

Greenwashing in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector: A Systematic Analysis of the literature

Greenwashing en el Sector Turístico y Hotelero: Un Análisis Sistemático de la literatura

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ABSTRACT

"Greenwashing" is a deceptive practice that presents a company as environmentally responsible without real support. This study reviews the existing literature on greenwashing in the tourism and hospitality sector, highlighting the importance of transparency and corporate responsibility in consumer perception. Using the PRISMA method for systematic reviews and meta-analysis, a bibliometric analysis was carried out that identified thematic clusters such as green finance, sustainability, green marketing and corporate image. Although research on greenwashing has increased, specific studies in the hospitality sector are limited. Key questions for future research are raised, such as the influence of scientific journals and the main research topics in the hotel sector. The study methodology combines qualitative and quantitative approaches, underlining the importance of transparency in the results. In summary, the need for more research and concrete actions to combat greenwashing is emphasized, promoting authenticity and responsibility in tourism and hotel companies.

Keywords: Greenwashing, Green Confusion, Green Brand Equity, Credibility, Falsificación De Datos, Responsabilidad Social Corporativa, Green Marketing.

RESUMEN

El "greenwashing" es una práctica engañosa que presenta a una empresa como ambientalmente responsable sin un respaldo real. Este estudio revisa la literatura existente sobre greenwashing en el sector turístico y hotelero, destacando la importancia de la transparencia y la responsabilidad corporativa en la percepción de los consumidores. Utilizando el método PRISMA para revisiones sistemáticas y metaanálisis, se realizó un análisis bibliométrico que identificó clústeres temáticos como finanzas verdes, sostenibilidad, marketing verde e imagen corporativa. Aunque la investigación sobre greenwashing ha aumentado, los estudios específicos en el sector hotelero son limitados. Se plantean preguntas clave para futuras investigaciones, como la influencia de las revistas científicas y los principales temas de investigación en el sector hotelero. La metodología del estudio combina enfoques cualitativos y cuantitativos, subrayando la importancia de la transparencia en los resultados. En resumen, se enfatiza la necesidad de más investigaciones y acciones concretas para combatir el greenwashing, promoviendo la autenticidad y la responsabilidad en las empresas turísticas y hoteleras.

Palabras Claves: Greenwashing, Green Confusion, Green Brand Equity, Credibility, Falsificación De Datos, Responsabilidad Social Corporativa, Green Marketing

INTRODUCTION

A growing concern among management theorists revolves around the condition of the world that future generations will inherit (Islam et al., 2023 ; Sajid et al., 2023). Issues such as oil spills, deforestation, global warming, unethical scandals and pandemics have led global entities such as the United Nations and the World Economic Forum to intensify their calls to conduct business sustainably. In response, consumers show great interest in purchasing environmentally friendly products, motivated by environmental concerns (Ioannou et al., 2023). Consequently, due to increasing pressures from consumers and other stakeholders, a multitude of corporations have initiated the launch of environmentally friendly products and have participated in various environmental initiatives (Islam et al., 2023; Sajid and Zakkariya, 2022). However, it has been observed in various sectors, from energy to retail, that certain companies engage in deceptive practices (Adegeest, 2022 ; Li et al., 2022).

The practice of "washing" has emerged as a relevant phenomenon in the field of marketing and business communication, covering a variety of sectors and aspects of contemporary times. This term denotes the manipulation of perceptions through the misleading presentation of products, services or activities, which has given rise to the conceptualization of various categories that reflect their different manifestations. In this context, five main types of washing are identified: pinkwashing, bluewashing and greenwashing. Each of these modalities involves particular strategies that capitalize on different issues and social concerns with the purpose of promoting commercial or political interests, thus generating debates around ethical issues, authenticity and corporate responsibility. The objective of this study is to explore and analyze these variants of "washing", investigating their characteristics, repercussions and implications in various social and business environments.

Pinkwashing, a term coined by Breast Cancer Action's Think Before You Pink campaign in 2002, describes when companies that sell breast cancer-related products market those products in conjunction with breast cancer charities or awareness organizations (Action and Pink, 2023). There are no trademarks or other restrictions on the use of the pink ribbon in marketing, allowing any company to use breast cancer-related brands in their marketing campaigns (Harvey and Strahilevitz, 2009).

"Bluewashing", which is defined in this paper as UNGC members "paying lip service to the true objectives of CSR rather than undertaking substantial but costly changes to their environmental and human rights" (Berliner and Prakash, 2015). The disconnection between discourse and practices is not limited to the environmental aspects of sustainability. In fact, it can be present in communication on all UNFC principles and the SDGs. Several scholars have highlighted bluewashing practices (Berliner and Prakash, 2015; Hamann et al., 2009; Junaid et al., 2015; Rasche et al., 2013).

Greenwashing refers to a practice where companies attempt to gain undeserved moral credit by not "walking" their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) "talk" (Papa- giannakis et al., 2024). Conceptually, greenwashing represents a phenomenon of moral inconsistency whereby companies attempt to obtain an undeserved moral benefit by appearing more sustainable than they really are (Effron & Helgason, 2023).

Greenpeace defines greenwashing as "a public relations tactic used to make a company or product appear environmentally friendly without significantly reducing its environmental impact" (Greenpeace, 2021), while Terra-Choice defines greenwashing as " the act of misleading consumers about a company's environmental practices or environmental performance and positive communication about environmental performance" (TerraChoice, 2007).

The phenomenon of greenwashing has become a major concern as companies increasingly respond to the call for sustainability (Li et al., 2022; Sajid and Ertz, 2024). Among other things, the goal is to attract consumer sympathy through a positive image and social responsibility, increase product value, increase popularity, respond to market needs and test new markets (Lintang, Y., 2022).

A significant impact of greenwashing is that it can lead consumers to make uninformed purchasing decisions, believing that they are making environmentally responsible decisions when they are not (Santos et al., 2023). This can result in greater environmental damage as consumers continue to purchase products with significant environmental impacts. When consumers discover that a company engages in greenwashing, they may feel deceived and lose faith in the company's environmental commitment (Jaiswal et al., 2021).

Greenwashing can be found in various industries where companies promote products or practices as environmentally friendly, according to Zhang (2022) the greenwashing risk of extreme events in the form of a shock to the regulation of the green financial system, and found that green financial regulation makes highly polluting companies more likely to engage in greenwashing. Xing et al. (2021) investigated how, due to corporate greenwashing, companies with higher environmental disclosure quality do not obtain more loans. Only green innovation promotes access to corporate loans.

The malpractice of this phenomenon is also found in the banking sector, according to Aras, in recent years, the issue of greenwashing is also affecting the banking sector. Banks play an important role in the transition to a low-carbon economy, as they are responsible for financing many of the projects that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions (Aras et al., 2018; Gangi et al., 2019 ; Galletta et al., 2021; As a result, there has been growing interest in sustainable finance and environmental, social and governance (ESG) investments (Zhang et al., 2022; Zheng et al., 2023; Galletta et al., 2022; Khan, 2022; Long et al., 2022)

(Borel-Saladin & Turok, 2013) analyzed how a green economy is often promoted as a way to promote sustainability and environmental protection. However, they warned there is a danger of greenwashing, when companies or governments make exaggerated or false claims about their environmental credentials to mislead customers or investors.

In the agricultural sector, 3 vital themes were found: the implementation of sustainable practices in production units, especially in small farms; the influence of supra-national organizations on the sustainability of the sector through their policies; and the effect of certification programs, which can both improve and distort the environmental perception of production. Therefore, research in this area focuses mainly on sustainability and legitimacy, with less attention on end consumer perception. Within the first topic we can locate the works of Bager and Lampin (2020) on the adoption of sustainable practices in the coffee industry; Francis (2004), addressing the impact of corporate agriculture on sustainability; and Francisco et al. (2007), who studied the influence of farm size on the adoption of sustainable practices. Alexander (2019) analyzed the impact of the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture on sustainability. Alons (2017) studied the inclusion of Environmental Policy Integration in the

EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) through the analysis of the historical evolution of the CAP. Finally, DeFries et al. (2017) focused on the effects of adopting voluntary certification programs for smallholder tropical produce farms. The main concern of papers related to the food industry is related to labels and packaging, considering both the information they reveal about the product and the impressions they make on end customers. Organic foods play the leading role in some of these studies. Thus, marketing and communication emerge here as the main areas of concern. Elving and Steenhuis (2014) studied the impact that an industrial label has on consumers. Organic foods caught the attention of three studies: Yarosh and Mitina (2018), who study the accuracy of organic food producers' claims in Crimea; Nguyen et al. (2019), who address the mediating role of green skepticism in the relationship between greenwashing and green purchase intentions; and Schuldt and Hannahan (2013), who conducted two studies analyzing the role of the personal degree of environmental activism in the perception of organic products.

In the fashion and beauty sector, recent studies show that consumers expect fashion brands to communicate not only their commitments, but more importantly, the actual procedures the company follows to avoid regulatory arbitrage, prevent corruption and human rights violations, as well as the company's performance metrics and corrective mechanisms. uses to save water, reduce carbon emissions and prevent biodiversity loss (Jestratičević et al., 2020; Schafer, 2023). Recent research reports show that the COVID-19 crisis exacerbated existing problems in the fashion industry, increasing the lack of transparency about emerging failures in the supply chain, including but not limited to order cancellations, purchasing practices and workers' salaries (Sumarlah et al., 2021; Fashion Revolution, 2022). During the pandemic, the global fashion industry's quest for greater transparency faced significant obstacles. Brands like H&M, committed to being circular and climate positive by 2030, symbolized the industry's pre-pandemic ambition to execute "perfect tasks" (Jestratičević et al., 2022).

Finally, there is the tourism sector, it is one of the most important economic sectors in many countries (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2020), and travelers increasingly consider sustainability as a key criterion in their travel choices (Antonides, 2017; Croce et al., 2019;

This emerging group of consumers, seeking more authen-

tic and satisfying experiences that benefit the body, mind and soul, is often referred to as the 'Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability' (LOHAS) market segment. According to Kotler (2011), 'the market for LOHAS products is growing' (p. 144); therefore, 'producers will have to decide more carefully what to produce, how to produce it, how to distribute it, and how to promote it' (p. 144). This search for holistic experiences is driving tourism operators to develop new business models focused not only on profits but also on social and environmental sustainability (Pan et al., 2018; Więckowski, 2021).

Existing literature has widely explored sustainable tourism from various perspectives (Butler, 1999; de Lange and Dodds, 2017; Ivars-Baidal et al., 2021; Streimikiene et al., 2021; Timur and Getz, 2008). Since the tourism industry contributes approximately 8% of total carbon dioxide emissions worldwide (Lenzen et al., 2018), most studies have focused on green tourism (Font et al., 2021; Jones, 1987; Lenzen et al., 2018; Line et al., 2018), while others have studied the impact of tourism on the quality of life of residents in tourist destinations (Hassan, 2000; Jeon et al., 2016; Mihalic and Kušcer, 2022; Ramkissoon, 2020).

This research note seeks to address these limitations, namely: a) the paucity of research into the extent to which large tourism and hospitality providers are greenwashing and therefore whether they are prepared to address regulatory challenges such as the Directive on Green Statements, b) whether customers penalize such behavior through actual purchases (and not purchase intentions), and c) the lack of a theory-based, standardized measure to measure greenwashing in the weather and tourism sectors and hospitality. In doing so, the literature review has several strengths: a) it uses data from multiple secondary sources; b) operationalizes greenwashing in a more comparable way across companies (i.e., the same elements for all companies) by adopting a novel theoretically driven measure that builds on recent management work (Kassinis et al., 2022)

In the current context where there is growing interest within the hotel sector, it is crucial to investigate the different marketing strategies carried out by companies in the sector, within these is "greenwashing" and therefore we want to understand how the use of This practice affects customer perception on a personal and financial level. By carrying out this study, vital information will be obtained to answer the research questions posed.

RQ.1. Which scientific journals are most influential in the field of greenwashing?

RQ.2. What are the main research topics on greenwashing in the hotel and tourism sector?

RQ.3. What are the most influential articles for greenwashing research in hotel and tourism companies?

METHODOLOGY

A systematic review collects all relevant evidence that fits prespecified eligibility criteria to answer a research question. We adopted the PRISMA model, an approach derived from healthcare studies where it is necessary to provide clinical practice guidelines and inform clinical decision making under a predefined methodological approach and an associated protocol (Moher et al., 2009, 2015; Cooper et al., 2018). The use of systematic reviews, particularly the PRISMA method, is motivated by the search for a systematic and rigorous research approach (Tranfield et al., 2003). This method can help researchers summarize existing literature based on a meticulous, explicit and transparent step-by-step iterative process (Liberati et al., 2009). In this sense, employing a methodological approach based on a systematic review of the literature can provide feedback on the relevance of this gap.

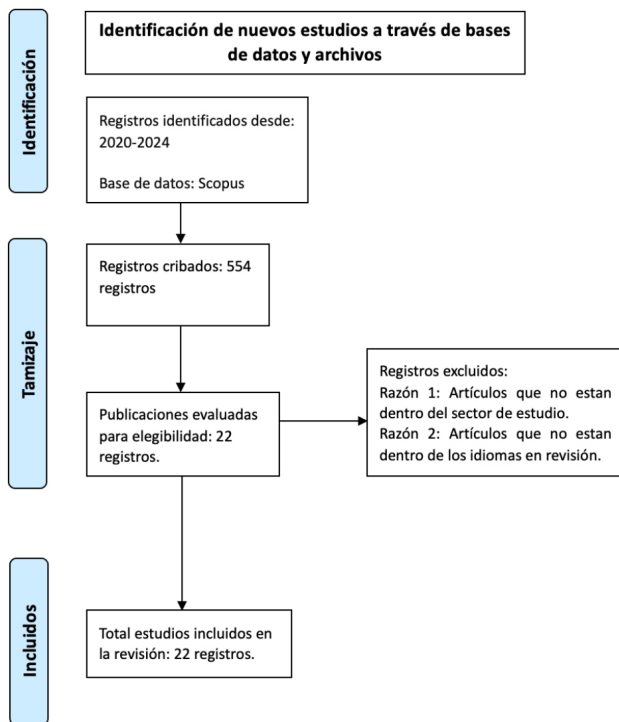
The PRISMA method (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) is a guide that establishes a set of guidelines for the transparent and complete presentation of systematic reviews and meta-analyses in the scientific literature. The PRISMA method helps standardize the way these types of studies are reported, making it easier to evaluate the quality of the research and the replicability of the results.

The PRISMA process consists of several highly relevant steps:

- The first step is identification and in this stage, the research question is defined and exhaustive searches for relevant studies are carried out.
- Secondly, there is selection, this step consists of selecting the identified studies based on their relevance and applying inclusion and exclusion criteria.
- Thirdly, there is inclusion, which is where it is verified that the studies that meet the eligibility criteria are included in the systematic review.

- Fourthly, there is evaluation and in this step the quality of the selected studies is evaluated and their relevance to the research question is analyzed.
- Fifthly, there is the synthesis, which is where the findings of the included studies are synthesized and presented in a clear and coherent manner.

Figure 1: Prism Map



Source: Prepared by the authors

Subsequently, upon completing the steps satisfactorily and following the PRISMA guidelines, the aim is to guarantee rigor and transparency in the conduct and presentation of this type of research.

Regarding the hotel sector, the PRISMA method is used to carry out specific systematic and bibliometric reviews on aspects related to corporate social responsibility and organizational commitment in the hotel industry. By following PRISMA guidelines in this context,

we seek to rigorously and transparently identify relevant literature, systematically analyze it, and present the results in a structured and coherent manner. This allows researchers and professionals in the hotel sector to obtain a clear and up-to-date understanding of the interaction between corporate social responsibility and organizational commitment in the hotel industry, identifying possibilities for theoretical and empirical development in this specific area.

Greenwashing is a green marketing strategy that brings with it a better reputation towards companies that take this resource as a strategy. It is understood that this will affect the company, denoting a better image at an institutional level; fatal consequences for society, as well as probable financial falls due to the discovery of these practices by clients.

In the hotel sector, the concept of greenwashing is relevant due to the importance of sustainability and social responsibility in the sector. Greenwashing in hotels occurs when companies excessively communicate their environmental or social initiatives to be perceived as more responsible than they really are or have been, without supporting these statements with concrete and credible actions. Likewise, hotels that practice greenwashing can have negative consequences, such as the loss of trust of their users and a possible large-volume decrease in sales or services. Therefore, it is essential for hotels to avoid greenwashing to maintain the credibility and trust of their customers.

This research was guided by qualitative and quantitative approaches, since literature review and bibliometrics were used for the structure of the research, through metrics and content analysis. Two types of bibliometric techniques were used, evaluation and relationship; The first included measures of productivity (number of articles per year, countries, journals and authors) and impact (citations per author).

When carrying out this first search, 1019 articles on “green marketing” were obtained in Scopus, while doing the second search 551 articles on “greenwashing” were obtained. Showing that research in conjunction with the hotel sector is limited.

Table 2. Statistical adjustment of the different models

	Search equations	Results
SCOPUS	((TITLE-ABS-KEY ("green marketing")) (Limited to Business, Management and Accounting))	1019
	((TITLE-ABS-KEY ("greenwashing")) (Limited to Business, Management and Accounting)).	551

Source: Prepared by the authors

BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS:

In the last 5 years, there has been growth in articles on greenwashing research, with greater growth in the publication of articles in 2023 and a drop in the publication of these articles in the following year. Greenwashing is a topic that is gaining more attention in recent years due to the confusion that companies or corporations create as part of their marketing to add value to their brand.

Figure 2. Articles published by years



Source: Prepared by the authors

In relation to the language, it can be observed that in the countries where English is the language, they are the countries that carry out the most scientific work on greenwashing, being the main sources for more than 90%, exposing a limited interest in research on the variable in the English language.

Table 3. Articles published by language

Row labels	Count of Source title
English	542
French	1
Portuguese	5
Russian	1
Spanish	2
Total general	551

Source: Prepared by the authors

In relation to the most productive scientific journals on the topics of “green marketing” and “greenwashing”, the magazines “Journal of Cleaner Production” and “Business Strategy and the Environment” stand out. These two magazines represent 72 magazines out of 551. Focusing on the financial and hospitality field.

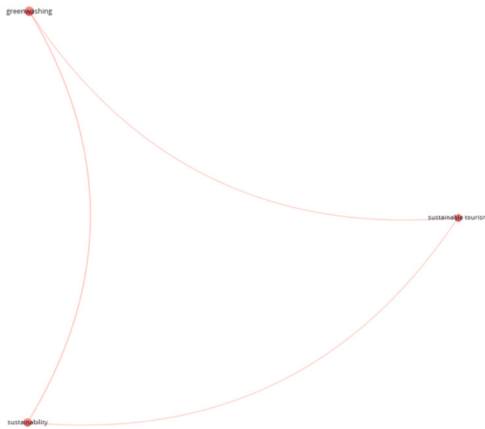
Table 4. List of scientific journals with the most publications

Row labels	Count de Source title
Journal of Cleaner Production	38
Business Strategy and the Environment	34
Journal of Business Ethics	24
Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management	22
Journal of Sustainable Finance and Investment	8
Business Ethics, the Environment and Responsibility	8
International Journal of Advertising	7
Sustainability Accounting, Management and Policy Journal	7
Developments in Marketing Science: Proceedings of the Academy of Marketing Science	7
Organization and Environment	6
CSR, Sustainability, Ethics and Governance	6
Research in International Business and Finance	5

Source: Prepared by the authors

After sifting through a large amount of information on greenwashing, one specific area has been identified that reveals a notable gap in the literature: greenwashing in the tourism sector. This selective approach allows us to highlight new perspectives or little explored areas within the field of study of corporate sustainability applied to tourism. In this study, more than 551 articles published between 2020 and 2024 were filtered, coming exclusively from magazines specialized in business, administration and accounting. After an exhaustive analysis, only 22 articles were selected that offered relevant and specific information on greenwashing in tourism. This rigorous approach has allowed us to exhaustively select and analyze the most relevant information on greenwashing in the specific context of tourism.

Figure 5. Keyword network on greenwashing and tourism

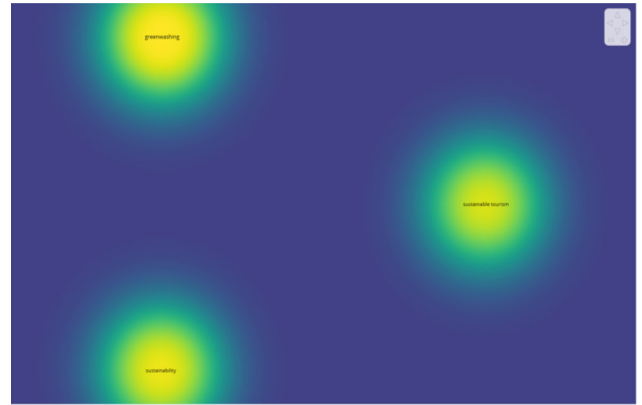


Source: Prepared by the authors

The choice to focus on this specific aspect highlights the contemporary relevance of the topic and underlines the importance of research that not only identifies problems, but also proposes innovative solutions. This direction can contribute significantly to the academic and practical field, offering new ideas to improve the environmental and social integrity of business practices.

By focusing on this less explored area, research is positioned as a valuable resource to inform policy, guide business strategies, and move toward a future where sustainability and corporate responsibility are more than just slogans, but effective and transparent commitments to global well-being.

Figure 6. Density display



Source: Prepared by the authors

DEVELOPMENT AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of relevance and evolution of variables

In the current context of growing environmental awareness and corporate responsibility, the phenomenon of greenwashing has acquired unprecedented relevance in the global business environment. As Figure 1 illustrates, the concept of greenwashing is experiencing a notable rise, reflecting a significant change in the attitudes and behaviors of consumers and society at large. This rise in the appreciation of environmentally friendly practices has placed greenwashing at the center of the discussion, as companies come under increasing pressure to demonstrate a genuine commitment to sustainability.

Green Washing

Greenwashing strategies and their intensity could be better understood by considering underlying issues related to two important issues, namely, institutional context (external factors related to a given country and its social actors) and corporate governance (a factor related to the company) (Velte, 2022).

Greenwashing is a disclosure-based strategy (Lee & Raschke, 2023; Seele & Schultz, 2022; Seele & Gatti, 2017; Cooper et al., 2018) that may depend on certain conditions, incentives or external pressures that characterize the institutions. national context in which these strategies are used (Zharfpeykan, 2021; Velte, 2022; Marquis et al., 2016; Seele & Schultz, 2022; Li et al., 2023) or that they are shared within the global context. For the most part, companies aim

to adjust to the institutional context to which they belong, which is composed of a social system, legislation, and the norms and rules that govern the activities of companies (Guo et al., 2017). Indeed, companies fear the reputational damage they could suffer if they violate global environmental standards and, consequently, deceptively moderate their disclosure with the intention of addressing the threat to their reputation (Marquis et al., 2016).

Greenwashing perception

The Oxford Dictionary (2023). Greenwashing is activities carried out by a company or organization to make people believe that they care about the environment, even if their business damages it. Many studies explain greenwashing, Zhang et al. (2018c). Greenwashing is a company's excessive communication about its environmental performance, Guo et al. (2018). Greenwashing can be attributed to corporations' environmental claims about green products that are ambiguous and misleading to create a positive "green" image without delivering on green promises, Blome et al. (2017). Greenwashing can be defined as "misleading consumers about the ecological (often, in a broader sense, sustainable) performance of a company or the environmental (sustainable) benefits of a given practice, product or service." Greenwashing is a false marketing practice that causes consumers to form a false impression of a company's environmental practices in the process of advertising and communicating to consumers. Greenwashing, also known as greenwashing, whitewashing, greenwashing, greenwashing, green finery or green perspective washing, is a form of illusory advertising to promote a company's product objectives or policies and thus increase the compound profits of the product. product. (Kahle and GurelAtay, 2015; Mayrand and Trottier, 2011). Guo et al. (2017). A large number of studies show that the dangers of greenwashing are well documented, as trust between green brands and their stakeholders is significantly damaged after the implementation of greenwashing. Junior.S.B et al. (2019).

Green awareness

Green awareness is knowledge among people about the environment, the key relationships and major issues related to environmental impacts, an appreciation of 'whole systems' and the joint responsibilities necessary for sustainable development (Chelliah et al. , 2017, p. 44). Environmental knowledge is positively correlated with

eco-conscious customer behavior (Alamsyah et al., 2020). The industry has observed such behaviors and uses green marketing strategy to attract the customer towards the manufactured products. It started with "recognizing and remembering the brand as a green brand as a result of green activities and associations based on green consciousness" (Mourad et al., 2012). Suki et al. (2016). A growing awareness of corporations' environmental commitment because these commitments enhance competitive advantage (Chen and Chang, 2013).

Environmental Trust

Kotler and Keller (2016) noted that building trust is one of the prerequisites for a great long-term relationship (p. 230). According to them, trust is a company's willingness to trust a business partner and depends on interpersonal and interorganizational factors, such as the company's perceived competence, integrity, honesty, and benevolence (Kotler & Keller, 2016, p. 231). Additionally, personal interactions with company employees, opinions about the company, and perceptions of "trust" will grow with experience. An organization or company will be more easily considered trustworthy if it provides complete and honest information and incentives to its employees. Aligned with customer needs, partners with customers to help them learn to be self-sufficient and makes valid comparisons to competitors. Trust is essential to understanding tenants' behaviors and intentions toward extending or renewing their rental contracts. (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2019).

Corporate social responsibility

Environmental management is a perspective that permeates most CSR studies, due among other reasons to the controversial behavior of the hotel industry in causing negative ecological impacts such as pollution caused by waste and excessive use of natural resources, among others. Research under this approach has been advancing over the years (AlSuwaidi et al., 2021; Boğan and Dedeoğlu, 2020; Channa et al., 2021; Farooq and Salam, 2020; Farmaki and Stergiou, 2021; Kim et al. , 2020; Rhou and Singal, 2020), topics such as staff perceptions regarding the environmental practices carried out by hotels are addressed (Raza et al., 2021; Shah et al., 2021; Srivastava and Shree, 2019; Tian and Robertson, 2019); also, about the effect that CSR has on work well-being, and the ecological behavior of the organization (Ahmed et al., 2020; Su and Swanson, 2019), and of employees (Fung Wong and

Kim, 2020; Kim et al. al., 2018; Pereira et al., 2021; Shah et al., 2021; Shao et al., 2021).

Recent studies show that there are CSR factors such as quality of work life that increase the loyalty of workers, therefore, they are actively involved with the company in solving problems and achieving objectives (Xue et al., 2022; Wong et al., 2021). CSR provides workers with a sense of security, self-esteem and belonging (Kunda et al., 2019; Supanti and Butcher, 2019). CSR actions generate a competitive advantage in the hotel sector through innovation and creativity (Da Silva & Da Silva, 2020).

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions derived from an exhaustive analysis of greenwashing in the tourism and hotel sector reflect the imperative need to address this phenomenon in a critical and proactive manner, given its growing relevance in a context where sustainability and social responsibility have emerged as primary values. both for consumers and for society in general. According to Lopes, Gómez and Trancoso (2023), "The phenomenon of greenwashing in the era of sustainability is like a moving, complex and continuously evolving objective", according to this, greenwashing represents a significant challenge that companies in this sector must face with transparency and coherence, in order to preserve its credibility and contribute effectively to its sustainability. It is essential to highlight the importance of companies in the tourism and hospitality field adopting genuine practices of social and environmental responsibility. Greenwashing, by presenting a false image of commitment to sustainability, not only misleads consumers, but also undermines trust in companies and compromises their long-term reputation. Authenticity in environmental and social actions emerges as a fundamental pillar for building customer trust and strengthening the sustainability of the sector.

Furthermore, according to Lopes, Gómez and Trancoso (2023), "greenwashing should be seen exclusively as a deceptive business practice that only misleads consumers", it is evident that greenwashing can have negative consequences at an institutional and social level. Although this strategy could initially improve the perception of companies, once deceptive practices are discovered, they are exposed to risks of fatal repercussions for society and possible financial consequences. Loss of consumer confidence, damage to reputation and possible legal sanctions are emerging as some of the consequences that compa-

nies could face when resorting to greenwashing as a marketing strategy. Another relevant aspect lies in the need to educate and raise awareness among both companies and consumers about greenwashing. Companies must understand the ethical and legal implications of these deceptive practices, as well as the importance of acting responsibly and transparently in their operations. For their part, consumers must be trained to identify and question companies' environmental and social claims, fostering a more informed and critical consumer culture.

In this context, transparency and independent verification emerge as crucial elements in preventing greenwashing and promoting sustainable and responsible development in the tourism and hospitality industry. Companies must be willing to subject their environmental and social practices to public scrutiny and meet rigorous disclosure and reporting standards. Strong oversight and stricter regulations are necessary to ensure that companies meet their sustainability commitments and avoid resorting to greenwashing as a misleading marketing strategy. It is essential to highlight that greenwashing not only affects the perception of companies, but also it significantly affects consumer confidence and their purchasing decisions. Consumers are increasingly aware and demanding about the authenticity of companies' sustainable practices, and greenwashing can undermine that trust and generate skepticism around brands' environmental and social claims.

In summary, the analysis of greenwashing in the tourism and hospitality sector highlights the importance of honesty and authenticity in business actions, as well as the need to promote a culture of genuine social and environmental responsibility in the industry. Avoiding greenwashing is essential to maintain reputation and customer trust, as well as to effectively contribute to the construction of a more sustainable and ethical tourism and hospitality sector for the benefit of society as a whole. The fight against greenwashing constitutes a crucial step towards a more transparent, responsible and sustainable future in the tourism and hospitality industry.

Future research should focus on developing more rigorous and objective metrics that allow for a more detailed evaluation of the impact of greenwashing on consumer behavior and perceptions. It is essential that they be explored through systematic reviews, it is crucial to investigate through meta-analysis the specific greenwashing strategies used in the hotel sector to identify predominant

patterns and trends in each of them. Additionally, it would be a good idea to add longitudinal studies since they are of great value to analyze the long-term repercussions of greenwashing on consumer trust in brands and progress towards global environmental sustainability. These investigations will provide a solid foundation for the development of more effective interventions and the formulation of more informed and efficient public policies.

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