



Sustainable views of guests of Hotel Haaga Central Park

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Abstract

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<p>The goal for this thesis is to find out how important sustainability is for the guest of Hotel Haaga Central Park. The hotel in question is also the commissioner. The aim is to find out how important sustainability is in their everyday life, their knowledge on different sustainable issues and their views on eco-friendly hotels, focusing mainly on sustainability in Hotel Haaga Central Park.</p> <p>This research based thesis presents theoretical framework consisting of different aspect of sustainability; as a megatrend, corporate sustainability as well as sustainability in hospitality business including the green values of hotel guests.</p> <p>After literature review, there is an introduction of Hotel Haaga Central Park and the sustainable actions they have taken. Hotel Haaga has received the Green Key certificate which indicates that the target is forerunner in being environmentally friendly.</p> <p>A survey was made in print and handed to the guests of Hotel Haaga Central Park. LinkedIn and Facebook were also used to gather more responses. The survey was carried out during March 2022. Additional research was done by searching online reviews for sustainable-related comments.</p> <p>Quantitative research was chosen as a method as it allows to gather more information from the respondents and is not biased. It also gives reliable data and is easier to replicate.</p> <p>The data shows similarities between the previous studies done and is discussed in the theoretical part of thesis. According to the results, guests do see sustainability as a part of their lives and appreciate eco-friendliness of a hotel. However, due to the lack of responses, these results cannot be taken as reliable nor valid.</p> <p>Additional research is recommended as the topic is important in hospitality and especially for hotels which have the Green Key certificate.</p>
Keywords Corporate sustainability, sustainability, eco-friendliness, hotel guests

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1 Introduction

The main focus of this thesis will be on sustainability as a megatrend, environmental responsibility in hospitality business as well as its meaning to people visiting Hotel Haaga Central Park. As people are getting more aware of sustainability, it also affects hospitality business in a way, in which people are starting to compare hotels and choosing the ones which they see are investing most when it comes to green values (Bradley 2020).

The research in this thesis is conducted to customers of Hotel Haaga Central Park in Helsinki, which also acts as a commissioner. Hotel Haaga is known as “wellness hotel” and they have a Green Key certification meaning acknowledgment of sustainable awareness and which must be applied on a yearly basis (Hotel Haaga 2017).

The research will concentrate not only on a common level of sustainability in the customers lives but also how the customers view sustainable acts done by Hotel Haaga. In addition, the research concentrates on how sustainability affects the customers’ decision to book a room and how they see themselves being part of it. The purpose of the research is not only to find out if the guests consider sustainability as an important part of their everyday life but most of all how important it is regarding their stay in a hotel. Research will also be done on customers’ views on how well Hotel Haaga meets possible expectations they might have regarding green initiatives. Also, the knowledge and willingness of guests’ own actions toward having more sustainable stay in a hotel will be researched.

The main research question is how important sustainability is as a value for guests visiting Hotel Haaga Central Park. The meaning sustainability has in their lives as well as when they are being a customer in a hotel. The sub-questions will back up the main question, concentrating more deeply on sustainability in Hotel Haaga.

1. Are different aspects of sustainability equally important to the guest?
2. Do sustainable actions make a hotel to be more interesting?
3. Does Hotel Haaga Central Park succeed in being a sustainable hotel in the eye of a hotel guest?

Being able to answer the main question, the sub-questions are supporting the research. These questions are first discussed on theoretical level with the help of literature research which will then be supporting the questions conducted in the survey. Survey consists of questions regarding how guests of Hotel Haaga Central Park view sustainable actions done by the hotel as well as its importance to their everyday life. Guests were approached to answer the survey and respondents were determined by who was willing to answer it.

Below, the table one shows the overlay matrix of sub-questions, how theoretical framework supports them, results and questionnaire questions related. As one of the targets for this research was to see the how the guests view Hotel Haaga Central Park as an eco-friendly hotel, most of the results will concentrate on how it is seen as a sustainable hotel.

Table 1. Overlay matrix

Sub-questions	Theoretical framework	Results	Questionnaire questions
1. Are different aspects of sustainability equally important to the guest?	2.3	5.2	7.
2. Do sustainable actions make a hotel more interesting?	2.4, 2.5	5.2	9-11
3. Does Hotel Haaga Central Park succeed in being a sustainable hotel in the eye of a hotel guest?	2.6, 3	5.3	12-20

As for the structure of the thesis, it begins with an introduction to the main topic, the aim, and targets of this research. Introduction also includes the research question, including sub-questions which will be the basis for the thesis.

Second chapter will be the theoretical framework. Theoretical framework will have a deeper look at corporate sustainability and sustainability in hospitality business. Hotel guests and green values are also part of the framework as it is a part of the research as well as more important factor for hotels to consider.

Hotel Haaga and the Green Key certificate will be explained more in depth in the third chapter. This chapter will present what kind of hotel is Hotel Haaga, their sustainability actions as well as introduce the Green Key certificate for what it is and what is needed for a company to achieve the certificate.

The fourth chapter of the thesis will be focusing on the research. It will explain how and when the research was done as well as showing and analysing the data.

In the final chapters the data and results will be gone through in a more thorough way. Results will be discussed, analysed, and determined have the research questions been answered. In the end there are also suggestions for further research as well as own learning.

2 Sustainability

Sustainability in various forms will be the main theory linked to the research of this thesis. This chapter will be presenting sustainability as a megatrend, corporate sustainability and its three pillars, sustainability in hospitality business and the green values of hotel customers. After sustainability has been discussed, Hotel Haaga Central Park and its take on sustainability will be presented alongside the Green Key certificate.

2.2 Sustainability as a megatrend

According to Sitra (Dufva, M. 2020), which examines and publishes Megatrends in Finland, the term megatrend is following: "...a general direction of development, consisting of several phenomena, or a wide-ranging process of change. They are often considered to occur at the global level and development is often believed to continue in the same direction". Sitra also adds that megatrends "...are familiar things, changes that are already happening today and highly likely to continue happening tomorrow. They provide a useful view of broad future changes that can be narrowed down by focusing on more detailed trends, weak signals, and analysis of tensions".

Sustainability is and will be a megatrend for quite some time in the future. Even though, at the early years, not many were that keen on sustainability they have since come to realize the affect that being sustainable can have on their business. Companies that were among the first ones to realize this, were some of the biggest in the world such as Walmart, Philips, Adidas, Coca-Cola Company, Nike, and McDonalds to name a few. (The Institute for Sustainability.)

2.3 Corporate sustainability

Corporate sustainability means for company to be environmentally sustainable in their actions while also supporting their economic growth. As they are aiming to grow sustainably, they also aim have a long-term growth. (Futurelearn 2021). To have competitive advantage in sustainability, the company needs to address simultaneously and "an integrated manner" the outcomes from different impacts. Figure 1 shows the concept of sustainability, with the older, narrower concept of sustainability of being just environmental, the Triple P and Triple bottom line which are the same concept but with different perspective and finally the importance of corporate sustainability for the overall continuity of business by also showing the importance of the stakeholders. (Asif et al., 2010).

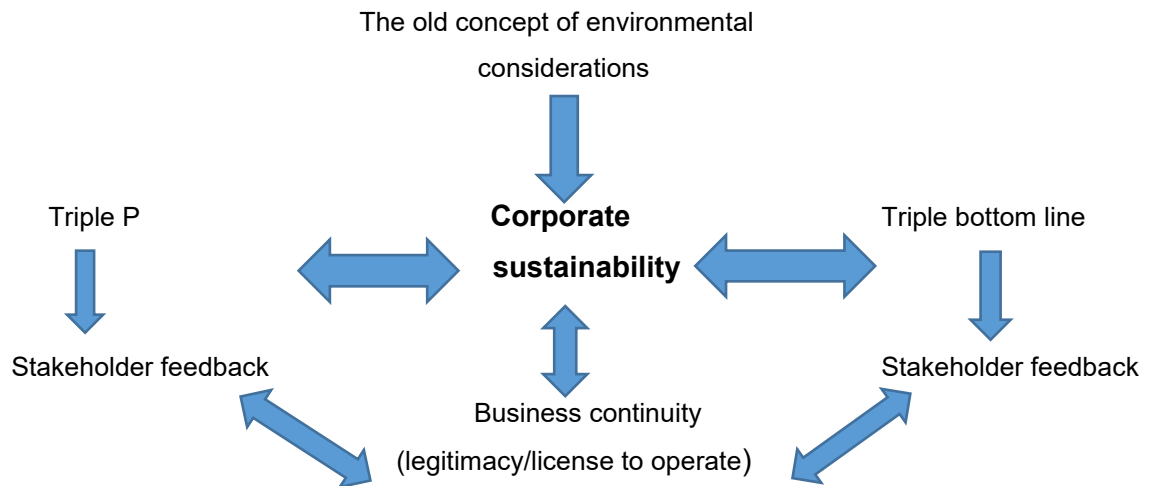


Figure 1. The concept of sustainability (adapted from Asif, Searcy, Zutshi & Ahmad, 2010)

Corporate sustainability can be sometimes mistaken as being same as CSR, which stands for corporate social responsibility. Corporate social responsibility is a concept on how companies can have a balance between social, environmental, and economic imperatives while reaching the expectations their shareholders and stakeholders have for them (Unido). Even as corporate sustainability is considered to be a part of CSR, there are differences between these two. Whereas CSR is usually considered as more broad concept, corporate sustainability's focus is mainly on so-called three pillars, which are the environmental, social, and economic pillars (Unboxed staff 2020). The pillars have been considered to be "relevant to sustainability" as they are important when policies are created, and the future is planned (ESG).

However, as these three pillars are often mentioned when talking about corporate sustainability or sustainability itself, Ben Purvis et.al. mention in their article "Three pillars of sustainability: in search of conceptual origins", that there is no theoretical development behind the pillars. They have been mentioned in literature already in 2001 without any background reference and regarding sustainable development are considered just as "common sense". (Purvis et al. 2018). Yet, the three pillars have been defined for the first time in 1987 publication *Our Common Future* by so-called Brundlandt Commission, in which sustainability has been looked at from viewpoint of economy, environment, and ecology (Sharman, 2019).

For company to successfully achieve all these pillars, they are required to work together with other groups such as the community, government, and other global institutions as is being mentioned in the section 4.1 of course in *Corporate Sustainability Management* by Professor Judith Wallace. Below, figure 2 shows different types of patterns that can be used when referring to the three pillars.

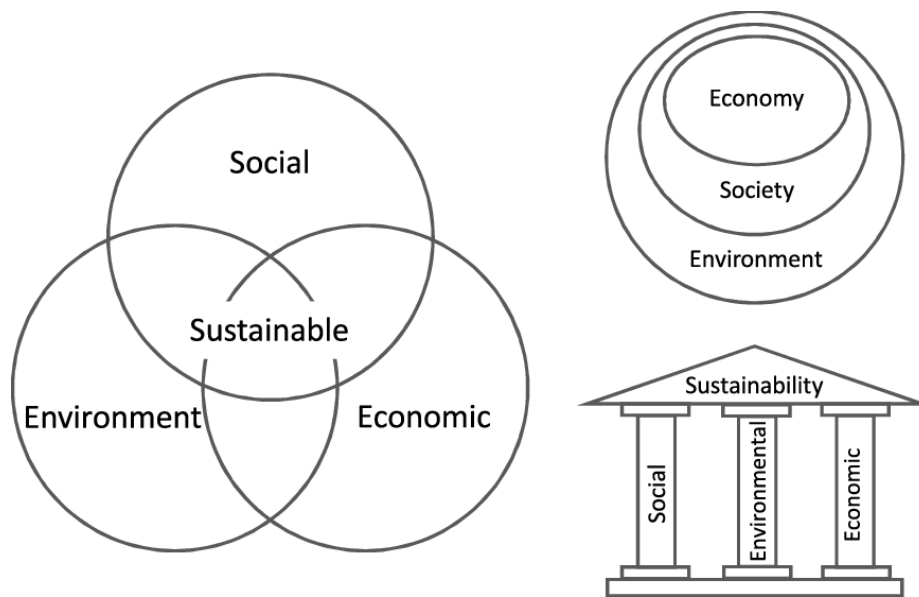


Figure 2. Three pillars of sustainability: in search of conceptual origins (Purvis, Mao & Robinson, 2018)

2.3.1 Environmental

Known also as the planet-pillar. Out of all the three pillars, is the environmental pillar the most popular among companies. For them it usually can mean seeing how they deal with waste, packaging and especially in hospitality business lessening the water consumption has become one of the ways to reduce their carbon footprint. Not only do these different sustainability actions help the environment but companies can also financially benefit from them. (Beattie 2021).

2.3.2 Social

Social pillar can be known as people-pillar. Having a successful social pillar means that the company does business in a way that is socially acceptable. This includes the way they are treating employees, interacting with different stakeholders, and doing business altogether. It is important for the company to be aware of not only their local way of doing business but also their possible supply chain. It should be clear that everything is done according to the acceptable guidelines. There should not be any child labour and the working conditions need to be non-discriminatory and safe for everyone. (Beattie 2021).

Peoples' wages should be fair to all, and they should be informed and heard when decisions are being made which concern their work. Non-discriminatory workplace does not

only mean gender parity but having no discrimination done on basis of age as well as have possible opportunities for disadvantage people. (ESG).

2.3.3 Economic

Last of the three pillars, economic pillar is also known as the profit-pillar. Being able to have a strong economic pillar regarding corporate sustainability needs the company to be profitable. Companies also should practice “compliance, proper governance and risk management” as a part of an economic pillar. Aside from economic and profit, this can be called a governance pillar which means that management and boards of directors are working in such manner that decisions and methods are transparent to stakeholders and investors who can also have a possibility to be included in bigger and more important issues at least by voting on them. (Beattie 2021).

2.4 Sustainability in hospitality business

Hospitality industry is briefly put “a variety of businesses and services linked to leisure and customer satisfaction”. Sectors that belong to this industry are accommodation, food and drink and travel and tourism. (Revfine). The sector which this part of the thesis is about, is the accommodation. More precisely the hotel industry.

Becoming more sustainable in hospitality business is important as the future requires that companies from different industries pay more attention to their actions when it comes to changing ways the business is done and encouraging companies be more involved in green practices (Bruns-Smith, Choy, Chong & Verma, 2015). Sustainably friendly hotel can be called green, eco-friendly, environmentally responsible, and environmentally friendly which all refer to hotel’s practices and principles (Ko, 2021).

The United Nations is currently working together with the hotel industry to help them achieve the target set for global average temperature, which has been mentioned in the Paris Climate Change agreement. This can be done by getting the greenhouse gas emissions reduced as well as paying attention to the sustainability of the industry. Hotel industry is responsible for 1% of global emissions which will also be increasing in the future. (United Nations Climate Change 2018). For hotels it is important to change the energy consumptions, including the use of water, to be more sustainable as it is one of the biggest utility costs hotels have. Changing to more sustainable and green energy usage is not only good for the environment but good for reducing costs. (Bruns-Smith et al., 2015).

Investing in green activities has also “strategic value” for hotels as it also can make them more competitive as well as keep and get more customers who value sustainability.

Guests who are aware of CSR practices of the hotel can also be more loyal and willing to pay for their stay, but this may not always be true as the intentions can differ from real actions. (Merli, Preziosi, Acampora & Ali, 2019).

Covid-19 has had and will have an effect on hotels and their sustainable actions. When the pandemic started, it was beneficial for the environment as the air and motor vehicle traffic declined and manufacturing industry had closures but for hospitality business it was critical with millions of people were unemployed. As the world is slowly recovering from the pandemic and hotels are getting back on their feet, there is a fear that as there has been such amount of financial losses that the sustainable actions or commitments are not one of the top priorities. This means that hotels will be more focussed on their core operations and the strategic marketing will be more important than their corporate sustainability programmes. (Jones, Comfort, 2020).

2.5 Hotel guests and green values

As Alex M. Susskind and Rohit Verma write in their Cornell University's study, hotels need to start considering more of "green initiatives and sustainability" in their designs and development processes and especially what their guests want in terms of green and sustainable values (Susskind & Verma, 2011, p.6). Hence, the motivation behind being more involved in green practices has mostly been the customers and their increased concern for climate issues as Mihaela Simona Moise et al. reference on previous research done on consumer behaviour. It is also proposed that the eco-friendliness of a company can make the customer have a positive attitude for them. Regarding hotels, this can make them have a better image among guests and that image is related to better customer satisfaction. (Moise, Gil-Saura & Ruiz Molina, 2020).

There can also be a difference on making an eco-friendly purchase between male and female genders. According to different studies, females seem to be more concerned about environmental issues, hence are also willing to pay more for product that are environmentally friendly. These results are based on research done on different "marketing and green consumption settings" but there is not that much research done on whether these statistics also apply to green hotels. (Ko, 2021).

Cornell University study on Environmental Sustainability in the Hospitality Industry done in 2015 suggests that even though the environmental sustainability is what people are starting to be aware of more and do appreciate these practices, it still does not play a big part when choosing a hotel to stay at. Nevertheless, while staying in a hotel, the guests are ap-

preciative and do want to participate on green activities offered. The amount of active participation on sustainable actions during their stay is mostly based on the guests' own beliefs. The study still shows that for the people who do not see green values as being so important, would be willing to be more involved if "given incentives". (Bruns-Smith et al., 2015).

Regardless that sustainability and environmental issues are being more visible to people nowadays, not all customers are privy of the actions they can take to be more environmentally friendly. Informing guests of sustainable practices made as well as what the customers themselves can do, could also attract them to be more interested in environmental issues. (Leslie, 2015, p. 114).

Getting more insight on the willingness of guests' own green actions can be by doing a survey. However, conducting different consumer and visitor surveys show that people do not only have positive attitude towards environmentally friendly practices but also for paying more to support them. There can still be a reasonable doubt that people answer these surveys thinking what should be done and what they could do instead of what they actually are willing to do or what they have done. (Leslie, 2015, p.122).

2.6 Carbon offset

Greenhouse gases produced by people are significant factors when it comes to global warming (EPA). Counting the carbon footprint either of one person or a company shows "the total amount of carbon dioxide and other GHGs" their direct and indirect actions do generate. Direct emissions are most often caused by the use of fossil fuels and indirect can be caused for example in the whole production of a t-shirt, from growing the cotton until the decomposition of its material. People and companies can use different carbon footprint calculators to count the amount of their carbon footprint. From these calculations can a person or a company pay their carbon offset. It can be either done voluntarily or when there are regulations that need to be met. This paid offset is most often used to invest different eco-friendly programs or projects. (Lutkevich, 2021).

As hospitality and tourism business is being mentioned as one of the biggest contributors when greenhouse emissions are concerned, have the researchers started to look for the attitudes of customers in being a part of mitigating the emissions and being more sustainable. There have been four main results when conducting this research. People, consumers, and leaders of hospitality business are thinking about the environment as well as being concerned about environmental issues still consumers are not too interested in making changes concerning their consumption. They have also been found to be willing to pay

their carbon offset but there has been little concrete action to do so when possible. (Denton, Chi & Gursoy, 2020).

3 Hotel Haaga Central Park

Hotel Haaga Central Park is a hotel in Haaga, Helsinki. There are 122 rooms as well as other premises of events of any kind and meeting rooms where maximum of 240 people can have their meetings. Hotel Haaga is designed to be a hotel where a person can have relaxing time, having multiple possibilities for it. There is a spa with different treatments, yoga and wellness studios, fitness club as well as sauna and 17 metres long pool (“the longest swimming pool in the city”).

Restaurant Central Park’s main “dining philosophy” is Scandinavian cuisine and there is also a possibility to have international food options which have a “Nordic twist”. In line with the hotel philosophy is the restaurants’ business idea to be part of the wholesome well-being. Steps to Organic is a program in which kitchens with intentions of increasing the use of organic and sustainable products can be part of. Kitchens need to pay an annual fee to be part of the program and can increase the use of mentioned products in their own pace. There are six steps and with advancing their organic product use, the kitchens can move forward as well as they can also start from whatever step is closest to their then current actions. The sixth step is the highest. (Luomua Ravintola). In Restaurant Central Park, being on the step three in a six-step program of Steps to Organic is an indication to customer that there are always organic options offered on every meal as well as the possibility to make choices on food which do not have a big environmental burden. (Hotel Haaga Central Park).

3.1 Hotel Haaga and sustainability

Hotel Haaga Central Park is investing on being a sustainable hotel. For the invites to tender, Hotel Haaga expects their subcontractors to also comply with the corporate responsibility requirements they have. Also in the invitations, should there be two equal tenders, the more responsible provider will be chosen. In the kitchen the OVA self-monitoring system is in use, which “compiles self-monitoring reports based on the measurement data” and in case of exceeding the set limits, automatically sends a notification which helps to make needed adjustments. The OVA systems are tailor-made to each location. In sustainable addition to having a restaurant which is participate in Steps to Organic program, Hotel Haaga has a Green key certificate which needs to be required on a yearly basis.

As part of Green Key certificate requirements, Hotel Haaga also informs and encourages their guests to use more environmentally friendly ways to move from one place to another, such as public traffic and bicycles. Each room also has tips for customers how to be sustainable and helpful in saving the environment as a hotel guest. (Haaga-Helia Central

Park). According to their Green Key application, Hotel Haaga Central Park fulfils all of the mandatory criteria points as well as multiple additional points.

3.2 Green Key

Green Key is a certificate which indicates that the target is forerunner when it comes to being environmentally friendly. Different targets that receive the certificate are hotels and hostels, small accommodations, camp sites and cottage villages, restaurants and cafes and other tourism places to visit. Currently, there are over 2300 certified places in 65 countries. In Finland there are little over 160 different places which Green Key certificate. International FEE, Foundation for Environmental Education, is the main manager for the Green Key program and in Finland these certifications are being granted and monitored by Suomen Ympäristökasvatus Oy (Hotel Haaga Central Park). To achieve the certificate, one must fulfil the criteria's set by Green Key. There are thirteen different parts in the criteria, which are same for all of the participants, but the criteria may differ according to company and whatever they represent.

During years from 2022 to 2025 the criteria are following: environmental management, involvement of staff and customers, water, sanitation, waste, energy (saving and procurement), food, indoors, greenery, corporate social responsibility, and recreational services. In case the company uses subcontractors in some of the cases it is their responsibility to make sure the subcontractors also follow the guidelines.

There is compulsory as well as optional criteria for points. The applicant for the certificate must have all the needed points of compulsory criteria as a basic level. If the applicant does not meet all of the requirements it is a very rare case when the jury will consider them regardless of that shortage.

Targets will be presented to the jury after the auditors have gone through the applications and conducting their own report. Personnel consists of permanent employees and outside auditors with strong experience regarding tourism, business, and sustainability. The jury consists of seven people representing different interest groups and expertise in sustainable tourism. Jury has meetings every two months. (GreenKey, 2022).

4 Methods and data collection

The main research question is how important sustainability is as a value for guests visiting Hotel Haaga Central Park. Do the sustainable actions done by any hotel affect their decision on booking a room, how visible sustainability in Hotel Haaga and what do the customers see as their role in being part of being more environmentally friendly.

4.1 Research methods

The main research was conducted in a form of a survey for the guests of Hotel Haaga Central Park during a period of one month. The survey consisted of overall 20 questions with multiple choice answers including a possibility to give a more detailed answer and one question giving a possibility to add any information the respondent felt necessary. Survey was in printed form, which was decided together with the commissioner since there was not a possibility to do it electronically. Prints were delivered to reception of Hotel Haaga, and the receptionists handed the forms to the guests. This quantitative method was chosen by the researcher as it served the purpose the most, which was to collect data from multiple customers. As quantitative data mainly answers the questions of how many, how much and how often, this method also backed up the survey questions the most (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022). Other advantages supporting this choice were ability to collect data, which is reliable and accurate, quantitative research and data collection is able to be done fairly quickly and mostly eliminates biased answers. For the additional research, the secondary quantitative method was used in gathering data found from different websites. (QuestionPro).

The aim was to find questions which would have theoretical background and would help determine the answer to the main research question. As the commissioner had requests to find answers to certain questions which would benefit them, these were added to the survey.

Main activity with collecting the answers was done by receptionists in Hotel Haaga during a period of one month in March 2022. They handed the survey to all of the guests arriving to the hotel and willing to answer it. In addition, the researcher spent one morning approaching guests to gather responses to the survey. This resulted in one interview type encounter with one of the guests, in which the researcher asked the guest questions from the survey, and the guest answered on the spot. A couple of survey forms were successfully handed to other guests to answer on their own time.

Researcher also added an additional request on Facebook and LinkedIn for people who may have visited the hotel previously to take a part in the survey. Four more answers were gathered using this method. Data from the survey has been converted to an Excel chart to visualize the data using percentages. Open-ended and other questions containing additional information to questions in Excel charts have been discussed together with the data.

4.2 Additional research

As the number of answers received during the period of one month was not satisfactory, additional research needed to be done. In this research, unstructured observation was used, meaning that the data collection was done “in a free and open manner”. (Bhasin H., 2020). The targets for this observation were reviews of Hotel Haaga from the past year, April 2021 to April 2022 using different websites. These websites were TripAdvisor, Google, Trivago, Booking.com and Facebook, which were chosen by their reliability as review sites. (Elliott C., 2018).

Hotel Haaga has received good reviews according to overall customer feedback. These reviews include all of the categories, not just based on sustainability. On TripAdvisor they have four “stars” out five from 732 people (TripAdvisor), Trivago has a grade of 8.2 with 1763 reviews (Trivago), Google reviews with 1120 people give the hotel four stars out of five (Google), In Booking.com 3389 people review them at 8.4 which means “very good” (Booking.com) and on Facebook they have a grade of 3.8/5 from 196 people.

The research included all of the reviews on all of the review sites mentioned during past year. As none of the reviews were linked straight to sustainability or eco-friendliness of Hotel Haaga, there were a lot of similarities between those that can be considered as a part of eco-friendliness in the hotel. Breakfast with its versatility was mostly seen as the best part of the stay. The location and the use of public transportation received both positive and negative reviews. As location near Central Park in Helsinki was seen as enjoyable and the close proximity to the bus stops was a good thing, it was also seen as not so nice location due to the fact that it can be difficult to arrive there as well as the noisy highway nearby.

5 Description of collected data

The aim of the research was to gather altogether 50 answers but only 10 people answered the survey. The answers were aimed to be analysed by doing a cross tabulation. From 10 people who answered the survey, six were then currently visiting the Hotel Haaga Central Park and four people were reached using Facebook and LinkedIn. The gender of the respondent was asked in the survey, options being “female”, “male”, “other” and “does not want to say”. Since there were only two genders among the answers, those being female and male, the following data cross analyses between these genders. Age and location of the respondents has been compared to total amount of answers and in other questions there has been made a comparison between male and female answers. These answers have also been analysed as an overall answer. The respondents were able to give multiple different answers to some of the questions hence the total percentage of answers may exceed 100% in some of the cases.

5.1 General questions of the survey

General questions are showing respondents age, location from where they travelled from and main reason for their stay in Hotel Haaga Central Park.

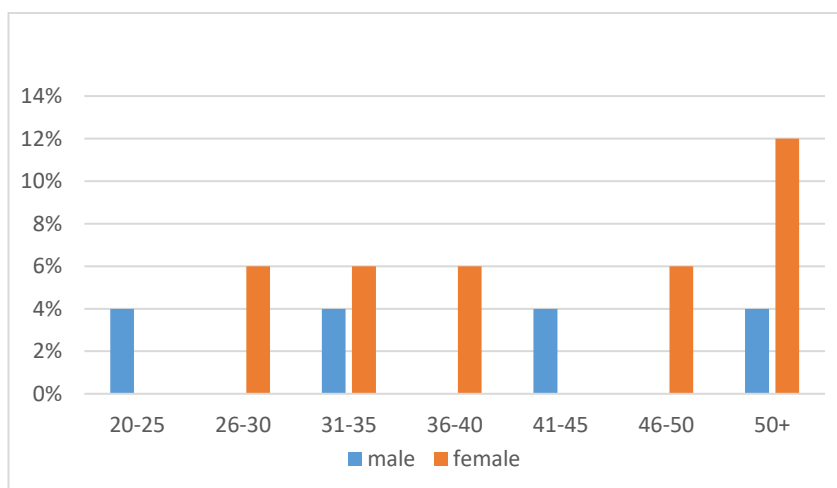


Figure 3. Age (N=10)

Out of the male and female respondents, there were four males and six females. The age of the respondents did vary as there was at least one from each age group. In the survey, the age 50+ was not an age option but as seen on Figure 3, people belonging to that age group answered the most, and due to the lack of responses, the researcher decided to include it to the data. There was one male respondent per age group, except for the group of 36 to 40, and one female respondent in the groups of 26 to 30, 31 to 35, 36 to 40, 46 to 50 and two for the additional group of 50+.

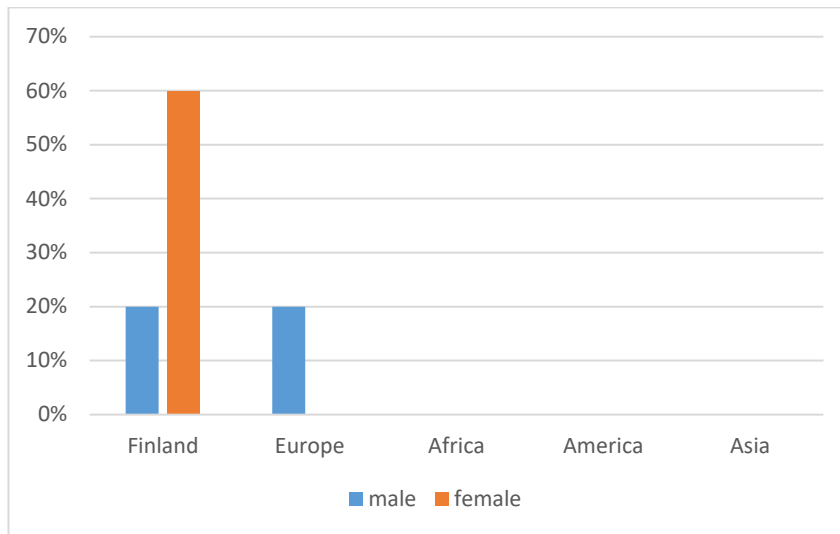


Figure 4. Location (N=10)

The respondent's location from where they travelled were very similar. All of the females were visiting from Finland as two of the males were also from Finland. As it was not necessary to mention the exact country for other continents, two male respondents were from Europe.

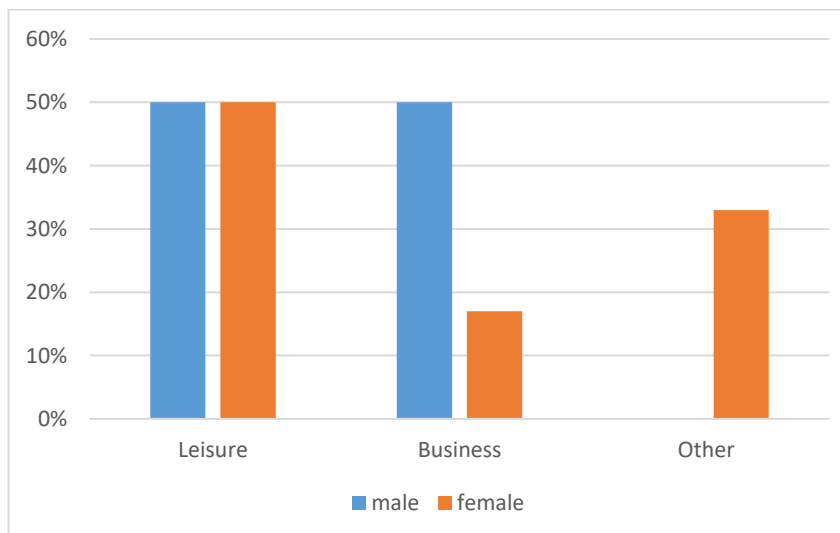


Figure 5. Reason for staying in Hotel Haaga (N=10)

From Figure 5 onwards, the answers have been calculated based on the number of answers of the same gender. The main reason for the guests' stays in Hotel Haaga was mostly leisure, as 50% of the male and female respondents answered that. The rest of the males were there for a business trip as for 17% of the females, which means one respondent. Two female respondents, 33%, stayed there for other reasons which were not necessary to specify in case those were personal reasons.

5.2 Sustainability

The questions under sustainability show the part of research where guests' personal sustainable acts and views on sustainability have been answered.

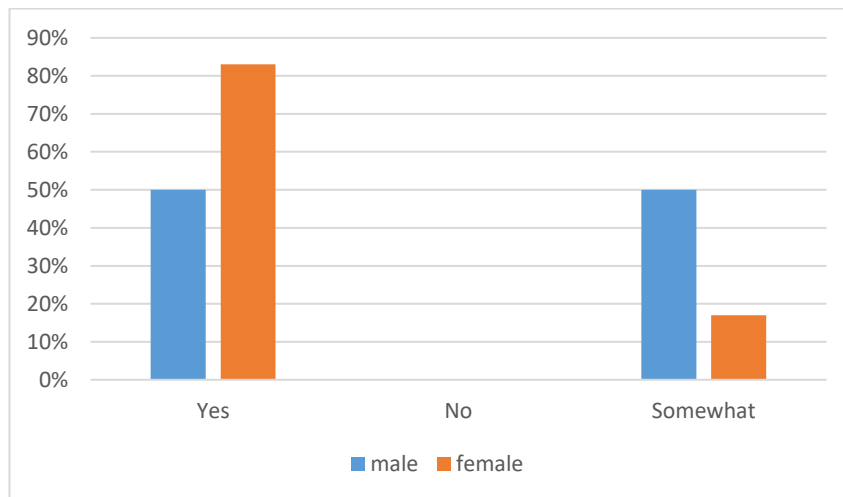


Figure 6. Can sustainability be seen in your everyday life (N=10)

Figure 6 shows that sustainability can be seen in respondents' everyday life. For male respondents, 50% says that it does show and 50% say that it shows somehow. As for the females, for 83% it shows and for 17% it shows somehow.

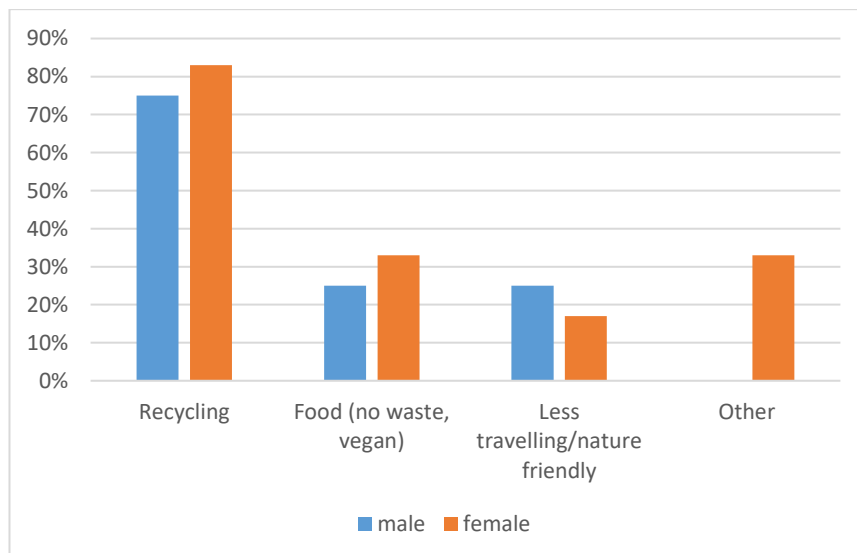


Figure 7. If yes/somewhat, how (N=10)

The most popular way for sustainability to show in respondents' life is recycling. 75% of males and 83% of males answered this. There was some dispersion among other answers, none of them being as popular.

The 33% of females answered other and there was possibility to explain how. One of the respondents did composting and did not buy fast fashion clothes but used more flea markets and/or other clothes that last. This person also stated that sustainability showed in everything they did. Other respondent also was doing less consumption/shopping, for example clothes, they also were cycling more than using car as well as using green sources for electricity. Other answers were also similar, using mostly bicycle or walking, avoiding unnecessary shopping and using local and vegetarian foods.

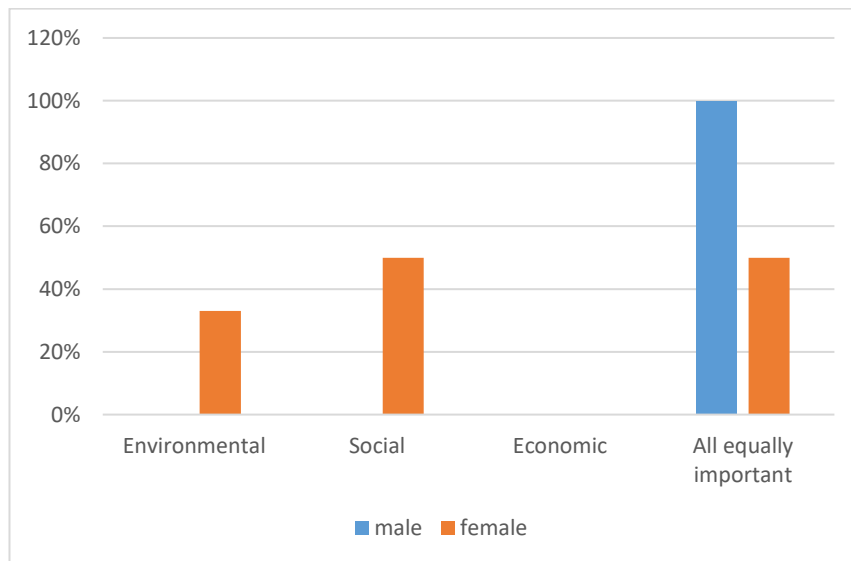


Figure 8. What is the most important regarding CR (N=10)

On question 7, figure 8., the corporate responsibility was explained shortly in the survey. Guests were asked if they considered any of the “the three pillars” more important than the other or did they view all of them equally important. It was also possible to choose more than one. If the respondent saw something more important than the other, they were given a chance to explain why.

All of the male respondents saw that everything was equally important. From the females, 50% answered everything being equally important and with the possibility to answer multiple parts, 50% also saw social important and 33% environmental. The reasons for answering social were “child labour reasons”, as it is important to have school and work for women and wages of the employees needed to be good and humane. There was no explanation for why environmental was one of the most important ones.

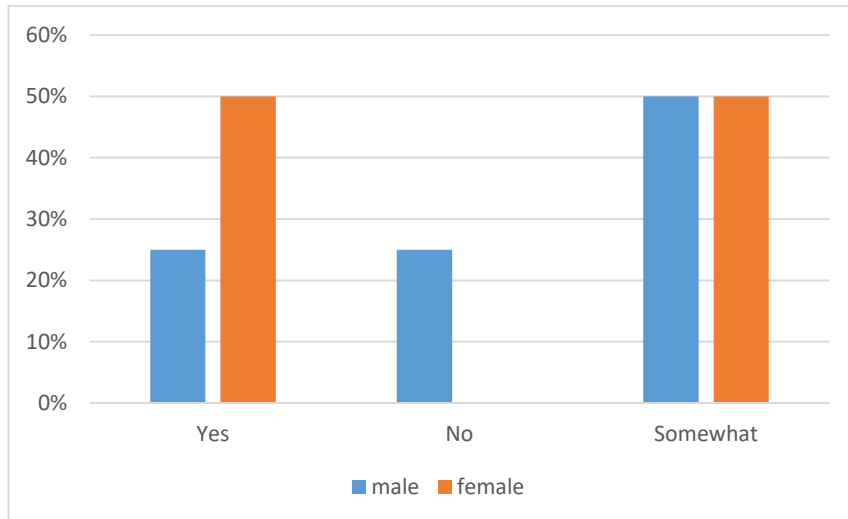


Figure 9. Are you aware of what is a green/eco-friendly hotel? (N=10)

Female respondents mostly knew exactly or somewhat what a green/eco-friendly hotel is. 50% of the male respondents knew somewhat as 25% knew or did not know at all. Comparing all of the answers, people somewhat know what that means.

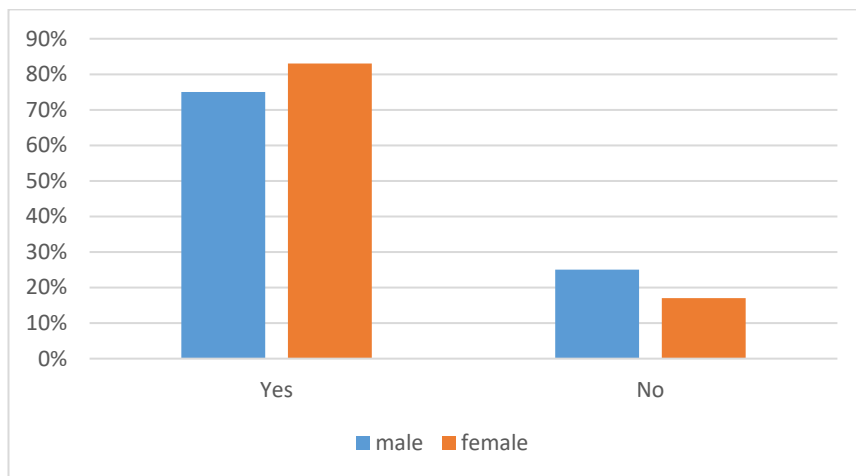


Figure 10. If a hotel is marketing itself as being sustainable, does it interest you more as a customer? (N=10)

Figure 10 shows that when a hotel is marketing itself as being more sustainable that it does interest guests more. Only 17% of the females and 25% of males were not more interested. They were also asked would why One respondent mentioned them being “worth looking at more” and it being good to support that. For other person it talks more about the values of the hotel and for one, it was question of eco-friendliness fitting with their own values.

In case people were more interested in hotels being sustainable, they were asked if they searched more for what actions the hotel does. Three of the respondents do not look for more information but they trust that everything can be found the hotel’s webpage. One

person would search for more since they were interested in how the hotel minimizes the use of water, energy, and food waste and for other one also searching for information, it felt it would be good to know what the hotel is doing overall.

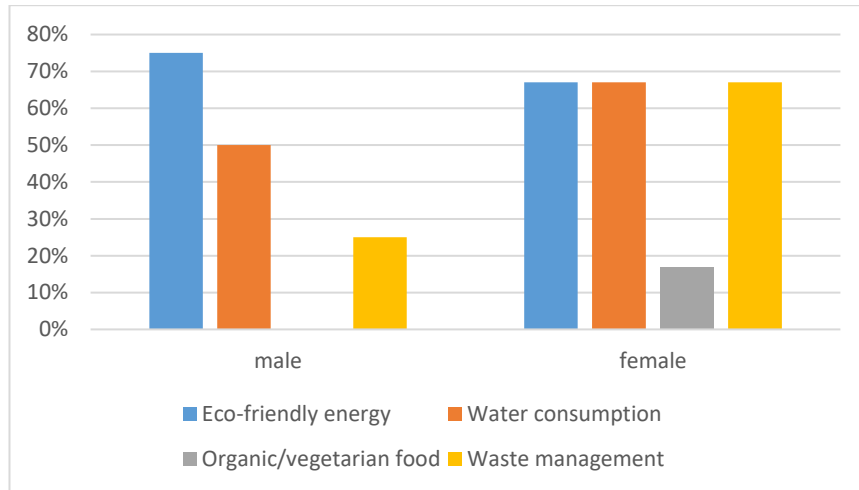


Figure 11. What do consider to be the most important action(s) a hotel can do in attempt to decrease their carbon footprint? (N=10)

On Figure 11 can be seen that respondents see the use of eco-friendly energy as the most important way to reduce their carbon footprint, as they were able to choose multiple answers. None of male respondents saw organic/vegetarian food served being as one of the most important ones and for females it was also the least important. Other ways mentioned was the use of unnecessary plastics, towels being of ecological material and heating and logistics being eco-friendly.

5.3 Hotel Haaga

This part of data shows how the guests view the sustainability as part of their stay in Hotel Haaga Central Park and how well the hotel does.

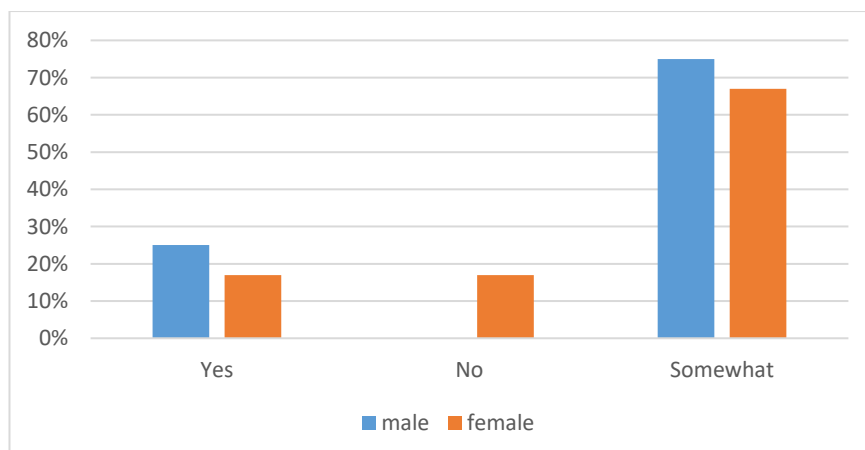


Figure 12. Hotel Haaga Central Park has a Green Key certificate indicating them being environmentally friendly. Are sustainable actions clear in Hotel Haaga? (N=10)

In the first question regarding sustainability in Hotel Haaga, first the Green Key certificate was explained as a certificate being granted to hotels which are forerunners in being sustainable/eco-friendly. Then the guests were asked if sustainable actions are clear in the hotel. If the person answered no or somewhat, they were asked what they would want to see more regarding these actions.

Mostly the sustainable actions are somewhat clear for the guests. 17% of female guests feel that they are not. Most of all the guests wanted to see more clear arguments what the hotel does, how they have managed the energy, heating, and logistic issues. There was also a question from a guest, on if the hotel does what they advertise, since this guest had had their towel changed even though they had acted the way it was suggested for it not to be changed.

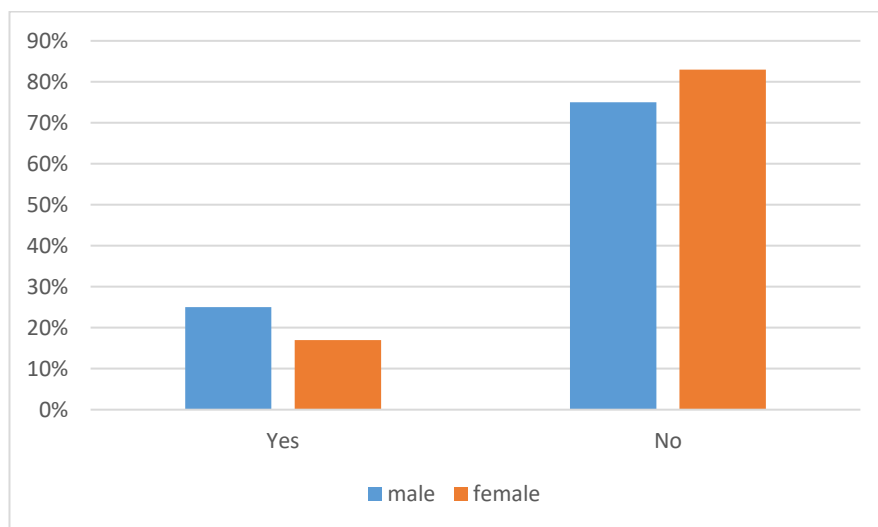


Figure 13. Is sustainability/eco-friendliness the reason for choosing Hotel Haaga Central Park? (N=10)

From Figure 10 it can be seen the respondents did not see sustainability being as one of the reasons why they chose to stay in Hotel Haaga Central Park, even though most of them travelled there for leisure as seen earlier on Figure 5. Still more male than female respondents see that as a reason.

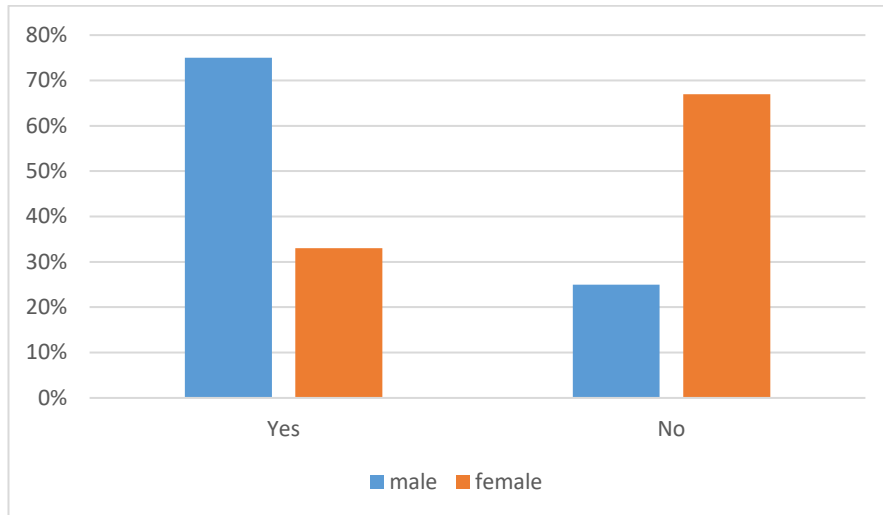


Figure 14. Does Hotel Haaga Central Park make clear how the guest can help with being more sustainable? (N=10)

75% male respondents feel that Hotel Haaga does make it clear how they can help with being more sustainable whereas 67% of female respondents feel that it is not clear. It was hoped that the hotel would make clearer how the guests can help more.

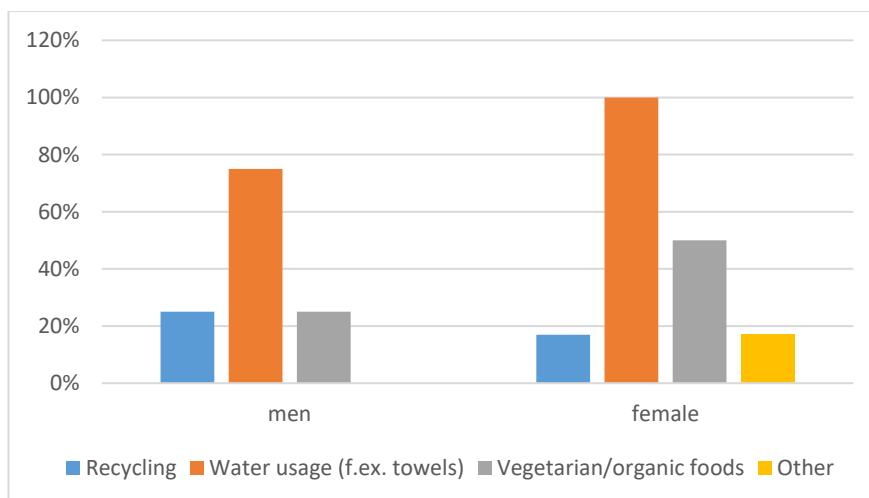


Figure 15. What do you see as the most important thing a guest can do? (N=10)

As respondents were allowed answer more than one on what they see are the most important things guests themselves can do to help with sustainability, the Figure 15 shows that water usage is among the highest with both genders. For male respondents recycling and choosing vegetarian/organic foods was equally important whereas females saw that as second-best way. The other way a female respondent saw how the guests can be of help, was minimizing the energy consumption.

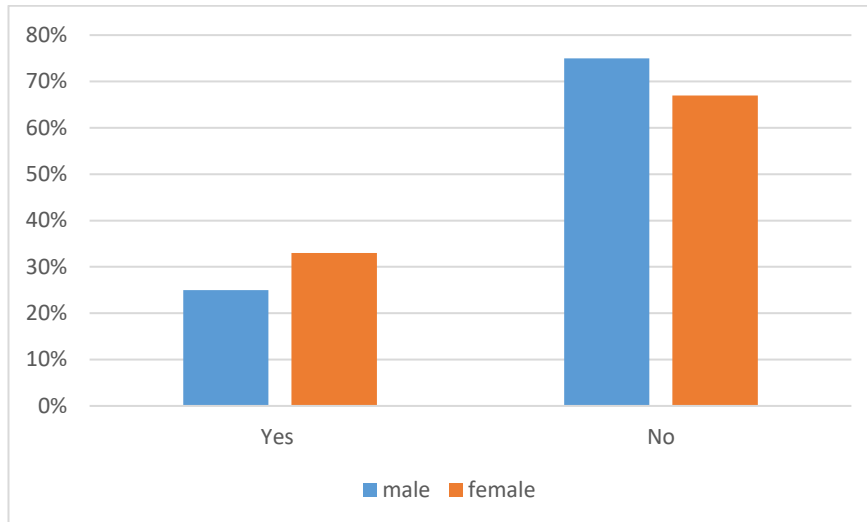


Figure 16. Would you like to know the carbon footprint of your stay in Hotel Haaga Central Park? (N=10)

On Figure 16 it can be seen that 75% of male respondents and 67% of female respondents would not like to know their carbon footprint. The only reason for this was that it was not felt as so important. Respondents choosing that they would like to know it stated that they want to minimize their carbon footprint on all levels as well as it is and would be interesting to know.

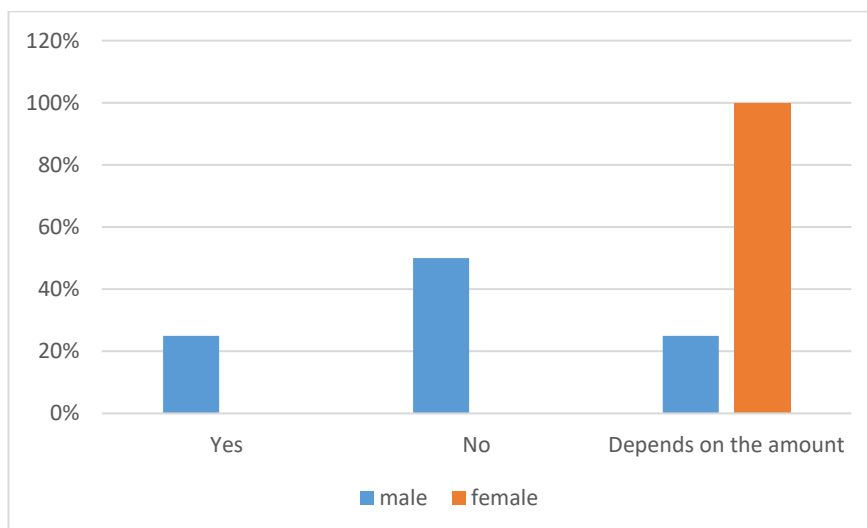


Figure 17. Would you be ready to pay more for your stay in Hotel Haaga Central Park in form of carbon offset?

Paying for one's carbon offset as an extra cost has begun to be an option for people. When asked, if the respondents would be willing to pay more, 100% of the females answered it depends on the amount. 50% of the male would not pay more, 25% would and for 25% it depends on the amount.

Respondents, who were willing to pay or for whom it dependent on the amount, were asked what they see as an appropriate amount. Most popular answer was from 5 to 10 euros per night. One of the respondents would be ready to pay 20 euros and for one respondent 30 euros would be fair price but the most important for them was for it to really compensate instead of green wash.

Guests were also given possibility to give additional information regarding sustainability in Hotel Haaga Central Park. They thought that as there were some guidelines and directions when it comes to sustainability, the execution is not good. In the room there is only one garbage bin for all of the garbage. There could be more directions with water usage, and for the maintenance staff to follow these directions also. It was also wished that regarding food waste, there would be more guidelines to get people to reduce the food waste. The guests were satisfied with there being more vegetables than meats and cheeses for breakfast. Overall, they felt that there is not anything more they needed to add when it comes to sustainability.

6 Conclusion

This chapter examines the results from the research done and their relation to theoretical framework as well as answers to sub-questions and the main research question. The reliability and validity of the conducted research will be discussed.

6.1 Key findings from the survey and online research

To answer the first sub-question, different aspects of sustainability, both male and female guests did have similar answers. Different aspects of sustainability are not equally important even though sustainability can mostly be seen in their everyday life. There were not any big differences on how sustainability belongs to their lives. Most people do recycle and also eat more vegetarian food and are careful with there not being any food waste. Different aspects of corporate responsibility were also viewed as all of them being equally important. If chosen separate answers, economic part was seen as the least important and surprisingly environmental was the second to last. The reasons for social pillar being the second most important, respondents answered with the same aspects mentioned in the theoretical. Child-labour, fair wages and work being non-discriminatory against gender were among these answers.

Respondents, as an answer to the second sub-question, did see eco-friendly hotels as more interesting. These hotels were somewhat familiar to respondents. If a hotel did advertise them being a green hotel, it did raise more interest among male and female genders. Still, most of the respondents did not feel it important to search for more information on how the hotel is more sustainable. As for hotels to reduce their carbon footprint, use of eco-friendly energy, water consumption and waste management were seen as the most important actions.

Answering the last sub-question, the connection between sustainability and Hotel Haaga Central Park was not that clear for the guests. Most of the people had not chosen the hotel because of their eco-friendliness, and their actions were seen only as somewhat clear. Between male and female guests, the most deviation was seen on question whether or not the hotel made clear what the guests can do to help with being sustainable. Male respondents said it was clear whereas female respondents said it was not clear. How the guests themselves saw their part in helping, the answers where again similar. Reducing water consumption, eating vegetarian food, and avoiding food waste.

Knowing their carbon footprint for their stay in the hotel did not interest most of the guests. Still, with one exception, most guests were willing to pay more money for their stay in form of carbon offset, as long as the amount was decent.

The overall results from this research are in line with theories presented. People do appreciate and are interested in sustainable hotels. They would also be willing to do more and participate as guests if there were good instructions. For there to be any difference between male and female and their concern for environmental issues, this was not clear in this research. The answers were very homogenous. Based on this survey, the answer to the main research question of how important sustainability is as a value for guests visiting Hotel Haaga Central Park, it does have value for them. Both males and females are interested in sustainability and sustainable hotels, it can be seen in their lives, they can participate and do their part as a guest as well as be willing to compensate their stay as a carbon offset.

6.2 Reliability and validity

Reliability and validity of this research are minimal. It was difficult to have any real kind of delimitations due to the lack of surveys gotten back. The collected number of answers was not satisfactory nor did the additional research of online reviews bring any new information or help with the questions in the survey. Circumstances may have still been affected partly by Covid-19 as well as the guests' reluctance to spend time answering the survey. As the survey was written in English, this may also affect guests who are not comfortable or are otherwise unable to understand the language. Even with low number of answers, it was still possible to see the connection between theory and real life. With more answers, the results may have had been different.

7 Discussion

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the reliability and validity of the research could have been better. The main goal was to find out how the customers in Hotel Haaga Central Park view sustainability and its importance to them. Based on the answers received, sustainability being somewhat important to them, this may have been the reason they did take part in this survey. People who do not care for eco-friendliness may not necessarily want to spend time answering questions regarding this subject. As the survey had multiple questions about sustainability in Hotel Haaga, for some of the respondents this may have been a good way to give their feedback on these issues, as it was noticed in additional research, people tend not to discuss eco-friendliness when reviewing a hotel rather than giving their opinions on more superficial level.

7.1 Further research

As theoretical framework points out, there has not been that much research done on green values of hotel guests and the meaning of eco-friendly and sustainable hotels for them. The topic itself is something that, especially hotels with the Green Key certificate, should consider researching. This research could be done by using surveys in hotel rooms or given to people or via e-mail and/or SMS after the guest has signed out of the hotel.

The questionnaire/survey does not have to be this long, and it could be done as open-ended questions or using a Likert scale (McLeod, 2008). This research could be conducted on a quarterly basis or every half a year or a year. Questions could also be more precise to get more detailed answers.

To be recognized as a sustainable hotel, especially with the certification to prove it, further research would help the hotel move forward with ecological endeavours.

7.2 Thesis process and own learnings

This thesis process has taught the importance of proper research. Thinking about research question(s), having them align with theoretical framework as well as adding the questions to the survey was not easy.

Working with Hotel Haaga Central Park did help a lot, as it was always easy to reach them. With help of receptionists, the researcher was able to get at least this number of answers, since it was impossible to spend time in the hotel due to other school and work commitments. Overall, working with the hotel was the easiest part of the process.

This process has taught how many different ways there are to do research. Also, how important it is to choose the methods and processes that are the best for the person doing the research and the topic of the research.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Sustainability Survey

Sustainability survey

This survey is a part of thesis research on hotel guests' view on sustainability- overall and in Hotel Haaga Central Park. Thesis will be done by a Hospitality, tourism, and experience management student at Haaga-Helia. All of the answers are anonymous and are used only for thesis research purposes. Answer sheets will not be saved for further use. In case of answering this survey, it is most kindly requested that You will return this form to hotel reception.

Age:

20–25 26–30 31–35 36–40 41–45 46–50

Gender:

Female Male Other Does not want to say

Location from where you travelled:

Finland Europe Africa America Asia

Reason for staying in Hotel Haaga Central Park?

Leisure Business Other

Can sustainability be seen in your everyday life?

Yes No Somewhat

If yes/somewhat, how:

Recycling Food (no waste, vegan) Less travelling/more nature friendly travelling

Other, how:

Corporate sustainability consists of environmental (good for the earth), social (good working conditions, no child labor) and economic (transparency) pillars.

Would you consider one of them more important than the other in a company and if so, what, and why?

Environmental Social Economic All equally important

If some is more important, why:

Are you aware of what is a green/eco-friendly hotel?

Yes No Somewhat

If a hotel is marketing itself as being sustainable, does it interest you more as a customer?

Yes No

Why/Why not:

If yes, do you search more what are the sustainable actions they are doing/involved in?

Yes No

Why/why not:

What do you consider to be the most important action(s) a hotel can do in attempt to decrease their carbon footprint?

Eco-friendly energy Water consumption Organic/vegetarian food served

Waste management

Other, what:

Hotel Haaga Central Park has a Green Key certificate which can be applied and is given when hotel is forerunner in being environmentally friendly. Are the sustainable actions clear in Hotel Haaga Central Park?

Yes No Somewhat

If no/somewhat, what would you want to see more?

Answer:

Would you consider sustainability/eco-friendliness be reason or one of the reasons why you chose to stay in Hotel Haaga Central Park?

Yes No

Does Hotel Haag Central Park make clear what a guest can do to help with work towards being more sustainable?

Yes No

What do you see as most important thing you as a guest can do to help?

Recycling Avoid excess water usage (incl. using the towels again) Choose
vegetarian/organic foods

Other, what:

—

Would you be interested in knowing the carbon footprint of your stay in Hotel Haag Central Park?

Yes No

Why/why not:

—

Would you be ready to pay more for your stay in Hotel Haag Central Park in form of carbon offset to compensate for your carbon footprint?

Yes No Depends on the amount

If you were willing to pay a carbon offset, what is the amount you see appropriate?

Answer:

—

Anything you want to add regarding sustainability/sustainability in Hotel Haag Central Park?

Answer:

—