were recognised as increased levels of word-of-mouth.

> There is going to be a word of mouth benefit, but it's not something that we've quantified when we've worked that project out.

One manager acknowledged that their CSR activities were of a vicarious nature, and not something they were actively engaged in:

> So today we're a partner of a foundation, it's a very important foundation, so we're therefore as we're a partner with this foundation because they're the ones who are doing that project we therefore get exposure.

This separation of the hotel from actively engaging with CSR activities is a little unsurprising, but noteworthy nonetheless. When asked whether or not such (vicarious) CSR activities were beneficial, this manager was very clear:

> If I was to evaluate, as you just put it how much business am I going to get out of it, probably wouldn't have chosen that. Probably would have chosen to go with a luxury watch maker and use him as sponsoring something to do with something that's got huge exposure on television and I'd be amongst 10 other sponsors on a boat or something like that and the very glamorous event.

It is clear then that while managers were cognisant of there being some benefits to engaging with CSR activities, they would not go so far as to say there were any quantifiable commercial benefits from doing so. This reflects the comments made by TA2 above, who noted the difficulties in assessing and measuring the "social stuff". Contrary to this, Lee & Park (2009) found that hotels' CSR activities had a positive and simultaneous effect on financial performance, thus with these contrasting perspectives, making the grounds for decision-making very uncertain in the eyes of hotel managers. Other managers felt that it was not the role of CSR to be used to gain competitive advantage:

> Again, I don't think that's particularly the reason why we have sort of undertaken to become involved in these types of projects. I think it might

> be a sort of indirect outcome, how significant or not, I don't know, but that isn't really the reason why the company would decide to become involved in such projects. It's a bit more intrinsic than that.
>
> What you're stating there is that basically if we don't see an added value out of it then it won't happen, which I disagree - it just depends on the person's conviction and the people who are in the company to believe that this is a cause worth working for and I think it's got to go all the way from the top of the organization to the bottom of the organization.

6.3.2 Challenges Facing Sustainable Development

In discussing the meaning of sustainability with managers, although not explicitly asked for by the researcher, a number of challenges, or reasons for not embracing sustainability, were identified. As one manager suggested, "we practice sustainability within the confines of our envelope" indicating that they are faced with a number of constraints. To contextualise, TA2 talked of a sustainability checklist that business must address before moving on to consider any marketing or communication strategies.

> I do think the checklist is still important and that's where you have to start. You know you've got to start with the basics you've got to have that in place, you've got to work out what part of your brand it integrates in to whether that's product service or brand story or whatever and then you have to work out how to communicate that. And when you're looking at communication there's so many different ways of handling it, but if you don't want to be accused of green wash, in whatever the case you have to have the checklist ticked off before you even think about communication.

A manager echoed this line of thought on checklists, and suggested that the road to sustainable business operations is paved with tick-boxes:

> Yeah, but at the end of the day there is a financial resource specifically dedicated to that which would have that train of thought and say okay. how much do we need to invest in sustainable business so that we get accredited by this, this, and this, you know next budget year, put so much aside spend the money, get the accreditation okay, what's next on the list. So you're speaking more tick some boxes.

Managers generally saw the series of checklists as a means of accreditation, but were largely not convinced of the business value such accreditations could bring.

One manager talked of a division between corporate and leisure guests, where corporate guests, particularly those signing contracts for events and functions bookings, were increasingly asking for 'green' credentials and accreditations. The same manager noted that on an individual guest basis, the achievement of accreditation had not made a significant difference to business operations. When asked whether or not accreditation was seen as a means of gaining competitive advantage in the luxury hotel sector he responded "I don't, no, not at this stage". Another manager responded to the same question:

> We would apply it to the marketing material. As to how much marketing advantage it would bring, I would question as to what it would really bring. But I think it's first done with the aim in mind to save energy, reduce costs, have sponsored investment and make some right business decisions.

Despite this response evidencing the reasons for gaining accreditation to be on the basis of sensible business decisions, using accreditations as a form of competitive advantage was not seen as feasible. These perceptions resonate with the work of Buckley (2001) and Font & Buckley (2001) who note the low penetration, low reliability and low consumer recognition that accreditation schemes have. Following from this, another manager noted that while they did see increased levels of interest from corporate guests on such accreditations, they were hampered by head office directives (or lack thereof) to enable them to market these accreditations on the company's main website. Given the academic and industry line of thought on this issue being that little commercial advantage is to be gained from accreditations and the like, it was deemed important to explore this topic in the second phase of the research. Understanding whether or not consumers placed importance on such labels and accreditations would be beneficial in determining whether or not these aspects acted as brand loyalty drivers (refer section 3.2.2.3).

Elaborating further on the aforementioned point of head office directives, managers also noted the challenge of organisational culture. Challenges in this regard take their genesis firstly from senior managers and/or owners. One manager noted that:

> Each hotel is responsible for its own operational management and implementation of sustainable business practices - there is no head office directive.

This picture evolves further when the same manager was asked further about the implementation of sustainability initiatives in the hotel. His response:

> We already have a tent-card showing our environmental charter and we are hoping to start offering guests the option of reusing their bed linen in the next 3-4 months. But this is not a well thought about subject in head office.

Problems associated with adhering to company policy meant that some managers felt that they might be able to realise some commercial gains, but were unable to do so. Because of a lack of concern from head office on such strategies, one manager commented that they were not able to use platforms such as the hotel company's website for marketing or promotion of accreditations or certifications. It was not something head office felt was in line with their brand image and as such would not support individual hotels in their pursuits. One manager commented:

> If it was us alone well yes we'd obviously speak about it, we'd obviously speak about it to the press, we'd obviously do something about it because it's normal to turn it into something as much as you can so yes we work toward that, it's normal.

One manager also questioned the tangible value that employees placed on CSR activities:

> You can have a very interesting project that's deemed by the top of the organization that has a value and as it filters its way down the organisation they think well why am I standing in a photo with 100 people holding a red balloon?

Whilst this manager appears to question the organisational benefits of CSR, it might be asserted that perhaps this raises broader questions about organisational leadership and culture, rather than the value of such activities.

In contrast, organisational culture was also seen from a more holistic perspective:

> I think they have to form part of the culture of the hotel in every aspect of its operation, and I think sustainability has to govern our approach you know in every single stage of our business operation. It's not something

> which is the sort of disconnected activity which has its own independent force. I think it has to be built into everybody across the board.
>
> What you'll often find is that they at the outset it will be led, it has to be driven by someone at the top, so if the owners or whoever, someone quite, who has a bit of power is interested in it's much easier to embed.

Yet, it was also acknowledged from an employee perspective, that diverse workforces can bring their own rewards:

> I think interestingly enough, the colleagues [employees] that we have working with us, are from developing countries a lot of them, and I don't know if you've ever been to Asia or some of the countries within Asia and South-East Asia, but these people tend to do a lot of recycling in their own little way.

Finally, organisational cultures external to the hotel were also noted to be influential. A hotel who sold rooms on a contractual basis to corporate clients felt that the product and service they offered was influenced by the organisational culture of these clients. If there were no requirements from that client for evidence of sustainable business practices or engagement in CSR activities, then the manager felt there was (a) little need to be implementing such strategies; and (b) also little competitive advantage to be gained from doing so:

> I think you're going to find that the awareness has grown but the level of awareness especially in the corporate segment is probably not very high. And the more you move up the luxury chain the less that awareness is [and] that's going to drop off I think because people are going to say I'm paying top buck for this so you know…
>
> The other aspect is depending on which market you're in. If you're in a corporate market where it's a business market and it's basically dollar value for what I'm getting which is what the corporate business is all about. So basically I'm prepared to go into a luxury hotel, the value of every dollar I pay you has to be high, because I've chosen to go into a luxury hotel.

Whilst the first quote above is more explicit about its link to organisational culture, evident in the second quote is the aforementioned concept of sustainability being less than perfect. Consequently, if the corporate client does not see value in sustainable business practices, then hotels will not actively offer them. This highlights the inextricable link between the supply and demand sides of the consumer economy. Without the provision of sustainable luxury hotels, there is little wonder the demand for them is minimal.

Interestingly, the next major challenge noted by managers was that of legislation (or lack thereof). Given the contractual nature of hotel operations, and the fact that managers and operators are rarely the same people as those who build and develop the hotel in the first instance, emergent problems were identified. One manager was emphatic about this point:

> Not just in my mind, but it's a fact, that it's not the hotel operator, it is the hotel owner that has…that's where it starts, at the development point. And it also starts with the government, the sets perimeters and laws that we then are forced to follow.
>
> It's the developer, together with the government, and that's really where it starts, when you build the thing, that you say "okay, how can we build it so that it has a minimum impact on the environment".

At first glance, these quotes seem to reinforce Sharpley's (2012) claims that tourism stakeholders too often see sustainability as someone else's problem. While indeed there is an element of 'passing-the-buck' here, there was certainly an adamant desire from hotel managers and operators to be given more guidance through legislation, thus providing more solid boundaries within which they could operate. Certainly, it would seem that managers feel a certain degree of pressure to be seen to be 'doing the right thing', but no matter how well-intentioned they might be, divergences still arise. Whilst in some Western countries building and development regulations are being reformed to incorporate sustainable practices, countries such as the UAE are appearing to be slow to embrace this way of thinking (Samarai & Qudah 2007). Partly, this might be attributed to the intimate relationship its government has with the corporate sector, and that imposing stricter regulations on development may threaten opportunities for further growth.

Additionally, managers also saw educating consumers to be a challenge. As TA2 noted:

> The challenge for the luxury brands is to educate consumers that this is important or not to preach. I mean there's a difference between educating

> consumers and preaching to them and that's why you've got the backlash in the UK at the moment is that people feel like they're being preached to and so the challenge for the brand here is to influence behaviour change in a clever, fun way.

But equally managers also faced challenges in educating their workforce:

> We do have very large teams within the hotels which they've drawn from a variety of different backgrounds with different educational levels and different motivations for being at work. Not just one occupational group within the hotel. I think education is quite important - turning lights off, closing doors, regulating heating, closing floors of the hotel down and wings of the property down

The diverse nature of the hospitality workforce is acknowledged widely (e.g. Richardson, 2009), and the benefits of that have already been acknowledged previously by one manager. Interestingly though, this manager highlights the differing motivational drivers for employees and suggests that these might play a role in educating his workforce to adopt sustainable work practices. Importantly though, it must be recognised that it is not just consumers that need educating, but often the workforce as well.

Another challenge identified, and perhaps one that has received the most attention in the media is around marketing and communication strategies for sustainable business practices. As already mentioned by TA2, communication is something which must be handled with care to avoid claims of 'green washing'. Remarkably, the fear of falling foul to 'green washing' was not a concern which arose with many managers. The importance of not attempting to market a brand as 'green' without having any credentials to back that up were emphasised quite aptly by TA2:

> It was a bit arse-about-tit, so you've got to have the community, you know environment blah blah blah in place [before], there is no point in going to communicate something great to customers about what you're doing if you are raping and pillaging the land and you know closing down tribal communities to build a golf course, there's no point.

To contextualise further, another interesting point made by TA2 was questioning the necessity of communicating such strategies:

> Whether they communicate that to the customer is kind of where things are at now. Whether it's appropriate that they communicate that to a customer as a luxury brand is kind of....has to be decided with that brand. It may not be appropriate that Gucci goes and says we're eco and green because the association with green and eco are you know a bit naff, I think. But that doesn't mean that they shouldn't be doing something. As a big corporate brand they should be.

So while companies may well be engaging in sustainable business activities, it remains to be seen whether or not marketing and communicating such activities brings any commercial advantages. Again, this is indicative of a need to address whether or not sustainable business practices should be demand-led or supply-driven. Perhaps unsurprisingly, managers were generally unresponsive to any suggestion that such types of 'green' marketing *would* result in an increased competitive advantage. Not least because they are aware that either they don't have the appropriate credentials to communicate, or that their clientele would not be interested in such claims (even if they were supported):

> Q: What's your opinion on green marketing – how do you feel about that?
>
> A: No, I don't think it affects business, I don't think the client takes it into consideration.
>
> Q: Do you think the strategies around those concepts would or could ever be used as a competitive advantage for this hotel?
>
> A: Not much – I don't think any luxury hotel.
>
> Well it comes back to what I said before when you asked me the question as if it really was something that in the luxury segment that really had added value and was something that they would embrace, probably not because we're in a luxury segment.

Despite these views, some managers *did* feel that marketing such credentials would have a positive impact.

> Our corporate/conference brochures do show our green credentials. This definitely has an impact on business clients/contracts, but not on an individual guest level. Some destination marketing companies will only work with businesses/hotels that hold green credentials.
>
> A more active use of accreditations in marketing materials would lead to a greater patronage from guests.
>
> I think it's probably a silent acceptance and a silent nod by our guests..."Oh that's very nice, that's what they're doing".

Given this divergence in opinions amongst managers, which interestingly differed *within* homogeneous geographic areas, it was seen as important that this was investigated further in the second phase of the research among consumers. Given the behavioural influences the Global-Elite are said to have on mass-market consumption, it was important that in order to ratify this, it was verified from a mass-market consumer perspective, where this was subsequently carried out in the second phase of the research.

Although the aforementioned conservation theme was strong, managers still felt they were hampered by what was involved in 'being sustainable'. According to TA2:

> What they need to be looking at and what they will be looking at is their supply chains about how they produce stuff, about how they use less water about making sure there's not child labour and whatever, so a lot of it goes on behind the scenes. I think that people have been willing to adapt to new practices that integrate sustainability for a long time, what I think has been lacking is innovation, in products and services.

Some managers felt that innovation, design and technology were not being developed to allow them to become sustainable:

> Well I think one has to be fair…ask a hotel to be sustainable after the fact, i.e. after everything has been built, and then all of a sudden start to say "oh you're using too much water and too much electricity there", which are the two key elements is not entirely fair.
>
> Here we have the world's tallest lobby…and then you have a membrane that covers the front of the building. We are hugely energy inefficient, and to air-condition that space [is inefficient].
>
> It's still too expensive to install solar systems. Because you have issues obviously when you install solar systems next to the sea there's a lot of

> corrosion on it, and the upkeep is very expensive.

Certainly it was felt that design was a major enabling factor for hotels to 'become' sustainable. Managers felt strongly that without the appropriate considerations at the design and planning stage of development, their role as managers, employed by the hotel operating company rather than the developer, was a difficult one. It was noted that should the cost of solar panels and their associated upkeep reduce, then it would become a viable option. Interestingly, although during the interview it transpired that the researcher had solar panels at her own home, managers still maintained that in a commercial setting it was not a viable option. Likewise, managers felt that sustainability was not compatible with design and architecture:

> It starts at design….I mean do you want to create a monument, a landmark? Or do you want to be energy efficient?

> Sustainability depends on a destination, especially in an old city; there are limitations on how sustainable an old city can be.

The first quote demonstrates undoubtedly this manager felt that sustainability, in his eyes defined predominantly as energy efficiency, could not work hand in hand with iconic design and architecture. The two were seen to be mutually exclusive and incompatible; a theme which re-emerges at a later point. Equally, the second manager felt that in historic buildings, sustainable practices were more difficult to implement and posed certain limitations. Interestingly, it appears that the concept of heritage acts as a double-edged sword, where although in earlier definitions of sustainability the concept of preservation and heritage were seen to be congruent with sustainability, in this instance they are seen as problematic and obstructive.

Another aspect which emerged when defining sustainability was the context in which it was (and was not) suitable, appropriate or manageable. One manager referred to sustainability as 'soft' and only working in a particular hotel sector:

> The example is in the hotel industry at the moment is eco lodges and this new segment that's appeared. Well they're working very well in that segment cause they're actually touching on... shall we call it a soft spot... that people have that when they're in their family mode that's okay. When they're in a corporate mode, it's not really okay.

> It's one that has to be… it's more of a leisure hotel to begin with, that's my interpretation of it. If I was to say today I want to be a more

> sustainable hotel I would have to choose one to work at I would probably have to work at a resort, I would probably have to work in a place where my impact on the community can be immediate and that there is the ease to do it and the product that I'm actually selling to the customer can be modified and accepted by the customer who's buying it.

Echoing the earlier delineation between business and leisure guests, one manager elaborated:

> If you're, as I said, a leisure hotel and your client base would be completely different their perceptions would be different, so today to say to me I need to invest and be 100% green and use green fuel and this and that and expect to get an added value business out of my corporate accounts, I have very little doubt that will make a major impact. Whereas if I'm running an eco-lodge and I go from you know creating my own electricity, solar panels, and all of this and being in a fantastic location and everything and I do that, and [when] I don't do that, some people will make a choice [not to stay] that will have an impact on the business.

Unsurprisingly, as the reasoning presented here relies upon a distinction between corporate and leisure markets, the majority of leisure guests at this hotel manifest out of corporate clients, in the form of repeat business from previous business trips. According to that manager, the corporate mentality of sustainability remains with them even whilst on purely leisure visits.

In spite of these obstacles, there still appears to be demand for innovation. Market researcher TA2 noted that luxury brands and hotels, because of their loyal customer base were well positioned to lead the way in sustainable innovation:

> I think that people have been willing to adapt to new practices that integrate sustainability for a long time, what I think has been lacking is innovation, in products and services. I think the buzz word at the moment is about innovation and that area and if these luxury brands in the hotel industry are leading big brands with you know with a loyal following which often they are, then they are in the perfect space to innovate, to show their customers and potential customers that they're doing stuff in this area and to communicate that in an innovative way however they decide to do that whether they decide to give back to the communities.

Loyalty aside, in addition, it could also be argued that due to their brand profile and premium pricing strategies, luxury hotels are in the foremost position to be implementing sustainable business practices. Another key point appears to be associated with how companies communicate with their customers about sustainability efforts (see section 6.3.2).

Another challenging aspect managers commented on were the different cultural interpretations of both luxury and sustainability.

> I think you might find, just an example off the top of my head if you look at cultures also there's going to be a different view, a different perception of these things depending on what culture you're in. I'll take an example if you were to go to Scandinavia and take a Scandinavian hotel group, very different culture, very different background, very different concept of what is luxury and what is my need as a luxury client, what I'm satisfied with and what I feel the environment is all about. Whereas if you go to Rome, where it's all about luxury, glitz, opulence and all that, so there's…that's an interesting factor also each city in each country is different and each environment in which the hotel finds itself will also dictate the way it adapts [to sustainability].

These findings played an important role in influencing the questionnaire demographics for the second phase of research. Given this anecdotal evidence provided by managers, it was seen as important to determine not only the nationality of respondents, but also if they held more than one nationality, and in which country they resided, as these are all factors which are seen to contribute to personal identity and attitude formation. This difference in cultural understandings was echoed by another manager who noted that:

> It depends entirely on, I think, what feeder market your guests are coming from. The Germans are very environmentally aware, and trained. You go to Germany, you know everybody separates their garbage, they're really keen on that. They spray paint your car if it uses more than 15L/100km, you know! So they're very much aware and they've been well trained. Many other nations are not nearly as well trained and consequently don't really pay attention to that [sustainability].

Again, the challenges of communicating sustainability agendas to different cultures was also noted. TA2 talked of identifying appropriate strategies for different markets depending upon some pre-conceived ideas of education:

> The challenge for the luxury brands is do they speak in a different way to a consumer say in Asia and China to, or than someone in Europe, do you know, you talk about sustainability to a European customer because they're more aware of this stuff, but not, and I think they're challenge is to

> get this stuff across all their markets, but yes it's a huge area, it's a huge growth area and it's important and I think we just need to start behind the scenes rather than necessarily deciding to take this through to you know the messaging and communications, but it depends on what area.
>
> I think the challenge for a lot of these luxury brands, [is that] the [traditional] markets are no longer the dominant markets and are to a lesser degree Europe and America, they're Asia, Russian, Middle East and I don't think that sustainability has a huge feature in those markets.

Cultural differences in understanding sustainability were also commented on from an employee perspective where some managers were quick to acknowledge the challenges presented by virtue of their diverse workforces, and another manager was aware of the impact of his own foreign upbringing on his behaviour:

> I think you know obviously it's all about the balance and the notion of sustainability which sometimes doesn't go hand in hand with the world of hospitality. Obviously as development expands, environmental sustainability and CSR and education of the workforce, because obviously we're working with so many different cultures and people from all over the globe who have no idea about recycling or donig things a certain way or LED lights, so I think it's all about the education.
>
> Where I come from (India) we are used to doing these things. It has become kind of new in this country [UK] now.

Thus, from an employee perspective, a challenge for managers appears to be in harnessing the knowledge, experiences and cultures of their employees and using these attributes to assist hotels in engaging with sustainable business practices.

Finally, and perhaps one of the most pronounced interpretations of sustainability, was that it in one way or another meant 'less'. Whether it be through a fewer number of linen changes or using fewer number of towels, to providing a lower quality of service or fewer amenities to guests. The impression that sustainability was in many ways inferior to the luxury product was evident.

> So basically what we're saying is that in the luxury environment, you're going to have to take away something from somebody which is obviously much more sensitive to that happening.
>
> If they are engaging in an experience which they see as being perhaps a top end experience then they wouldn't necessarily be thinking about

> making savings or making or rationalizing. So I think it is a bit of a challenge for the luxury providers, it's a bit difficult to describe that but I think you understand what I mean.
>
> I think our guests don't want to be in a situation where their level of comfort is compromised for the sake of sustainability.
>
> I've worked in luxury hotels around the world from the States, to Europe, to the Indian Ocean, aah the Caribbean, and anywhere in any of these hotels, and they were all top notch, number one hotels in their respective markets; the guests who come to these hotels, they're very rich people for the most part, they're used to luxury and that means they're also used to for lack of a better word access. And they're not used to, and they don't want to economise in any which way. Whether it be.....because they come to enjoy themselves, they come for absence of discomfort, they come for luxury. Now by very virtue of the fact that they can afford the things they can in life, they are obviously very successful, they have a certain level of intelligence, and they're smart people. But if they come to this hotel (or equivalent) and you would force upon them a product that is not commensurate with what they're used to, and does not spell out luxury to them, then they wouldn't appreciate it.

In many ways, these interpretations are in line with many of the luxury definitions presented in chapter 2. These explanations resonate with the traditional conceptions of luxury as being extravagant, opulent, excessive or lavish. They fail, however, to acknowledge the synergies identified by Kapferer (2010) between luxury and sustainability. Included in this are concepts such as longevity, quality and rarity. Ironically, as Kapferer (2010) points out, and perhaps even more so for the tourism industry, is the idea that luxury is something which is inherently resource dependent and, in turn, heavily reliant upon the sustainability of its resources. To suggest as some managers did, that hotel operations would only be detrimental in certain environments, is to suggest that those same operations would have a lesser impact in other destinations. Interestingly, one manager did make reference to this concept of longevity, but curiously did not associate it with sustainability *per se*.

> Well I think obviously you enter into business from a hospitality perspective to have longevity, and I think when you're looking at properties such as ours, of course they want to still be present in 50, 70, 100 years time. So sustainability in my eyes is achievable within the hotel business. I think it is definitely [that] the success of sustainability will be

> linked to your focus on standards. So of course if we maintain our standards, if we maintain the path that we want to follow in terms of marketing and communication, service delivery, education of our staff, then we should be able to sustain longevity in the business.

6.4 SUMMARY

Understanding how hotel managers defined the apparently opposing concepts of luxury and sustainability is used to understand the reasoning behind the lack of adoption of sustainable business practices in the luxury hotel sector. Managers saw luxury as encompassing a number of facets including utility, aesthetics, design and innovation. More unique to the experiential nature of the hotel industry, managers also commented on the sensory nature of luxury, as well as it also being related to the amount of time, quality of service and privacy afforded to guests. Ironically, the overriding sentiment of managers appeared to be that these conceptualisations of luxury were not compatible with the concept of sustainability and sustainable business practices.

Managers reached a general consensus of what sustainability meant. Predominantly, it was seen as a concept which centred on environmental concerns. A strong emphasis was placed on the utilisation of resources and subsequent waste outputs, while little consideration was given to the sustainability of other resources including human resources and financial capital, for example. Conservation was a key theme, as was the fact that sustainability was seen as contextual and was not always seen as something that could or should be pursued in particular environs. Economic sustainability was something which was seen to relate primarily to the financial viability of businesses, rather than, as Mowforth and Munt (2003) put it, as being related to the reinvestment of financial capital back into host communities. This, along with the concept of socio-cultural sustainability, was seen as being more closely related to the domain of Corporate Social Responsibility, rather than sustainability.

Ultimately, the resounding sentiment was that luxury and sustainability were not compatible with the hotel sector. This conclusion stemmed primarily from the fact that managers viewed sustainability in one way or another as meaning 'less'. In many ways, sustainability was seen as an inferior option to the luxury hotel offering. In some respects it was identified as acting as a means of differentiation, but that it would act to highlight the self-righteousness often associated with ethical consumers, rather than affording the status and esteem desired by luxury hotel guests. A number of challenges to implementing sustainable business practices were noted by mangers to some extent reinforcing their position of its incompatibility with luxury. Managers felt that a lack of design and technology, a lack of clear legislation, cultural differences in understandings and education as well as a distinct lack of demand from guests all acted as inhibitors to implementing sustainable business practices. As noted throughout the chapter, this research has illuminated the question of whether sustainable business practices should be supply-led *or* demand-driven, or rather does the inextricable nature of the problem necessitate a macro-perspective be adopted. Accordingly, the ways in which luxury hotels communicate, or market sustainable business practices, and the appropriateness of doing so, remains problematic. A number of beliefs and assertions made about luxury hotel guests were highlighted in this chapter, and the logical next step in answering the research questions of this project was to investigate these from a demand-side, luxury hotel guest perspective.

7 DEMAND FOR SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES IN LUXURY HOTELS: INVESTIGATING CONSUMER VALUES AND BRAND INVOLVEMENT

In contrast to chapter 6, this chapter will present results from the demand side of the research – that of luxury hotel guests. As outlined in chapter 5, data collection for this perspective of the thesis took the form of an on-line questionnaire survey. This chapter will set out these results, concurrently presenting a discussion around the findings. Firstly, an overview of the distribution methods, response rates and respondent profile will be given, including such demographic information as age, gender, income and so on. Secondly, descriptive results will be presented on the core constructs outline in chapter 5, as well as the results of tests of difference between sub-groups (based on the aforementioned demographic variables). In addition to this, results of correlation analyses will also be presented. Finally, the chapter will embark on a section of hypotheses testing via a series of regression analyses. Results of the 3-step staging procedure of the Psychological Continuum Model will also be presented, and the influence of the questionnaire constructs on the stages of brand loyalty will be presented.

7.1 RESPONSE RATES & RESPONDENT PROFILE

As discussed in chapter 6, this phase of the research involved two electronic mail outs of the questionnaire. A sample was obtained (*n*=18,622) based on the criteria outlined in chapter 6. Of this, 1,000 people were e-mailed a link to the questionnaire in November 2011. From this pilot test, there was a bounce-back rate of 4.6% (*n*=46) where e-mails were non-deliverable, leaving a pilot sample of 954 respondents. Of these, 43 responses were received, equalling a response rate of 4.5%. An initial visual check of data for accuracy was carried out, followed by some basic preliminary statistics. All items on the questionnaire were being answered as intended and initial indications suggested the questionnaire was operating as it should.

Following this, the remainder of the sample (*n*=17,622) were sent an invitation to the questionnaire in December 2011. Respondents were offered the chance to win a £50 Amazon gift voucher as incentive to participate in the survey. In this main study, a gross response rate of 4.1% (*n*=727) was achieved, although while it was possible for TUI to provide information on the number of non-deliverable e-mails in the pilot study, the sample size of this main study meant that they did not have the resources to be able to provide the same information. As such, the 'bounce-back' rate from the pilot study was assumed for the main study as well. This resulted in an estimation of 810 e-mails being undeliverable, and a new response rate of 4.3%. While this response appears low compared to other on-line research (e.g. Deutskens et al. 2004), two points should be noted: firstly, the error which occurred in the main study mail-out will undoubtedly have affected this; and secondly, the response rate is only slightly lower than that achieved in the pilot study, therefore indicating that despite the aforementioned error, a similar response rate for this population was achieved

Following this, a phase of data cleaning was carried out where a total of 164 cases were removed where no responses to any questions had been recorded. When added to the 43 responses from the pilot study, this resulted in a final, cleaned data set of 606 usable cases. The profile of these respondents is outlined below.

7.1.1 Gender

Figure 30 shows the gender breakdown of respondents according to gender.

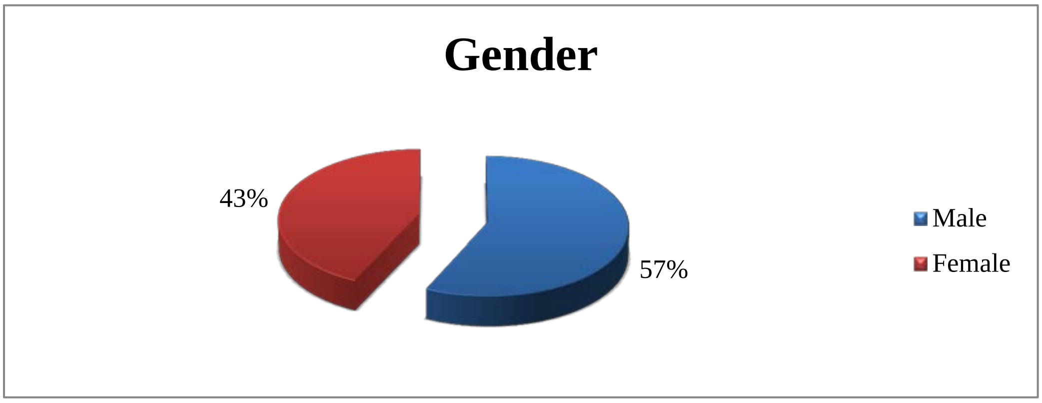

Figure 30 - Gender distribution of respondents (n = 463)

As the figure demonstrates, the proportion of males (57%) was slightly higher than the proportion of females (43%), which is slightly unusual for surveys in the social sciences, where it is often seen that female respondents outnumber male respondents. With the balance between male and female being slightly unbalanced, this will need to be taken into consideration when drawing conclusions from the data.

7.1.2 Age Groups

Respondents were asked to select from a drop-down list which year they were born in. This allowed for the researcher to manually calculate ages and subsequently group respondents into age groups. Six defined age groups were created in line with those of the Office for National Statistics (2010). Figure 31 shows the distribution of age according to these categories.

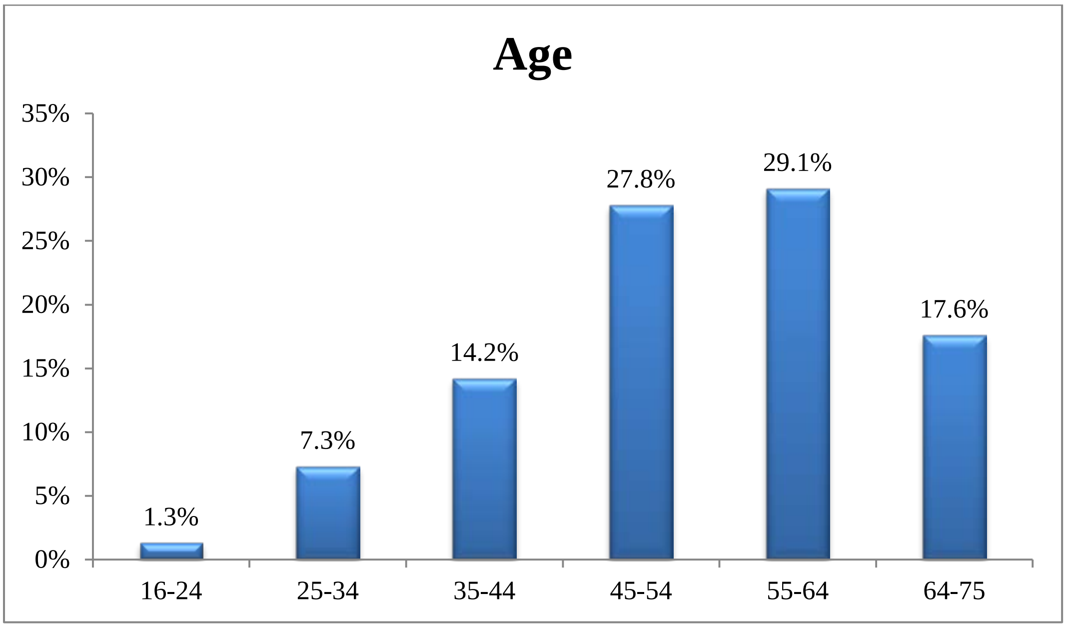

Figure 31 - Age group distribution of respondents (n=450)

As can be seen from the figure above, the majority of respondents (74.5%) were over the age of 45, and the sample had an average age of 55 years. It should therefore be noted that the sample collected is slightly skewed towards older respondents, and this should be borne in mind when drawing conclusions from the study.

7.1.3 NATIONALITY

Given the characteristics of Global Elites discussed in chapter 2, it was deemed important to determine whether or not the mass-market respondents surveyed in this section of the study shared any of the same characteristics. In particular, the nationality of respondents, and whether or not they held multiple nationalities was especially important. Figure 32 shows the nationality distribution of respondents.

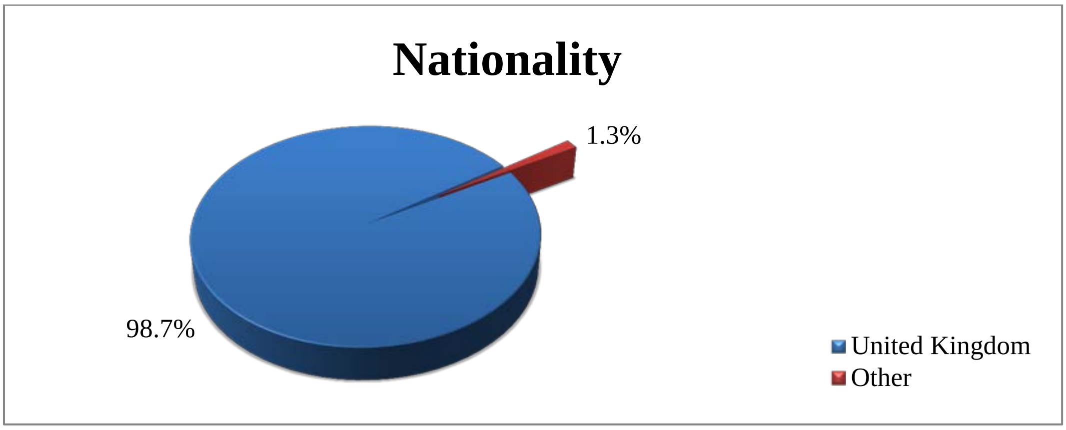

Figure 32 - Nationality distribution of respondents (n = 459)

The majority of the sample (98.7%, n=453) identified themselves as citizens of the United Kingdom (UK), while 1.3% (n=6) identified themselves as nationals of other countries. Further to this, 4.6% (n=21) held more than one nationality.

7.1.4 Country of Residence

Further to 7.1.3 above, it was deemed important to understand whether or not respondents usually resided in the UK, or in another country. Figure 33 depicts the residency of respondents.

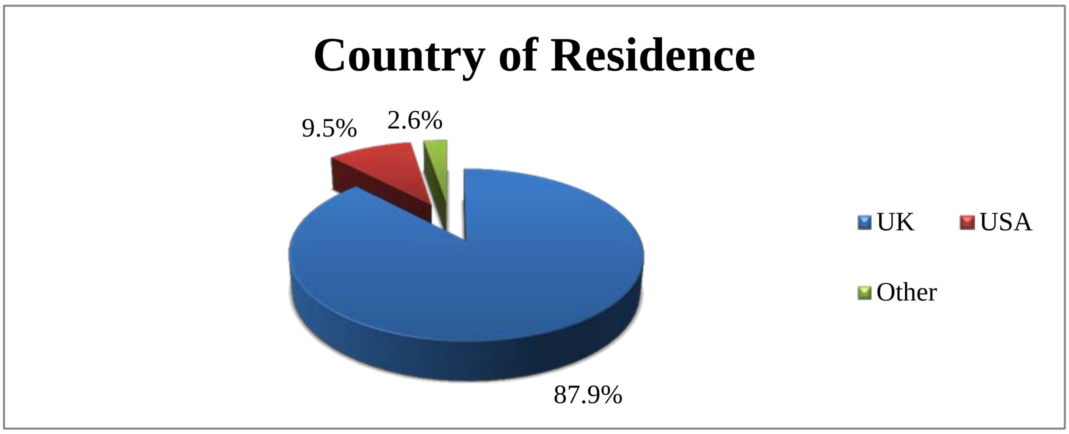

Figure 33 - Country of residence distribution of respondents (n=463)

In line with the responses on nationality in 7.1.3, the majority of respondents also lived in the UK. The ‘Other’ respondents consisted of Australian, Iranian, Spanish and Swiss respondents.

7.1.5 MARITAL STATUS

The marital status of respondents was divided into seven categories. Figure 34 represents the distribution of respondents.

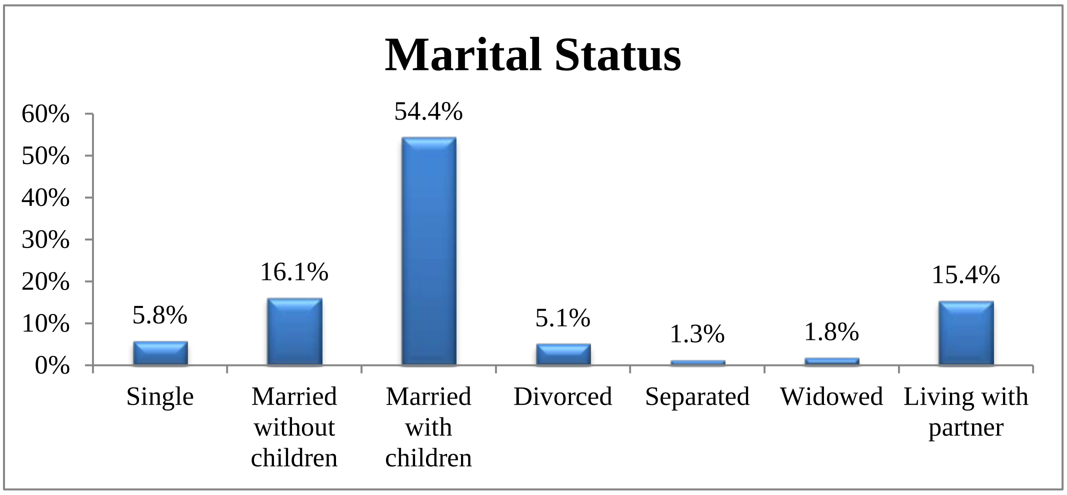

Figure 34 - Marital status distribution of respondents (n = 447)

The majority of respondents (85.9%) were married or in a marriage-like relationship, with most (54.4%) also having children.

7.1.6 INCOME

Respondents were asked to provide their combined annual household income by selecting one of 15 categories. Figure 35 presents the distribution of household income. To simplify this distribution for further analyses, the income categories were condensed into a new variable with only three categories. In this new variable, the majority of respondents (49.5%, n=218) reported a combined annual household income of less than £50,000, 39.1% (n=172) reported income of between £50,000 - £99,999, and 11.4% (n=50) reported income of £100,000 or more.

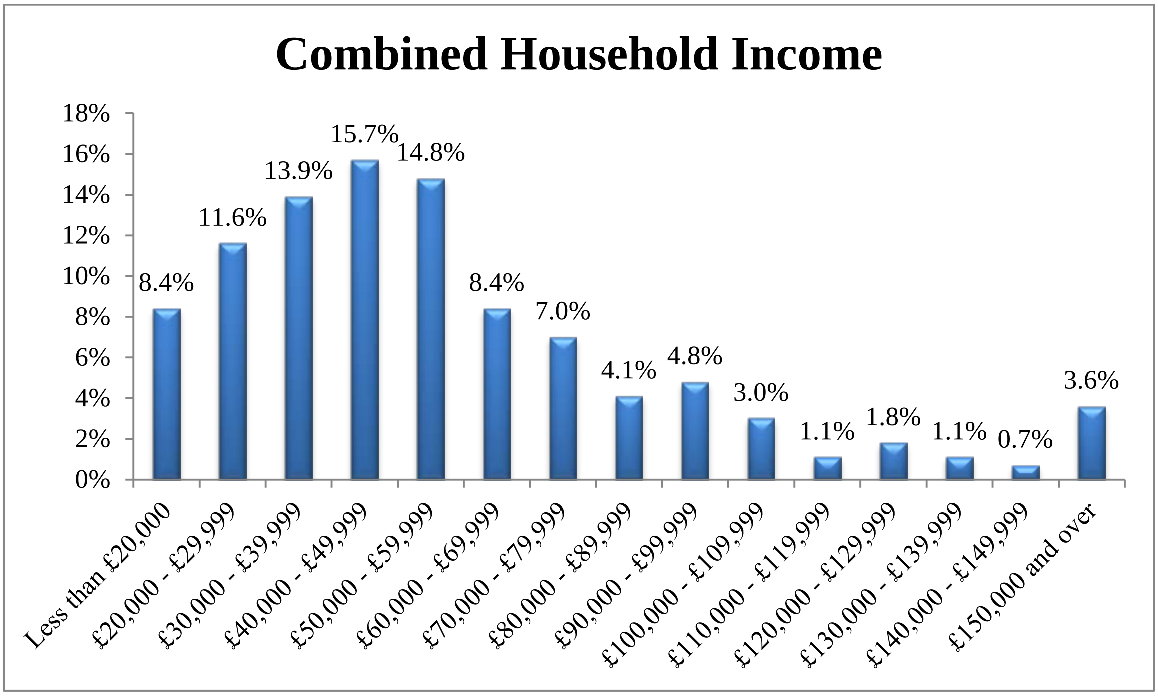

Figure 35 - Combined household income distribution of respondents

7.1.7 EMPLOYMENT

The questionnaire asked respondents three questions in relation to their employment, being their industry of employment, their occupation and their employment status.

7.1.7.1 Industry of Employment

Respondents were asked to select from a drop-down menu of 20 industries which industry most accurately represented their industry of employment. Table 11 presents the results in descending order.

Table 11 - Distribution of industry of employment of respondents

Industry of Employment		
	Frequency	Per cent
Professional, scientific or technical services	47	13.2
Other services (except public administration)	46	12.9
Health care or social assistance	42	11.8
Educational services	39	11.0
Manufacturing	35	9.8
Finance or insurance	24	6.7
Retail trade	19	5.3
Unclassified establishments	19	5.3
Construction	16	4.5
Utilities	11	3.1
Transportation or warehousing	10	2.8
Information	10	2.8
Management of companies or enterprises	10	2.8
Admin, support, waste management or remediation services	10	2.8
Arts, entertainment or recreation	5	1.4
Wholesale trade	4	1.1
Real estate or rental and leasing	4	1.1
Accommodation or food services	3	.8
Forestry, fishing, hunting or agriculture support	2	.6
Total	**356**	**100.0**

7.1.7.2 Employment Status

Respondents were asked to select one of seven statuses of employment. Figure 36 presents the distribution of these results. The results demonstrate that over half of the respondents were in full time employment, while 23.9% were not in any form of employment.

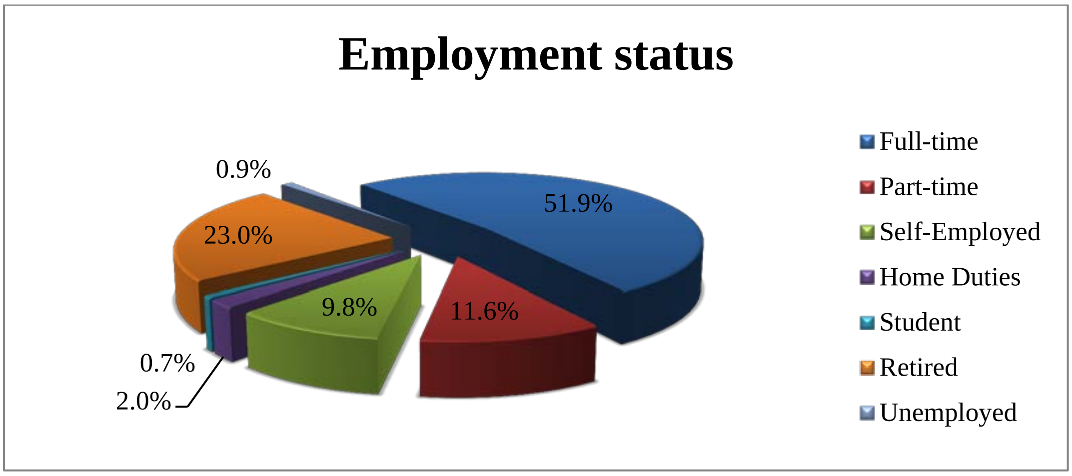

Figure 36 - Employment status (n = 447)

7.1.8 Frequency of Travel

Respondents were asked about their travel patterns, and were asked to indicate in general, how many overseas trips they make each year. Figure 37 shows the distribution of these results.

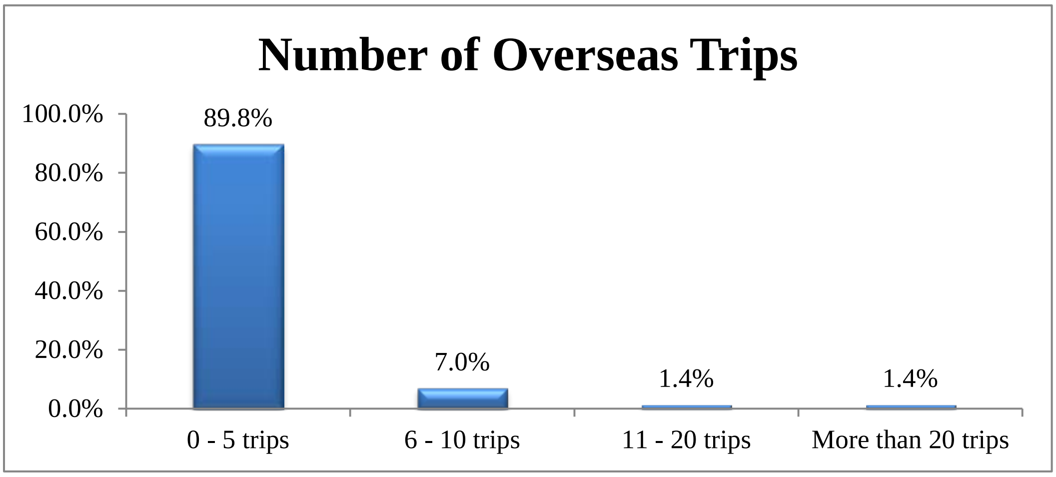

Figure 37 - Frequency of overseas travel (n = 561)

The vast majority of respondents made five or less overseas trips each year. There was no distinction made here as to whether these trips were for business or leisure, as it was overall travel frequency that was of interest.

7.1.9 LEVEL OF HOTEL

Further to section 7.1.8 above, respondents were asked to indicate at which level of hotel they regularly stay. Respondents were provided a choice of three, four or five stars. Figure 38 presents the results of this question.

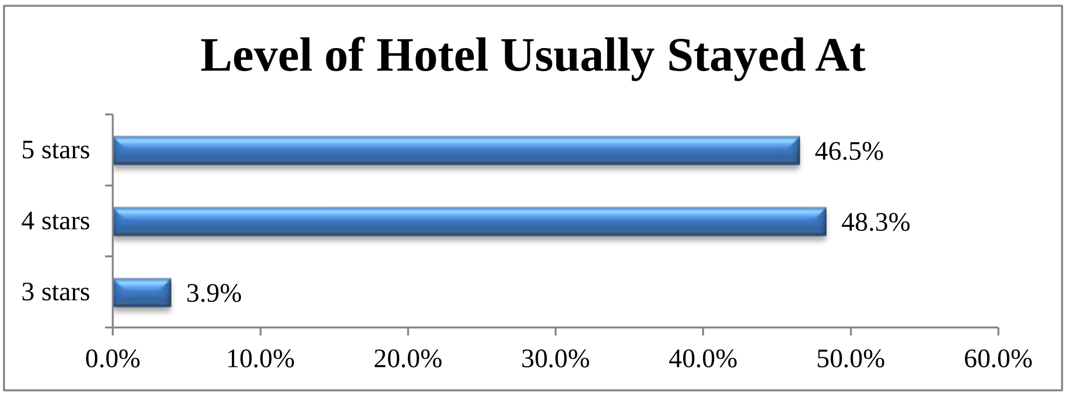

Figure 38 - Distribution of level of hotel usually stayed at (n = 561)

The results demonstrate that the vast majority (94.8%) of respondents usually stay at four or five-star hotels. This was seen as important in order to determine the 'normal' travel behaviours of respondents, and in turn to be able to draw conclusions from further analyses.

7.2 ASSESSMENTS OF VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

7.2.1 EXAMINATION OF CONSTRUCT 1: HOTEL LOYALTY

As discussed in section 5.5.2.1 in chapter 5, the hotel loyalty items were obtained from the extant literature on hotel loyalty. The seven items included in this construct were all found to be significant determinants of loyalty in the studies from which they were taken, except for sustainability. At the crux of this thesis is the examination of whether or not sustainable business practices influences consumer loyalty, and as such a 'Sustainability' item was included in the set of loyalty drivers. Given that the validity of these drivers had been confirmed in other studies, as well as the small number of items, only the reliability of the scale needed to be examined. This was done by examining Cronbach's alpha, where Table 12 summarises the results.

Table 12 - Reliability of Hotel Loyalty construct

Scale Item	Item to Total Correlations	Cronbach's Alpha
Trust I trust the staff and management of this hotel	.72	
Relationship My relationship with this hotel has a great deal of personal meaning	.51	
Satisfaction Overall, I am satisfied with this hotel	.69	
Sustainability The adoption of sustainability policies at this hotel is important to me	.46	0.87
Quality This hotel was of the highest quality throughout	.76	
Image This hotel company has a positive image	.71	
Alternative Choices If there were other hotels of a similar standard available, I would still choose to stay at this hotel	.65	

Cronbach's alpha score for the scale is 0.87 which exceeds the minimum criteria for establishing scale reliability (> .70). Item-to-total correlation coefficients for the scale range from 0.46 to 0.72, exceeding the minimum threshold of .30. Therefore, no need appears to force elimination of any items. These results indicate that the hotel loyalty scale is reliable.

7.2.2 Examination of Construct 2: Hotel involvement

The hotel involvement construct, as presented in the questionnaire, was theoretically underpinned by three conceptual dimensions: pleasure, centrality and sign (Filo et al. 2011). Each of these dimensions had three statements assigned to them in the questionnaire, resulting in a total of nine items in the overall scale. An exploratory factor analysis using principal components extraction and Varimax rotation was applied to all nine items in the scale to examine its validity. Prior to performing the exploratory factor analysis, the suitability of the data for use in this technique was assessed. Tabachnick & Fidell (2007) suggest a minimum of 300 cases for factor analysis to be successful, and in this study as noted earlier, a complete data set of 606 cases was achieved, thereby making this statistical technique suitable. Further to this, Tabachnick & Fidell (2007) note the importance of the strength of the inter-correlations among scale items. They suggest a minimum correlation of 0.3, while Bartlett's test of sphericity should be significant ($p < .05$) and a minimum Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value of 0.6 (where the KMO scale ranges from 0 to 1). Upon inspection of the correlation matrix, the presence of mostly strong and significant coefficients >0.3 ($p < .001$) was confirmed, as well as a KMO value of .805, exceeding the recommended value of .6 (Kaiser 1974). Bartlett's test of sphericity reached statistical significance ($p < .001$), thereby supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix.

Principal Components Analysis revealed the presence of only two components with eigenvalues exceeding 1, explaining 48% and 19% of the variance respectively. Thus, the two-component solution explained a cumulative variance of 66.53%. To aid in the interpretation of these components, Varimax rotation was performed, and the rotated solution revealed the presence of a simple structure, with both components showing a number of strong loadings. This was further supported by the results of Parallel Analysis, which showed only two components with eigenvalues exceeding the corresponding criterion values for a randomly generated data matrix of the same size (9 variables x 577 respondents). The results of the exploratory factor analysis are presented in Table 13 below.

Table 13 - Results of exploratory factor analysis for the Hotel Involvement construct

Scale Item	Factor Loadings		
	Factor 1	**Factor 2**	**Communalities**
Pleasure Items			
I really enjoyed visiting this hotel		0.934	0.88
Visiting this hotel was pleasurable		0.934	0.88
Visiting this hotel is very interesting	0.522		0.51
Centrality Items			
A lot of my life is organised around visiting this hotel	0.826		0.68
Visiting this hotel has a central role in my life	0.841		0.72
Lots of my time is organised around visiting this hotel	0.677		0.47
Sign Items			
Visiting this hotel really allows me to be myself		0.615	0.62
Visiting this hotel says a lot about who I am	0.719		0.60
When I stay at this hotel, others can see me the way I want them to see me	0.768		0.62
Eigenvalue	4.32	1.67	
% of Variance Explained	48.00%	18.53%	Total: 66.53%

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax Rotation. Item loading less than 0.3 omitted.

Table 13 supports a two factor solution, which is at odds with the theoretical construct which was employed in the questionnaire, and does not replicate the same number of dimensions as other involvement constructs (e.g. Filo et al. 2011; Funk et al. 2011; Funk 2006; Funk & James 2006). The grouping of items into the two-factor structure presented above does not provide a logical division of items, or any kind of theoretical justification for this split. In order to provide a more meaningful interpretation of the results, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed whereby only the first component was retained for further investigation. The results of this showed acceptable loadings of all nine items onto a single factor, although reducing the amount of variance explained to 48% (compared to 65% in the two-factor solution). As Pallant (2000) suggests, discretion regarding the number of factors which most appropriately describe the underlying relationship of the variables remains with the researcher, and in this case it is suggested that the strongest empirical and theoretical backing should be given to a single-factor solution. By collapsing the involvement construct into uni-dimensional (single-factor) construct it gives empirical and theoretical backing for using the nine individual involvement items in the staging procedure in section 7.7 below.

In order to assess the reliability of the scale, Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the scale. Table 14 below shows the results from this reliability analysis.

Table 14 - Reliability of Hotel Involvement construct

Scale Item	**Item to Total Correlation**	**Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient**
I really enjoyed visiting this hotel	0.43	0.86
Visiting this hotel was pleasurable	0.48	
Visiting this hotel is very interesting	0.60	
A lot of my life is organised around visiting this hotel	0.61	
Visiting this hotel has a central role in my life	0.69	
Lots of my time is organised around visiting this hotel	0.53	
Visiting this hotel really allows me to be myself	0.65	
Visiting this hotel says a lot about who I am	0.67	
When I stay at this hotel, others can see me the way I want them to see me	0.65	

As shown in the table, Cronbach's alpha score for the scale is 0.86 which exceeds the minimum criteria for establishing scale reliability (> .70). In addition, the Item to Total Correlations range from 0.43 to 0.69 which exceed the recommended threshold of 0.3 (De Vaus 2002), demonstrating reasonable strength of correlations. Therefore, it can be concluded that no items need to be removed in order to improve the reliability of the scale. The results of these investigations support the use of all nine involvement items in further analyses.

As a result of the preceding discussion, the hotel involvement construct represented by nine items as a uni-dimensional construct appears valid and reliable. Confirmatory factor analysis supports the validity of the scale, while Cronbach's alpha coefficients support the reliability of the scale.

7.2.3 EXAMINATION OF CONSTRUCT 3: CONSUMER VALUES

The ten consumer value items adapted from Schwartz's Value Scale (SVS) (Schwartz 1994b) were subjected to an exploratory factor analysis using principal components analysis (PCA). Prior to performing the PCA the suitability of the data for use in this technique was assessed. Based on the minimum criteria already outlined in section 7.2.2 above, inspection of the correlation matrix, the presence of mostly strong and significant coefficients >0.3 ($p < .001$) was confirmed, as well as a KMO value of .837, exceeding the recommended value of .6 (Kaiser, 1974). Bartlett's test of sphericity reached statistical significance ($p < .001$), thereby supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix.

Principal Components Analysis revealed the presence of only two components with eigenvalues exceeding 1, explaining 42% and 14% of the variance respectively. Thus, the two-component solution explained a cumulative variance of 56.3%. To aid in the interpretation of these components, Varimax rotation was performed, and the rotated solution revealed the presence of a simple structure, with both components showing a number of strong and equal loadings. This was further supported by the results of Parallel Analysis, which showed only two components with eigenvalues exceeding the corresponding criterion values for a randomly generated data matrix of the same size (9 variables x 577 respondents). The results of the exploratory factor analysis are presented in Table 15.

Table 15 - Results of factor analysis for the Consumer Values construct

Scale Item	Factor Loadings		
	Factor 1	**Factor 2**	**Communalities**
Power Social power, authority and wealth	.655		.44
Achievement Achieving success, capability and ambition, and influence on people and events	.737		.58
Hedonism Seeking pleasurable experiences and enjoying life	.632		.44
Stimulation Being daring and leading a varied and exciting life	.787		.64
Self-Direction Being creative, curious and the freedom to choose your own goals	.694		.56
Universalism Protecting the environment, achieving a world of beauty, being broad minded and aspire to social justice		.495	.43
Benevolence Being helpful, honest and forgiving		.716	.62
Tradition Being devout and accepting of your portion in life		.656	.48
Conformity Being polite, honouring and respecting parents and elders, and being an obedient citizen		.874	.77
Security Being clean, having a sense of national and family security as well as social order		.814	.68
Eigenvalue	4.21	1.42	
% of Variance Explained	42.14%	14.16%	Total: 56.23%

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax Rotation. Item loading less than 0.3 omitted.

Table 15 supports a two factor solution, which is in line with the dichotomous continuum model of the SVS and Weeden's (2011) revised model presented in section 4.2.2 of Chapter 4. In addition to this two-factor model, it was also deemed suitable, both theoretically and logically, to force a one-factor model in order to create a uni-dimensional variable. Given Schwartz’s model proposes a set of universal values that are common to all individuals, and transcend situations, as well as the validity this proposal received through the work of Lindeman & Verkasalo (2005), its theoretically and conceptually appropriate to operationalise this construct as a uni-dimensional one. To do this, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed whereby only the first component from the CFA was retained for further investigation. The results of this showed acceptable loadings of all ten items onto a single factor, although reducing the amount of variance explained from 56% to 42%. As previously noted, discretion regarding the number of factors which most appropriately describe the underlying relationship of the variables remains with the researcher (Pallant 2000), and in this case it is suggested that a single-factor solution is also appropriate.

In order to assess the reliability of the scale, Cronbach’s alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the scale. Table 16 shows the results from this reliability analysis.

Table 16 - Reliability of Consumer Value scale

Scale Item	Item to Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
Power Social power, authority and wealth	.45	.85
Achievement Achieving success, capability and ambition, and influence on people and events	.56	
Hedonism Seeking pleasurable experiences and enjoying life	.48	
Stimulation Being daring and leading a varied and exciting life	.57	
Self-Direction Being creative, curious and the freedom to choose your own goals	.58	
Universalism Protecting the environment, achieving a world of beauty, being broad minded and aspire to social justice	.54	
Benevolence Being helpful, honest and forgiving	.62	
Tradition Being devout and accepting of your portion in life	.51	
Conformity Being polite, honouring and respecting parents and elders, and being an obedient citizen	.55	
Security Being clean, having a sense of national and family security as well as social order	.57	

As shown in the table, Cronbach's alpha score for the scale is 0.85 which exceeds the minimum criteria for establishing scale reliability (> .70). In addition, the Item to Total Correlations range from 0.45 to 0.58 which exceed the recommended threshold of 0.3 (De Vaus 2002), demonstrating reasonable strength of correlations. Therefore, it can be concluded that no items need to be removed in order to improve the reliability of the scale. The results of these investigations support the use of all ten value items in further analyses.

As a result of the preceding discussion, the consumer value construct represented by ten items as a uni-dimensional construct appears valid and reliable. Confirmatory factor analysis supports the validity of the scale, while Cronbach's alpha coefficients support the reliability of the scale.

7.2.4 Examination of Construct 4: Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to assess the validity of the hotel brand loyalty and trust scale. The scale was conceptually presented as two dimensions in the questionnaire with three items each focusing on hotel brand loyalty and hotel brand trust. Principal components extraction and Varimax rotation was applied to these six items to examine the scale validity. Prior to performing the exploratory factor analysis, the suitability of the data for use in this technique was assessed. Upon inspection of the correlation matrix, the presence of mostly strong and significant coefficients >0.3 ($p < .001$) was confirmed, as well as a KMO value of .848, exceeding the recommended value of .6 (Kaiser 1974). Bartlett's test of sphericity reached statistical significance ($p < .001$), thereby supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix. The Principal Components Analysis revealed the presence of only one component with an eigenvalue exceeding 1, which explained 72.8% of the variance. Thus, as well as explaining a significant degree of variance, the single-factor structure showed strong loadings, confirming the appropriateness of this scale to be operationalized as a uni-dimensional construct. The results of the exploratory factor analysis are presented in Table 17 below.

As shown in the table, Cronbach's alpha score for the scale is 0.91 which exceeds the minimum criteria for establishing scale reliability (> .70). In addition, the Item to Total Correlations range from 0.70 to 0.81 which exceed the recommended threshold of 0.3 (De Vaus 2002), demonstrating a high level of strength of correlations. Therefore, it can be concluded that no items need to be removed in order to improve the reliability of the scale. The results of these investigations support the use of all six items in further analyses.

As a result of the preceding discussion, the hotel brand loyalty and trust construct represented by six items as a uni-dimensional construct appears valid and reliable. Confirmatory factor analysis supports the validity of the scale, while Cronbach's alpha coefficients support the reliability of the scale

Table 17 - Results of factor analysis of the Hotel Brand Trust and Hotel Brand Loyalty construct

Item	Factor Loadings	Communalities	Item to Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
Hotel Brand Trust Items				0.91
I trust this brand	.886	.78	.79	
This is an honest brand	.894	.80	.80	
This brand is safe	.864	.75	.76	
Hotel Brand Loyalty Items				
I will stay with this brand of hotel the next time I need accommodation of this type	.859	.74	.80	
I intend to keep staying with this brand of hotel	.846	.72	.81	
I am committed to this brand of hotel	.764	.58	.70	
Eigenvalue	4.367			
% of Variance Explained	72.79%			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Item loading less than 0.3 omitted.

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7.3 Descriptive Analysis

This section provides a descriptive analysis of all questions in the survey. Where appropriate, graphical representations of results have been provided to aid in their interpretation.

7.3.1 Hotel Involvement

Grounded in the preceding discussions in chapters 2 and 5, respondents were asked to respond to items relating to the three elements of hotel involvement: pleasure, centrality and sign. Each element included three items in order to improve for internal scale reliability and consistency. Respondents were asked to rate their responses on a 7-point Likert scale which ranged from 1 = Strongly

Disagree to 6 = Strongly Agree, and 7 = Neither Agree nor Disagree. Responses were condensed into the three broad categories of Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree and Agree in Figure 39 below which demonstrates the distribution of responses to these nine items.

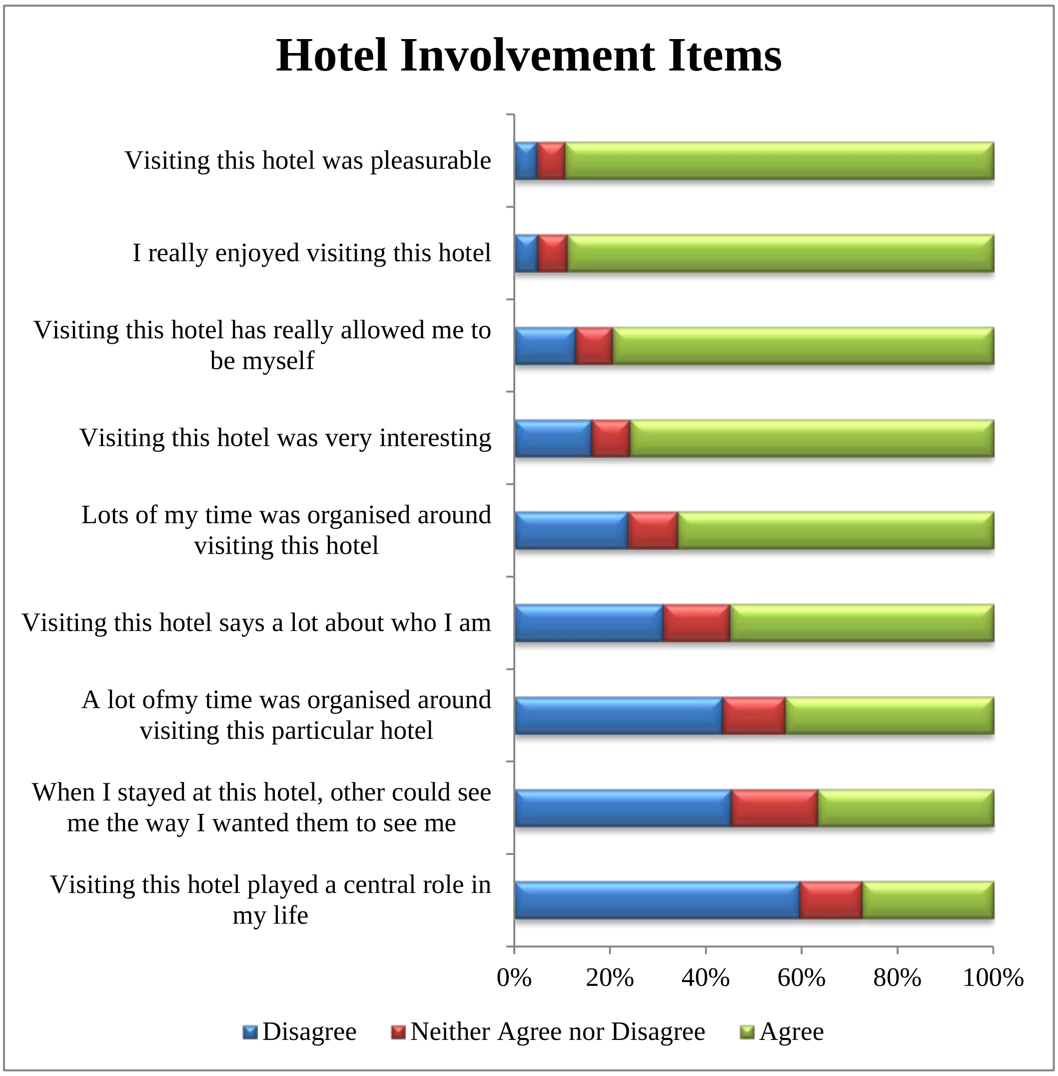

Figure 39 - Responses to Hotel Involvement items (n = 577)

The item with the highest level of agreement was the Pleasure Item “Visiting this hotel was pleasurable” with 89.1% of respondents agreeing with this statement. The item with the highest level of disagreement was the Centrality item “Visiting this hotel played a central role in my life” with 59.6% of respondents disagreeing with this statement. Table 19 below lists the mean scores of each item, and the overall mean for each dimension of the Hotel Involvement scale.

Table 18 - Mean scores and standard deviations for Hotel Involvement dimensions

Dimension/Item	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pleasure	**1.00**	**7.00**	**5.29**	**0.98**
I really enjoyed visiting this hotel	1.00	7.00	6.31	1.29
Visiting this hotel was pleasurable	1.00	7.00	6.25	1.27
Visiting this hotel was very interesting	1.00	7.00	5.25	1.57
Centrality	**1.00**	**7.00**	**4.01**	**1.59**
Lots of my time was organised around visiting this hotel	1.00	7.00	5.01	1.79
A lot of my life was organised around visiting this particular hotel	1.00	7.00	4.01	1.92
Visiting this hotel played a central role in my life	1.00	7.00	3.28	1.88
Sign	**1.00**	**7.00**	**4.39**	**1.47**
Visiting this hotel really allowed me to be myself	1.00	7.00	5.23	1.27
Visiting this hotel says a lot about who I am	1.00	7.00	4.48	1.89
When I stayed at this hotel, others could see me the way I wanted them to see me	1.00	7.00	3.70	1.97

N.B. Scale was re-ordered from 1 to 7 where 1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree; 4=neither agree nor disagree. Higher mean scores indicate higher levels of agreement with the statement.

As can be seen in the table, the item with the highest mean score was the Pleasure item “I really enjoyed visiting this hotel”, and the item with the lowest mean score was the Centrality item “Visiting this hotel played a central role in my life”. The average standard deviations were lowest for the Pleasure dimension and highest for the Centrality dimension.

7.3.2 Hotel Brand Loyalty and Trust

This section asked respondents to respond to a set of six items related to hotel brand trust and hotel brand loyalty. Respondents were asked to think specifically about the Thomson hotel that they stayed in most recently when answering these questions. This was deemed important in order to have respondents think of a brand rather than a particular hotel. Respondents were asked to rate their responses on a 7-point Likert scale which ranged from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 6 = Strongly Agree, and 7 = Neither Agree nor Disagree. Responses were condensed into the three broad categories of Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree and Agree in figure 40 below which demonstrates the distribution of responses to these nine items.

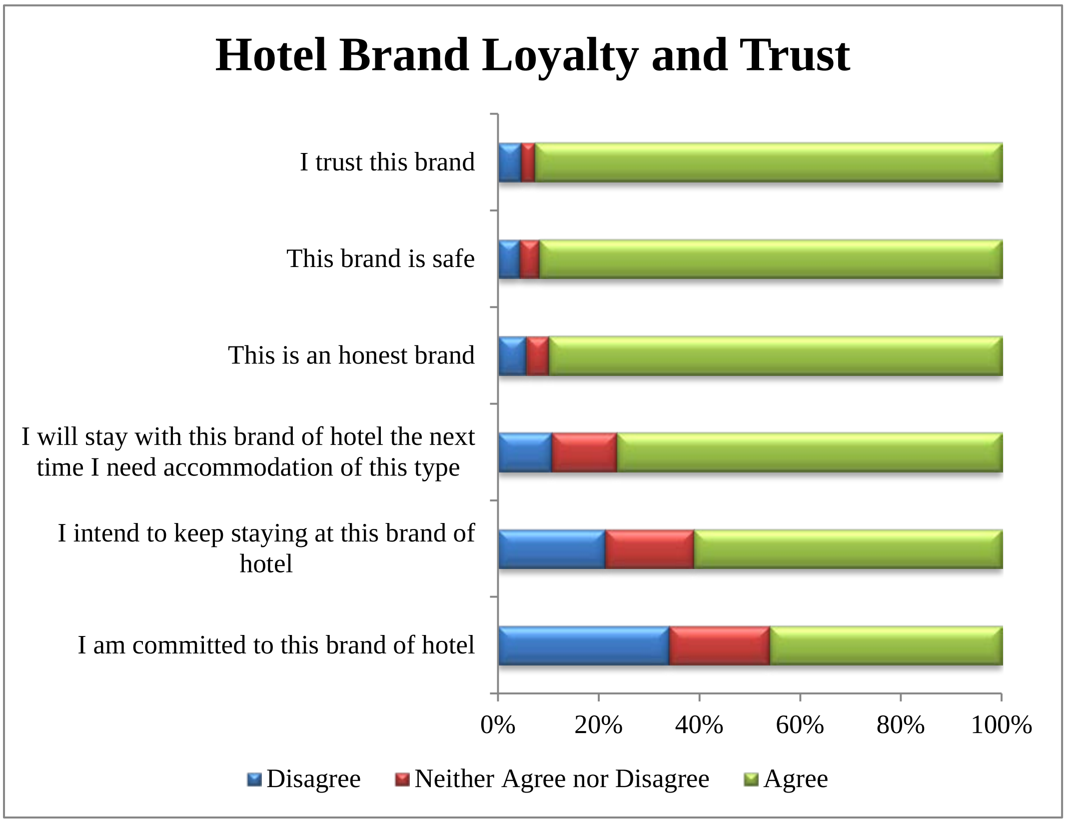

Figure 40 - Responses to Hotel Brand Loyalty and Hotel Brand Trust items (n = 563)

The item with the highest level of agreement was “I trust this brand” with 92.7% of respondents agreeing with this statement. The item with the highest level of disagreement was the item “I am committed to this brand of hotel” with 34.0% of respondents disagreeing with this statement. Table 19 below lists the mean scores and standard deviations of each item.

Table 19 - Mean scores and standard deviations for Hotel Brand Trust and Loyalty items (n = 563)

Dimension/Item	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I trust this brand	1.00	7.00	6.00	1.21
This brand is safe	1.00	7.00	5.90	1.21
This is an honest brand	1.00	7.00	5.83	1.25
I will stay with this brand of hotel the next time I need accommodation of this type	1.00	7.00	5.41	1.63
I intend to keep staying at this brand of hotel	1.00	7.00	4.85	1.77
I am committed to this brand of hotel	1.00	7.00	4.22	1.89

N.B. Scale was re-ordered from 1 to 7 where 1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree; 4=neither agree nor disagree. Higher mean scores indicate higher levels of agreement with the statement.

As can be seen in the table, the item with the highest mean score was the item "I trust this brand", and the item with the lowest mean score was the item "I am committed to this brand of hotel". The standard deviations were lowest for the first three dimensions.

7.3.3 Hotel Brand Loyalty Drivers

A list of seven brand loyalty drivers was developed from the extant literature (see chapters 2 and 5 for discussion). Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement on a 7-point Likert scale which ranged from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 6 = Strongly Agree, and 7 = Neither Agree nor Disagree. Responses were condensed into the three broad categories of Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree and Agree in figure 41 below which demonstrates the distribution of responses to these nine items.

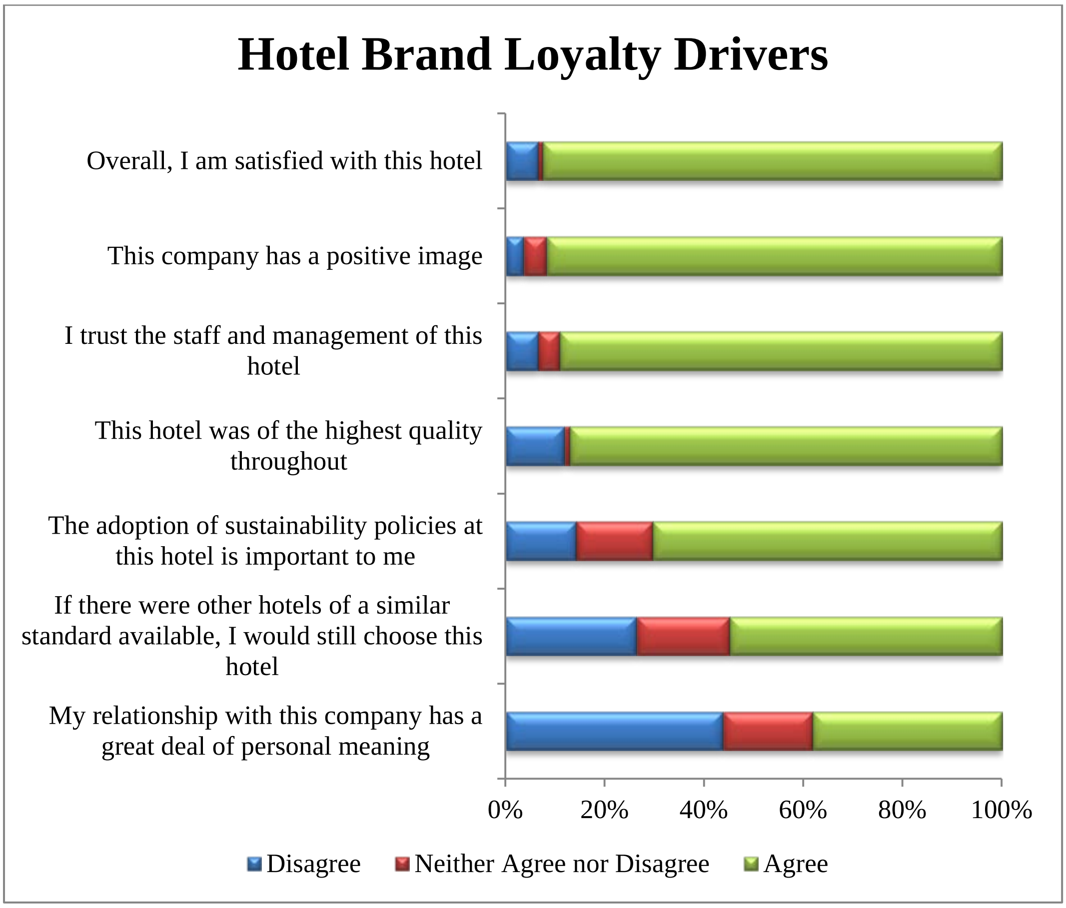

Figure 41 - Responses to Hotel Brand Loyalty drivers

The item with the highest level of agreement was "Overall, I am satisfied with this hotel" with 92.5% of respondents agreeing with this statement. The item with the highest level of disagreement was the item "My relationship with this company has a great deal of personal meaning" with 43.8% of respondents disagreeing with this statement. Table 20 below lists the mean scores and standard deviations of each item.

Table 20 - Mean scores and standard deviations for Hotel Loyalty items (n = 546)

Dimension/Item	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Overall, I am satisfied with this hotel	1.00	7.00	6.19	1.35
This company has a positive image	1.00	7.00	5.94	1.15
I trust the staff and management of this hotel	1.00	7.00	5.79	1.29
This hotel was of the highest quality throughout	1.00	7.00	5.69	1.56
The adoption of sustainability policies at this hotel is important to me	1.00	7.00	5.12	1.54
If there were other hotels of a similar standard available, I would still choose this hotel	1.00	7.00	4.64	1.79
My relationship with this company has a great deal of personal meaning	1.00	7.00	3.84	1.87

N.B. Scale was re-ordered from 1 to 7 where 1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree; 4=neither agree nor disagree. Higher mean scores indicate higher levels of agreement with the statement.

As can be seen in the table, the item with the highest mean score was the item "Overall, I am satisfied with this hotel", and the item with the lowest mean score was the item "My relationship with this hotel has a great deal of personal meaning". The standard deviations were lowest for the second dimension.

7.3.4 *Consumer Values*

This section presented the list of Schwartz's (1994a) ten universal values, and asked respondents to assess the relative importance of each one. Each value item was presented as a single term, with a brief description in parentheses immediately following the term. A Likert scale ranging from 1=Opposes my Principles to 7=Of Supreme Importance was used (Lindeman & Verkasalo 2005). Figure 42 presents the distribution of responses to these items.

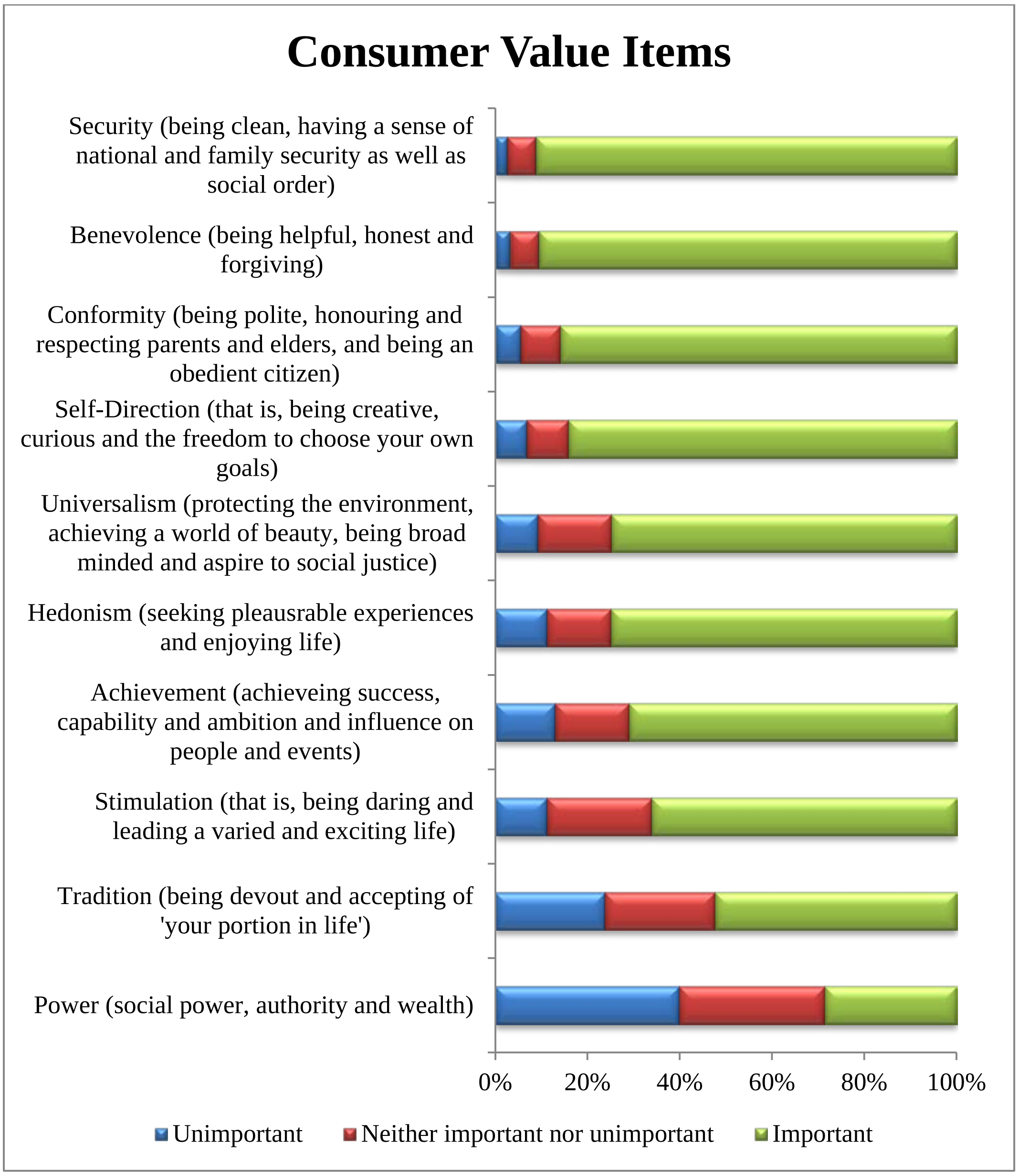

Figure 42 - Responses to consumer value items (n = 454)

The item with the highest level of importance was “Security (being clean, having a sense of national and family security as well as social order)” with 91.2% of respondents rating this statement as important. The item to have the highest degree of unimportance was the item “Power (social power, authority and wealth)” with 39.9% of respondents placing the highest level of unimportance on this statement. Table 21 below lists the mean scores and standard deviations of each item.

Table 21 - Mean scores and standard deviations for Hotel Loyalty items (n = 457)

Dimension/Item	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Security	1.00	7.00	5.82	1.13
Benevolence	1.00	7.00	5.75	1.13
Conformity	1.00	7.00	5.71	1.32
Self-Direction	1.00	7.00	5.39	1.21
Universalism	1.00	7.00	5.04	1.31
Hedonism	1.00	7.00	5.00	1.32
Achievement	1.00	7.00	4.92	1.29
Stimulation	1.00	7.00	4.83	1.28
Tradition	1.00	7.00	4.40	1.51
Power	1.00	7.00	3.75	1.35

N.B. Higher mean scores indicate higher levels of agreement with the statement.

As can be seen in the table, the item with the highest mean score was "Security", and the item with the lowest mean score was the item "Power". The standard deviations were lowest for the first two dimensions.

7.3.5 UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABILITY

The questionnaire asked respondents two open ended questions seeking to understand their knowledge of the term sustainability. The first question asked respondents to complete the sentence "To me sustainability means…", and the second asked respondents to complete the sentence "When I think of a sustainable hotel I think….". A selection of responses to each are provided in tables 22 and 23 below. In addition, word clouds were generated based on responses to each question, where words in the largest font indicate the highest number of mentions. The full list of responses is provided in Appendix 2.

Table 22 - Sample responses to "To me sustainability means..."

"To me sustainability means….."
Careful use of resources
Economical use of utilities
Continuing to produce a good level of service and facilities by recycling, local sourcing etc.
An affiliation with the environment
Keeping things alive and not just a memory
Solidity
For quality to remain good throughout your stay
To be true I don't know
Care of the local environment
Same standard each year

As can be seen from the table above, responses were varied, but did tend to relate predominantly to the environment. This is reflected in the word cloud for the same question (figure 43).

Figure 43 - Word cloud for "To me sustainability means..."

In response to the second open-ended question, a largely similar set of responses were evidenced (see table 23 below).

Table 23 - Sample responses to "When I think of a sustainable hotel I think..."

"When I think of a sustainable hotel I think…"
Comfort, not luxury. The human touch.
Reduction of waste
Green living
Continuity
Don't know
Nothing what silly question it a holiday not buying a house
Efficient use of energy, recycling and in tune with its locale
People/companies who value the environment and the local people
Working with local authorities, tour operators to keep clients and staff in a happy holiday environment
Relaxing
Eco-systems
The good it is doing in that area

As can be seen from the table, responses were varied, but did still have a strong focus on the environmental aspect of sustainability. This is reflected in the word cloud for the same question (figure 44).

Figure 44 - Word cloud for "When I think of a sustainable hotel I think ..."

7.3.6 Factors Affecting Hotel Selection

This section aimed to elicit which factors respondents place most importance on when choosing a hotel. Respondents were presented with a list of ten items and were asked to rank them in order of importance, where 1 = most important to 10 = least important. Table 24 below presents the results of this question.

Table 24 - Results of ranking of factors which affect hotel selection

Rank	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	% Respondents
1	Quality of Service	2.20	1.413	40.7
2	Hotel Facilities	2.54	1.231	38.4
3	Location of the hotel	2.82	1.655	26.3
4	Price charged for rooms	4.67	1.958	22.5
5	In-room facilities	5.24	1.916	25.1
6	Hotel, image, design or décor	6.13	2.295	25.5
7	Hotel sustainability policies	6.77	1.927	25.4
8	Hotel ethical policies	7.54	1.501	31.5
9	Industry accreditations	7.86	1.591	35.8
10	Third party affiliations	9.21	1.367	62.8

As can be seen in table 24, the single most important factor when selecting a hotel was ‘Quality of Service’, with the least important being ‘Third Party Affiliations’. Mean scores for these items (on a scale of one to ten) ranged from 2.20 to 9.21 with standard deviations ranging from 1.231 to 2.295, demonstrating some degree of variability.

7.4 T-TESTS AND ANOVA TESTS

This section describes the results of t-tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests conducted on the data. T-tests and ANOVA tests compare the mean statistic of more than two groups (Brace et al., 2006). In this research, a t-test was used on variables with only two groups (gender and multiple nationalities), and ANOVAs were used on variables with more than two groups (age, nationality, country of residence, marital status, employment characteristics, frequency of travel and level of hotel). Each grouping variable below was tested against the four scale constructs used in the research, based on the results of the validity and reliability tests conducted in section 7.2 above. They are presented as follows:

- Construct 1: Hotel Loyalty
- Construct 2: Hotel Involvement

- Construct 3: Consumer Values
    - Construct 3a: Factor 1 Value Items
    - Construct 3b: Factor 2 Value Items
- Construct 4: hotel Brand Loyalty and Trust

Unless otherwise noted, the results presented assume that all criteria for conducting the appropriate statistical procedure were met, and that no assumptions were violated. If violations existed, alternative tests were undertaken, and the appropriate results reported.

7.4.1 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GENDER

An independent samples t-test was conducted to test for any differences between males and females in the four constructs. The results are presented in Table 25 below according to gender.

Table 25 - Results of T-test: constructs by gender

Construct Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std.D	T	Sig.
Construct 1: Hotel Loyalty	Male	259	5.29	1.13	.225	.822
	Female	195	5.27	1.15		
Construct 2: Hotel Involvement	Male	259	4.77	1.17	-.586	.558
	Female	195	4.83	1.18		
Construct 3: Consumer Values (uni-dimensional)	Male	259	5.03	0.84	-.877	.381
	Female	195	5.10	0.81		
Construct 3a: Consumer Values (Factor 1 items)	Male	259	4.78	0.96	.152	.879
	Female	195	4.77	0.91		
Construct 3b: Consumer Values (Factor 2 items)	Male	259	5.28	0.97	-1.66	.098
	Female	195	5.43	0.95		
Construct 4: Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust	Male	259	5.29	1.23	-.955	.340
	Female	195	5.41	1.35		

As shown in table 25, there were no significant differences between males and females on any of the constructs. These results indicate that both males and females responded similarly to the items in these scales.

7.4.2 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AGE GROUPS

An ANOVA test was conducted to test for any differences between age groups (as defined under section 7.1.2) within the four constructs. The results are presented in Table 26 below.

Table 26 - Results of ANOVA: Constructs by age group

Construct Variable	Age	N	Mean	Std.D	F	Sig.
	16-24	6	4.98	0.94		
	25-34	32	4.87	1.35		
	35-44	63	5.19	1.20		
Construct 1: Hotel Loyalty	45-54	124	5.21	1.07	1.78	0.10
	55-64	130	5.38	1.13		
	65-74	76	5.36	1.15		
	75 +	10	5.97	0.82		
	16-24	6	5.02	0.87		
	25-34	32	4.52	1.22		
	35-44	63	4.71	1.16		
Construct 2: Hotel Involvement	45-54	124	4.82	1.13	1.56	0.16
	55-64	130	4.87	1.19		
	65-74	76	4.71	1.23		
	75 +	10	5.71	1.15		
	16-24	6	5.65	0.49		
	25-34	32	5.03	1.01		
	35-44	63	5.21	0.78		
Construct 3: Consumer Values (uni-dimensional)	45-54	124	5.00	0.78	1.59	0.15
	55-64	130	5.08	0.77		
	65-74	76	5.02	0.89		
	75 +	10	4.57	1.34		
	16-24	6	5.43	0.59		
	25-34	32	5.14	1.19		
	35-44	63	5.02	0.92		
Construct 3a: Consumer Values (Factor 1 items)	45-54	124	4.74	0.83	3.66	0.00*
	55-64	130	4.73	0.86		
	65-74	76	4.55	1.00		
	75 +	10	4.16	1.34		
	16-24	6	5.87	0.59		
Construct 3b: Consumer Values (Factor 2 items)	25-34	32	4.93	1.12	2.18	0.04*
	35-44	63	5.40	0.8		

	45-54	124	5.26	0.96		
	55-64	130	5.43	0.91		
	65-74	76	5.48	0.99		
	75 +	10	4.98	1.53		
Construct 4: Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust	16-24	6	5.50	0.87	1.17	0.32
	25-34	32	4.91	1.46		
	35-44	63	5.34	1.20		
	45-54	124	5.31	1.31		
	55-64	130	5.42	1.32		
	65-74	76	5.29	1.24		
	75 +	10	6.00	0.82		

A one-way ANOVA test was conducted to investigate the impact of age on the four constructs. Of those, there was a statistically significant difference at the $p < 0.001$ level in constructs 3a and 3b. Specifically, for construct 3a, participants aged 65-74 years differed significantly in their mean scores from those aged 25-34 years and 35-44 years. The effect of size was moderate with an eta squared of .05 (Cohen 1988). There were no significant differences amongst the other age groups. For construct 3b, although tests indicated a significant difference, post-hoc tests did not identify between which sub-groups the difference existed.

7.4.3 Differences Between Nationality

Respondents were asked to give their nationality in a text box on the questionnaire, which was later coded into two categories: UK or Other. An independent samples t-test was conducted to test for any differences between UK citizens and those of other nationalities within the four constructs. The results are presented in Table 27 below according to nationality.

Table 27 - Results from T-test: Constructs by nationality

Construct Variable	Nationality	N	Mean	Std.D	T	Sig.
Construct 1: Hotel Loyalty	UK	445	5.29	1.13	0.326	0.74
	Other	6	5.14	1.11		
Construct 2: Hotel Involvement	UK	445	4.81	1.16	1.474	0.14
	Other	6	4.11	1.37		
Construct 3: Consumer Values (uni-dimensional)	UK	445	5.07	0.81	-0.235	0.81
	Other	6	5.15	0.37		
Construct 3a: Consumer Values (Factor 1 items)	UK	445	4.79	0.93	-0.208	0.84
	Other	6	4.87	0.70		
Construct 3b: Consumer Values (Factor 2 items)	UK	445	5.36	0.95	-0.199	0.84
	Other	6	5.43	0.43		
Construct 4: Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust	UK	445	5.36	1.27	0.315	0.75
	Other	6	5.19	1.36		

As shown in the table, there were no significant differences between UK citizens and foreign citizens on any of the constructs. These results indicate that both UK citizens and foreign citizens responded similarly to the items in these scales.

7.4.3.1 Differences between Multiple Nationalities

In addition to analysing the nationality of respondents, as highlighted in chapter 6, determining whether or not respondents held more than one nationality was also of interest. An independent samples t-test was conducted to test for any differences between those who held more than one nationality and those that didn’t within the four constructs. The results are presented in Table 28 below according to multiple nationalities.

Table 28 - Results from T-tests: Constructs by multiple nationalities

Construct Variable	Multiple Nationality	N	Mean	Std.D	T	Sig.
Construct 1: Hotel Loyalty	Yes	21	5.03	1.33	-1.03	0.30
	No	428	5.29	1.14		
Construct 2: Hotel Involvement	Yes	21	4.59	1.28	-0.83	0.41
	No	428	4.81	1.17		
Construct 3: Consumer Values (uni-dimensional)	Yes	21	4.94	1.03	-0.66	0.51
	No	428	5.07	0.82		
Construct 3a: Consumer Values (Factor 1 items)	Yes	21	4.69	1.13	-0.47	0.64
	No	428	4.78	0.93		
Construct 3b: Consumer Values (Factor 2 items)	Yes	21	5.20	1.12	-0.67	0.50
	No	428	5.35	0.96		
Construct 4: Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust	Yes	21	4.93	1.30	-1.51	0.13
	No	428	5.36	1.29		

As shown in the table, there were no significant differences between those who did hold more than one nationality compared to those who didn't on any of the constructs. These results indicate that both respondents who hold only one nationality and those who hold more than one nationality responded similarly to the items in these scales.

7.4.4 Differences Between Country of Residence

Respondents were asked to give their country of residence, which was later coded into two categories: UK or Other. An independent samples t-test was conducted to test for any differences between UK residents and those residing in other countries within the four constructs. The results are presented in Table 29 below according to nationality.

Table 29 - Results from T-tests: Constructs by country of residence

Construct Variable	Country of Residence	N	Mean	Std.D	T	Sig.
Construct 1: Hotel Loyalty	UK	398	5.27	1.14	-0.60	0.55
	Other	56	5.36	1.14		
Construct 2: Hotel Involvement	UK	398	4.81	1.19	0.62	0.53
	Other	56	4.70	1.05		
Construct 3: Consumer Values (uni-dimensional)	UK	398	5.07	0.84	0.79	0.43
	Other	56	4.98	0.77		
Construct 3a: Consumer Values (Factor 1 items)	UK	398	4.79	0.95	0.72	0.47
	Other	56	4.69	0.86		
Construct 3b: Consumer Values (Factor 2 items)	UK	398	5.35	0.97	0.65	0.52
	Other	56	5.26	0.91		
Construct 4: Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust	UK	398	5.34	1.28	-0.06	0.95
	Other	56	5.35	1.29		

As shown in the table, there were no significant differences between UK residents and residents of other countries on any of the constructs. These results indicate that both UK residents and residents of other countries responded similarly to the items in these scales.

7.4.5 Differences Between Marital Status

An ANOVA test was conducted to test for any differences between marital status within the four constructs. The results are presented in Table 30 below.

Table 30 - Results from ANOVA: Constructs by marital status

Construct Variable	Marital Status	N	Mean	Std.D	F	Sig.
Construct 1: Hotel Loyalty	Single	26	5.17	1.14	0.18	0.98
	Married w/o children	71	5.28	1.21		
	Married w/ children	239	5.27	1.22		
	Divorced	23	5.28	1.30		
	Separated	6	5.67	1.23		
	Widowed	8	5.43	0.90		
	Living with partner	67	5.29	0.81		
Construct 2: Hotel Involvement	Single	26	4.65	1.03	0.91	0.49
	Married w/o children	71	4.76	1.21		
	Married w/ children	239	4.75	1.24		
	Divorced	23	5.29	1.04		
	Separated	6	4.89	1.36		
	Widowed	8	5.04	1.27		
	Living with partner	67	4.86	0.99		
Construct 3: Consumer Values (uni-dimensional)	Single	26	5.08	1.22	0.82	0.56
	Married w/o children	71	5.13	0.78		
	Married w/ children	239	5.02	0.82		
	Divorced	23	5.39	0.72		
	Separated	6	5.12	0.95		
	Widowed	8	4.95	0.73		
	Living with partner	67	5.12	0.80		
Construct 3a: Consumer Values (Factor 1 items)	Single	26	4.92	1.30	1.85	0.09
	Married w/o children	71	4.89	0.87		
	Married w/ children	239	4.70	0.90		
	Divorced	23	5.29	0.76		
	Separated	6	4.73	1.20		
	Widowed	8	4.85	0.74		
	Living with partner	67	4.88	0.97		
Construct 3b: Consumer Values (Factor 2 items)	Single	26	5.25	1.27	0.29	0.94
	Married w/o children	71	5.36	1.01		
	Married w/ children	239	5.35	0.96		
	Divorced	23	5.50	0.94		
	Separated	6	5.50	0.84		
	Widowed	8	5.05	1.14		
	Living with partner	67	5.36	0.88		
Construct 4: Hotel Brand	Single	26	5.54	0.83	0.58	0.75

Loyalty & Trust	Married w/o children	71	5.21	1.29
	Married w/ children	239	5.30	1.39
	Divorced	23	5.49	1.48
	Separated	6	5.89	0.90
	Widowed	8	5.67	1.26
	Living with partner	67	5.37	1.07

A one-way ANOVA test was conducted to investigate the impact of marital status on the four constructs. Of those, there were no statistically significant differences between groups. The results indicate that all respondents, regardless of their marital status, responded similarly to the items on the scales.

7.4.6 Differences Between Income

An ANOVA test was conducted to test for any differences between combined household income within the four constructs. The condensed income variable was used, where income brackets were reduced to three groups (Group 1: <£50,000; Group 2: £50,000 - £99,999; and Group 3: £100,000 and over). The results are presented in table 31 below.

Table 31 - Results from ANOVA: Constructs by income bracket

Construct Variable	Income	N	Mean	Std.D	F	Sig.
Construct 1: Hotel Loyalty	< £50,000	215	5.38	1.14	7.36	0.00*
	£50,000 - £99,999	170	5.29	1.07		
	£100,000 and over	48	4.69	1.37		
Construct 2: Hotel Involvement	< £50,000	215	4.98	1.20	7.98	0.00*
	£50,000 - £99,999	170	4.72	1.14		
	£100,000 and over	48	4.27	1.13		
Construct 3: Consumer Values (uni-dimensional)	< £50,000	215	5.13	0.75	0.70	0.50
	£50,000 - £99,999	170	5.04	0.87		
	£100,000 and over	48	5.01	1.05		
Construct 3a: Consumer Values (Factor 1 items)	< £50,000	215	4.77	0.86	0.90	0.41
	£50,000 - £99,999	170	4.81	0.97		
	£100,000 and over	48	4.97	1.13		
Construct 3b: Consumer Values (Factor 2 items)	< £50,000	215	5.49	0.89	5.03	0.01*
	£50,000 - £99,999	170	5.26	0.98		
	£100,000 and over	48	5.05	1.19		
Construct 4: Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust	< £50,000	215	5.55	1.27	8.27	0.00*
	£50,000 - £99,999	170	5.19	1.26		
	£100,000 and over	48	4.81	1.40		

A one-way ANOVA test was conducted to investigate the impact of income on the four constructs. Of those, there was a statistically significant difference at the $p < 0.05$ level in constructs 1, 2, 3b and 4. Specifically, for construct 1, hotel loyalty, participants earning more than £100,000 differed significantly in their mean scores from those earning <£50,000 and £50,000 - £99,999. Despite reaching statistical significance, the effect of size was only small with an eta squared of .03 (Cohen 1988). Differences in mean scores in relation to this construct suggest that those respondents earning £100,000 or more place less importance on hotel loyalty items compared to those earning £50,000 - £99,999 and <£50,000. For construct 2, hotel involvement, participants earning £100,000 and over differed significantly in their mean scores from those earning <£50,000 and £50,000 - £99,999. Again, despite reaching statistical significance, the effect of size was only small with an eta squared of .04. Differences in mean scores in relation to this construct suggest that those respondents earning £100,000 or more place less importance on hotel involvement factors, compared to those earning £50,000 - £99,999 and <£50,000. Third, for construct 3b, consumer values factor 2 items (universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity and security), participants earning <£50,000 differed significantly from those earning £100,000 or more. With and eta squared score of .02, the effect of size was again only small. Differences in mean scores in relation to this construct suggest that those earning <£50,000 place more important on this set of values compared to those earning £100,000 or more. Finally, for construct four, hotel brand loyalty, participants earning <£50,000 differed significantly in their mean scores compared to those earning £50,000 - £99,999 and £100,000 or more. Despite reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in mean scores between groups was quite small with an eta squared score of .04 indicating a relatively small effect of size. Differences in mean scores in relation to this construct suggest that those respondents earning <£50,000 place more importance on hotel brand loyalty dimensions compared to those earning £50,000 - £99,999 and £100,000 or more.

7.4.7 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Tests were conducted to assess whether or not there were differences in mean scores between varying employment status. Initial tests for homogeneity of variance showed that construct 3 and construct 3b violated this assumption, and as such were subjected to the Kruskal-Wallis Test as alternative for non-parametric statistics. All other constructs did not violate the homogeneity of variances assumption, and were therefore examined under the one-way ANOVA technique.

Table 32 - Results from ANOVA: Constructs by employment status

Construct Variable	Work Status	N	Mean	Std.D	F	Sig.
Construct 1: Hotel Loyalty	Unemployed	4	3.92	2.06	1.37	0.23
	Full Time	228	5.26	1.09		
	Home Duties	9	5.35	12.5		
	Self-Employed	44	5.14	1.47		
	Student	3	5.05	0.22		
	Retired	100	5.43	1.05		
	Part-Time	52	5.27	1.22		
Construct 2: Hotel Involvement	Unemployed	4	3.58	1.95	0.96	0.45
	Full Time	228	4.78	1.16		
	Home Duties	9	4.83	1.58		
	Self-Employed	44	4.71	1.01		
	Student	3	5.11	0.59		
	Retired	100	4.86	1.18		
	Part-Time	52	4.93	1.28		
Construct 3: Consumer Values (uni-dimensional)	Unemployed	4	4.10	2.06	2.37	0.15[a]
	Full Time	228	5.14	0.69		
	Home Duties	9	5.46	0.53		
	Self-Employed	44	5.07	0.78		
	Student	3	5.93	0.57		
	Retired	100	4.97	0.96		
	Part-Time	52	4.99	1.01		
Construct 3a: Consumer Values (Factor 1 items)	Unemployed	4	3.55	1.76	4.39	0.00
	Full Time	228	4.94	0.84		
	Home Duties	9	5.18	0.35		
	Self-Employed	44	4.88	1.01		
	Student	3	5.53	0.81		
	Retired	100	4.56	0.95		
	Part-Time	52	4.58	1.04		
Construct 3b: Consumer Values (Factor 2 items)	Unemployed	4	4.65	2.45	1.21	0.14[a]
	Full Time	228	5.33	0.83		
	Home Duties	9	5.73	0.96		
	Self-Employed	44	5.26	0.86		
	Student	3	6.33	0.42		
	Retired	100	5.38	1.14		

	Part-Time	52	5.39	1.12		
Construct 4: Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust	Unemployed	4	4.13	2.14	1.62	0.14
	Full Time	228	5.34	1.23		
	Home Duties	9	5.91	1.22		
	Self-Employed	44	4.97	1.45		
	Student	3	5.39	0.42		
	Retired	100	5.46	1.26		
	Part-Time	52	5.35	1.47		

[a] *figures reported are A symp. Sig. from Kruskal-Wallis test for non-parametric statistics.*

From the table above, it can be seen that only one statistically significant difference in mean scores was found, and was in relation to construct 3s consumer values factor 1 (achievement, hedonism, self-direction, stimulation and power). Firstly, it was noted that respondents who are unemployed differed significantly in their mean scores from those who were employed either full time or who undertook home duties. Secondly, it was also noted that those who are retired differed significantly in their responses to those who are employed full-time. A medium size of effect was noted with an eta squared score of 0.05 in relation to this construct. Differences in mean scores in relation to this construct suggest that respondents who are unemployed place lower levels of importance on factor 1 consumer values compared to those who work full time or those who undertake home duties. Similarly, differences in mean scores also suggest that those who are retired place lower levels of importance on factor 1 consumer values than those employed full time.

7.4.8 Frequency of Travel

An ANOVA test was conducted to test for any differences between frequency of travel within the four constructs. Frequency of travel was measured on an annual basis in four categories (0-5 trips, 6-10 trips, 11 – 20 trips and 20 or more trips). The results are presented in table 33 below.

Table 33 - Results of ANOVA: Constructs by frequency of travel

Construct Variable	Freq. of Travel	N	Mean	Std.D	F	Sig.
Construct 1: Hotel Loyalty	0-5 trips	409	5.34	1.08	5.45	0.00*
	6-10 trips	34	5.07	1.50		
	11-20 trips	6	5.21	1.08		
	20 or more trips	8	3.79	1.66		
Construct 2: Hotel Involvement	0-5 trips	409	4.85	1.14	4.47	0.00*
	6-10 trips	34	4.54	1.21		
	11-20 trips	6	4.59	1.32		
	20 or more trips	8	3.46	1.57		
Construct 3: Consumer Values (uni-dimensional)	0-5 trips	409	5.05	0.82	1.11	0.34
	6-10 trips	34	5.22	0.75		
	11-20 trips	6	5.23	0.27		
	20 or more trips	8	4.68	1.56		
Construct 3a: Consumer Values /(Factor 1 items)	0-5 trips	409	4.75	0.93	1.29	0.28
	6-10 trips	34	5.04	0.90		
	11-20 trips	6	5.13	0.64		
	20 or more trips	8	4.88	1.62		
Construct 3b: Consumer Values (Factor 2 items)	0-5 trips	409	5.36	0.95	2.27	0.08
	6-10 trips	34	5.41	0.91		
	11-20 trips	6	5.33	0.52		
	20 or more trips	8	4.48	1.60		
Construct 4: Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust	0-5 trips	409	5.43	1.23	6.59	0.00*
	6-10 trips	34	4.85	1.50		
	11-20 trips	6	4.94	1.31		
	20 or more trips	8	3.79	1.77		

From the table above, it can be seen that three statistically significant differences were found. First, construct 1, hotel loyalty, showed statistically significant differences in the mean scores between those who make more than 20 trips per year compared to those who make 0-5 trips or 6-10 trips per year. Although reaching statistical significance, the effect of size calculated to have an eta squared of .03 is considered only to be small. Differences in mean scores suggest that those who travel more frequently (>20 trips per year) place less importance on hotel loyalty factors.

Second, construct 2, hotel involvement demonstrated statistically significant differences between those who make 20 or more trips per year compared to those who make 0-5trips per year. Again, despite reaching statistical significance, the effect of size was only small with an eta squared of .03. Differences in mean scores suggest that those who make more than 20 trips per year place lower levels of importance on hotel involvement items than those who make only 0-5 trips.

Finally, statistically significant differences were noted in construct 4, hotel brand loyalty and trust, whereby it was noted that the mean scores of those who make more than 20 overseas trips each year differed significantly from those who make 0-5 overseas trips per year. The effect of size was again small with an eta squared of .04. Differences in mean scores in relation to this construct indicate that those who make more than 20 overseas trips each year place less importance on hotel brand loyalty and trust items compared to those who make 0-5 overseas trips each year.

7.4.9 Level of Hotel

An ANOVA test was conducted to test for any differences between the level of hotel respondents usually stay at within the four constructs. Respondents were asked to choose between 3, 4 and 5 star hotels on the questionnaire. The results are presented in table 34 below.

Table 34 - Results of ANOVA: Constructs by level of hotel

Construct Variable	Level of Hotel	N	Mean	Std.D	F	Sig.
Construct 1: Hotel Loyalty	3 star hotels	15	5.40	0.65	0.25	0.78
	4 star hotels	220	5.31	1.02		
	5 star hotels	216	5.25	1.29		
Construct 2: Hotel Involvement	3 star hotels	15	4.61	0.78	0.77	0.46
	4 star hotels	220	4.75	1.09		
	5 star hotels	216	4.87	1.27		
Construct 3: Consumer Values (uni-dimensional)	3 star hotels	15	4.78	0.57	1.45	0.24
	4 star hotels	220	5.04	0.87		
	5 star hotels	216	5.12	0.80		
Construct 3a: Consumer Values (Factor 1 items)	3 star hotels	15	4.20	0.73	4.58	0.01*
	4 star hotels	220	4.72	0.95		
	5 star hotels	216	4.88	0.94		
Construct 3b: Consumer Values (Factor 2 items)	3 star hotels	15	5.36	0.66	0.00	1.00
	4 star hotels	220	5.35	0.98		
	5 star hotels	216	5.36	0.96		
Construct 4: Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust	3 star hotels	15	5.03	0.62	0.53	0.59
	4 star hotels	220	5.35	1.20		
	5 star hotels	216	5.38	1.40		

Results in the above table show that construct 3a, consumer values factor 1 items (achievement, hedonism, self-direction, stimulation and power) demonstrated a statistically significant difference, where the mean scores of those who regularly stay at 3 star hotels differed significantly from those who regularly stay at 5 star hotels. Despite reaching statistical significance, the effect of size was only small with an eta squared of .02. Differences in mean scores suggest that those who regularly stay in 5 star hotels place a higher degree of importance on the factor 1 values compared to those who regularly stay in 3 star hotels.

7.5 Correlation Analysis

The preceding sections have demonstrated the reliability and validity of the cores constructs of interest in this study, as well has highlighting key aspects where respondents differ in their responses. Before progressing onto any further analyses it is important to assess the correlations of the four main constructs and to obtain an initial understanding of types of correlations which exist. Table 35 shows the correlation matrix of the relationships among variables. Given the non-normal nature of the data, the non-parametric test of Spearman’s Rho was used. Coefficients range from -1 to +1, where 0 indicates no correlation.

Table 35 - Correlation matrix of the relationship among research constructs

Variables	1	2	3	4
1. Hotel Loyalty Construct	1.00			
2. Hotel Involvement Construct	0.69**	1.00		
3. Consumer Values Construct	0.16**	0.14**	1.00	
4. Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust Construct	0.70**	0.63**	0.11*	1.00

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level* ***Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level*

As can be seen from the table, all constructs are significantly and positively correlated, with correlations ranging from 0.11 to 0.70. According to Cohen's (1988) guidelines, the correlations between Construct 1 and 3, Construct 3 and 2, and Construct 4 and 3 are all relatively small (r=.10 to .29). These relationships suggest that (i) high consumer value scores are associated with high hotel loyalty scores; (ii) high consumer value scores are associated with high hotel involvement scores; and (iii) high consumer value scores are associated with high levels of hotel brand loyalty and trust. The correlations between Construct 2 and 1, Construct 4 and 1, and Construct 4 and 2 are all relatively large (r=.50 to 1.0), suggesting that (i) high involvement scores are associated with high hotel loyalty scores; (ii) high levels of hotel brand loyalty and trust are associated with high levels hotel loyalty; and (iii) high levels of hotel brand loyalty and trust are associated with high hotel involvement scores.

7.6 Three-Step PCM Staging Procedure

The three-step staging procedure was used to allocate luxury hotel guests onto one of four stages of brand loyalty based upon their psychological connection towards a given hotel brand. The four stages are Hotel Awareness, Hotel Attraction, Hotel Attachment and Hotel Allegiance. Figure 45 outlines the PCM framework, with a brief description of inputs/antecedents and outcomes/characteristics of each stage.

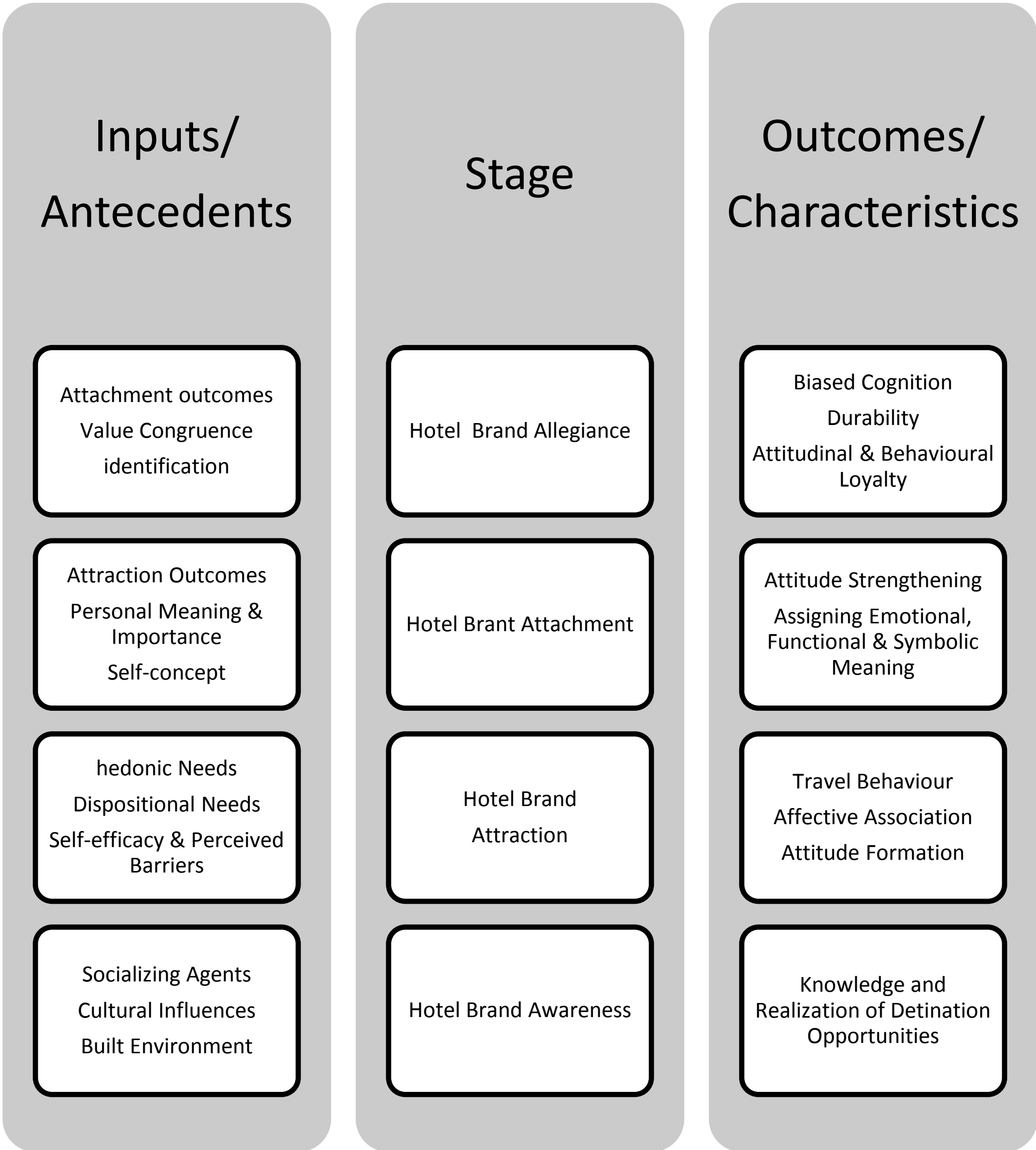

Figure 45 - Inputs/antecedents and outcomes/characteristics of PCM framework

In order to best use the information contained in the Involvement construct, prior research suggests that each facet (of Pleasure, Centrality and Sign) should be examined (for example, Beaton et al. 2011). Once different profiles have been established, they can be used to operationalise the staging procedure of the framework. As a result, participants are organised into theoretically meaningful groups within a comprehensive, stage-based framework (Beaton et al. 2009; Funk et al. 2011). The *a priori* theoretical profiles developed in the aforementioned earlier research are presented in table 36 below.

Table 36 - Theoretical profiles of PCM framework

Hotel Brand Awareness			Hotel Brand Attraction			Hotel Brand Attachment			Hotel Brand Allegiance		
P	C	S	P	C	S	P	C	S	P	C	S
L	L	L	M	L	L	L	L	M	M	H	H
			H	L	L	L	L	H	H	H	M
						L	M	L	H	M	H
						L	M	M	H	H	H
						L	M	H			
						L	H	L			
						L	H	M			
						L	H	H			
						M	L	M			
						M	L	H			
						M	M	L			
						M	H	L			
						M	M	M			
						M	M	H			
						M	H	M			
						H	L	M			
						H	M	L			
						H	M	M			
						H	L	H			
						H	H	L			

The staging procedure consists of three steps. First, mean scores for each of the three Hotel Brand Involvement facets were calculated: Pleasure, Centrality and Sign. Second, the mean scores for each of these Involvement facets were rated as being low (L), medium (M) or high (H), thus creating the involvement profiles outlined above. The involvement profiles were developed based upon previously established cut-points which have been developed and tested in previous applications of the model (see for example Beaton et al. 2009; Filo et al. 2011;

Beaton et al. 2011). Mean Involvement scores of less than 4.50 were rated as low; scores above 4.50 but below 5.65 were rated medium; and mean scores above 5.65 were rated as high. Finally, a pre-existing model algorithm was employed which allocated participants into one of the four PCM stages to determine Hotel Brand Involvement level. The algorithm consists of six actions, which together with the preceding two staging steps are presented in the box below.

PCM Three-Step Staging Procedure

STEP 1: Calculate Involvement facet mean scores

STEP 2: Develop respondent profile based on calculated mean scores

STEP 3: Employ algorithm using theoretical profiles from step two above (see table X).

- **Action 1:** If all three facets are rated low (L), then stage = Awareness; if condition is not satisfied then:
- **Action 2:** if Pleasure facet is rated low, then stage = Attachment; if condition not satisfied then:
- **Action 3:** if both Centrality or Sign facets rated low, then stage = Attraction; if condition not satisfied then:
- **Action 4:** if either Centrality or Sign facets are rated low, then stage = Attachment; if condition not satisfied then:
- **Action 5:** If any two facets are rated high (H), then stage = Allegiance. If condition not satisfied, then:
- **Action 6:** For all remaining respondents stage = Attachment.

For the purpose of this study, since questionnaire respondents were taken from a particular brand of hotel (TUI UK & Ireland), it was deemed irrelevant to include the stage of Awareness, as for respondents to receive the questionnaire they would have already stayed at a hotel, and would obviously be aware of the brand. Thus, the model was reduced to three stages of Hotel Brand Attraction, Hotel Brand Attachment and Hotel Brand Loyalty. The above outline procedure resulted in the following distribution of respondents: 262 respondents were allocated into the

Hotel Brand Attraction; 179 respondents were allocated into the Hotel Brand Attachment profile; and 136 respondents were allocated into the Hotel Brand Allegiance profile. Figure 46 provides a graphical distribution of respondents across the three involvement profiles based on percentages.

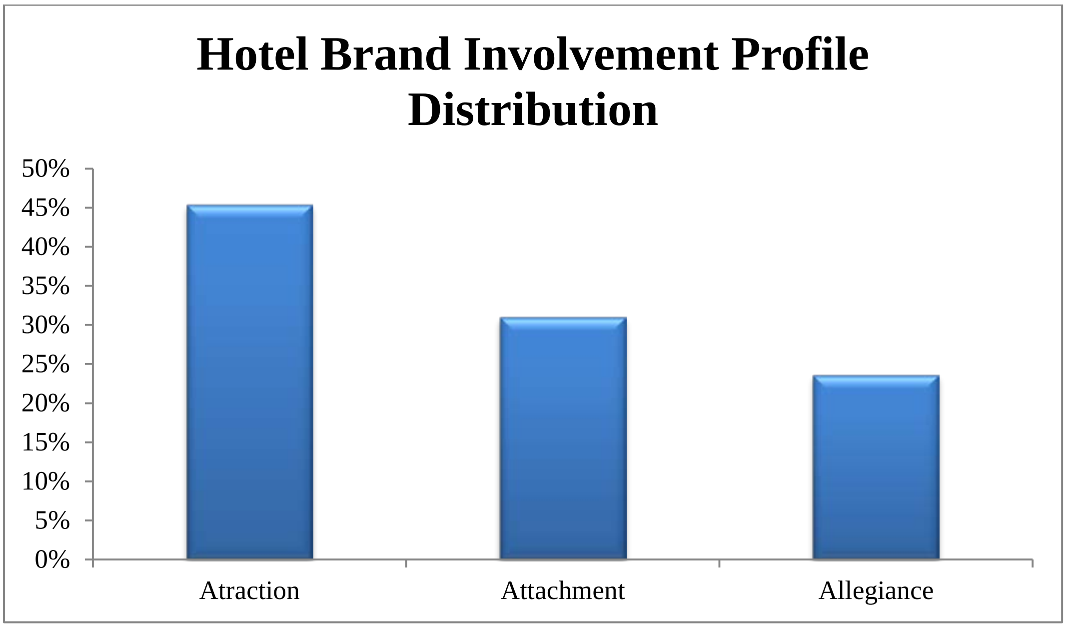

Figure 46 - Hotel Brand Involvement profile distribution

Section 7.8 discusses the results of multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVAS) which were used to determine whether or not the three groups differed with respect to value constructs and brand loyalty drivers.

7.7 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES AND MODEL TESTING

In the penultimate stage of analysis for this research, regression analyses based on Baron and Kenney's (1986) methods were used to examine the mediating and moderating effects, research hypotheses and the veracity of the overall model. Seven brand loyalty drivers (Trust, Relationship, Satisfaction, Sustainability, Quality, Image and Alternative Choices) are independent variables; ten values facets (Power, Achievement, hedonism, Stimulation, Conformity, Self-Direction, Universalism, benevolence, Tradition, Security) are mediating variables; and brand loyalty is the dependent variable.

7.7.1 *Effects of brand Loyalty Drivers on Hotel Brand involvement*

One of the aims of this research is to examine the influence of brand loyalty drivers (BLD) on the hotel brand involvement (HBI) profiles outlined above. Specifically, it seeks to determine whether or not the uni-dimensional hotel brand involvement facets of Pleasure, Centrality and Sign are influenced by any of the seven brand loyalty drivers. To achieve this, the following hypotheses were generated:

H1: ‘Trust’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Pleasure’ of HBI.
H2: ‘Staff Relationships’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Pleasure’ of HBI.
H3: ‘Satisfaction’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Pleasure’ of HBI.
H4: ‘Sustainability’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Pleasure’ of HBI.
H5: ‘Hotel Quality’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Pleasure’ of HBI.
H6: ‘Hotel Image’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Pleasure’ of HBI.
H7: ‘Alternative Choices’ will have a positive effect on ‘Pleasure’ of HBI.
H8: ‘Trust’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Centrality’ of HBI.
H9: ‘Staff Relationships’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Centrality’ of HBI.
H10: ‘Satisfaction’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Centrality’ of HBI.
H11: ‘Sustainability’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Centrality’ of HBI.
H12: ‘Hotel Quality’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Centrality’ of HBI.
H13: ‘Hotel Image’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Centrality’ of HBI.
H14: ‘Alternative Choices’ will have a positive effect on ‘Centrality’ of HBI.
H15: ‘Trust’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Sign’ of HBI.
H16: ‘Staff Relationships’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Sign’ of HBI.
H17: ‘Satisfaction’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Sign’ of HBI.
H18: ‘Sustainability’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Sign’ of HBI.
H19: ‘Hotel Quality’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Sign’ of HBI.
H20: ‘Hotel Image’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Sign’ of HBI.
H21: ‘Alternative Choices’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Sign’ of HBI.

Testing these hypotheses will rely on seven regression analyses. The seven components of the Brand Loyalty Drivers will act as independent variables, and each of the hotel Brand Involvement facets will act as dependent variables. The results of these regression tests are summarised in table 37.

Table 37 - Summary of regression analyses: Brand Loyalty Drivers on Hotel Brand Involvement dimensions

Variable	Pleasure			Centrality			Sign		
	Beta	t-value	p-value	Beta	t-value	p-value	Beta	t-value	p-value
Trust	0.00	0.10	.917	-0.04	-0.56	.578	0.09	1.60	.110
Staff Relationships	0.02	0.70	.486	0.39	11.04	.000	0.32	10.39	.000
Satisfaction	0.40	9.40	.000	0.14	2.13	.034	0.22	3.77	.000
Sustainability	0.03	1.30	.195	0.14	3.57	.000	0.08	2.14	.033
Hotel Quality	0.09	2.23	.023	-0.11	-1.86	.064	-0.02	-0.33	.742
Hotel Image	0.10	2.26	.024	0.01	0.07	.941	0.03	0.46	.649
Alternative Choices	0.07	2.57	.010	0.14	3.44	.001	0.14	3.80	.000
(Constant)		8.63	.000		3.51	.000	0.37	1.28	.200
R^2	0.52			0.36			0.47		
F	82.47			43.28			67.49		
P	0.000			0.000			0.000		

Table xx demonstrates that the regression model is statistically significant (*p* = 0.000) in estimating the 'Pleasure' dimension of Hotel Brand Involvement. The R^2 value of 0.52 indicates that 52% of variance in the regression model is explained by the 'Pleasure' facet of Hotel Brand Involvement. 'Satisfaction' (β = 0.40), 'Hotel Quality' (β = 0.09), 'Hotel Image' (β = 0.10) and 'Alternative Choices' (β = 0.07) all make statistically significant contributions ($p < .05$) in estimating the 'Pleasure' dimension of Hotel Brand Involvement. However, the remaining drivers of 'Trust', 'Staff Relationships' and 'Sustainability' are shown to have no significant influence on the 'Pleasure' dimension of Hotel Brand Involvement. Therefore, this research confirms **H3, H5, H6** and **H7**, but does not confirm **H1, H2** or **H4.**

The second regression analysis conducted assesses the relationship between Brand Loyalty Drivers and the 'Centrality' dimension of Hotel Brand Involvement. The regression model is statistically significant (*p* = 0.000) in estimating the 'Centrality' dimension of Hotel Brand Involvement. The R^2 value of 0.36 indicates that 36% of variance in the model is explained by the 'Centrality' facet of Hotel Brand Involvement. 'Staff Relationships' (β = 0.39), 'Satisfaction' (β = 0.14), 'Sustainability' (β = 0.14) and 'Alternative Choices' (β = 0.14) all make statistically significant contributions ($p < .05$) in estimating the 'Centrality' dimension of Hotel Brand Involvement. The remaining variables however, of 'Trust', 'Hotel Quality' and 'Hotel Image' make no significant contribution to explaining the influence of 'Centrality' on Hotel Brand Involvement. Thus, the regression confirms **H9, H10, H11** and **H14**, but does not confirm **H8, H12** or **H13.**

The third and final regression in this section demonstrates that the mode is statistically significant (*p* = 0.000) in estimating the 'Sign' facet of Hotel Brand Involvement. The R^2 value of 0.47 indicates that the 'Sign' dimension of Hotel Brand Involvement accounts for 47% of variance in the model. 'Staff Relationships' (β = 0.32), 'Satisfaction' (β = 0.22), 'Sustainability' (β = 0.08) and 'Alternative Choices' (β = 0.14) all make statistically significant contributions ($p < .05$) in estimating the 'Sign' facet of Hotel Brand Involvement. The remaining dimensions of 'Trust', 'Hotel Quality' and 'Hotel Image' make no significant contribution to the model. Thus, this research confirms **H16, H17, H18** and **H21,** but does not confirm **H15, H19** or **H20.**

7.7.2 Effects of hotel brand Involvement on Hotel brand Loyalty & Trust

The previous section demonstrated that the three facets of Hotel Brand Involvement are significant explainers of variance (i.e. 'Pleasure', 'Centrality' and 'Sign'). Inherent in the aims of this research was the need to establish whether Hotel Brand Involvement (HBI) influences Hotel Brand Loyalty and Trust (HBLT). To achieve this, the following additional hypotheses were generated:

H22: 'Pleasure' of HBI will have a positive effect on 'Trust' of HBLT
H23: 'Pleasure' of HBI will have a positive effect on 'Loyalty' of HBLT
H24: 'Centrality' of HBI will have a positive effect on 'Trust' of HBLT
H25: 'Centrality' of HBI will have a positive effect on 'Loyalty' of HBLT
H26: 'Sign' of HBI will have a positive effect on 'Trust' of HBLT
H27: 'Sign' of HBI will have a positive effect on 'Loyalty' of HBLT

Testing these hypotheses will rely on three regression analyses. The three components of the Hotel Brand Involvement will act as independent variables, and each of the Hotel Brand Loyalty and Trust facets will act as dependent variables. The results of these regression tests are summarised in table 38.

Table 38 - Summary of regression analyses: Hotel Brand Involvement and Hotel Brand Loyalty and Trust dimensions

Variables	Trust			Loyalty		
	Beta	**t-value**	**p-value**	**Beta**	**t-value**	**p-value**
Pleasure	0.40	10.03	.000	0.29	5.42	.000
Centrality	0.01	0.22	.000	0.18	4.15	.000
Sign	0.23	6.16	.000	0.40	7.81	.000
(Constant)		12.05	.000	0.57	2.08	.038
R^2	0.38			0.64		
F	116.40			131.04		
P	0.000			0.000		

Table 38 demonstrates that the regression model is statistically significant (p = 0.000) in estimating the 'Trust' dimension of Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust. The R^2 value of 0.38 indicates that 38% of variance in the regression model is explained by the 'Trust' facet of Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust. 'Pleasure' (β = 0.40), 'Centrality' (β = 0.01), and 'Sign' (β = 0.23) all make statistically significant contributions (p < .01) in estimating the 'Trust' dimension of Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust. Therefore, this research confirms **H22, H23,** and **H24**.

The second regression analysis conducted assesses the relationship between Hotel Brand Involvement and the 'Loyalty' dimension of Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust. The regression model is statistically significant (p = 0.000) in estimating the 'Loyalty' dimension of Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust. The R^2 value of 0.64 indicates that 64% of variance in the regression model is explained by the 'Loyalty' facet of Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust. 'Pleasure' (β = 0.29), 'Centrality' (β = 0.18), and 'Sign' (β = 0.40) all make statistically significant contributions (p < .01) in estimating the 'Loyalty' dimension of Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust. Therefore, this research confirms **H25, H26,** and **H27**.

7.7.3 MEDIATING EFFECTS OF CONSUMER VALUES

One of the main aims of this research is to examine the mediating role of personal values. As depicted in the model in section 5.x, this is hypothesised to happen at two points in the model. As such, the following hypotheses are generated:

H28: Personal Values mediates the effect of Brand Loyalty Drivers on Hotel Brand Involvement

H29: ‘Personal Values’ mediates the effect of Hotel Brand Involvement on Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust

In order to formally test these mediation hypotheses, Baron & Kenny's (1986) moderator-mediator criteria were adopted, to establish whether or not conditions for mediation existed. The figures below graphically illustrate the two hypotheses above and illustrates the mediating role of Personal Values on Hotel brand Involvement (figure 47) and then on Hotel Brand Loyalty and Trust (figure 48).

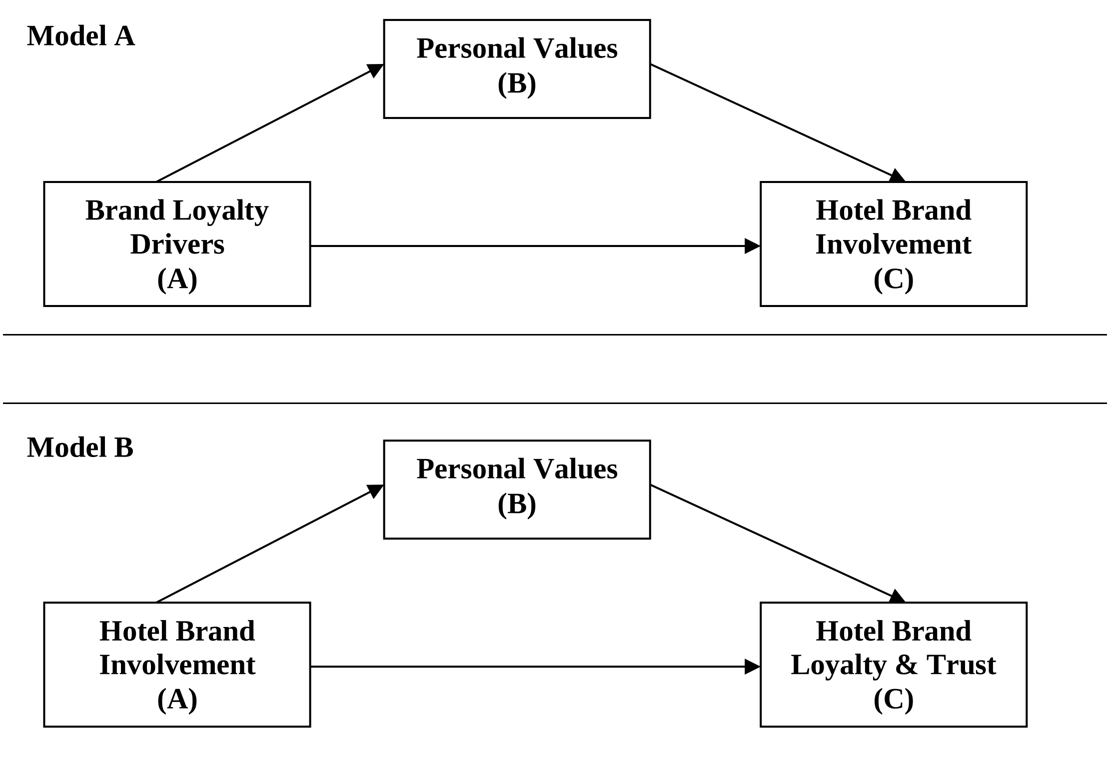

Figure 47- Model A - Mediating model for Personal Values between Brand Loyalty Drivers and Hotel Brand Involvement (top); and Model B - between Hotel Brand Involvement and Hotel Brand Loyalty and Trust (bottom)

In line with Baron & Kenny's (1986) criteria, in order to prove mediation exists, a series significant relationships must be demonstrated. Firstly, a significant relationship must be demonstrated between predictor (A) and dependent outcome variable (C); secondly, a significant relationship must be established between predictor (A) and mediating variable (B); and finally, a significant relationship must be found between mediating variable (B) and dependent outcome variable (C). Section 7.7.2 established the significant relationships between predictor (A) and dependent outcome variable (C) in both models above, thereby satisfying Baron & Kenny's (1986) first criteria. Further regression analyses were conducted in order to confirm the second and third criteria for each model presented above. It should be noted here that, based on Schwartz's (1994a) study where universality of the four higher-order value types was found, it was decided that there existed sound theoretical reasoning to collapse all ten value items into a single uni-dimensional construct ‘Personal Values’. Likewise, given the significance of correlations between all three Hotel Brand Involvement dimensions, as well as the established empirical precedent in earlier research with this model, it was also seen as appropriate to collapse Hotel Brand Involvement into a single uni-dimensional construct.

7.7.3.1 Model A – Mediating Effect of Personal Values on Brand Loyalty Drivers and Hotel Brand Involvement

Firstly, table 39 presents the regression analyses for the relationship between predictor A (Hotel Loyalty Drivers) and mediating variable B (Personal Values).

Table 39 - Regression analyses for relationship between Hotel Loyalty Drivers and Personal Values

Variable	Personal Values		
	Beta	t-value	p-value
Trust	0.00	0.05	0.96
Staff Relationships	0.04	1.65	0.10
Satisfaction	-0.08	-1.74	0.08
Sustainability	0.08	3.06	0.00
Hotel Quality	0.01	0.18	0.86
Hotel Image	0.08	1.68	0.09
Alternative Choices	-0.02	-0.85	0.39
(Constant)	4.55	20.22	0.00
R^2	0.05		
F	3.57		
P	0.001		

As can be seen in Table 39, in the examination of the relationship between Brand Loyalty Drivers and Personal Values, the R^2 value of 0.05 indicates that Brand Loyalty Drivers explain 5% of variance in Personal Values. This is statistically significant at the .001 level. However, only one of the Brand Loyalty Drivers, ‘Sustainability’ (β = 0.08), has a significant influence in explaining Personal Values (p = .000), while no other Brand Loyalty Drivers contributed to the explanation of Personal Values. Overall, a significant relationship is seen to exist between predictor A (Brand Loyalty Drivers) and mediating variable B (Personal Values).

Second, the relationship between mediating variable B (Personal Values) and outcome variable C (Hotel Brand Involvement) needs to be assessed. Table 40 presents the regression analysis for this test.

Table 40 - Results of regression analyses between Personal Values and Hotel Brand Involvement

Variable	Hotel Brand Involvement		
	Beta	**t-value**	**p-value**
Personal Values	0.17	2.53	.012
(Constant)	3.96	11.74	.000
R^2	0.01		
F	6.41		

As can be seen in Table 40, in the examination of the relationship between Personal Values and Hotel Brand Involvement, the R^2 value of 0.01 indicates that Personal Values explain 1% of variance in Hotel Brand Involvement. This is statistically significant at the .05 level. Overall, a significant relationship is seen to exist between mediating variable B (Personal Values) and outcome variable C (Hotel Brand Involvement). Thus, Baron & Kenny's (1986) second and third criteria are met for model A, thereby supporting **H28**.

7.7.3.2 Model B - Mediating Effect of Personal Values on Brand Involvement and Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust

The same process as above must now be repeated for model B. Criterion one of Baron & Kenny’s (1986) theory has been met in Table 41. Firstly, table X presents the regression analyses for the relationship between predictor A (Hotel Brand Involvement) and mediating variable B (Personal Values).

Table 41 - Regression analysis between Hotel Brand Involvement and Personal Values

Variable	Personal Values		
	Beta	**t-value**	**p-value**
Hotel Brand Involvement	0.08	2.53	0.01
(Constant)	4.661	28.62	0.00
R^2	0.01		
F	6.41		

As can be seen in table 41, in the examination of the relationship between Hotel Brand Involvement and Personal Values, the R^2 value of 0.01 indicates that Hotel Brand Involvement explain 1% of variance in Personal Values. This is statistically significant at the .01 level. Overall then, a significant relationship is seen to exist between predictor A (Hotel Brand Involvement) and mediating variable B (Personal Values).

Second, the relationship between mediating variable B (Personal Values) and outcome variable C (Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust) needs to be assessed. Given the strong internal reliability of the Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust scale, it too was deemed appropriate to collapse into a uni-dimensional variable. Table 42 presents the regression analysis for this test.

Table 42 - Regression analysis between Personal Values and Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust

Variables	**Loyalty & Trust**		
	Beta	**t-value**	**p-value**
Personal Values	0.18	2.50	0.01
(Constant)	4.44	12.02	0.00
$\mathbf{R^2}$	0.01		
F	6.25		

As can be seen in Table 42, in the examination of the relationship between Personal Values and Hotel Brand Involvement, the R^2 value of 0.01 indicates that Personal Values explain 1% of variance in Hotel Brand Loyalty and Trust. This is statistically significant at the .01 level. Overall, a significant relationship is seen to exist between mediating variable B (Personal Values) and outcome variable C (Hotel Brand Loyalty and Trust). Thus, Baron & Kenny's (1986) second and third criteria are met for model B, thereby supporting **H29**.

To summarise, the overall model for this second phase of research is presented in Figure 48. Models A and B above are highlighted within this framework. A series of regression analyses have been conducted in order to determine the veracity of the model, and overall, all relationships have proven to be significant. The regression analyses tested a number of research hypotheses, and the outcome of these tests are summarised in table 43 below.

Table 43 - Summary of regression analyses and hypotheses outcomes

Hypotheses	Beta	p-value	Hypothesis Supported
H1:‘Trust’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Pleasure’ of HBI	0.00	0.917	No
H2:‘Staff Relationships’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Pleasure’ of HBI	0.02	0.486	No
H3:‘Satisfaction’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Pleasure’ of HBI	**0.40**	**0.000**	**Yes**
H4:‘Sustainability’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Pleasure’ of HBI	0.03	0.195	No
H5:‘Hotel Quality’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Pleasure’ of HBI	**0.09**	**0.023**	**Yes**
H6:‘Hotel Image’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Pleasure’ of HBI	**0.10**	**0.024**	**Yes**
H7:‘Alternative Choices’ will have a positive effect on ‘Pleasure’ of HBI	**0.07**	**0.010**	**Yes**
H8:‘Trust’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Centrality’ of HBI	-0.04	0.578	No
H9:‘Staff Relationships’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Centrality’ of HBI	**0.39**	**0.000**	**Yes**
H10:‘Satisfaction’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Centrality’ of HBI	**0.14**	**0.034**	**Yes**
H11:‘Sustainability’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Centrality’ of HBI	**0.14**	**0.000**	**Yes**
H12:‘Hotel Quality’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Centrality’ of HBI	-0.11	0.064	No
H13:‘Hotel Image’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Centrality’ of HBI	0.01	0.941	No
H14:‘Alternative Choices’ will have a positive effect on ‘Centrality’ of HBI	**0.14**	**0.001**	**Yes**
H15:‘Trust’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Sign’ of HBI	0.09	0.110	No
H16:‘Staff Relationships’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Sign’ of HBI	**0.32**	**0.000**	**Yes**
H17:‘Satisfaction’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Sign’ of HBI	**0.22**	**0.000**	**Yes**
H18:‘Sustainability’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Sign’ of HBI	**0.08**	**0.033**	**Yes**

H19:‘Hotel Quality’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Sign’ of HBI	-0.02	0.742	No
H20:‘Hotel Image’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Sign’ of HBI	0.03	0.649	No
H21:‘Alternative Choices’ of BLD will have a positive effect on ‘Sign’ of HBI	**0.14**	**0.000**	**Yes**
H22:‘Pleasure’ of HBI will have a positive effect on ‘Trust’ of HBLT	**0.40**	**0.000**	**Yes**
H23:‘Pleasure’ of HBI will have a positive effect on ‘Loyalty’ of HBLT	**0.29**	**0.000**	**Yes**
H24:‘Centrality’ of HBI will have a positive effect on ‘Trust’ of HBLT	**0.01**	**0.000**	**Yes**
H25:‘Centrality’ of HBI will have a positive effect on ‘Loyalty’ of HBLT	**0.18**	**0.000**	**Yes**
H26:‘Sign’ of HBI will have a positive effect on ‘Trust’ of HBLT	**0.23**	**0.000**	**Yes**
H27:‘Sign’ of HBI will have a positive effect on ‘Loyalty’ of HBLT	**0.40**	**0.000**	**Yes**
H28:‘Personal Values’ mediates the effect of BLD on HBI	**-**	**-**	**Yes**
H29:‘Personal Values’ mediates the effect of HBI on HBLT	**-**	**-**	**Yes**

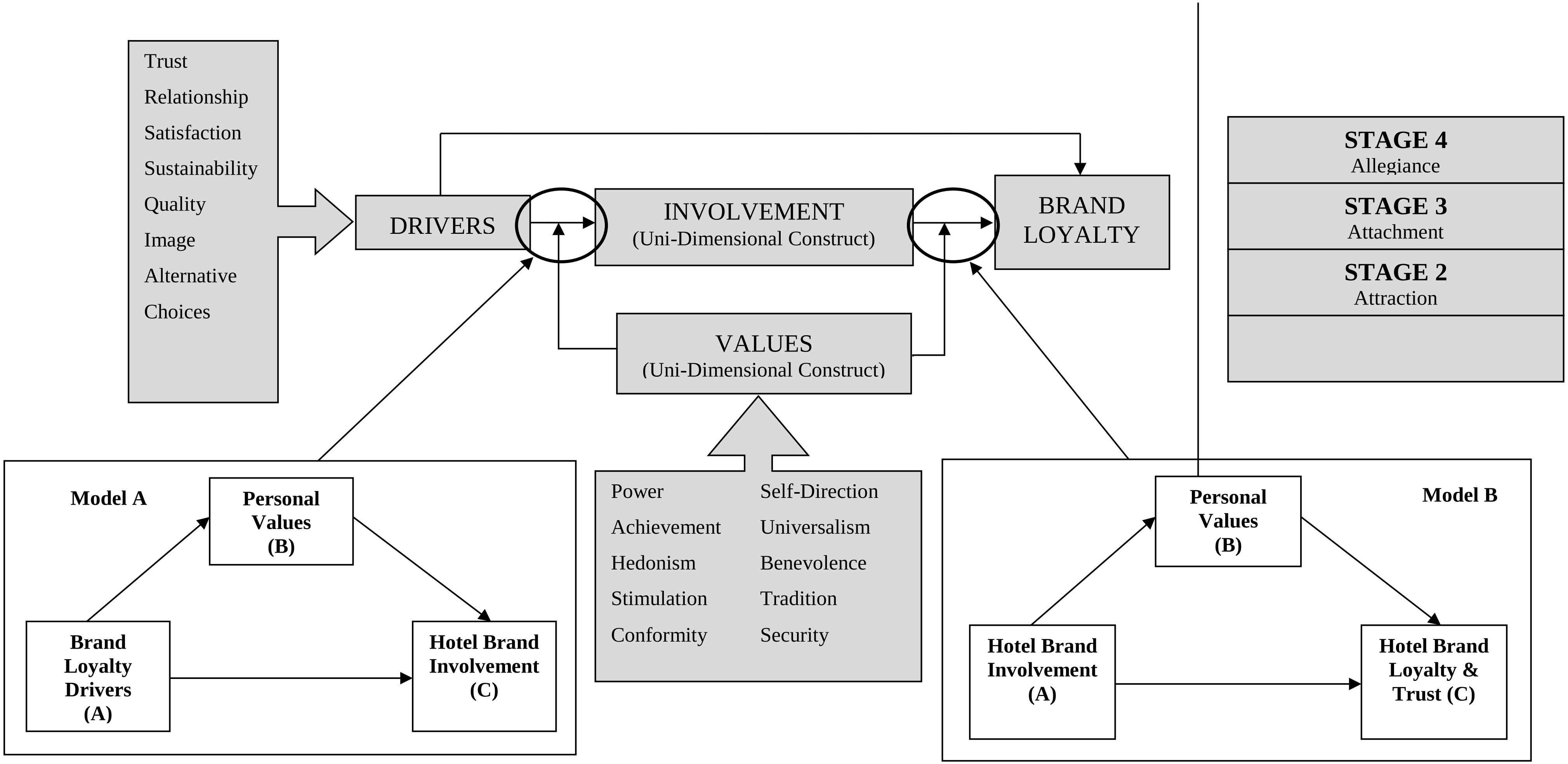

Figure 48 - Model to predict values and drivers of hotel loyalty according to level of involvement

7.8 INFLUENCE OF CONSTRUCTS IN STAGING

One of the main aims of this research was to examine which constructs, and construct variables influence the staging procedure of the PCM. The aim of this stage of analysis was to determine whether the three groups categorised based on Hotel Brand Involvement (Attraction, Attachment and Allegiance) differed in terms of Hotel Brand Loyalty Drivers, Personal Values and Hotel Brand Loyalty and Trust. In addition, fundamental to the research was the need to investigate luxury hotel guests' willingness to pay (more) for sustainable business practices. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was carried out, as this statistical test is useful when the dependent variables are correlated (Hair et al., 1995). In line with the MANOVAs conducted, the following hypotheses were proposed:

H30: The level of importance luxury hotel guests' place on Hotel Brand Loyalty Drivers will increase incrementally as the stage of Hotel Brand Involvement increases (i.e. from Attraction to Attachment, and from Attachment to Allegiance).

H31: Luxury hotel guests' Personal Values will differ as the stage of Hotel Brand Involvement increases (i.e. from Attraction to Attachment, and from Attachment to Allegiance).

H32: Levels of luxury hotel guests' Hotel Brand Loyalty and Trust will incrementally strengthen as the stage of Hotel Brand Involvement increases (i.e. from Attraction to Attachment, and from Attachment to Allegiance).

H33: Luxury hotel guests' willingness to pay more for sustainable business practices will increase incrementally as the stage of Hotel Brand Involvement increases (i.e. from Attraction to Attachment, and from Attachment to Allegiance).

7.8.1 THE EFFECT OF HOTEL BRAND LOYALTY DRIVERS ON STAGE OF HOTEL BRAND INVOLVEMENT

Table 44 presents the descriptive statistics from the MANOVA conducted to test H30. The overall trend was that all means increased from Hotel Brand Attraction to Hotel Brand Attachment, to Hotel Brand Allegiance. The MANOVA results revealed that Hotel Brand Involvement had a significant effect on the dependent variables 'Trust', 'Staff Relationships', 'Satisfaction', 'Quality', 'Image' and 'Alternative Choices' (p = .000), and 'Sustainability' (p

< .05). Individual analysis of the seven Hotel Brand Loyalty Drivers showed that all mean scores significantly increased as the stage of Hotel Brand Involvement increased. Post hoc tests were conducted to determine if significant differences were present across the three stages of Hotel Brand Involvement. Given the differences in sample sizes across the three stages homogeneity of variance was not assumed, and as such Tamhane's post hoc analysis was used. Results revealed significant differences for each of the Hotel Brand Loyalty Driver measures ($p < .000$) across the PCM stages. This leads to the acceptance of **H30**.

Table 44 - Results of MANOVA between stages of involvement and hotel loyalty drivers

Hotel Brand Involvement	Trust	Staff Relationships	Satisfaction	Sustainability	Quality	Image	Alternative Choices
Stage 1: Hotel Attraction	5.39 (1.41)[a]	2.83 (1.56)[a]	5.79 (1.62)[a]	4.77 (1.61)[a]	5.17 (1.75)[a]	5.61 (1.26)[a]	3.98 (1.72)[a]
Stage 2: Hotel Attachment	5.96 (1.11)[a]	4.43 (1.69)[a]	6.41 (0.92)[b]	5.14 (1.50)[a]	5.89 (1.24)[a]	6.02 (0.96)[a]	4.93 (1.69)[a]
Stage 3: Hotel Allegiance	6.43 (0.83)[a]	5.13 (1.50)[a]	6.73 (0.80)[b]	5.80 (1.17)[a]	6.52 (1.01)[a]	6.53 (0.76)[a]	5.61 (1.45)[a]
Overall	5.80 (1.28)	3.85 (1.87)	6.20 (1.34)	5.12 (1.54)	5.70 (1.56)	5.95 (1.13)	4.65 (1.78)

[a] Post hoc tests revealed significant differences from all other stages

[b] Post hoc tests revealed significant difference between Stage 1: Attraction and Stages 2 and 3: Attachment and Allegiance

7.8.2 The Effect of Personal Values on Stage of Hotel Brand Involvement

Table 45 shows that there were no overall trends in relation to the mean scores of the Personal Value dimensions in relation to the stages of Hotel Brand Involvement. The MANOVA revealed that Hotel Brand Involvement had a significant effect on the dependent Personal Values variable of 'Conformity'. Post hoc tests were conducted to determine if significant differences were present across the three stages of Hotel Brand Involvement. Given the differences in sample sizes across the three stages homogeneity of variance was not assumed, and as such Tamhane's post hoc analysis was used. Results revealed that those respondents at Stage 3: Allegiance scored significantly higher on the Personal Value domain 'Conformity', compared to those at Stage 1: Attraction ($p < .01$). There was no statistically significant difference between Stage 1 and Stage 2 or between Stage 2 and Stage 3. This leads to a partial acceptance of **H31**.

Table 45 - Results of MANOVA between stages of involvement and personal values

Hotel Brand Involvement	Achievement	Hedonism	Self-Direction	Stimulation	Universalism	Benevolence	Tradition	Power	Conformity	Security
Stage 1: Hotel Attraction	4.84 (1.26)	4.94 (1.28)	5.48 (1.10)	4.83 (1.23)	5.12 (1.19)	5.81 (0.99)	4.26 (1.47)	3.66 (1.27)	5.51 (1.32)*	5.76 (1.06)
Stage 2: Hotel Attachment	5.06 (1.34)	4.94 (1.42)	5.40 (1.31)	4.91 (1.30)	4.95 (1.36)	5.66 (1.22)	4.57 (1.55)	3.77 (1.42)	5.81 (1.30)	5.75 (1.20)
Stage 3: Hotel Allegiance	4.92 (1.28)	5.23 (1.27)	5.15 (1.28)	4.71 (1.36)	5.02 (1.49)	5.73 (1.28)	4.47 (1.53)	3.88 (1.41)	6.01 (1.27)*	6.06 (1.14)
Overall	4.92 (1.29)	5.00 (1.32)	5.39 (1.21)	4.83 (1.28)	5.04 (1.31)	5.75 (1.13)	4.40 (1.51)	3.74 (1.35)	5.71 (1.32)	5.82 (1.13)

* Post hoc tests revealed significant difference between Stage 1: Attraction and Stage 3: Allegiance at $p < .01$.

7.8.3 The Effect of Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust on Stage of Hotel Brand Involvement

Table 46 presents the descriptive statistics from the MANOVA conducted to test H32.

Table 46 - Results of MANOVA between stages of hotel involvement and hotel brand loyalty and trust

Hotel Brand Involvement	Trust	Loyalty
Stage 1: Hotel Attraction	5.51 (1.30)[a]	4.08 (1.53)[a]
Stage 2: Hotel Attachment	6.12 (0.6)[a]	5.20 (1.40)[a]
Stage 3: Hotel Allegiance	6.42 (0.92)[a]	5.81 (1.24)[a]
Overall	5.91 (1.16)	4.83 (1.60)

[a] Post hoc tests revealed significant differences from all other stages

The overall trend was that all means increased from Hotel Brand Attraction to Hotel Brand Attachment, to Hotel Brand Allegiance. The MANOVA results revealed that Hotel Brand Involvement had a significant effect on the dependent variables 'Loyalty' and 'Trust' (p =.000). Individual analysis of the two Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust measures revealed that all mean scores significantly increased as the stage of Hotel Brand Involvement increased. Post hoc tests were conducted to determine if significant differences were present across the three stages of Hotel Brand Involvement. Given the differences in sample sizes across the three stages, homogeneity of variance was not assumed, and as such Tamhane's post hoc analysis was used. Results revealed significant differences for each of the Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust measures ($p < .000$) across all three PCM stages. This leads to the acceptance of **H32**.

7.8.4 The Effect of Willingness to Pay More for Sustainable Business Practices on Stage of Hotel Brand Involvement

The final hypothesis to be tested is H33, which investigates whether not respondents' willingness to pay more for a hotel that engages with sustainable business practices influences their stage of Hotel Brand Involvement. Table 47 presents the descriptive statistics from the MANOVA conducted to test H33:

Table 47 - Results of MANOVA between stages of hotel involvement and willingness to pay more

Hotel Brand Involvement	**Willingness to Pay More**
Stage 1: Hotel Attraction	5.05 (1.01)[a]
Stage 2: Hotel Attachment	5.07 (0.74)[a]
Stage 3: Hotel Allegiance	4.73 (1.50)[a]
Overall	4.99 (1.07)

[a] Post hoc tests revealed significant differences from all other stages

Table 47 shows that means increased from Hotel Brand Attraction to Hotel Brand Attachment, but then decreased to Hotel Brand Allegiance. The ANOVA results revealed that Hotel Brand Involvement had a significant effect on the dependent variables 'Willingness to Pay More' (p <.05). Post hoc tests were conducted to determine if significant differences were present across the three stages of Hotel Brand Involvement. Given the differences in sample sizes across the three stages, homogeneity of variance was not assumed, and as such Tamhane's post hoc analysis was used. Analysis showed that there was a significant decrease in mean willingness to pay between Stage 1: Attraction and Stage 2: Attachment compared to Stage 3: Allegiance. This leads to the rejection of **H33**.

7.9 SUMMARY

This chapter presented the quantitative findings from the second phase of the research. Results were presented from the online questionnaire survey of 18,622 luxury hotel guests. First, the profile of respondents was given through the presentation of the descriptive statistics. Second, a series of tests were conducted to identify significant differences to each of the four constructs based on demographic variables such as income, gender, occupation and nationality. Statistically significant differences were found in relation to age, income, work status, frequency of travel and the level of hotel at which respondents regularly stayed. No significant differences were found on any of the other grouping variables. Next, tests for correlation were conducted to assess the reliability of the scales where all scales were seen to be positively and significantly correlated Furthermore, the validity and reliability of all four constructs were proven. As part of the descriptive analyses that were undertaken, the calculation of two equations used to assess individuals' scores on the two higher-order dimensions of the values construct were applied. The results illustrated the clustering of respondents in the Conservation and Self-Enhancement domain, and specifically over the value domains of Power and Security which are in direct opposition to the domain of Universalism, where one would expect a concept such as sustainability to be valued. Further to this, respondents placed low levels of importance on hotel sustainability policies, hotel ethical policies and industry accreditations when selecting a hotel.

Following these descriptive analyses, respondents were subjected to the PCM staging process, where 45% of respondents were located in the Attraction stage; 31% in the Attachment stage; and 23.6% of respondents were allocated in the highest stage of Involvement, being Allegiance. Of note was the test loyalty driver variable of Sustainability having a significant positive effect on two of the three involvement dimensions, namely Centrality and Sign. It was also found that the Trust and Loyalty dimensions of the Hotel Brand Loyalty and Trust construct had a significant and positive effect on the Hotel Involvement construct. Importantly it was found that the uni-dimensional construct of personal values was found to have a mediating effect between Brand Loyalty Drivers and Hotel Brand Involvement, and between Hotel Brand Involvement and Hotel Brand Loyalty & Trust. Finally, results revealed that Hotel Brand Loyalty Drivers, Personal Values and Hotel Brand Loyalty and Trust all increased incrementally as the stage of Hotel Brand Involvement increased. In addition, respondents' willingness to pay extra to stay at a sustainable hotel was higher for those staged at Attraction or Attachment compared to those at the Allegiance stage. The data presented in this chapter demonstrate a number of significant findings from the research. These coupled with the findings from the first phase of the research hold important implications for managers and make significant theoretical contributions to the academy. The conclusions drawn from the findings presented in this chapter and those from the first phase of research are presented in chapter 8.

8 CONCLUSION

This final chapter presents the key findings of this research and draws conclusions on how the research has contributed to the canon of tourism knowledge and how it may act to inform future studies. Specifically, this chapter highlights the theoretical contributions of conducting a dyadic mixed-methods research project, and illustrates the precise contributions of such a study. To adequately account for the main contributions of the study and the way in which the overarching aim of the research was accomplished, the four key research questions under investigation are revisited. Findings are discussed in line with each of these research questions in order to combine the dyadic perspectives of supply and demand, managers and guests, and in doing so, draw more complete and meaningful conclusions.

As well as presenting the theoretical contributions made by the research, this chapter also discusses the implications of these findings for industry. The overall research process is then discussed, with particular reference to the challenges faced in respect to academic autonomy and the social control of research when conducting a program of industry-funded research such as this. Finally, a number of recommendations are made regarding future research in the area, as well as how the limitations of this study might be overcome. It suggests that far greater attention must be afforded to those at the geographic core of society in order for us to better understand their influences on consumption practices more generally, as well as their impact on broader tourist behaviours. Equally, the research suggests that greater recognition of the constraints faced by industry practitioners could provide the impetus for future policy developments in the field of sustainable (tourism) development (S. Malone, personal communication via Trinet Discussion Board, 26th October 2012).

8.1 REVISITING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The key findings of the research are set out below and are considered under the four key research questions under investigation (Chapter 1, section 1.2).

8.1.1 CAN LUXURY HOTELS INCORPORATE ETHICAL AND SUSTAINABLE ELEMENTS WITHIN THEIR BUSINESS MODELS?

The recent heightened interest in the topic of sustainability and its inclusion in the concerns of ethical consumers, along with concerns around consumption practices more generally, has elevated the importance of carrying out academic research in this area, as well as making the research timely for the hospitality and broader tourism industries. This research was undertaken with the intention of firstly explicating consumer concerns for sustainability in the luxury hotel industry, and secondly to adopt a more critical perspective to the popular discourse on green consumerism where anecdotally at least, it is widely held that there is a genuine concern for sustainability among consumers. It has been suggested here that luxury is a multi-faceted and subjective term, open to numerous cultural and contextual interpretations. As such, the interpretation of what does and does not constitute luxury is entirely subjective and dependent upon a range of endogenous personal factors and exogenous societal and situational factors. The elicitation of luxury definitions held by hotel managers was seen as the first step in determining whether or not such businesses could embrace ethical consumption ideals. Unique to the experiential nature of hotels, managers commented on the sensory nature of luxury, as well as the importance of time (allowed to guests), the quality of service provided and the level of privacy afforded to guests. Alongside these interpretations were the more traditional concepts of luxury going beyond simple utility to include aspects of aesthetics, design and innovation.

Sustainability, on the other hand, was met with a general consensus on its definition. The results in chapter 6 illustrated that managers saw sustainability as being a concept which centred mainly on environmental concerns. Little consideration was given to the sustainability of human or financial resources. To this end, it would seem apparent that the widely accepted definition of sustainability in academia, being that derived from the Brundtland Commission of 1987 (see Chapter 3, section 3.2) is not aligned with the interpretations held by managers. Overwhelmingly, economic sustainability was something which was seen to relate to the financial viability of the business rather than to the reinvestment of financial capital back into the host community (Mowforth and Munt, 2001). Aside from this perspective, neither was there any consideration given on a much larger scale to the use of ethical and/or sustainable sources of capital and equity, such as those used to finance the construction and development of luxury hotels and resorts. Furthermore, the concept of socio-cultural sustainability was not seen as an element of sustainability, but rather as part of the Corporate Social Responsibility agenda. Whilst theoretically this was seen as true, in practice the neo-liberal views of economists such as Milton Friedman still pervade the corporate mindset of the 21st century. The belief that corporations have no, or little social responsibilities apart from acting without deception or fraud, is a belief that is still held, and evidenced in part through the difficulties experienced in this research in obtaining access to research participants. The general lack of engagement with industry on projects such as this is indicative perhaps of the level of importance placed on such topics.

Ultimately, the resounding sentiment from hotel managers was that sustainability objectives were not compatible with luxury hotels. This conclusion stemmed primarily from the fact that the majority of managers viewed sustainability as one way or another meaning ‘less’. The belief that sustainability, and the demand for it through ethical consumption practices, is somehow an inferior option to the luxury hotel offering was noted and attributed largely to the self-righteousness so often associated with ethical consumers. Sustainability, it was felt, does not offer any element of status or prestige desired by luxury hotel guests, nor does it afford them the conspicuousness needed to differentiate themselves from those on the lower rungs of Bourdieu's social ladder. Importantly, the recognition that sustainable business practices would act to preserve the very resources on which their industry relies, did not register with any of the managers interviewed. The dominant view emanating from managers was that the obstacles and challenges to implementing sustainable business practices were either too vast, or not their responsibility.

Drawing from these findings are some important conclusions. First, and most strikingly is that the definitions and interpretations managers gave of sustainability seem in no way to impinge on their own definitions of what constitutes luxury. If indeed the luxury (hotel) experience is embodied by elements of time, privacy, security and quality of service, as defined by hotel managers, then sustainability defined as environmental conservation efforts by hotel managers, should not interfere with the delivery of the luxury hotel experience. Second, is the perceived lack of importance of sustainability demonstrated by managers through either a lack of engagement with the topic or through a failure to implement related strategies. The response to this research question illuminates the issue of whether sustainable business practices should be demand-led or supply-driven. The position of some managers to point to barriers to implementation, or by more explicit statements of their views, has led to the conclusion that in general, managers of luxury hotels believe that the impetus for change lies with demand emanating from luxury hotel guests.

8.1.2 *DO GUESTS AT LUXURY HOTELS HOLD A CONCERN OR DESIRE FOR ETHICAL CONSUMPTION AND SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES?*

The thesis proposed that consumers exercise their concerns for sustainability through ethical consumption practices. As outlined in the preceding section (section 8.1.1) where the majority of hotel managers viewed sustainability as a purely environmental concern, it was also felt that consumers would share a similar sentiment. As such, the inclusion of ethical business policies and the like in the online questionnaire was an attempt at gauging the importance, or level of value placed upon, a wider range of activities which span the socio-cultural and financial pillars of sustainability, as it (sustainability) is defined in an academic context.

In determining the concerns for sustainable business practices held by luxury hotel guests, respondents were asked to rank a list of factors they would consider when choosing accommodation. Included in this list were the factors of hotel sustainability policies, hotel ethics policies mentioned above, and industry accreditations. In terms of their relative importance to other factors, these specific factors were ranked seventh, eighth and ninth respectively, indicating a comparatively low level of importance towards these factors. In addition, for each of these three factors, at least a quarter of respondents were in agreeance that these items should be ranked as they are.

The effect of personal values on the stage of brand involvement was measured. As noted in section 7.8.2, whilst it was found that personal values do moderate the relationship between hotel brand involvement and brand loyalty, the only value domain which showed a significant difference between stages was that of 'Conformity'. As defined by Schwartz (1994), the domain of 'Conformity' refers to restraint of actions, inclinations and impulses likely to upset or harm others and (actions which) violate social expectations and norms. The findings of this study show that as the stage of hotel brand involvement increase, the degree to which respondents ascribe to the 'Conformity' value domain increases, with a significant difference between Stage 1: Hotel Brand Attraction and Stage 3: Hotel Brand Allegiance. As identified by the literature, the stage of Allegiance represents a point where the consumer has a continuous and enduring relationship with the brand and believes that the brand is congruent with their own values and self-concept. At this stage of involvement it would be fair to assume that because these consumers place a high degree of importance on this value domain, and that because consumers at this stage believe their values are congruent with that of the brand, there would be a high expectation on the part of consumers that the brand they aligned themselves with would also be engaging in business activities congruent with this value domain. And such, it could be suggested that activities that are associated with the 'Conformity' value domain, particularly the sorts of activities which are unlikely to upset or harm others or violate social expectations and norms (i.e. socially responsible activities) could lead to an increased level of brand involvement.

8.1.3 WILL ENGAGING WITH SUCH ACTIVITIES CREATE INCREASED LEVELS OF BRAND LOYALTY?

Recent concerns on climate change and economic stability have caused what some have referred to as ‘green consumerism’. Over the course of this project, market research suggested a change in sentiment regarding these preferences, pointing now to lower levels of consumer concerns for sustainability issues. The fickle nature of these so-called 'trends' is demonstrative not only of the dynamic consumer society in which we live, but also a need for better understanding of value systems and constructs, such as the one examined here, due to their enduring and influential nature on human behaviour.

As noted above, there has already been a suggestion that activities which are aligned with conformity values may play a role in increasing levels of brand loyalty. In terms of measuring whether or not sustainable business practices would influence levels of brand loyalty, the concept of sustainability was tested as a means of measuring concerns around this issue. Interestingly, of the list of loyalty drivers derived from the extant literature, it was the test variable of sustainability (i.e. that the adoption of sustainable business practices is important to respondents), that was found to be the only significant variable in explaining the mediating role of personal values between the loyalty and hotel brand involvement constructs. Thus, this finding demonstrates that of all the loyalty drivers tested, sustainability was the only driver to be mediated by personal values. That is, that our value constructs are responsible for influencing the role of sustainability in our levels of brand involvement. Whilst this is in some ways unsurprising, it is interesting to note that none of the alternative drivers such as price, quality, staff relationships, satisfaction, hotel image or alternative choices were mediated by personal values.

In line with these findings, responses were also tested to see if any of the brand loyalty drivers were influential in the staging process. The hotel loyalty drivers derived from the extant literature were tested, and sustainability was added to this list as a test variable. The findings in section 7.8.1 demonstrated that all seven hotel brand loyalty drivers were significant in increasing levels of hotel brand involvement. Of particular importance was that the test variable of sustainability was included in these findings. Thus, as the stage of hotel brand involvement increased, so too did the level of importance placed on sustainable business practices as a motive for loyal behaviour.

The conclusions from this group of findings demonstrate implications for marketing strategies adopted by luxury hotels. Focusing on those consumers who place higher levels of importance on sustainable business practices, it was noted that those consumers reported that the value domains of Universalism and Benevolence were of importance to them. Again perhaps an unsurprising observation, however the implications this has on brand involvement are worthy of consideration. If a hotel were to consider appealing to consumers' values in their marketing activities, it would be the value domains of Universalism and Benevolence that would be influential in communicating to those consumers who place importance on sustainability as a loyalty driver, in turn resulting in increased levels of brand involvement. The literature has emphasised the importance of consumer choices in reflecting self-concept and life-styles, and as such consumer values are an important component of the consumer decision-making process. By targeting consumers whose value systems align with the goals of sustainability, luxury hotels should not preclude themselves from pursuing such objectives.

8.1.4 WOULD LUXURY CONSUMERS BE WILLING TO PAY MORE TO STAY AT A MORE ETHICALLY OPERATED AND SUSTAINABLE HOTEL?

The research sought to investigate guests' propensity to pay more for luxury hotels who operate under sustainability policies. The majority of respondents were undecided on this question, and no differences in this were found between any of the defined demographic sub-groups. This lack of differentiation suggests a strong degree of homogeneity among respondents, thereby enabling a broader degree of generalizability to this and other conclusions. Ultimately, while consumers do have a preference for sustainable business practices, they do not necessarily believe they should be paying any additional money for such practices.

When considering willingness to pay further, the role it plays with respect to hotel brand involvement was also considered. Responses were tested to determine whether or not consumers were willing to pay more for sustainable business practices as they progressed through the levels of hotel brand involvement. Interestingly, the findings in section 7.8.4 demonstrated that consumers who were classified at the highest level of brand involvement, Stage 3: Hotel Allegiance, were significantly less likely to be willing to pay more for sustainable business practices compared to those classified at Stage 1: Hotel Attraction and Stage 2: Hotel Attachment. A possible explanation for this decrease in willingness to pay might be that this stage of hotel allegiance is characterised by a point where the consumer has a continuous and enduring relationship with the brand and believes that the brand is congruent with their own values and self-concept. Thus, once consumers reach this stage, it would be fair to assume that because consumers at this stage believe their values are congruent with that of the brand, there would be a higher expectation that the brand they have aligned themselves with would be engaging in business activities congruent with their own values. It would be highly unlikely to find a consumer at the stage of hotel allegiance that would be willing to pay more for sustainable business activities, as they would likely already know that the brand would in fact be engaging in these activities.

8.1.5 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

On the one hand, this conclusion seems reasonable, in that humans ascribe to a similar set of values. Schwartz's (1994) typology is illustrative of this. However, the literature highlights a need for a balance to be struck between the teleological and deontological studies of ethical philosophy. This need is highlighted well by the findings in this study in that 'the greatest good for the greatest number' maxim adopted by teleological philosophies does not necessarily marry with the more deontological views of ethical consumers. That is, that what constitutes whether or not an outcome is ‘good’ should be guided by what are the ‘right’ actions. This perspective arguably affords greater support for underprivileged or exploited peoples, but may not necessarily achieve the greatest level of happiness for society as a whole. So, while globalisation has contributed to the reduction of prices in real terms to an artificially low level, and in doing so has achieved great happiness for many people (by affording easier access to goods or services which would previously have been unattainable), it is not necessarily, as Rawls (1972) would argue, the ‘right’ actions to be taking. The fact that as consumers we have now adjusted to such pricing levels, means we are resistant to any inflation in prices in real terms, and see them not as a real and necessary price correction, but as a more capitalistic pursuit of companies simply trying to increase profits. So it would appear from this study, that while there is somewhat of an expectation that hotels will embrace sustainable business practices, there is still a lack of recognition that these initiatives, due in part to their deontological emphases, inevitably come at a higher price. Illuminated by this conclusion is the need, as highlighted in section 3.1, for an approach (to sustainability and ethics) that is sensitive to the nuances and ambivalences of ethical decision-making, and one which accounts for the complexities of experiential consumption environments, such as the luxury hotel environment.

8.2 Reflections on the Research Process

Throughout this research, the apparently conflicting concepts of sustainability and luxury afforded many opportunities to engage and reflect, and through this process obtain a multitude of theoretical and pragmatic research insights. Over the course of the project increased levels of attention were evidenced on the research topics through popular media including newspapers and magazines, but also to an extent by industry through travel and trade exhibitions. Furthermore, recent interest in academic forums has also brought the topic of sustainable, and indeed ethical, luxury to the fore.

Importantly, a number of political events also occurred during the course of the research which may have also impacted on values and beliefs of consumers. At the start of the research in 2009 the after effects of the global financial crisis of 2007 were still being felt, and many developed economies around the world remained in recession. As pointed to in some market research, the climate for concern around issues such as sustainability has changed from consumers taking a wider-thinking global perspective toward a much stronger focus on domestic life and the immediacy of ramifications from the fallout of the global financial crisis. In addition, the climate change scandal of 2010 undoubtedly brought an air of uncertainty around climate science, and the true environmental impacts of our actions on Earth's climate were called into question. Given the overwhelming finding that sustainability is often solely linked to environmental concerns, it may well be unsurprising that events such as this impacted upon peoples' perceptions and attitudes.

Suggestions have been made that given the exploratory nature of the research, that a stronger emphasis on qualitative methods should have been afforded. By its very nature, all research can be said to be exploratory, or at least should be. Any attempt to investigate, examine or scrutinise a topic or field of thought which has previously been disregarded or overlooked should be deemed exploratory. The question of the appropriateness of methodology lies more wholly with the topic under investigation. The dyadic approach to the topic as outlined in chapter 1 served not only to achieve methodological triangulation but also to achieve findings which have industrial agency as one of their characteristics. As discussed in chapter 5, the funded nature of this research in many ways demanded this as an outcome, but so too does the changing requirements of the academy. Finally, as with any pursuit of professional development, the research design was also selected as a means of developing and improving the skills of the researcher.

From the outset, the researcher was motivated to conduct a comprehensive and in-depth study of the luxury hotel sector that explored perspectives from industry as well as consumers. Having worked previously as a senior research assistant, the researcher was aware of the challenges of conducting research which required engagement from industry. As discussed in section 5.6, the researcher had not fully anticipated the degree to which the social control of research might influence the research outcomes. Whilst these challenges have been comprehensively discussed in the aforementioned section, there have been criticisms levelled at the research that this and indeed other research projects, should only investigate what is practicable and achievable. The position of this research, which is vehemently defended, is that although the researcher was attempting to reach a group of society who operate with varying degrees of ‘detached engagement’ (Elliott & Urry, 2009) and are centred at the so-called geographic core of society, these circumstances are not seen as being any more or less unique than those researching in less developed contexts. Most research settings are challenging, but in the interest of knowledge generation and in building intellectual capacity within the academy, we must not ignore these segments of society and the impact they have on the broader influence on the production of consumption experiences in the tourism industry. Everett & Low (2011) discuss more broadly the challenges faced when conducting industry funded research and the impacts this can have on the emotional labour of early career researchers.

Inherent in the aforementioned objective were challenges in locating and accessing the population of interest. Devising an appropriate sampling frame was problematic from the outset (see section 5.3.3), in part due to inconsistencies in industrial mechanisms for classifying luxury versus other levels of hotels, but perhaps more problematic was the aforementioned issue of access. The generalizability of results from phase one of the research may on the surface appear limited, however, from the interviews conducted it can be seen that the results approached theoretical saturation in relation to understandings of the concepts of luxury and sustainability. Many of the descriptors and definitions managers gave of these concepts were repeated and appear universal in their belief and understandings. When addressing the second phase of the research, sampling took the form of a stratified random sampling approach. As addressed in section 5.4.4, the selection of research participants by the research partner was not believed to be problematic given the magnitude of the sample. Among studies on luxury hotels to date (see chapter 2), this research has achieved by far the largest sample size, and as such confidence in the generalizability of results is founded. Of interest however, are the characteristics of the sample, particularly demographics, where new understandings of what luxury hotel guests look like are noted.

This study aimed to investigate the feasibility of sustainable business practices being used as elements for competitive advantage. This was executed through the employment of a brand loyalty model which at its core examined brand involvements. The data present a snapshot of individual luxury hotel guests' levels of luxury hotel brand involvement, brand attachment, and intention to pay more for sustainable business practices at luxury hotels. This cross-sectional study examined these factors *after* their stay in a luxury hotel, and after they had returned from the holiday destination. Longitudinal data collected before, during and after a stay in a luxury hotel could provide a more comprehensive assessment of luxury hotel brand involvement as well assist in determining potential movement between the stages of luxury hotel brand involvement. Such longitudinal data can account for the dynamic nature of brand involvement and develop deeper understandings of consumers brand attachments and luxury consumption preferences.

8.3 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

The original contribution of this research has been to critically examine the luxury hotel sector's understanding of and importance placed upon sustainable business practices, while simultaneously gain insights into luxury hotel consumers' consideration for sustainable business practices and their preparedness to pay more for these aspects. Specifically, the research has contributed in three broad areas.

First, the research has made theoretical contributions by developing and extending the current branding literature. By assessing the Psychological Continuum Model and extending it to incorporate a consumer values construct, deeper understandings into the role values play in mediating the relationship between

Loyalty Drivers and Hotel Brand Loyalty. The research confirmed that consumer values to play a role in mediating the relationship between Hotel Loyalty Drivers and the Brand Loyalty concept. That is, that consumers' value constructs play a role in determining the level of involvement a consumer has with a brand. The implications of this are significant for marketing practitioners both in the hotel and wider tourism and hospitality industries.

As such, the second contribution of the research is a commercial one where, by recognising the role of consumer values in influencing brand involvement, marketing communications strategies can be developed accordingly. On the one hand, it is suggested that marketers use this information to identify and target more effectively ethical consumers in the luxury hotel sector. On the other, this research can be used to develop campaigns which appeal more broadly to the value domains of Conformity, Universalism and Benevolence to increase levels of awareness and concern for issues tied to those values, such as sustainability.

The third contribution of the research is a methodological one. As set out in chapter 5, much attention was afforded to the issue of emotional labour in the research(er) process. In particular, the impact of gatekeepers and access to research participants on researcher autonomy, positionality and emotional labour was found to be significant. A major finding of the research is that much more attention must be paid to these issues, particularly in early career researchers, and those who are receiving funding from external third parties.

The research has established the luxury hotel sector, and indeed the broader domain of luxury tourism as an important yet under researched segment of the tourism industry, as well as academic thought. The research has, though not explicitly investigated, highlighted the impact of the luxury hotel sector as a significant impactor upon consumption practices and consumer beliefs. Whilst the findings of this research provide significant and material implications for managers and industry alike, it is hoped the research also acts as a catalyst for deeper understanding of luxury hotels, but especially as a vehicle for continuing the underdeveloped academic area of critical hospitality thought. As such, there are many areas of this sector still to investigate and further ways in which understanding of this particular topic can be developed.

8.4 RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

With respect to broader hospitality research, this study has afforded much credibility to the domain and has illuminated a number of avenues for future research. The importance of not only the hotel and accommodation sector, but in particular the luxury hotel sector as a highly influential actor in the greater tourism experience has been noted. In particular, the study has served to act as a reminder for the need of greater and continued critical investigation of the hospitality sector and the ways in which it co-creates consumer experiences. The work of a few, namely Lashley, Lynch & Morrison (2007) and Lugosi, Lynch & Morrison (2009) have attempted to underscore the importance of embracing emergent criticality in the area. The gaps in this research further serve to remind us of the need for greater criticality in research in this area, not only for the maturation of research in the field, but also to assist in ratifying claims of legitimacy and research quality (Lugosi, Lynch and Morrison, 2009) in the future. For example, much could be drawn from not only the work of the preceding authors, but also that of Elliott & Urry (2010) and Beaverstock & Faulconbridge (2010) and others from the human geography field of mobilities research. Research such as these and the present study, highlight the need for a much more pronounced focus on the societal geographic core, namely the super-rich. As the gap between rich and poor continues to expand, now is the time to embark on such pursuits. In-depth examination of the way place and space is presented, negotiated, performed and promoted in the context of luxury hotels would be useful, not least for understanding something other than purely operational strategies of industry, but also for balancing the self-righteous, 'holier-than-thou' perspectives of some campaigners, and acknowledging the efforts industry *is* making in the face of disjointed and at times misguided legislative environments.

In many ways, perhaps the most important finding from the research has emerged from the investigation of sub-research questions, rather than the whole. When examining the understandings held by industry of sustainability, it was clear that through their focus on its environmental concerns, criticisms levelled at industry can at times be unjustified and misguided. While academicians largely agree on the three underpinning pillars of sustainability, it appears a cavernous gap in transferring that knowledge to industry has occurred. Uncovering the causes of this is a further area suggested for research focus. It is unfair and irresponsible of the academy to pursue heavily critical commentary of an industry where there has been an obvious lack of guidance with respect to the transfer of knowledge and understanding around these concepts. It is not simply about further promoting the importance of sustainability to industry, but ensuring that both parties are 'singing from the same hymn sheet'. In line with this, managers in this study have explicitly called for greater guidance, particularly from governments and policy makers, on how to negotiate the corporate structures and relations of the hospitality industry, whilst pursing the sustainability agenda. Of course this necessitates continued lobbying of governments to create frameworks under which this can be pursued, though as researchers it is our responsibility to better understand existing frameworks before levelling heavy-handed criticisms upon industry.

The impact of this research is evidenced not just through its findings, but also through the identification of further areas worthy of exploration and investigation. So while some important theoretical avenues for further research have been identified, so too have a number of more pragmatic ones. Already mentioned in section 8.2 above is the need for longitudinal studies to extend the knowledge created by cross-sectional research such as this. Using this research as a starting point, a number of future studies can be developed. First, the factors that affect the transition between stages of hotel brand involvement need to be explored further. Qualitative data such as that generated by focus groups could be used to gain insights into the various aspects of the luxury hotel experience that initiate advancement across stages. If barriers to access were able to be negotiated, then this could prove to be a fruitful avenue for investigation.

Second, the exploration of additional outcome variables beyond brand attachment and willingness to pay should be explored. Behavioural factors such as length of stay, repeat visitation and place attachment could be aligned with the different stages of luxury hotel brand involvement. Finally, this work should be extended beyond the luxury hotel sector. In order to make the greatest impact, it is a wholesale change in the attitudes of the greater Global North that is needed. By broadening research to encompass tourists of all sectors and markets, not just those motivated by luxury, a better understanding of sustainability concerns could be achieved.

8.5 CONCLUSION

As a final concluding remark to this study, consideration must be given to the ways in which we conduct research. Running through this thesis has been a thread of challenging circumstances, which at times have rendered the research impracticable or 'too difficult' by others. The canon of tourism knowledge is incomplete and is punctuated by conspicuous silences and absences in research. Usually these are held to be of those in powerless or underprivileged positions as "permission to narrate may be denied to peripheral groups" (Tribe, 2008:376). This study and perhaps others involving industry partners or difficult-to-reach groups, permission to narrate is purposefully denied *by* core groups in acts of self-preservation. It is right that we turn our focus to those who hold powerful positions, and whose position at the geographic core of society has afforded them the ability to (purposefully) elude research attention. Henceforth, we must make much bigger in-roads to creating a more fulfilling research co-operative, for both industry and researchers, which heralds the way for a mutually beneficial and sustainable long-term research agenda between industry and the academy (Everett and Low, 2011).

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Low, T. and Everett, S. (under review). Impact of Industry Engagement on Tourism Research. *Tourism Management*

CONFERENCE PAPERS

Association for Tourism in Higher Education Annual Conference 8th-9th December, 2011. *Blending Research with Industry: Lessons from Match-Funded Research'*, St Anne's College, University of Oxford **(awarded Best Paper)**

British Academy Seminar, Emerging Issues in Uncertainty and Ethical Consumption Seminar, 13th June, 2011, '*Places and Spaces of Ethical Consumption'*, University of Glasgow, UK (bursary awarded)

Royal Geographical Society Post-Graduate Half-Term Conference, 'Future Geographies', 1st - 2nd April, 2011, '*Global Elites and Their Influences on Tourism Destinations'*, Durham University, UK.

Council for Australian University Tourism and Hospitality and Education Conference, 8th – 11th February, 2011, '*Blending Research with Industry: Reflections from the Field'*, University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia.

New Zealand Tourism and Hospitality Conference, 24th – 26th November, 2010, *'Consumer Preferences for Sustainability in the Luxury Hotel Sector'* Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand;

British Academy of Management (BAM) Conference, 13th – 16th September, 2010, *'Sustainable Branding of Luxury Hotels: A critical approach'*, University of Sheffield, UK (bursary awarded);

Tourism and Hospitality in Ireland Conference, 14th – 16th June, 2010, *'Sustainable luxury: a case of strange bedfellows?'* Shannon College of Hotel Management, Ireland.

Appendix 1: Informed Consent

Dear Guest,

The enclosed questionnaire forms part of ongoing research commissioned by the Lord Forté Foundation - a charitable trust whose aim is to encourage excellence within the field of hospitality, encompassing the hotel, catering, tourism and travel industries within the UK and overseas. The Foundation achieves this objective by making awards directly to educational establishments to carry out research relating to the hospitality industry.

This research is being carried out in conjunction with the University of Bedfordshire, UK where the main purpose of the project is to investigate the role of ethical consumption in the consumer decision-making process within luxury hotels. The questionnaire asks for your responses to a number of questions relating to ethical consumption, features of luxury hotels and your personal travel behaviours.

It is expected that this questionnaire will take no longer than 10 minutes to complete. All responses will be collected anonymously to ensure confidentiality. The results from this research may be used in subsequent research publications and reports, but will only refer to the aggregated set of data. Individual responses will not be described.

Your participation is of course voluntary, and you are free to withdraw from the research at any stage, without further consequences. The research operates in line with the University's Research Ethics Policy. Any questions in relation to this should be directed to:

INTOUR Ethics Committee
University of Bedfordshire
Polhill Avenue,
Bedford MK41 9EA
Bedfordshire, UK
Email: Andrew.Holden@beds.ac.uk

Your participation in this research is greatly valued and any questions or comments should be directed to Tiffany.Low@beds.ac.uk. Alternatively, I can be reached by telephone on +44 (0)1234 793 450.

Kind regards,

Tiffany Low
Chief Investigator & Researcher
University of Bedfordshire

Appendix 2: Responses to Open-Ended Questions

"To me sustainability means…"

Careful use of resources
Economical use of utilities
Continuing to produce a good level of service and facilities by recycling, local sourcing etc.
An affiliation with the environment
Keeping things alive and not just a memory
Solidity
For quality to remain good throughout your stay
To be true I don't know
Care of the local environment
Same standard each year
Being able to enjoy myself without damaging the locale and the environment
Not destroying the environment/good will of locals in the short term, for the greater value of more people in the long term
The hotel managing and keep clients happy so they will return year after year
Enjoyment
Necessary precondition for human well-being
Long term local people & environmental support
Using the resources again
On going
Trying to help protect our planet
Avoiding waste and making best use of resources for as long as possible and reasonable
Companies making a consious effort to stop wasting resources.
Being as efficient, green and carbon neutral as possible"
Looking to the future
Able to keep up and maintain facilities as committed to
Excellent service
Humans not damaging the environment unnecessarily.
Minimise waste and impact on the environment
Protecting the environment and adopting green policies. Not using up the natural resources
The long-term maintenance of wellbeing, which has environmental, economic, and social dimensions, and encompasses the concept of stewardship
Consistency in performance
Supporting the company
To use the resources we have without exploiting them and causing there to be a decline in supply.
Keeping things going and maintaining a good standard.
Protecting our environment
The safeguarding of natural resources
As much as I need
The ability to maintain the same environment over a long period of time without damage to the surrounding environment
Keeping it at the level which it is at the moment

Reducing one's personal carbon footprint by keeping energy consumption and waste to a minimum, and recycling as much as possible.
Looking after the planet
Not being wasteful of resources
Using locally sourced products
A carbon neutral footprint and positive local CSR arrangements and policy
Maintaining high standards
Future generation can also enjoy it
The environmental consideration in the hotels philosophy
Keeping up high standards
Capturing of free and natural resources, avoidance of waste and recycling if waste is unavoidable
Working and operating in a sustainable way or in harmony with the environment
Reduction of carbon footprint
Not using the obscene amount of disposable food wrapping and drinks carriers that are used in these hotels.
Worldly aware
How long it can survive in a difficult and competitive market.
Considering the impact of tourism on the local area
Being the best you can be without the wastage.
Can It survive
Having a minimal or positive impact on surrounding areas and populations
Is very important
The future of the planet
Kindness to the planet
Reliable consistency to a satisfaction
Protecting our planet and leaving a small footprint where we have been.
Sustainability is an attempt to merge ecology and economy into one system.
maintaining and providing for the future
Not wasting resources
Leaving as much of our world for our descendants.
To keep something going
Buying food locally, renewable energy especially in a sunny climate, careful use of water, recycling of rubbish
Zero impact on the environment
Not using up a disproportionate amount of resources
Minimising use of World's resources.
Keeping standards and working to better them for everyone
Maintaining standards in a green way
Being environmentally friendly /recycling/power saving etc
Making use of local produce and people
Supporting the environment and locality
Environmentally friendly
A business doing its best to continue offering high quality with consideration to impacting on environment...keeping customers...keeping staff but maintaining modern systems.
Benefitting the community without undue pressure on natural resources
Managing the/ environment in a responsible manner to protect it for future generations
A whole new world
The future
Not wasting resources

Looking to the future
Maintaining comfort and style without too much damage to the enviroment
Eco friendly
Good for the local community and environment
Being able to provide and maintain products and services to appropriate quality
Waste management, Energy Management, cost saving for the better good.
Something that can exist without a detrimental impact on its surroundings
Environmentally friendly
Use of local responsibly sourced resources and amenities
Protecting natural resources
Intelligent use of energy, local produce & recycling without compromise on standard.
The ability to last
Keeping things going like recycling, using biodegradable products
Considering the impact of our actions on the future
Maintaining a sensible level of natural resources
Protecting the worlds resources
Very little
No waste of resources and replaceable
Care of the hotel and its surroundings
Continuous high class service
Caring for environment and local people
My long term well being
Looking after the environment
Rectifying the negative impact of tourism on the environment
Awareness of environmental surroundings
Reduction of waste and the use of local products
Considering the future.
Minimum wastage
Making use of resources correctly
Helping to protect the environment
Looking after people less fortunate than yourself
A brand that you can trust, know will be around and look after customers to the highest level of service
Ensuring that the environment is there for future generations by treating it with respect
Running a company without a negative impact on the environment, either socially or physically, with a long-term view
Use of local produce and services
Renewable resources
Supporting local economy i.e. locally produced food, hotel furnishings, local workforce.
Environmentally aware and sympathetic
Green Friendly
Continuation without depleting any natural resources
Minimum long term impact
Enduring
The conscious use of sustainable and renewable materials and energy
To be able to continue to give a service that will not be compromised
It’s there for me whenever I want it.
Assured of the same or better in the future
Leaving a place at least as good as I found it
Trying to conserve
Grading service remains at the same level throughout

Using renewable resources where possible and local produce to reduce carbon footprint
Almost certainly a contradiction to the consumption associated with such a level of luxury
Natural local environment
Doing their best for their hotel to do as much as possible to reduce carbon footprint
Making repeat visits with minimal environmental impact
Eco-friendly
No waste
Looking after the environment
that everything i require within the holiday is there is i require it
not a lot
The ability to provide the same standard of service year in year out.
to endure within the environment within which it is set.
Responsible use of resources
providing local employment and keeping environmental impact as low as possible
pleasure
endurance
I can rely on previous experience
enabling future generations to enjoy what I'm enjoying
being as efficient as possible in all aspects
achieving desired holiday outcomes whilst minimising avoidable waste
doing business in a way that will not do environmental harm.
environment
conservation of low energy
Everything is run by management and staff in a perfectly ongoing co-ordinated way.
protecting the environment
caring for the local community and the wider environment
preserving the environment
Recycle as many products as possible , minimise energy consumption.
looking after the local community, commercially and environmentally.
environmentally conscious
protecting local environment
Impacting on environment as little as possible
that energy consumption is not fully reliant on natural resources, using renewable technologies
can assist in being self sufficient
using resources which there are plenty and or are replenished
stewardship of issues that impact economically, environmentally and socially on myself and those around me
Being concerned with green issues and supporting the local community
being able to maintain a level of service without damaging the environment too much.
RELIABILITY
maintaining the same high standards and concerns for customers.
recycling and eco friendly policies
long lasting
being an asset to the local environment
not making a mess of the destination we have come to experience
not having a negative impact on the local environment
not long term damage for short term satisfaction
being aware of current events and reacting to them
something that will last well into the future taking into account the world as it is today &

what is lekely to happen
maintaining a level of tourism that is environmentally friendly and carbon neutral
running an operation in a way which is sustainable in the long term for the local environment, culture and economy.
a product or service that is not depleting resources or using them wastefully
a neutral carbon footprint, water usage in line with water supply so there is a minimal environmental impact.
being able to sustain or improve service without a major impact on the environment
to keep the same
environmental friendly, good staff moral, true to the area
Minimum environmental impact by operation of hotel
trying to limit wastage whenever possible, whenever practical.
The lightest possible impact on the surrounding environment
Ensuring by responsible management we tend for the environment and our future.
maintaining and renewing
one very fuzzy term ideal for marketing
continuous standards
the same each time
Not compromising future generations, supporting well being without compromise.
Very little. I don't really know what it means
ensuring resources are used in a responsible way to maintain availability
The use of renewable resources and reducing the amount of energy used.
a low carbon footprint, using minimal resources efficiently
minimizing impact on environment over a period of time whilst maximising positive effects on surroundings and local people
Consideration for the future
Reducing negative impact on surrounding environment.
being without effecting
A 'green' low energy, environmentally friendly product
to continually repeat
Looking after the environment to ensure a sustainable future, climate etc
contributing to the local economy among other things.
optimum use of renewable resources
ability to keep going
Continuance and ease of life
not running a business to the detriment of local community, and not spending lavishly on 'improvements' that aren't necessary
preserving the environment, causing as little pollution as poss.
Preserving the planet for future generations
maintaining standards , objectives
consideration of environmental impact
Protecting natural resources and the local economy
being careful with wastage of any sort.
environmental impact
a guarantee of continuing standards.
sensible policies to protect the environment
making the effort
protecting, or supplementing, existing environmental conditions
Minimising energy consumption
offering the same or similar service but without being detrimental to the environment
in-house initiatives which are to do with the local area i.e. not using too much water to

wash towels but if it is a 5 star hotel in a hot climate, we expect it.
being able to provide a standard without harming the enviroment
it operates without a damaging effect on the planet
using renewables and recycling
attention to detail to purchase/use/dispose of quality consumables
A conscious effort to minimise the impact on the world
using less resources, water, electricity, etc...
Longevity and thoughtful
able to live happily and with in budget
looking after the environment and ensuring that policies support recycling and minimisation of waste
retaining everything which appeals to most whilst controlling cost.
neutral affect on the environment
putting back what used
Ethical, green, reliability
everything
being able to maintain standards and facilities without draining outside resources.
having the ability and power etc to keep going
ensuring it can maintain itself long term
a positive impact on the environment
To support and maintain
recycling
living within the location/environmets means
the ability to live in the environment without depleteing its resources
Looking after the environment
Less waste
thought given to the environment, efforts are taken to be sensible with local people and area
takes care to reduce the environmental impact
no cost to the environment
where possible recycling and using recoverable materials
environmentally friendly
keeping to the same high quality
good use local resources water supp;y etc
reducing carbon footprint and recycling of materials
Keeping things as they are as found
always constant quality
making the most of re-newable resources available
Reduce pollution, respect the environment and conserve natural resources
not a lot
energy consumption and environment
to support , provide for ,to maintain ,to keep going
ECO friendly
Its existence does not have any bad impact on the community or area's ecology in which it is set. Minimal waste.
Treatment of staff
No excessive waiste in terms of energy, water and food.
using solar enegy and not being waistful using local produce
recycling and efficient usage of water
benefitting tomorrow without harming today
being green

be responsible in reducing energy,reducing carbon footprint and prtecting the environment
Forward thinking
preserving natural resources for future generations
Using resources wisely
Being aware of and trying to sustain the local environment and the planet
maintain as permanence
Not a lot
ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY
?
Using materials and facilities/ services that are good for the environment .
recycling
effective use of resources and reduction in unnecessary waste
something hotels feel they have to do but in reality the majority of guests don't care either way.
Caring for the environment
Continuation
Not creating unnecessary waste. I don't need my toiletries renewed daily.
lopesan hotels
maintaining quality with minimal effect on the environment
utilising local resources
Recycle,energy awareness
Being as 'green' as possible
FRIENDLY EASY OING HOTEL
Renewing resources used
maintaining standards
thinking about things, making the right choices
Constant good service
protecting the environment for future generations
putting back what is taken out
managing things in such a way as to do no harm to the environment or local area/culture, and to help develop ethical projects.
retaining the worthwhile things
continued existence
using natural resources as efficiently as possible and reusing them where possible
being able to keep the quality of things the same
protecting the future
being able to keep the standard time and time again
very little
Locally sourced food thats seasonal and can be maintained in an healthy eco system.
being responsible for your outputs and the effect they have on the environment long term.
being environmentally conscious
sustaining what you have for the future - that could be business partners, customers or revenue.
running things in an ecological and efficient way
Working with today’s generation to preserve the environment for future generations to come
not unneccesarily wasting anything
keeping in line with the local suroundings
long term.
being carefull on envirenmental issues without detracting from my enjoyment of my

holiday
keeping yourstandards up
prolonged - over a long period of time
environmental friendly
creating and maintaining conditions that protect our environment
minimising any negative impact of the environment from well maintained practices.
No idear
it is a modern word used out of the old context - in the past it meant the ability to keep up with something
to sustain and provide for. to keep going.
maintaining the same standard consistently in an efficient but responsible manner.
how well something is going to hold together
LOW IMPACT ON ENVIROMENT
Reduced use of energy and carbon footprint and protecting the environment
ensuring all aspects of service and facilities are environmentaly friendly as possib;e and that there is a strategy to continue developing this.
longer life fot all
increased price or tax based on guilt
Using resources efficiently so they replace naturally
Taking care of the environment
renewal of energy and supplies
longevity
the hotel I go to stays the same to me each time I return
The future of the planet but often a luxury not affordable
a rather boring buzz word that basically means the hotel is managed well.
Maintaining a hotel to a decent standard
Use of local products etc from a sustainable source
The use of sustainable and recycable products
saving money
not using resources faster than nature can provide them
a sop to the green movement
Alot
Ability to survive and maintain standards and belief's
continuance by natural means and use cof renewable resources
to be able to carry on at the same level without having to compromise
the hotel functions safely without damage to the people and country around it
long term maintainence of the earths resources
not interested
nothing to me
nothing is taken away that cannot be replaced
able to continue operating without destroying the very thing it is set up to provide
this is not someting I think of
Eco warrior toilet paper
Supporting the local economy and being a responsible employer
care
long term maintenance of our economic and eclological responsibilites
to meet demand consistantly for prolonged period
nothing that actually matters
continuable and sensible use of resourses
use of resources
common sense

Not damaging to the environment.
environmentally friendly
an impossible dream given the way we want to live in the moden world
The product can last and carry on in the future
making sure a hotel presents an eco-friendly image
Minimisation waste
recycling and not wasting
ENSURING FGOOD VALUE FOR MONEY AND GUARANTEE THAT THE BOOKING WILL BE HONOURED
Hotel staff will not remove towels when not requested.
nothing at all with regards to a holiday
operating in a manner which is sympathetic to the environment
Environmentally friendly
little damage to the local environment
ripp off fees
continuous
Eco friendly using sustainable resources
preserving for the future
tree huggers and yoghurt knitters
nothing
do not give a fuck
Using local resources to the fullest degree
nothing
being careful
(Sorry - don't know what it means)
cheap and costs savings above all else.

"WHEN I THINK OF A SUSTAINABLE HOTEL I THINK…"

comfort, not luxury. The human touch
Reduction of waste
The Amara Beach
green living
Continuity
the last Thomson I stayed in
Aruba
Dont know
sofitel
nothing what silly question it a holiday not byeing a house
excellent holiday
Efficient use of energy, recycling and in tune with its locale
people/companies who value the environment and the local people
working with local authorities, tour operaters to keep clients and staff in a happy holiday environment
relaxing
eco-systems
the good it is doing in that area
A company that thinks about the environment and surroundings
Continuity
someone that is doing good for the people and land
energy usage, consideration of resources (natural and human)
A company who looks after the environment as well as its customers - yes social responsibility
the future"
a caring ethos
Ability to provide all that is expected at all times
paradise
A that thinks about what can be done to use resources wisely. Involving customers on these issues.
village
the assistance this is to the future of the environment and also the local area.
SOCIAL RESPONSABILITY
Professionalism in providing a consistent service that is top class.
Riu
the staff being friendly and happy in there jobs because they are paid a fair wage so they become more friendly with the holidaymakers. Also the food at the being locally sourced.
Bahia Feliz
a company that is thinking opf the environment and doing all that it can to protect it
the future
ability to enjoy with greater choice
dolphins
saving natural resources
What the is doing that I can actually see, what it's staff's attitudes are, and what they are doing as a team to comply with what I view as sustainability.
a that doesn't waste energy, water, food or any other resorce.
areduced carbon footprint
no that I have knowledge of.

My recent holiday at Sun Magic Life
a that is sustainable
no waste, clean and peaceful
a dedicated to the environment
5 star
Self sufficiency in its environment
staff and gests looked after
s that recycle and use reusable itesm for food and drink.
caring for others
Staying at the same on a regular basis.
eco s
what a well run and management company can do when they put their mind to it.
Going forward
a fair employer to the local people and who recycles and uses environmentally friendly practises
it being responsible
a responsible organisation
environment friendly policies
enjoyable holiday
positive relationships with the local community and environment.
Riu s as they are forward thinking and like to keep up with environmental issues
green issues
one that doesn't waste water, overuse detergents
A responsible owner.
location
a good choice of
a travel brochure
comfort, fairness and relaxation
?!
keeping high standards whilst using green policies
Holiday inns
good use of local people and protection of the environment
no to my knowledge
good clean thinking
Modern s in London and Edinburgh
in a desert situation effectively using desalinated water.
Ethically responsible employment (local people) and minimal disruption to the local environment.
the future
Going there
low levels of waste, care of their staff
Good Management who care
sensible use of materials to conserve energy while also giving good quality and value
economics
Working with nature and not the better of the community
a successful and well managed establishment
a company doing better things
ecologically sound, energy efficient, re-cycling
impact on envtronment
Ethical management style
efficiency protecting the environment

A Company that has a social conscience
a which has the ability to outlast others, unique in its own way.
caring about the environment
An ecologically responsible that replaces the resources it consumes. Employing local workers and contributes to the local community financially and socially
some thought has gone into maintaining the host country's resources
N/a
the environment
They think about the above
I never think of a as being sustainable
Marriott
Forward thinking for the planet future
It's long term future to retain customers and to draw in new customers year after year
?
a positive approach in tackling a global issue that is everyone's responsibility
looking after local environmental
best use of resources and fair play with local employees
what my role should be.
energy efficient
like I am a part of something
EMPLOYING LOCAL STAFF TRAINING THEM TO LOOK AFTER GUESTS AND PAYING THEM A FAIR WAGE TO DO SO
5 star, luxary, good facilities ticks all the boxes.....and more
a place I stayed in Sri Lanka
have a less negative impact on the surrounding environment (usually immediate, sometimes further afield) and a more positive impact on the lives of the local population (not just staff but benefitting local residents as well)
the environment
good practise
continued employment the local economy and general well being for all concerned.
eco awareness
Appropriate to the natural surrounds
Efficient use of all resources
?
sunshine
an oxymoron.
a sense of permanancy,reliability and at home in it's surroundings.
Care for our Planet. For all to enjoy.
happy holidays
preserving the planet for the next generation
saving water
same number of guests visiting each year
it stays in busniss
Small, locally owned, environmentally aware
Helping generate local employment and economy
for example, not washing towels every day or changing your sheets every day.
occasioally of something grim hair shirts & composting toilets etc
saving natural resources
Satisfaction
it is looking after its own country
having a good holiday

not a lot
A that maintains it standards
a that complements and respects the surrounding area, giving back to the local community as well as delivering a top class experience to guests.
efficiency, thoughtfulness, good management and happy staff
a with local employees and a working policy that supports the local environment
relaxation guaranteed
long established
food and service
renewable energy, locally-sourced food, drink, and services
energy consumption
fair treatment of staff and local community
the thought that must have gone in to create that environment
enviromentandcosts
one that looks at low running costs energy wize and recycling
My own life and the disciplines that I try to maintain always.
a that cares
resposible management
preserving the enviroment
providing employment for local community, and using loccally sourced produce.
using local workforce and not impacting the community.
energy efficiency using locally produced goods and sustainable materials
My carbon footprint
the future
re-cycling and caring more for the environment
it is run using sustainable resources
a that employs people at a fair wage, ensures their general and family wellbeing are caterwed for ad ensures environmental impacts are minimised
Empty promises
they are thinking about being enviromently friendly
RELAXATION
a company that cares about the environment and the welfare of its staff
making best use of equipment, utilities, recycling facilities etc.
same good service 24 hours a day
When I am on holiday I am selfish I don't think of the in that way
rodos palladium!
Minimizing waste and using local produce where possible
being able to enjoy it even more into the future
this
buildings & its environment that have been well thought out/designed that is environmentally responsible & efficient
taking a holiday that does not alter or harm the local environment of the country that I'm in.
a responsibly and ethically operated who pay staff a fair wage and operate in an environmentally responsible manner.
really not very much
using renewable energy, grey water systems and technology to minimise environmental impact.
eco tourism awards
moral and ethical compliance of company
sorry, nothing really.

A high quality property prepared to give it's customers the best experience in the most intelligent way
Towel usage (to be honest I've not seen many other examples)
good standards
Only Fools and Horses
Bahia Princess
maintaining a certain standard that I have become used to, i.e "Quality"
nothing in particular
environmentally friendly policies; not destroying surrounding environment; local community projects
recycling and energy consumption.
efficient energy consumption and built with renewable resources
solar power, care for sorrounding ecology
Has similar standards to myself
Staff with a positive and proactive attitude.
contributing and helping the planet
ecologically eficient
Green issues
No particular jumps to mind probably because our more recent stays have been in 'International' s. A small example - the Riu we stayed in in Portugal bought their oramges centrally from Spain which meant that we were deprived of the Portguese ones which are more tasty. In addition had the bought locally the economy would have benefited.
It is contributing to reducing environmental impact
use recyclable materials, biodegradables, materials which are easily regrown
Efficiency
a medieval estate where everything was grown/constructed inhouse wherever possible
green policies
desalination plants and keeping consumption of electricity etc as low as possible.
a that prioritises the use of local services, materials
ecologically sound practices
Long term thinking and investment
more care of the environment
its impact on the environment and locality
concern for others.
it might be a good place to stay
continuity
marine life,reducing waste and making the most ofut all available resourses,such as water
recycling points, not poluting the water with detergent,
not one in particular. thomson should be more sustainable and ethical for the family market by not inflating their overall rates in the school holidays. This is a good market for any tour operator and we are exploited.
the impossible
Rockcliffe Hall, Darlington
the future
Quality decision making
Bathroom towel replacement frequency
s in the wilderness
Fair policies
Thomson s that are value for money and always honest
a that I would prefer to stay at

pleasant surroundings and considerate
awareness
Confidence
more holidays
recycling! etc.
Various 5 star s in the Antalya regions of Turkey
the local economy and how it benefits from the .
using local and environmentally friendly products
being environmentally friendly, recycling and using local produce etc
the green ishuse
one that doesn't abuse the environment or resources of its location uses local staff and puts back into community
?
it doesn't really man much to me
Positive images
is caring in its attitude to the area and use of services.
not washing the towels unless it is necessary and using locally sourced produce
enrgy produced in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way, a minimal impact on the environment
how long the   cankeep going
Thomson hol;idas
s in india which i have visited which use water atrociously to keep gardens lush while locals queue for drinking water
the way I conduct myself at home
A   conscious of it's impact on it's environment
good clean comfortable
working within the environment
one that provides services to guests with the minimum environmental impact
energy consumption
considerate to the enviroment
.
saving energy
Eco friendly policies, staff welfare, it is of benefit to the community where it is situated.
Community inclusion
An efficiently run   that has a small carbon footprint.
not sure what this question is asking?
modern, eco-friendly, solar panels, natural products
environmentally friendly
Social responsibility
reliability
Standards will always be kept to the same level
H10 Meloneras Palace, Gran Canaria which aims for sustainability and collects rainwater from its roof in underground storage tanks through very clever design feature of its roof. I have stayed there multiple times.
One that is sympathetic to the local environment
reliability of maintenance of standards
Green
SOMEWHERE I WOULD LIKE TO STAY
?
An honest company
saving water etc

recycling, solar power,
a that feels it has to be seen to be doing the "right thing"!
long lasting care of the environment
They are trying to appear like their money saving ideas are ethical sustainability
lopesan s
water; eco-friendly; electricity consumption, recycling of bath towels
Riu Ocha Rius
Global awareness
one that thinks about the environment
Nothing. It is of no great importance to me.
?
a caring
good quality
one that is firmly part of its community
one which makes no impact on the locality in which it sets and blinds in without offence to sight, smell and sound.
nothing in particular
Good quality , giving good service, attention to customers
responsible management
Quality
bovine excrement
the impact it makes on the scocial, economic and environmental issues!!!
Towels being re-used
eco s
The caledonian   - it's been there for years.
nothing. I go away to relax. Selfish maybe but there we are.
Tranquil, 5 star, new, Spa
no answer
employing local people buying local produce
quality, price and regular maintenance.
mas palomas princess
Standards & quality never changing to such a degree that future visits to the same   are less enjoyable/compromised than the first visit.
environmental friendly by energy saving, reduction of carbon foot print, food products you can trust.
reducing waste and consumption
a that cares for the endurance, well-being and respect towards nature and mankind.
nothing much at all
a very well designed , provides for the community and environment.
a mature, trustworthy and responsible company.
something strong and safe
RECYCLING
reduced energy usage and a care for the environment
somewhere boring!
sorry nothing
chains that maximise retail prices and margins whilst paying staff rock bottom rates
High prices
Higher prices
greenery and commitments to cut down on waste
responsibility
reassurance

How I should be living
not a thing.
Efficient use of resources
Green credentials
A that fully considers it's responsibility to the environment
They can not be bothered to change things
i dont
notices about washing towels less often to save environment - not costs!
A good
A which delivers its marketing message whilst having policies to manage its environmental impact, values its staff and remains true to its vision
Not something I think about
competetively priced for that area
not using valuable local resourses
recycling/saving water/laundry green policy
not interested
nothing, i book to get away and live in luxury for 2 weeks
a that produces its own energy
not having a negative impact on the local environment
I do not think of sustainability when i think of s , choosing a for me is a pleasure
Eco friendly
A good reputation with experience backing it up
suitable
green policies and fair treatment of staff unlke the exploitation we experienced in cap verdi
consistent in services and can achieve what it claims to
as above
?
ability to keep going
reducing waste
The sensible use of natural resources.
D/K
them minimising their own energy use - which makes good business sense anyway.
It will always be there
one that is seeking a positive customer image
eco friendly
Energy and Recycling
recycling.
POPULARITY AND GOOD LOCATION /SERVICE PROVIDER AT REASONABLE COST
responsibility to the environment
AN OVER LARGE PR DEPT
signs in the bathroom to recycle towels!
hippy commune.
integration with local resources and community
just another way off charging more
maintained
Mud huts on the Thai beaches
low energy wastage
hairshirts
cheap skates

Local goods
stupid political correctness
higher prices or poorer quality facilities
economically viable and popular
accountants and marketing people making a quick buck.