

Corporate Social Responsibility: A Case Study of Scandic Hotels

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<p>The aim of the thesis is to discover whether Scandic Hotels is perceived as a leader in Corporate Social Responsibility within the hospitality industry. First a definition of CSR is created and the boundaries of research are given. Next the thesis looks into competitive advantages; how are they created and what has Scandic Hotels done to create a competitive advantage regarding CSR? Next an analysis of Scandic Hotels brand is made, and what they have done in the past twenty years regarding CSR. Finally the research focuses on how guests of Scandic Hotels perceive the company.</p> <p>Corporate Social Responsibility is an important concept in the hospitality industry. A variety of definitions can be given yet each definition consists out of the recurring elements voluntariness, stakeholder, social, environmental and economical. These elements are also found in the term sustainability which is an important factor of CSR. Both terms are based upon the triple bottom line framework; people, planet and profit.</p> <p>As many hotel chains are currently investing into CSR policies, Scandic Hotels was one of the early adaptors and has embedded CSR into the core values of the company. A competitive advantage is created when a firm can generate greater sales or margins and retain or attract more customers than the competition. Through the correct implementation of brand management these core values are the base of creating a competitive advantage in the market.</p> <p>In order to conduct the guest perception research a quantitative method has been used. A questionnaire consisting of 17 questions was conducted at the Scandic Grand Marina Hotel in Helsinki Finland. The questionnaire consisted of open and closed ended questions. In addition the use of likert scale questions gave respondents the possibility to rate sustainability aspects of Scandic Hotels. The questionnaire results gave the researcher the possibility to look at various cross tabs, discovering the influence of gender, origin, purpose of travel, age and frequency of travel on guest perception.</p> <p>Overall, Scandic Hotels is considered to be the leader in corporate social responsibility. The guests see the value and importance of the policy and want to contribute in their own way. Scandic has therefore succeeded into embedding CSR into their core values and communicating this to their guests. Yet the guests do not see the CSR policy as a decisive factor when choosing a hotel, and are not willing to pay extra for it. Further research should be conducted in Scandic Hotels worldwide to strengthen the results.</p>	
Keywords Scandic, Corporate Social Responsibility, Sustainability, Competitive Advantage, Brand Management, Guest Perception	

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1 Introduction

In order for a business to become successful they must have a competitive advantage over the competition. But can the competitive advantage be a strategy? Can Corporate Social Responsibility be implemented and managed in such a manner that it creates value for the company, the guests, and the stakeholders and therefore beats the competition?

The following research will focus on Corporate Social Responsibility in the hospitality sector, and mainly the sustainability aspect of it. The research was conducted in Scandic Grand Marina Helsinki Hotel; a 462 room counting hotel ideally situated in the harbour area Katajanokka in walking distance from Helsinki city centre. In addition the Scandic Grand Marina hosts 17 meeting rooms, restaurant, bar, summer terrace and fitness centre.

1.1 Background of the topic

Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility are two important terms for the hospitality industry. Within the past these terms were often interchanged and used incorrectly. Currently the lines between the two terms have become blurred, due to their close relationships. Therefore it is important to take the development and various definitions of both terms into account.

Hoteliers discovered approximately half a decade ago that hotels could provide an enhanced guest experience if environmental elements could be found within the hotel concept. Events which happened during the 1960's and 1970 including the oil spill in Santa Barbara and the energy crisis changed the mind-set of society. This triggered hoteliers to initially invest in sustainability. In the 1980's the United Nations introduced the concept of sustainable development. Numerous environmental summits and meetings introduced the first environmental certifications for the hospitality industry. The 2000's finally shifted the focus of sustainability to corporate social responsibility. The economic crisis of 2008 impacted the entire industry and forced major operational changes to reduce costs. (Goldstein & Primlani 2012, 2-8.)

Scandic Hotels was one of the early adaptors to a sustainable future. In 1993 Scandic did not have a set of unifying core values, leading to poorly run hotels, which led to the company making tremendous losses. In order to turn Scandic around, the focus was laid on new core values which were based on “profound caring for Scandic’s customers, its co-workers, its shareholders, the communities in which it operates and the natural environment.” (Pegram 2008, 1-3.) One of the first implementations was only replacing and laundering the towels that guests place on the floor, and replacing disposable soaps with dispensers.

1.2 Research Question

Even though Scandic Hotels has received numerous awards in the past, and has a clear goal for the future regarding CSR, do consumers recognize Scandic as one of the leaders in Corporate Social Responsibility in the Hospitality Industry? This research question can be further broken down in various sub-questions.

1. How does Scandic succeed in branding and communicating its sustainable efforts to its guests?
2. Has Scandic been able to create a competitive advantage implementing CSR?
3. How do the guests perceive the sustainable efforts Scandic has implemented?
4. Do guests value CSR, and are they willing to pay more for staying in a CSR hotel?

Therefore the aim of the thesis is to answer the main research question by finding answers to the previously mentioned sub-questions. These questions will be answered using a variety of methods. First, a thorough literature review will be conducted analysing various models and defining the scope of the research. In addition to research CSR it is important to understand the company and its values. Scandic will be analysed by speaking with employees and researching public information. Finally a quantitative survey will be done amongst the guests of Scandic. The theory and survey results will then be combined and analysed in order to answer the question.

1.3 Structure of the Thesis

The introduction will give brief background information of the topic. It will introduce the theme and why it is relevant in the industry. Next it will look at the main research questions supported by sub questions. This will make the purpose of the thesis clear.

The next chapter will focus on the theoretical framework of the thesis. Within the theoretical framework a definition of CSR will be made including the relevant aspects which will be addressed. Next an explanation will be given on how CSR can be used to gain a competitive advantage with regards to proper brand management. The theoretical framework will play an important role as a base for the survey.

The third chapter will focus mainly on Scandic Hotels as a company. First the company will be introduced and a brief history will be given. It will then look at how CSR is implemented in Scandic Hotels. Next the analysis will look at the various differentiation factors and how a competitive advantage has been created.

Within the methodology an explanation will be given on how the research has been conducted. It will explain what quantitative research is and why it is used as a research method. The survey questions will be introduced, and claims will be made why certain questions have been included. The research is then justified, which will include the validity, reliability and limitations of the research.

In the data description chapter the findings of the research will be displayed. Graphs and tables will be made introducing the results. These results will then be analysed and combined with the theoretical framework in the data analyses chapter.

Finally the theoretical framework will be combined with the research results. This will be done in the conclusion. The four sub-questions will be answered, and finally the main research question. Once the conclusions have been made suggestions for further research will be given for Scandic Hotels.

2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the thesis aims to give a theoretical base to conduct further research. Within this section Corporate Social Responsibility, sustainability, differentiation, competitive advantage and brand management will be discussed.

2.1 Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate Social Responsibility is an important term for the hospitality industry. Yet it is a term which is difficult to define. Previous studies have not been able to give one coherent definition. The following table will show the recurring elements which can be found in the following definitions.

Table 1. Analysis CSR Definitions based upon (Dahlsrud 2006, 7.)

Definition	Key words	Source
A concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis	Voluntariness Stakeholder Social Environmental Economic	Commission of the European communities, 2001
Corporate social responsibility is the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as the local community and society at large	Voluntariness Stakeholder Social Economic	World Business Council For Sustainable Development, 2000
Business decision making linked to ethical values, compliance with legal requirements and respect for people, communities and the environment	Voluntariness Stakeholder Social Environmental Economic	Business for Social Responsibility, 2000
Open and transparent business practices based on ethical values and respect for employees, communities and the environment, which will contribute to sustainable business success	Voluntariness Stakeholder Social Environmental Economic	IBLF, 2003
Corporate social responsibility is the overall relationship of the corporation with all of its stakeholders. These include customers, employees, communities, owners/investors, government, suppliers and competitors. Elements of social responsibility include investment in community outreach, employee relations, creation and maintenance of employment, environmental stewardship and financial performance	Stakeholder Social Environmental Economic	Khoury et al., 1999

In order for this research to be conducted it is important to understand CSR involves a variety of dimensions. The recurring dimensions according to previous studies are voluntariness, stakeholder, social, environmental and economical.

All these dimensions allow a company to contribute to society in a variety of levels. Not only should a company focus on the economic and legal obligations towards society, but also include ethical and philanthropic responsibilities. This increases the depth of CSR for companies. (Carrol 1991, 4-6.) These different levels can be placed into a pyramid which show the importance of the various responsibility the company has.

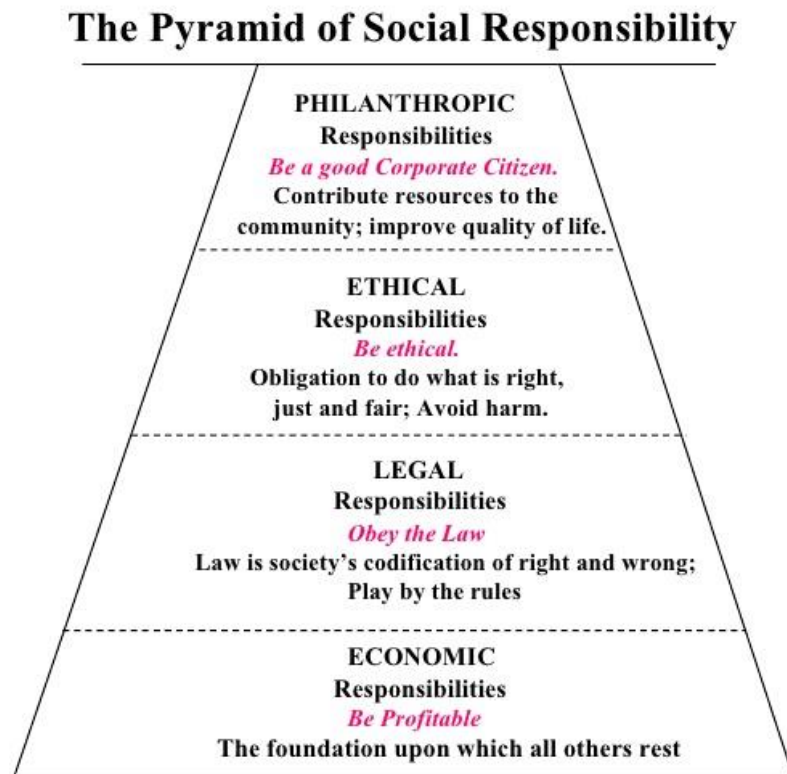


Figure 1. The Pyramid of Social Responsibility adopted from (Carrol 1991, 4-6.)

Naturally the economic responsibility towards the stakeholders is the most important aspect and is placed at the bottom of the pyramid. Without contributing financially the legal, ethical and philanthropic responsibilities cannot be met by the company. But it is important to understand that not only must a company be profitable, it must also decrease costs. The next step of the pyramid requires the companies to comply with the laws of the country. Next the “Ethical responsibilities embody those standards, norms, or expectations that reflect a concern for what consumers, employees, shareholders, and the community regard as fair, just, or in keeping with the respect or protection of stakeholders' moral rights.” (Carrol 1991, 5.) And finally the company must meet the expectations of what society thinks is well, the philanthropic level.

These different responsibilities can then be further divided into the triple bottom line framework. The triple bottom line consists of social, environmental and economical aspects; or people, planet and profit if you will. Traditionally the main focus of a company is to make profit, yet a company with a CSR policy focuses on the other dimensions as well. The triple bottom line is the basis of sustainability. Therefore an integral aspect of CSR is sustainability. (Elkington 1997, 37.) All aspects which influence CSR can be found in Figure 2.

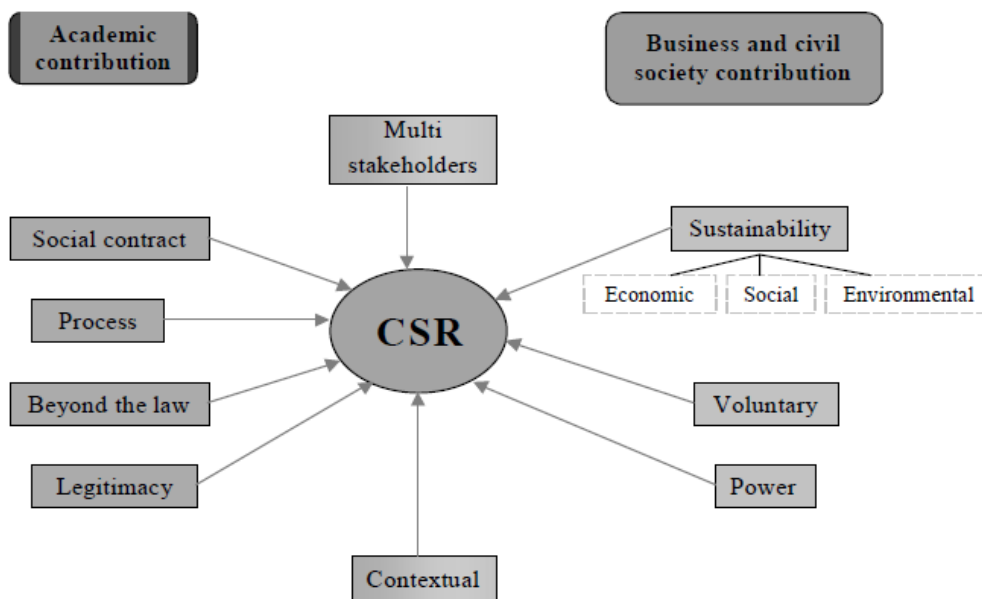


Figure 2. The CSR Concept: major contributions adopted from (Kakabadse, Rozuel, & Lee-Davies 2005, 286.)

As can be seen in the figure 2, CSR is influenced by both business and academic research. This means that the idea of sustainability as a core element of CSR is also influenced by these factors. In order to understand how sustainability influences the CSR policy of Scandic Hotels it is important to take a closer look at the People, Planet and Profit pillars.

2.1.1 People

The first pillar which needs to be taken into account is people. People still focuses on the company, but extends its reach to the employees working for the company. Hospitality is a business focussing on people. Therefore, the people pillar is also considered to be the social aspect.

There are many social aspects which need to be taken into account regarding the people aspect. “Public health, social justice, human rights, labour rights, community issues, equal opportunities, skills and education, workplace safety, working conditions, maintaining and promoting social and cultural diversity, involving communities, consulting stakeholders and the public as well as training staff with regard to sustainable practices.” (Sloan, Legrand, & Chen 2013, 26.) Even though all these aspects should be addressed according to law, they can be assessed to see how sustainable each aspect is.

Hospitality is a peoples industry. A hotel can play a major role in impacting society and its people; internally through the training, development and retention of employees and externally through providing sustainable circumstances for the guests. For example using local organic products within the restaurants of a hotel will support local suppliers and the guests will benefit through the healthy nature of the goods.

2.1.2 Planet

Secondly the planet pillar needs to be taken into account regarding sustainability. The planet pillar takes the company, the people and the environment into account in order to ensure sustainable development. It involves looking at a company’s external footprint in regard to all its operations, facilities and finished products. This all waste and emission elimination must be examined in detail. Productivity maximization and efficiency of all assets and resources must be strived for. The overall objective is to minimize all practices that might adversely affect the enjoyment of the planet’s resources by the next generation. (Sloan, Legrand, & Chen 2013, 25.)

Large hotel chains are often perceived as unsustainable. The emissions are often high in addition to high uses of water and electricity. There are many actions a hotel can take to decrease its impact on the planet. Designing hotel rooms using eco-friendly furniture also benefits the planet. Separating waste and using renewable packaging ensure decrease carbon commissions, led lights decrease energy consumption and sustainable toilets decrease water use.

2.1.3 Profit

Finally, the profit pillar mainly focusses on the company. The main goal of a company is to generate revenue and create a profit. Monitoring costs and working more efficiently play make the difference in this pillar.

Some practices that contribute to environmental sustainability can also provide significant short- and long-term business benefits. Saving costs through installing energy- and water-efficient technologies increase internal profitability. Addition business benefits of improved relationship with stakeholders, improved staff morale and motivation, enhanced public reputation, increased market share can all result from sustainable management systems. (Sloan, Legrand, & Chen 2013, 26.)

The added value in the profit pillar comes from the investment in the local environment. By investing in the local environment a company also influences the profit of the community. This will influence both the people and planet pillars. “A hospitality company committed to a sustainable business policy supports and participates in the development of local economy and will aim to generate economic benefits for local people through increased local employment opportunities, business linkages and other income-generating opportunities.” (Sloan, Legrand, & Chen 2013, 26.)

Profits are also influenced when costs are decreased. Initial investments which are high short term may lead to long term benefits. An example which can be given is investing in solar panels to power a hotel. The solar panels are a high initial investment yet in the long run the hotel could fully generate its own power. It is important to understand what influences profit; generating revenue, decreasing costs and making proper investments.

2.1.4 Sustainability and CSR

Fisk (2010, 8) has created a model showing how the different pillars influence each other. “People and planet and profit: economic growth is only sustainable if business activities are integrated with social and environmental priorities.” (Fisk 2010, 8.) This can be combined into a model which shows all the aspects which need to be taken into account, and the advantages which can be achieved for each pillar. It is important to take the bigger picture into account instead of focussing only on the company.

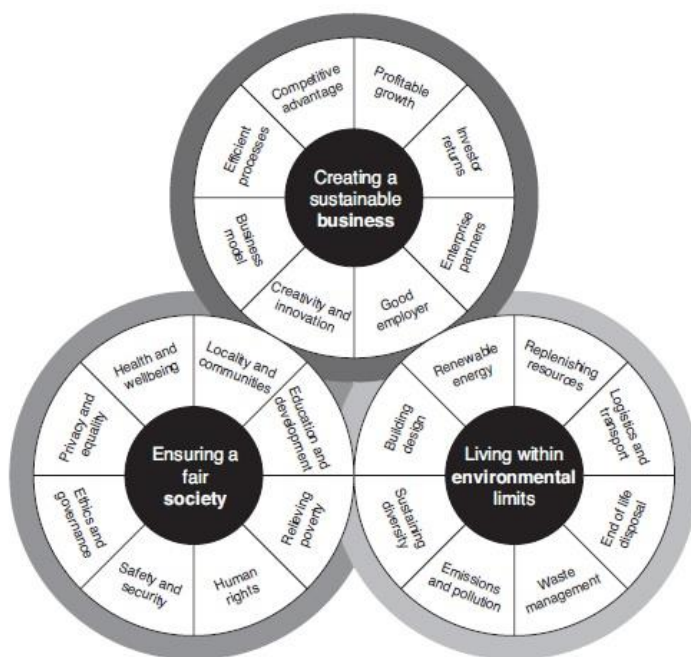


Figure 3. People, Planet, Profit adopted from (Fisk 2010, p. 8.)

Next to the triple bottom line, Carrol (1991, 4-6) stresses the importance of stakeholder involvement in contributing to CSR. This involvement can be achieved at the different levels of the Pyramid of Social Responsibility. A “win-win” situation for both the company and all the stakeholders on different levels will contribute best to society.

The three pillars of the triple bottom line all contribute in creating a specific value for a guest. According to Cavagnaro and Curiel (2012, 2) when the economic, social and environmental dimensions all create value a better quality of life can be created for the current and future generations.

Cavagnaro and Curiel (2012, 2) provide a model to illustrate their definition of CSR. This model can be seen as a building block on how the value can be created by Scandic Hotels. Or, it can be used to monitor the implementations of Scandic Hotels CSR.

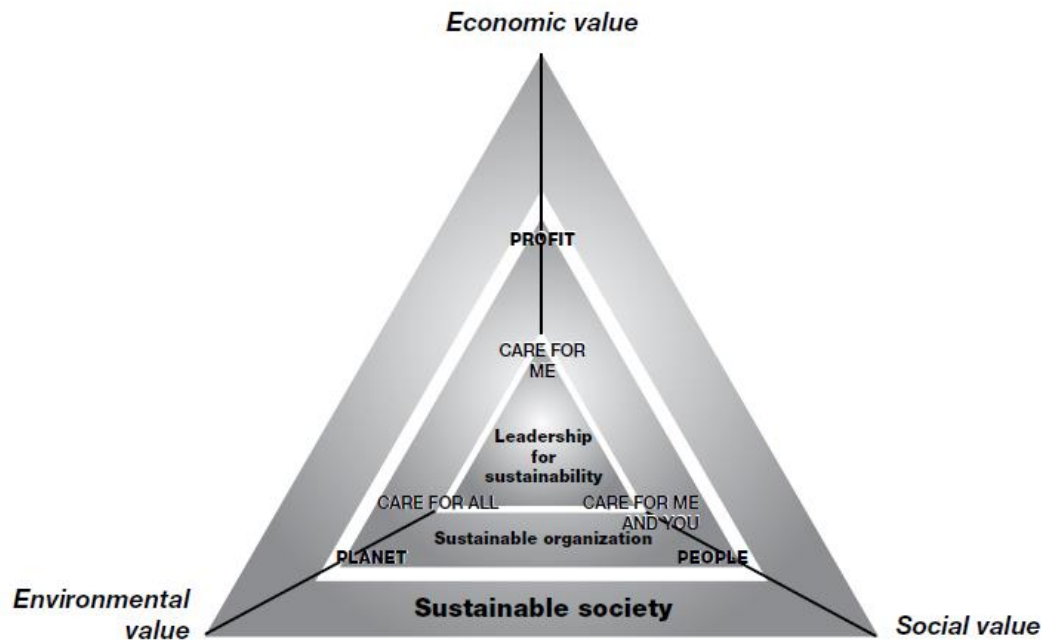


Figure 4. Three levels of sustainability (TLS) framework adopted from (Cavagnaro & Curiel 2012, 2.)

As can be seen in the model value can be created on different levels. By taking care of the company the profit aspect of sustainability is touched upon. This creates economic value for the environment. If the company takes care of itself and of its employees this can be seen back in the people aspect. This then creates social value. Finally the environmental value is created when the company takes care of the entire environment. Therefore the claim can be made that sustainability is a part of CSR.

The outer triangle of the TLS framework illustrates the three dimensions of sustainable development on the societal level: responsible economic growth, equitable social progress, and effective environmental protection. These three dimensions refer to a sustainable society. As mentioned above, “sustainable societies cannot be achieved without sustainable organizations and individuals.” (Cavagnaro & Curiel 2012, 2.) Scandic Hotels play an important role in the centre triangle. As corporate socially responsible leader of the industry, Scandic Hotels can create a benchmark which in the long run will contribute to a sustainable society.

The previous four mentioned models all touch important aspects of CSR. Carroll (1991, 4-6) shows the different responsibilities a company has toward society, Kakabadse, Rozuel, and Lee-Davies (2005, 286) show the various aspects which influence CSR, Fisk (2010, 6) shows the importance of the triple bottom line and Cavagnaro and Curiel (2012, 2) show how value can be created. These models can be combined into one giving the Combined CSR Framework.

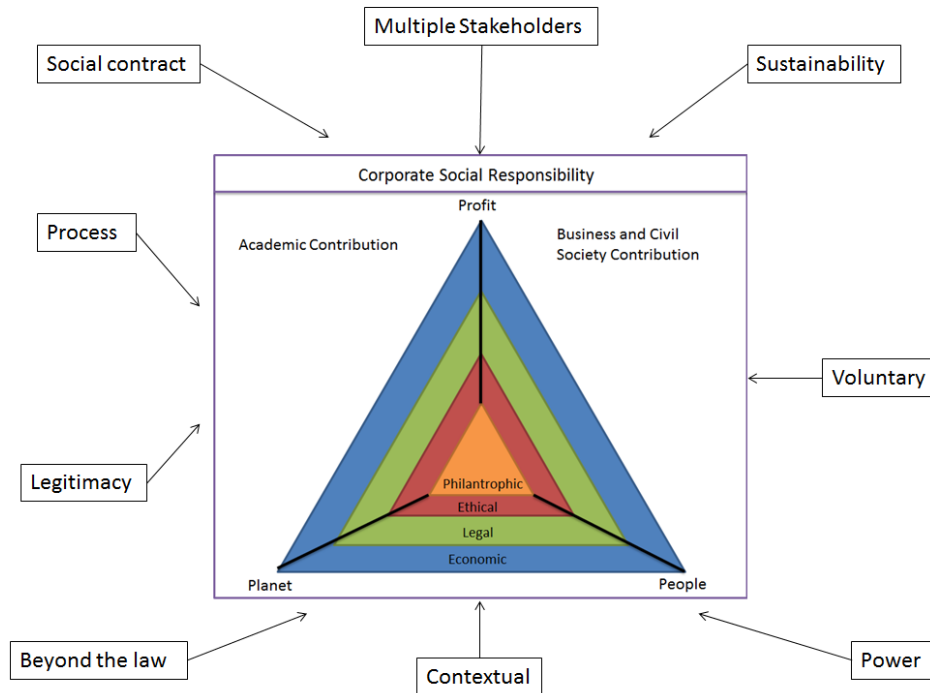


Figure 5. Combined CSR Framework (Heesbeen, 2014.)

As can be seen in Figure 5, the idea of CSR is the centre of the model. CSR consists of the triple bottom line dimensions, people planet and profit. If all the responsibilities in the central pyramid have been met, value will be created for each dimension. CSR is then influenced by the various aspects which can be found on the outside square.

In conclusion there are many different definitions of CSR which can be made. In order to continue further research the following definition will be used:

“Corporate social responsibility is the overall relationship of the corporation with all of its stakeholders. These include customers, employees, communities, owners/investors, government, suppliers and competitors of social responsibility include investment in community outreach, employee relations, creation and maintenance of employment, environmental stewardship and financial performance.” (Dahlsrud 2006, 9.)

2.1.5 Limitations of the study

Due to the fact that CSR is such a broad topic it is important to set boundaries for this research. This research will focus mainly on strategic CSR, meaning it will not research the ethical and philanthropic aspects.

Next the research will focus on customer perspective meaning not all stakeholders will be addressed during the research process.

Currently there are no direct laws in Finland which set standards for CSR. “The Finnish government emphasizes the voluntary aspect of CR in its public policy.” (Routti 2014) Thus there are no regulated CSR standards to be met, only voluntary ones. Yet the Finnish labour and other laws are in such detail that they already have CSR embedded into them.

In order to conduct further research the study will focus on CSR at a strategic level. This will be done in order the frameworks of gaining a competitive advantage through the use of proper brand management. Finally the strategic CSR will be researched in the context of sustainability.

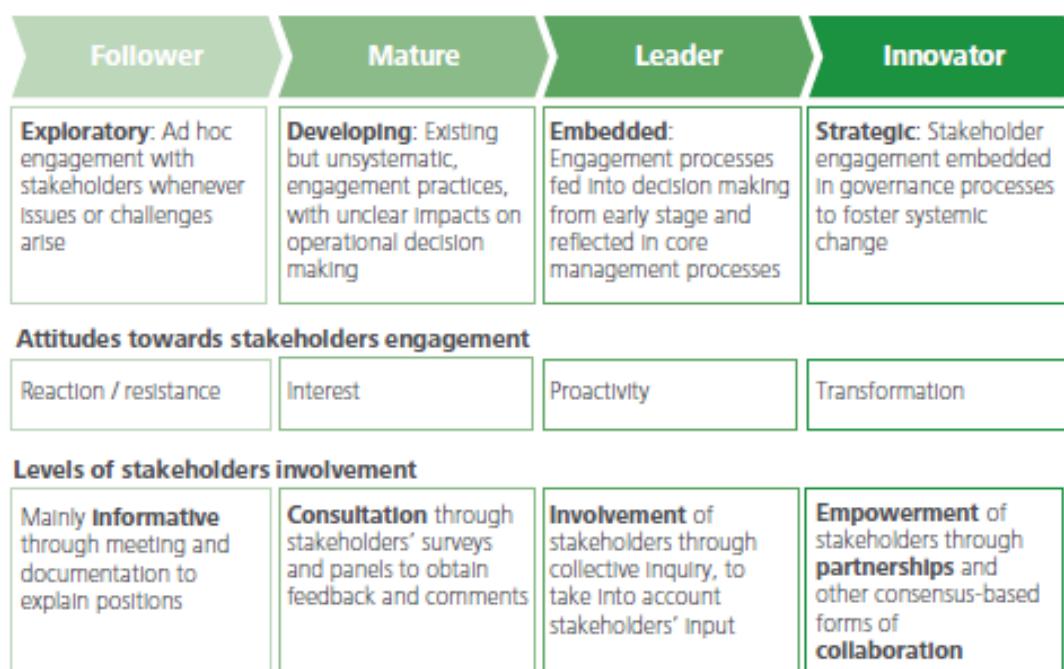
2.2 Competitive Advantage

According to Barney (2007, 17) “A firm’s strategy is its theory of how to achieve high levels of performance in the markets and industries within which it is operating.”

Therefore it can be seen as what a company should do to achieve its targets.

“Competitive advantage grows fundamentally out of value a firm is able to create for its buyer that exceeds the firm’s cost of creating it.” (Porter 2004, 1.) If a company is able to create value by implementing the correct strategy, a competitive advantage is created within the market.

Positioning in the market plays a central role in gaining a competitive advantage. Thus choosing the correct strategy and diversifying the company will create growth and possibilities to make profits. In addition if the chosen strategy is implemented correctly the company can create a sustainable competitive advantage which can eventually lead to a company becoming a market leader, or even innovator (Porter 2004, 374-380.) In order to do so a company must fully engage with the different stakeholder in a proactive manner. One way of how a company can become leader or even innovator can be seen in Figure 6.



Adapted from UNEP¹², Senge¹³ and Deloitte

Figure 6. Maturity levels of stakeholder engagement in line with Corporate Strategy adopted from (Noguer & Houillier 2014, 4.)

Considering Scandic Hotels as a single business, meaning approximately 95% of revenue comes from hotels, becoming CSR market leader could strategically be classified as a limited diversification strategy.

“There are several motivations for implementing diversification strategies, including exploiting operational economies of scope (shared activities, core competencies) exploiting financial economies of scope (internal capital allocation, risk reduction, obtaining tax advantages) exploiting anti-competitive economies of scope (multipoint competition market power advantages), and employee incentives to diversify (diversifying employees’ human capital investments maximizing management compensation).” (Barney 2007, 368.)

Therefore the implementation of this strategy has outcomes which meet the CSR standards. By diversifying the hotel chain as a corporate socially responsible one these competitive advantages are theoretically being reached by Scandic Hotels. Yet the competitive advantage is only reached when value can be created due to diversifying.

In theory the differentiation strategy creates a specific value for the buyer. Barber (2012, 5), claims that; “According to a study by the International Hotels Environment Initiative and Accor 90% of hotel guests would prefer to stay in a hotel that cares about the environment.” In the same article another claim is made by Crane et al (2000 in Barber 2012, 11) “As long as environmental issues remain a concern and individuals report the desire to improve environmental conditions, the marketplace can expect to see an increase in the purchase/use of environmentally friendly products.” These claims both show how consumers recognize the advantage of a sustainable practice. In addition it shows the importance of CSR in the future.

As discussed in section 2.1.1. Profit, an important aspect of a CSR strategy is to focus on gaining a cost advantage. By implementing a diversification strategy this can potentially create a sustainable cost advantage. Sources of these cost advantages can be scale, interrelationships with sister businesses, linkages, and proprietary learning and policy choices to process technology according to Porter (2004, 112).

2.3 Brand Management

Differentiating yourself as a company and creating a competitive advantage are two important aspects of Brand Management. According to Keller (2011, 1) Strategic Brand Management is the entire process of building, measuring and managing brand equity. In addition an important focus of Brand Management is brand communication. What message do you want to convey to your guest and how do you do this?

As mentioned in section 2.2 Competitive Advantage, in order to stand out from the competition a company must differentiate itself in the market. “A branded differentiator is a branded feature, ingredient, service or program that creates a point of differentiation for a branded offering that is meaningful for customers and merits active management over an extended time period.” (Aaker 2004, 16.) This feature should reflect the values of the company. Yet, the brand should also symbolize something the guest would like to be a part of. For Scandic this differentiator is in the way they communicate their information to the guests.

“A person does not need first-hand experience with the brand to form an impression of a brand, though, for brand equity is formed among non-users by exposure to media messages or by word-of-mouth.” (Prasad & Dev 2000, 24.) Thus if Scandic is able to market themselves correctly, and is able to incorporate their guests into their CSR policy it should theoretically lead to an improved performance. This does mean that each aspect of the hotel must consistently reflect the CSR policy. “A hotel will have strong brand equity when a large number of customers have a favourable perception of and attitude toward the hotel brand.” (Prasad & Dev 2000, 24.)

How should the brand message then be communicated to the guest? The communication mix of a hotel must incorporate a different communication tool for each different message. A variety of platforms could include magazines, signs, brochures and website. “An organization’s website (together with its intranet/extranet) is likely to be its most important communication tool.” (Scammell 2006, 49.)

According to Oh and Lee (2013, 52.) “One effective and popular persuasion strategy useful for designing a “right message” to influence people’s behaviors is message

framing.” This means creating an engaging message for the guests which will persuade them to take part in the CSR policy. An important and effective place to communicate with the guests is within their room. “if the hotel outlined specific steps it had taken to help the environment, participation increased to 45 percent.” (Oh & Lee 2013, 53.) The message must show the positive effects of the policy, and engage them.

The final aspect of Brand Management is the monitoring of the brand. Making use of the Brand Equity Model of Prasad & Dev will give a company four major benefits namely “tracking customers’ brand perceptions over time, helping to formulate remedial marketing strategies, measuring the effects of remedial actions, and tracking competitors’ brand equity.” (Prasad & Dev 2000, 25.) These all play an important role for Scandic.

3 Scandic

Scandic Hotels is an international hotel chain mainly operating in the Nordic countries. In addition to operating hotels in Sweden, Norway, Finland and Denmark the chain is expanding throughout Europe including hotels in Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Russia, Estonia and Poland. The headquarters of Scandic Hotels can be found in Stockholm, Sweden. (Scandic 2014.)

Since 1993, Scandic Hotels has been profiling itself as a truly socially and environmentally friendly chain. The staff receives special sustainability trainings, the hotel rooms are designed in an eco-friendly manner, and the food used within the restaurants is from local producers with certified eco-labels. (Laakso 2014)

Throughout the past 20 years, Scandic Hotels has won numerous prizes regarding their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Policy. A few of these prizes include (Scandic 2014):

- Glassbjörnen Environmental Award – GRIP Forum, Norway, May 2006
- Oslo's Urban Environmental Prize – City of Oslo, Norway, June 2006
- Best Environmental Work – Grand Travel Awards, Sweden, March 2007
- Swedish Recycling Award, October 2007
- The Sustainability Award – European Hotel Design Awards, London, October 2007
- Best CSR Programme – Hospitality Awards, Paris, November 2007
- Green Meetings Awards Gold – IMEX, Frankfurt 2008
- Corporate Responsibility Award – The Tourist & Convention Bureau of Helsinki, Finland 2009
- Sustainability Gold Medal – GBTA, May 2013

According to Inger Mattsson, Manager Sustainable Business at Scandic the company has “a CO² target of zero emissions from our own business by 2025” Therefore, one can conclude that Scandic Hotels has a leading role regarding CSR within the hospitality industry. (Scandic 2014.)

The previous sections have introduced Scandic Hotels, and explained what Corporate Social Responsibility, competitive advantage and brand management are. The next step is to analyse how Scandic Hotels has managed its brand in order to create a

competitive advantage to establish itself as the market leader regarding CSR. It is important to understand that since 1993 sustainability has become a core value of Scandic. This came from a lack of core values before this time.

Scandic lacked a set of unifying core values with which either its customers or its own employees could identify. It became clear that the company needed a new vision to reflect a changing society and market. Nilsson determined that the way forward for the “new” Scandic had to be based on a whole new set of core values – values based on a profound caring for Scandic’s customers, its co-workers, its shareholders, the communities in which it operates, and the natural environment. (Pegram 2008, 2.)

CSR means more to Scandic Hotels than just contributing and giving back to society and the environment. It also includes other factors such as investing and driving new business, decreasing costs and becoming more clever and efficient with everyday processes.

As mentioned in 2.1.5 the research will focus on the sustainability factor of CSR. The sustainability program of Scandic has resulted in the company saving more than 18 million Euros. The impact on the earth was becoming an important factor for the many people and Nilsson realized this at an early stage. In addition he realized the importance of having his management team involved. (Pegram 2008, 1-3.) By involving the management whilst implementing the new values Scandic was able to create a solid base for its brand identity, which is the first step when creating a competitive advantage. (Laakso 2014.)

Therefore the new differentiating core values and the involvement of the management team became the first step for Scandic Hotels. This indicates that CSR is part of the strategic planning of the company. Next, every Scandic hotel had created their own CSR action plan. This was co-lead by the corporate office, and provided Scandic with a knowledge centre which could be used for seminars, courses, and further development of a common framework. Yet each hotel could still take their own decisions. (Cuenllas 2014, 2.) From this framework the following implementations have been done throughout the past years. This framework was made in cooperation with The Natural Step. In order to obtain a clear vision of the various adaptations made by Scandic Hotels each pillar of sustainability will be discussed in depth. (Laakso 2014.)

3.1 People Pillar Scandic

When looking at the people pillar of CSR it is important to start looking at the employees working for Scandic Hotels. According to Pegram (2008, 3), each employee is trained in “The Environmental Dialogue” a four step program explaining the importance of sustainability and the impact on the environment. Since 1993 more than 12000 people have been part of this training. This training teaches the employees to be innovative with sustainable issues. “Don't be surprised if you see someone at our hotels watering the plants with a carafe from an empty restaurant table.” (Scandic Hotels 2014.) The water is not poured away, but it is given to the plants.

In 2001 Scandic Hotels introduced the Scandic in Society program. A program where all hotels gave back according to society however they could. Projects included collecting and distributing bed linen for people living in shelters and distributing food to homeless people. The important aspect of Scandic in society is that Scandic does not just raise money; they contribute to the society themselves. Since 2001 more than 1000 different projects have been done. (Laakso 2014.)

2005 marked the year where all Scandic Hotels became smoke free. But not only did Scandic Hotels become smoke free for its guests, all employees who were willing to quit smoking were given assistance by the company. This shows the importance of staff and connecting staff to core values. (Laakso 2014.)

In 2008 Scandic Hotels invested in roughly 100 rooms to make them more user-friendly for disabled people. Now, in 2014 this number has grown to 300. These rooms include beds which can change to different heights, and lowered light switches. This innovation shows how Scandic Hotels focuses on everyone in the society, and wants to ensure they are accessible for everyone. (Scandic 2014.)

In 2009 Scandic Hotels improved the gym facilities in each of its hotels. In addition, as a standard each hotel needed to provide its guests with sporting facilities. With an accessible gym for all its guests Scandic Hotels becomes a healthier living environment. Guest can work out as part of a healthier living style. (Scandic 2014.)

3.2 Planet Pillar Scandic

In 1995 Scandic Hotels introduced the first eco-room. The room became a new standard for Scandic Hotels worldwide. Composite materials are generally not used in the eco-rooms. The materials which are used in building the eco-rooms have to be energy efficient and sustainably produced. This also includes where these products come from, how they are transported and the methods used to produce all materials. The materials that are used in the rooms are also easily removed again. No materials are used that can harm people, might be dangerous in any way, cause harm to the environment or cause allergies. Even the maintenance of the eco-room is designed in a manner to be simple and last long. Therefore building a Scandic Hotel does not harm the environment in any matter. (Laakso 2014.)

1996 was a year dedicated to packaging of hotel amenities. Instead of offering guests shampoo in small bottles all hotels implemented refillable dispensers in the hotel rooms. Not only was this done in the hotel rooms but also in the restaurants with for example marmalade and jam. The waste of Scandic Hotels decreased with more than 370 million disposable packages. (Scandic 2014.)

Eco-labels have also played an important impact in the planet pillar of Scandic Hotels. Since 2001 each Swedish Hotel of the Scandic portfolio has been offering a minimum of 22 KRAV Eco labelled products. These products include coffee, honey, yoghurt and milk. Scandic provides their suppliers with a special contracting stating their products are environmentally friendly. The eco labelling has been expanded with the SWAN label in 2004. The SWAN label focuses on all hotel related products including shampoo, laundry and even televisions. (Scandic 2014.)

Finally when the smoke free policy was introduced in 2005, Scandic Hotels also introduced a policy for environmentally friendly cars. Cars of Scandic Hotels run on alternative fuels or are hybrids. (Scandic 2014.)

All these different improvements affect a better overall environment.

3.3 Profit Pillar Scandic

Both the People and the Planet pillars play an important role the overall profit of Scandic Hotels. By decreasing the costs for disposable packages, Scandic Hotels has been able to create a budget to invest in sustainable shampoos for guests. Therefore short term sustainability investments provide a budget for the long term studies.

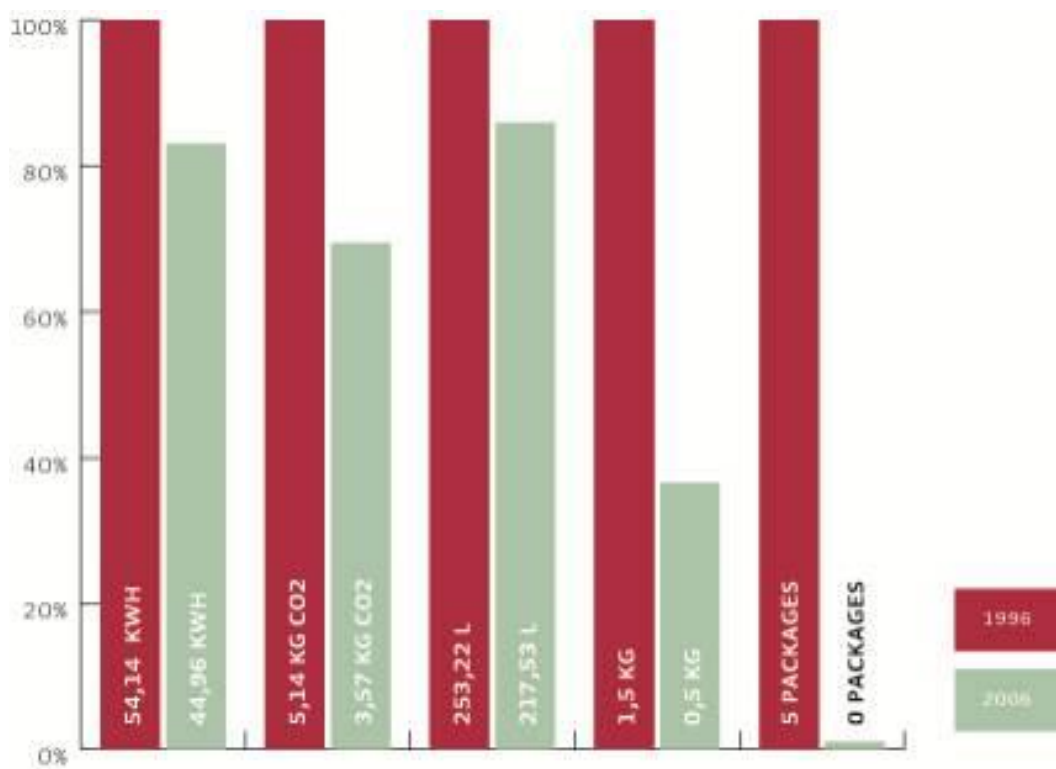


Figure 7. Scandic Achievements Graph adopted from (Scandic Hotels, A Good Day is a Day at Scandic , 2014.)

Best of all: Scandic demonstrates that it is possible to be an environmental trailblazer with even better profitability as a result. “Yes, sustainability earns us money! Being responsible is perfectly compatible with making a profit,” says Scandic’s Director Sustainable Business, Inger Mattsson. (Ehrling 2013, 12.)

As can be seen in Figure 7, Scandic has been able to decrease costs in various aspects. The amount of energy which has been saved since 1996 could power the airport in Helsinki for roughly a year. The amount of water which has been saved by investing in toilets that flush less has saved an amount to fill 873 Olympic sized swimming pools. (Scandic, 2014.) As can be seen, the investments in sustainability have increased the profitability of Scandic Hotels.

3.4 Measurement

Scandic is measuring the results of its CSR policy in various ways. The first tool they use is the Environmental Barometer. The environmental barometer measures which actions the hotel says it will take to which actions are actually implemented. This created a healthy competitive atmosphere within the chain stimulating hotels to implement more than their sister properties.

The next measurement tool is the Environmental Index, a list of 60 mandatory activities which need to be implemented in each hotel. These activities include installing led lights or making bicycles available for guest use. This index is accessible for both employees and guests and shows the transparency of the company.

Finally, Scandic Hotels makes use of the Resource Hunt which focuses on resource efficiency, sustainability and dematerialization. (Pegram 2008, 3). This keeps track of the actual figures. As mentioned in 2.3 Brand Management, measuring outcomes is an important aspect of brand management, and is effectively done by Scandic Hotels.

Energy consumption per guest night

1996	2012	
52,85 kWh	40,23 kWh	-24 %

Water consumption per guest night

1996	2012	
248 liter	196 liter	-21 %

Unsorted waste per guest night

1996	2012	
0,83 kg	0,45 kg	-46 %

Emissions of fossil carbon dioxide per guest night

1996	2012	
4,49 kg	1,57 kg	-65 %

Figure 8. Scandic Measurement Results adopted from (Ehrling 2013, 13.)

4 Methodology

In order to test the following hypothesis: “Scandic Hotels is one of the leaders in Corporate Social Responsibility in the hospitality industry” the following research will be conducted.

4.1 Quantitative Research

To find out if guests perceive this hypothesis as true a research among guests must be conducted. Data from the Scandic guests must be collected and analyzed in order to prove the statement. Due to the large size of the sample it is important to use a quantitative research method. “Quantitative research aims to determine how one thing (a variable) affects another in population, by quantifying the relationships between variables (the things you measure).” (Altinay & Paraskevas 2008, 75.)

A quantitative research method gives the possibility to explore a variety of matters. These matters can include the values of the guests, their impressions and their experiences. The statistics which will be the outcome of the research will be analyzed through the use of SPSS. SPSS will generate the various correlation coefficients, relative frequencies and differences between means.

The data which is needed to conduct the research will be compiled through a guest survey. This survey will be done in a Scandic Hotel by the author personally. The results gained include behavioural and psychographic information due to its descriptive nature. Considering the fact that the data will only be collected from one hotel, one of the limitations is that the data does not come from each property worldwide. Thus the information gathered will serve as a sample of the entire Scandic guest portfolio worldwide.

The survey will serve as an observation of guest perception. Thus the research is a deductive based research. (Altinay & Paraskevas 2008, 168-170.)

4.2 Questionnaire design and Data Collection

In order to collect a variety of data, the survey has a mix of question types. The first questions will be questions relating to the guests attributes, including gender, age, reason for travelling and where they are from. This is done in order to look at cross tabs. It will for example show if men and women look different at a similar topic. Next the survey will consist of behavioural and attitudinal questions. This will then give the possibility to find out if frequent travellers or loyal guests perceive the brand in a different manner. Finally the survey gives the guest the opportunity to state their opinion on different statements. By knowing what is important to the guest, the research will prove or disprove the hypothesis. Based on the guest opinion an advice can be given to Scandic Hotels.

In order to obtain more in-depth data the survey is built using both open and closed questions. Open ended questions give the possibility for each guest to give his or her personal opinion, whereas the closed ended questions will narrow down the focus of the research and make the survey easier for the informant to answer. (Altinay & Paraskevas 2008, 123-124.) The overall answers should give an overview of what is currently working well for Scandic Hotels and what needs to be improved.

Another tool used in data gathering is the use of likert-scale questions. The likert-scaled questioning is used to discover the extent to which a respondent believes in something. The statement gives the respondent a frequency scale and the responses are fixed choices. "If you are surveying a population to ascertain opinion, then the inclusion or omission of a mid-point can alter your results considerably." (Garland 1991, 70.) Three questions give the respondent the possibility to answer a mid-point neutral answer whereas one question does not give this possibility. This is done to force the respondent in making a choice even though he or she might not be sure of an answer.

The questions which can be found throughout the survey have been specifically designed for this research. In order to create the various questions example surveys on similar topics were taken into account. The survey has been tested by five people who

are not from the hospitality industry. Their feedback has improved some terms in the survey were explained and questions were rephrased. Before the final version was used. The full survey can be found in Appendix I.

The data collection took place in the Scandic Hotel Marina. The hotel is situated approximately one kilometer from the Helsinki City Center. It is located in the harbour area and has an industrial atmosphere. The hotel counts 462 rooms and 17 meeting rooms. In addition, guests can borrow bicycles, work out in the gym or enjoy the summer terrace, bar and restaurant.

The surveys were distributed by the researcher and the front office employees of the hotel. The respondents had the possibility to ask questions if any statements were unclear. In addition a few emails were sent out to regular guests requesting their assistance with the research.

4.3 Justification, Reliability, Validity and Limitations

The research is done in order to find out if consumers recognize Scandic as one of the leaders in Corporate Social Responsibility in the Hospitality Industry. A quantitative research method has been used in order to reach as many Scandic Guests as possible, and in order to discover patterns and correlations between data.

The research was conducted on two days during the week and one day during the weekend. One of the days during the week was a public holiday. This increased the amount of leisure travellers giving extra insights for the research. All survey respondents filled in the survey in front of the researcher. Therefore if any questions were unclear an explanation could be given. In addition the results are more reliable than an online survey due to the same reason. The research could be conducted in the exact same manner in a different Scandic Hotel in a different city or country in order to increase the reliability of the results.

The data becomes less reliable due to the fact that it is partially biased. Within the respondents a group of Canadian travellers were asked to answer the questionnaire. A

quarter of the data came from these respondents; therefore this information cannot generalize for all consumers. The group had the same origin, age group and travel purpose influencing the results.

The research has a variety of limitations. First the research is conducted in a Finnish hotel. Scandic Hotels can be found throughout Europe, and this research only focusses on one hotel in Finland. The author has not done any research into the population, therefore not knowing enough about the Finnish customs and their ideas behind the topic. In addition the guests were from too many different countries to discover if there were any statistical differences between nations. For example there were three Indians who answered the survey, one Colombian and two guests from Uganda. The limitation lies in the amount of guests from these various countries.

Another limitation which ties in to the sample size is the fact that a quarter of the respondents came from the same travel group. Therefore they had the possibility to discuss answers while answering the survey. These guests might not have answered the questions as they would have done if they were alone. The mentioned respondents all came from Canada, and were working in the same field as teachers. Therefore this creates biased data and a sample which is not random.

The next limitation which can be found is the size of the topic. CSR consists of so many factors that the topic had to be narrowed down to the sustainability aspect of CSR. The results of the survey show how guests perceive sustainability in a CSR context. In addition to this the guests are not all fully aware of sustainability and the different definitions. This increases the chances of questions being misinterpreted.

The survey was conducted on two days during the week and one day during the weekend. Most of the guests answering the survey answered in the morning. Therefore one of the limitations is that guests in the evening did not have the opportunity to participate in the study.

The final limitation to the research dealt with time. Due to the fact that the research could only be conducted throughout three days the researcher did not receive as many respondents as he was hoping for. Even though enough surveys were conducted for a proper research the results would have been more into depth if the researchers would have had more time to conduct the research.

5 Data Description

The research was conducted over a three day period. In total 103 hotel guests responded to the survey. The questions have been divided in general questions, perception questions and questions about Scandic. The results can be seen as followed.

5.1 General Questions

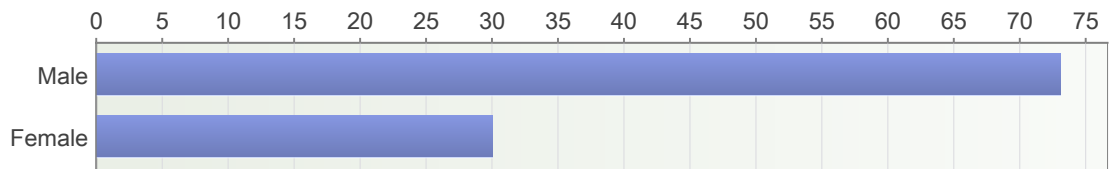


Figure 9. Gender (N=103)

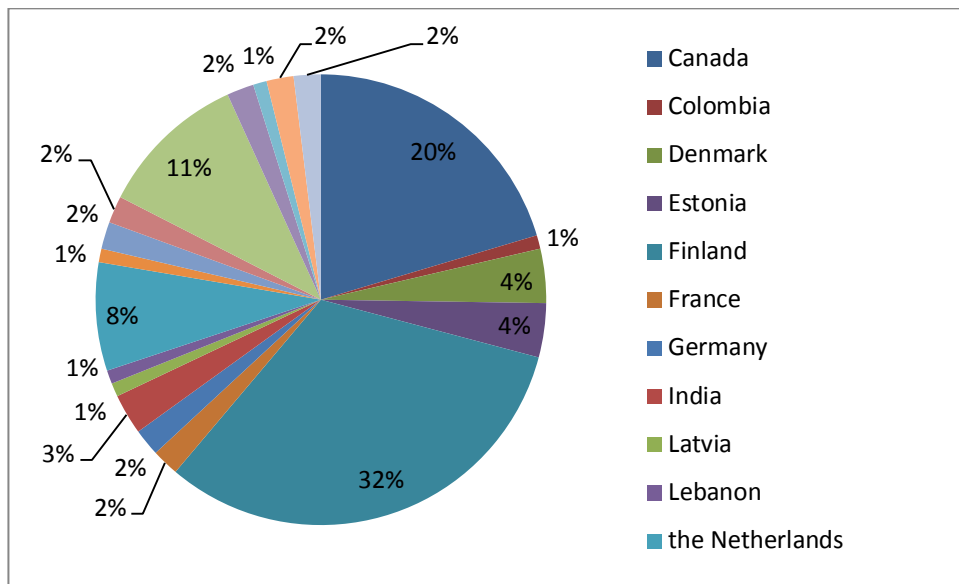


Figure 10. Origin (N=103)

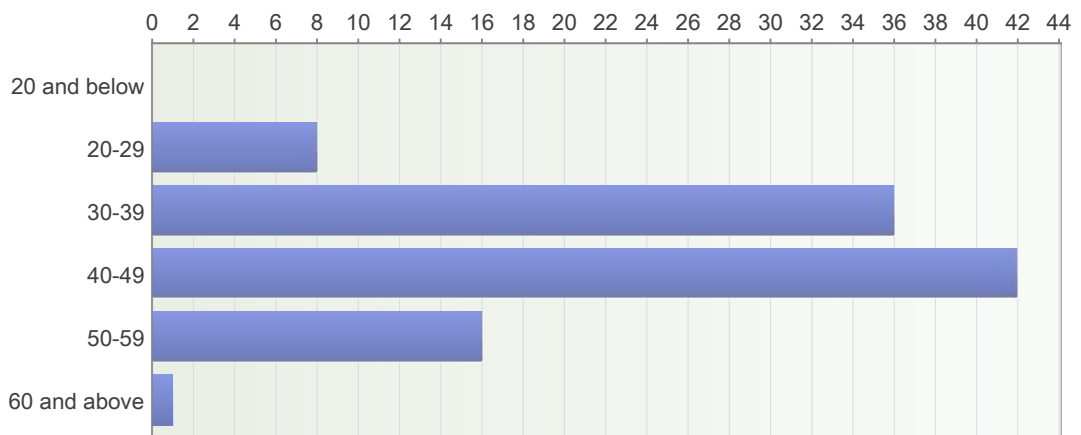


Figure 11. Age (N=103)

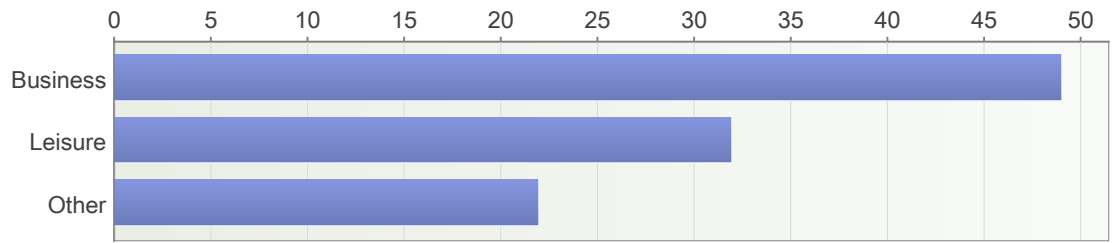


Figure 12. Purpose of Travel (N=103)

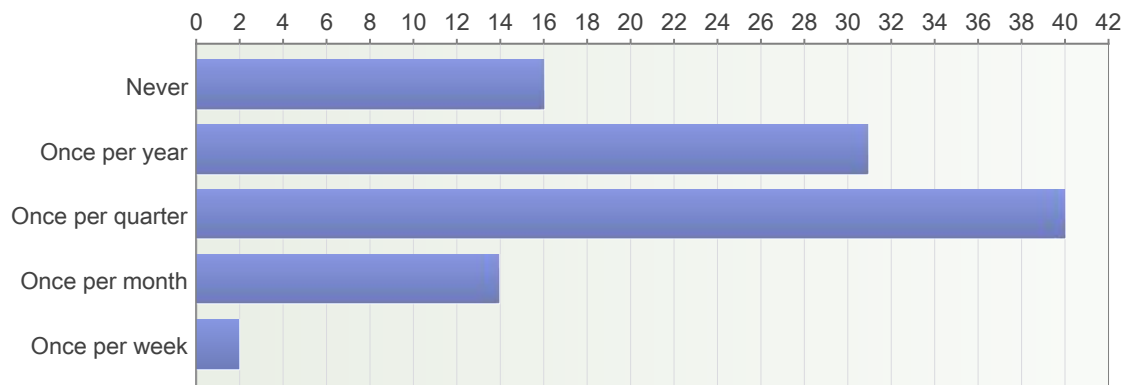


Figure 13. Frequency of stay at Scandic (N=103)

More than two thirds of the respondents are male. Females make up 29% and males 71%. The respondents come from 19 different countries including five different continents. Yet 52% of the total respondents come from Canada and Finland. The other countries will be grouped together as other for analyses. The average age scale of the guests was between 30 and 49 years old. Respondents were mostly business travellers. Interestingly more than twenty travellers were neither on business or leisure trip. Finally the majority of the guests stay with a Scandic hotel at least once a year. Only 15.6% have never stayed with a Scandic Hotel before.

5.2 Guest Perception

When looking at the perception of guests, Scandic is rated as the most sustainable hotel chain amongst competitors as can be seen in table 2. 32 respondents rated Scandic as completely sustainable whereas Intercontinental only received 11 completely sustainable ratings. Table 3 shows when looking at environmental impacts guest perceive the majority of the emissions to have decreased a little in the past 20 years.

Table 2. Perceived Sustainability by Guest (N=103)

	Not at all sustainable	Slightly sustainable	Moderately sustainable	Very sustainable	Completely sustainable	Average
Hilton Worldwide	4	15	36	39	9	3.33
Scandic Hotels	1	6	20	44	32	3.97
Kämp Group	6	10	37	45	5	3.32
Best Western Hotels	5	12	50	30	6	3.19
Intercontinental Hotels	4	13	33	42	11	3.42
Radisson Blu	2	8	38	45	10	3.51
Sokos Hotels	4	11	48	33	7	3.27
Omena Hotels	5	13	48	36	1	3.15

Table 3. Perceived Environmental Impact (N=103)

	Decreased a lot	Decreased a little	Increased a little	Increased a lot	Average
Energy consumption per guest night	32	56	13	2	1.85
Water consumption per guest night	32	54	14	3	1.88
Unsorted waste per guest night	37	53	11	2	1.79
Emissions of Co2 per guest night	44	45	12	2	1.73

Table 4. Guest Value (N=103)

	Not at all important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely important	Average
Price	8	20	35	24	16	3.19
Location	0	2	14	54	33	4.15
Service	1	2	9	48	43	4.26
Sustainability Policy	35	26	27	12	3	2.24
Safety	2	1	9	49	42	4.24
Brand Loyalty	18	26	40	12	7	2.65

Respondents of the survey do not find the sustainability policy of a hotel important when they book a hotel room. Service, safety and location are more important in comparison according to table 4. When taking a look at Figure 14, 68% of the respondents prefer staying in a sustainable hotel in comparison to an unsustainable. Not if the respondents prefer staying in an unsustainable hotel. This can also be seen in Figure 15 where the majority of guests agree with the statement that they are responsible for making a difference in the world by choosing a sustainable hotel. In addition Figure 16 shows the willingness to pay for sustainability.

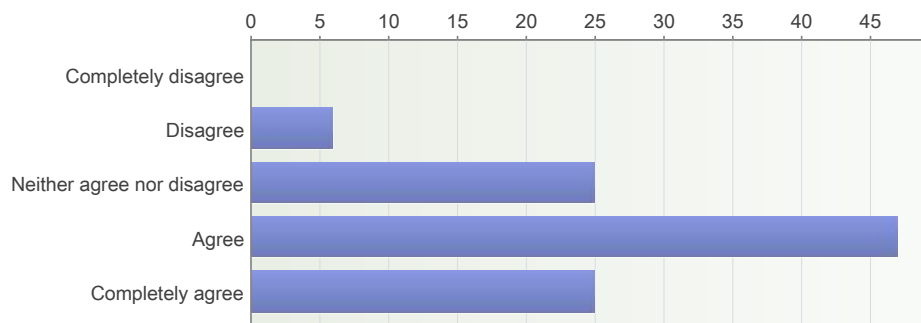
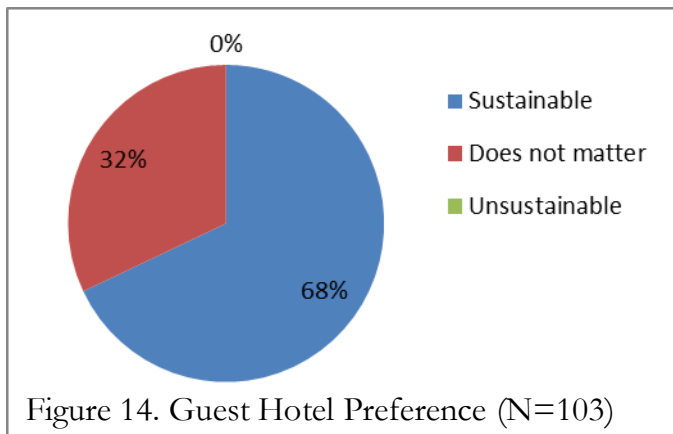


Figure 15. Guest responsibility (N=103)

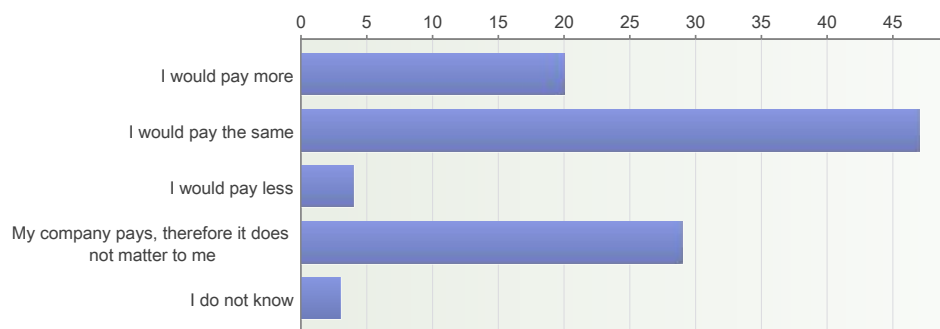


Figure 16. Guest willingness to pay (N=103)

5.3 Scandic

Finally the survey results show how the information is communicated to the guests which can be seen in Figure 17. Most of the communication can be found within the room on signs or in a magazine. Only two respondents have received an email regarding the Sustainability in Scandic. Figure 18 shows how Scandic can improve their sustainability policy according to the guest perspective.

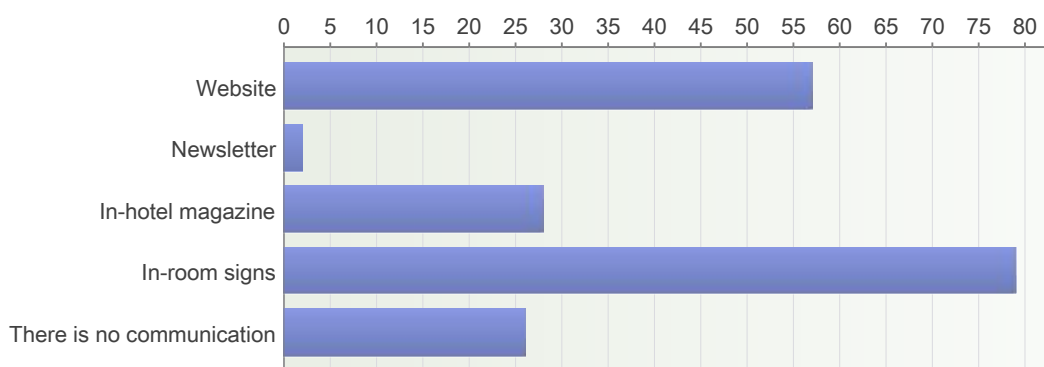


Figure 17. Scandic's Communication Methods (N=103)

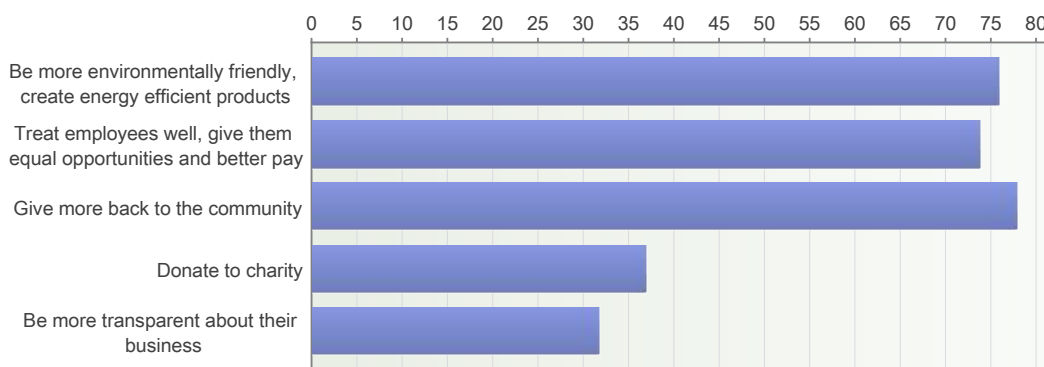


Figure 18. Scandic's Improvement Points (N=103)

6 Data Analyses

In order to answer the hypothesis “Scandic Hotels is one of the leaders in Corporate Social Responsibility in the hospitality industry” and the sub research questions the results of the survey must be analysed and combined with the theoretical framework. First, the analyses will look at the guest of Scandic in different target groups.

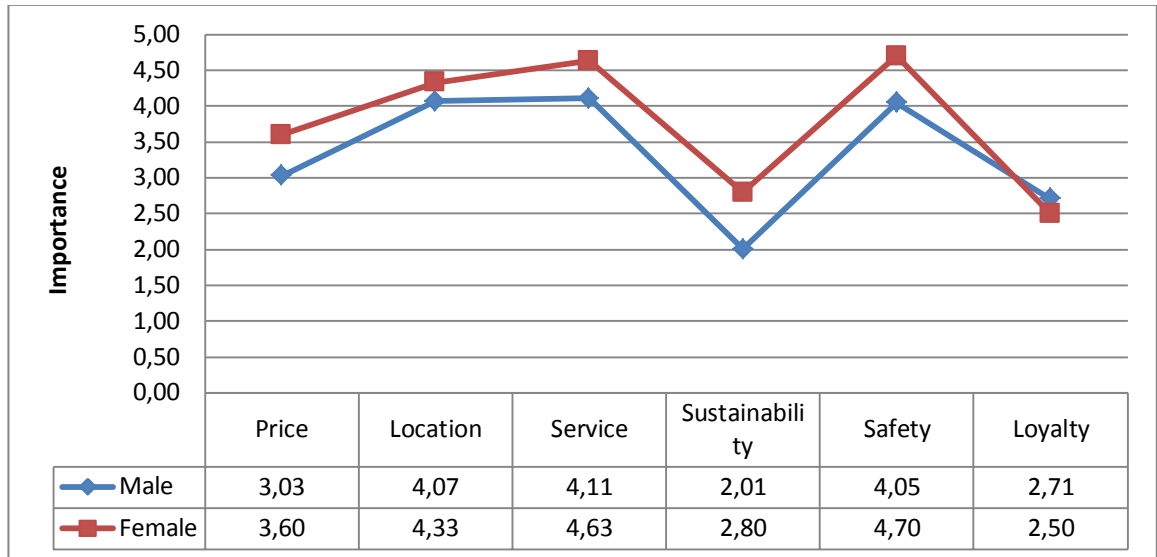


Figure 19. Gender Booking Values (N=103)

Figure 19. Looks at the importance a factor plays when booking a hotel room for men and women. As can be seen in Figure 19 location, service and safety are far more important values than sustainability. For men sustainability is the least important factor when booking a hotel, whereas women this is brand loyalty. Table 5 shows that the difference between men and women is significantly different.

Table 5. Independent Sample T-Test

		Independent Samples Test								
		Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Interval of the	
									Lower	Upper
Sustainability Policy	Equal variances assumed	1,005	,319	-3,357	101	,001	-,786	,234	-1,251	-,322
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,220	49,570	,002	-,786	,244	-1,277	-,296

The second group which will be distinguished is the location of where the guests are coming from; the origin. When looking at what is important for guests when they book a hotel again sustainability policy ranks lowest for Finland and the other countries. Yet, for the Canadians the sustainability policy of a hotel is more important than being brand loyal.

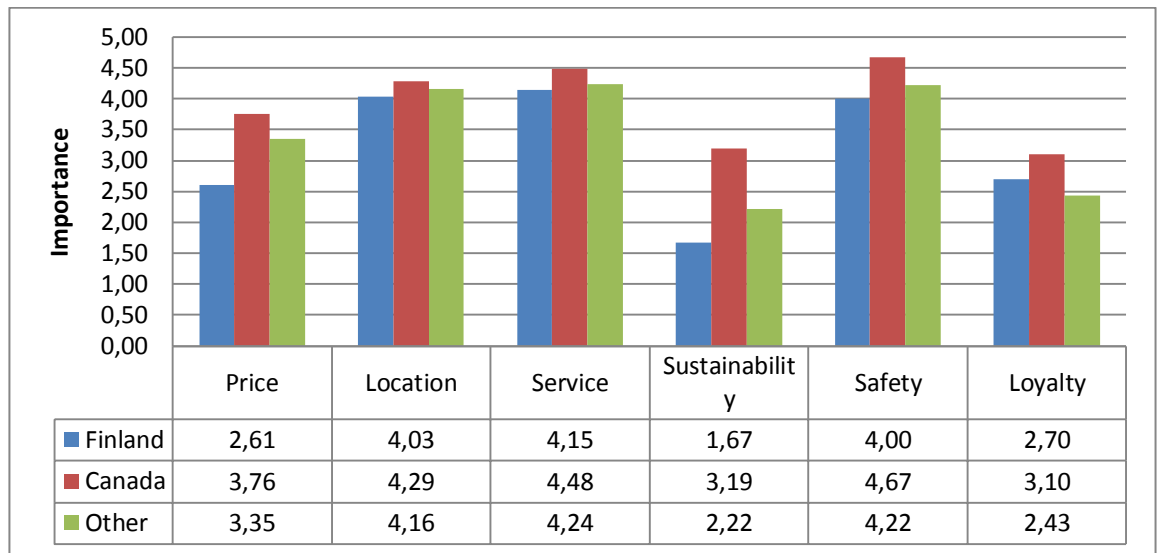


Figure 20. Origin Booking Values (N=103)

When looking at the purpose of travel, the same trend which can be seen when looking at gender or origin can be seen. Figure 21 shows the purpose of travel and how important the factors are when booking a room. Other travel purposes included school trip and sports tournament. Again sustainability policy of a hotel is not a decisive factor for guests.

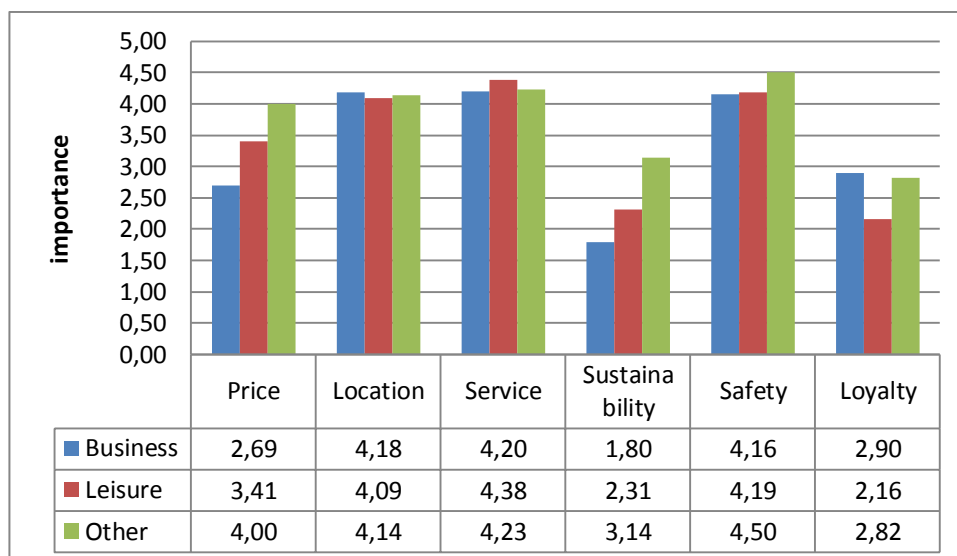


Figure 21. Purpose of Travel Booking Values (N=103)

After looking at gender, origin and purpose of travel the next target to look at is age. As can be seen in Figure 22, the same trend as with gender, origin and purpose of travel continues. Even though sustainability is the least important factor when booking a room it is interesting to see that there is an increase in importance from 20-29 year olds to 30-39 years olds and after the age of 39 the importance of sustainability decreases

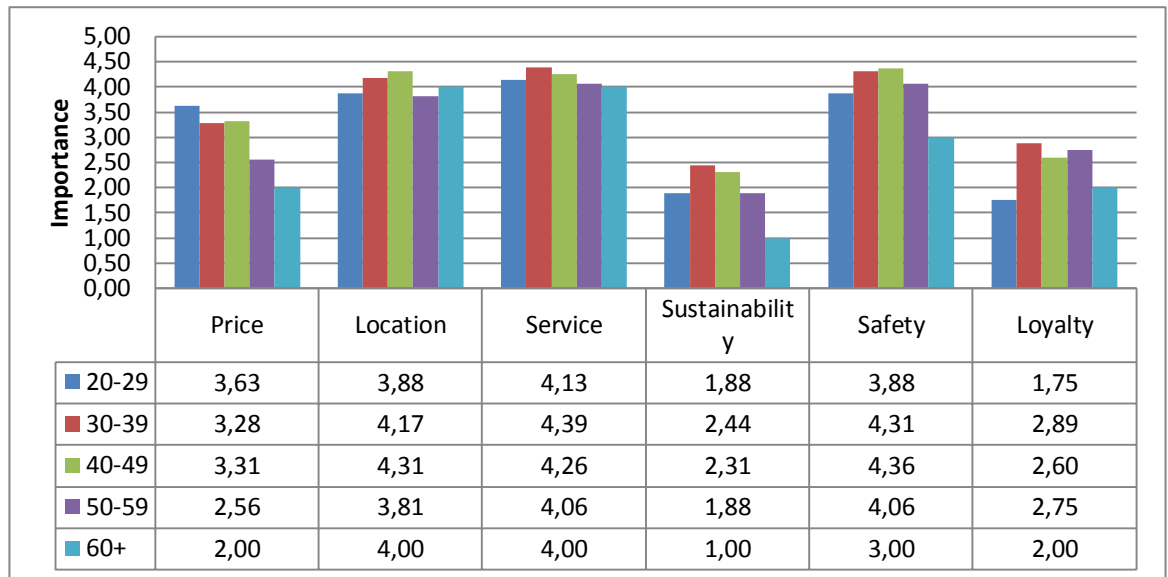


Figure 22 Age Booking Values (N=103)

Finally the difference between frequent and non-frequent travellers can be analysed. Interestingly according to the survey the more frequent a guest travels the less important a sustainability policy becomes when booking a hotel.

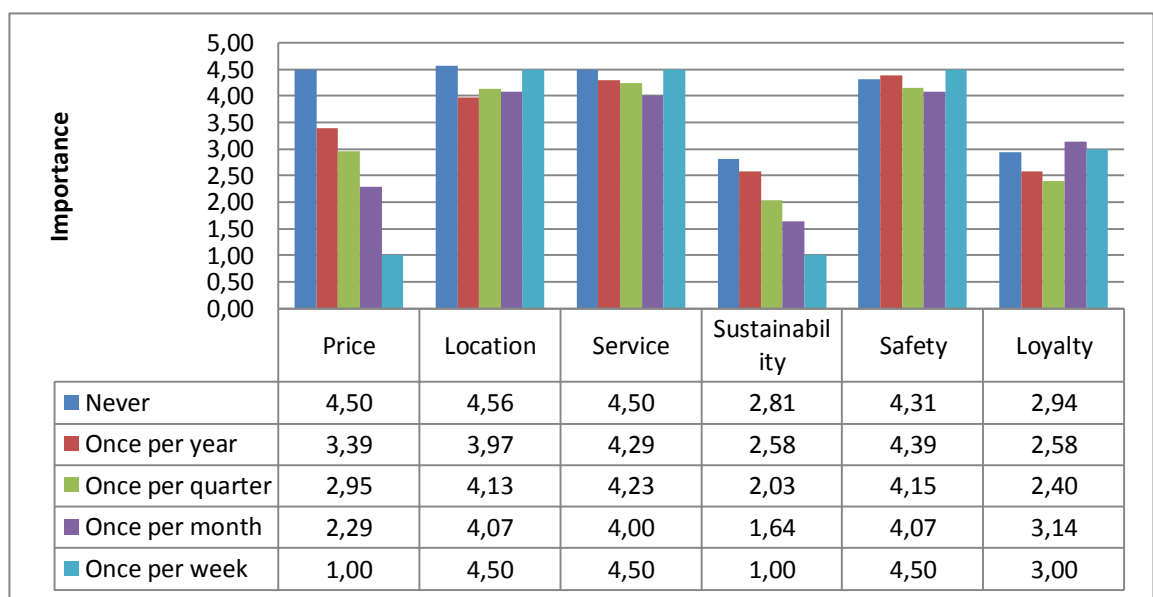


Figure 23 Frequency Booking Values (N=103)

Figures 19 through 23 all give an idea what the role of a sustainability policy is when booking a hotel room. Women tend to find the sustainability policy of a hotel more important than men. In comparison to Finns and people from other countries Canadians find sustainability policies more important than brand loyalty. Business travellers are less environmentally cautious in comparison to leisure and other travellers. Finally the older the guest is, and the more frequent a guest travels how less important the sustainability policy of a hotel becomes.

When asking the guests of Scandic Hotels if they “have a personal responsibility to help make a difference in the world by staying at a sustainable hotel” both men and women strongly agree with the statement. As can be seen in Table 6 women have a stronger urge to choose a sustainable hotel than men. The same claim which could be found in Figure 19. Table 7 shows that Canadians feel more responsible than Finns, and guests from other countries to contribute to a better world. The standard deviations of these outcomes confirm these findings.

Table 6. Gender vs responsibility

What is your gender?	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Male	3,75	73	,894
Female	4,20	30	,610
Total	3,88	103	,844

Table 7. Origin vs responsibility

Origin_Other	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Finland	3,88	33	,927
Canada	4,14	21	,727
Other	3,78	49	,823
Total	3,88	103	,844

From the previous analyses, the assumption can be made that women and Canadians value sustainability over men and people from other countries. This claim is strengthened by analysing the question if guests would prefer to stay in a sustainable, unsustainable hotel or if it did not matter to them. These can be found in Table 8.

Table 8. Guest Hotel Preference (N=103)

	Sustainable	It does not matter	Unsustainable	Percentage
Male	42	31	0	58%
Female	28	2	0	93%
Finland	18	15	0	55%
Canada	19	2	0	90%
Other	33	16	0	67%

Even though guests do not take sustainability into account when booking a room, they do see the value in sustainability. As mentioned in the literature review by Cavagnaro and Curiel (2012, 3) the triple bottom line creates value for the guests. The next step is to see how guests perceive Scandic in the Helsinki market. The same target groups will be taken into account. As can be seen in Figure 24 both men and women perceive Scandic to be the most sustainable in the Helsinki market. The statistical significance between the differences in gender is too small.

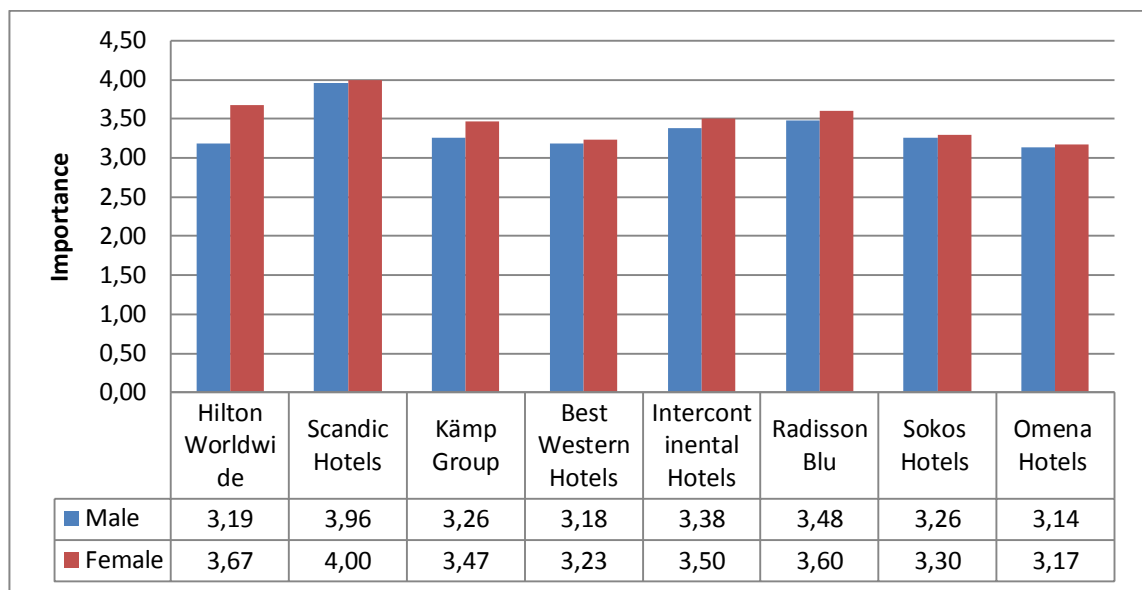


Figure 24 Gender vs Guest Perception (N=103)

The next target would be the origin of the guest. Interestingly the Finns perceive Scandic Hotels to be more sustainable than the Canadians or other guests. This could have to do with the fact that Scandic is a Nordic hotel chain. Therefore the Finnish guests are more familiar with the company. Next to this, the Finns compare all other companies as far less sustainable than Scandic Hotels. The variance is greater in comparison to Canadians and other countries as can be seen in Figure 25.

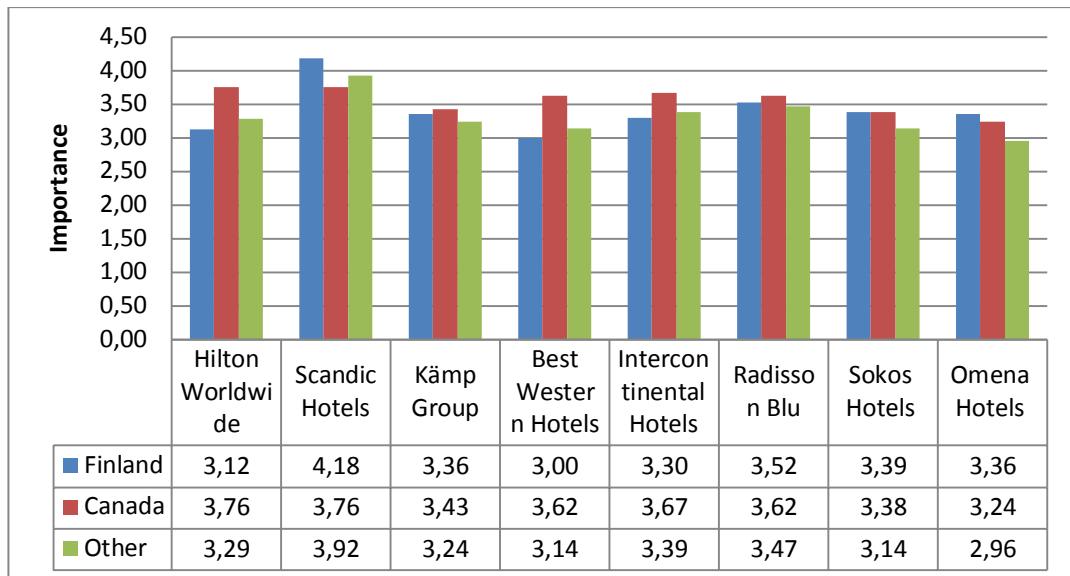


Figure 25. Origin vs Guest Perception (N=103)

The business traveler perceives Scandic Hotels as more sustainable than other hotel chains. This can have various reasons, one being most business travellers are from Finland and therefore more familiar with the company. Another could be business travelers stay more in hotels and therefore have a better understanding of a sustainability policy.

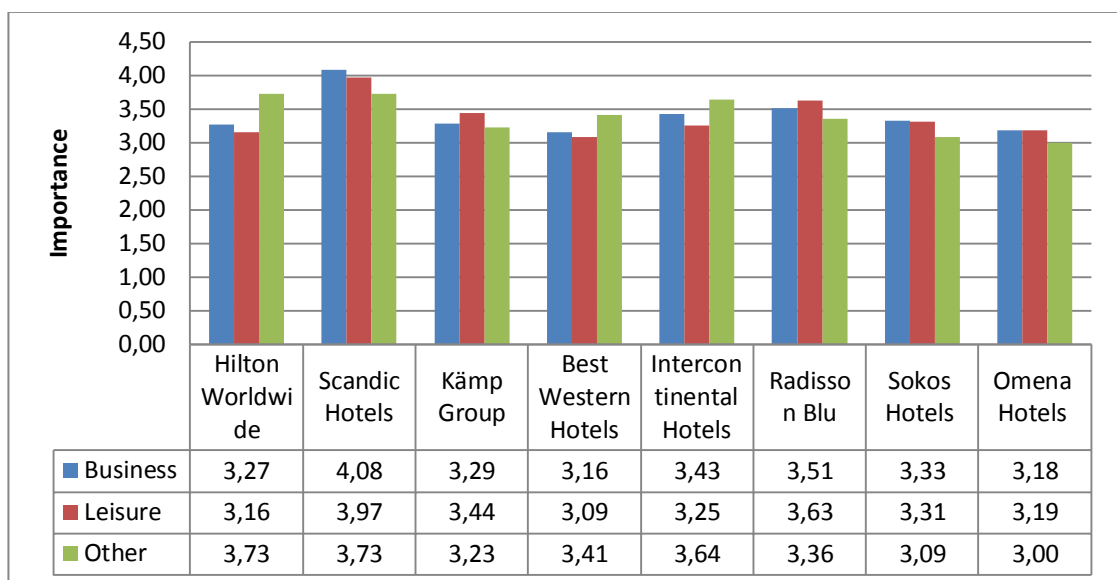


Figure 26. Purpose vs Guest Perception (N=103)

The differences in age groups and perception of Scandic Hotels do not show any new information. Therefore the final table will look at frequency of travel. As can be seen in Figure 27, the more a guest travels the more sustainable he or she perceives Scandic.

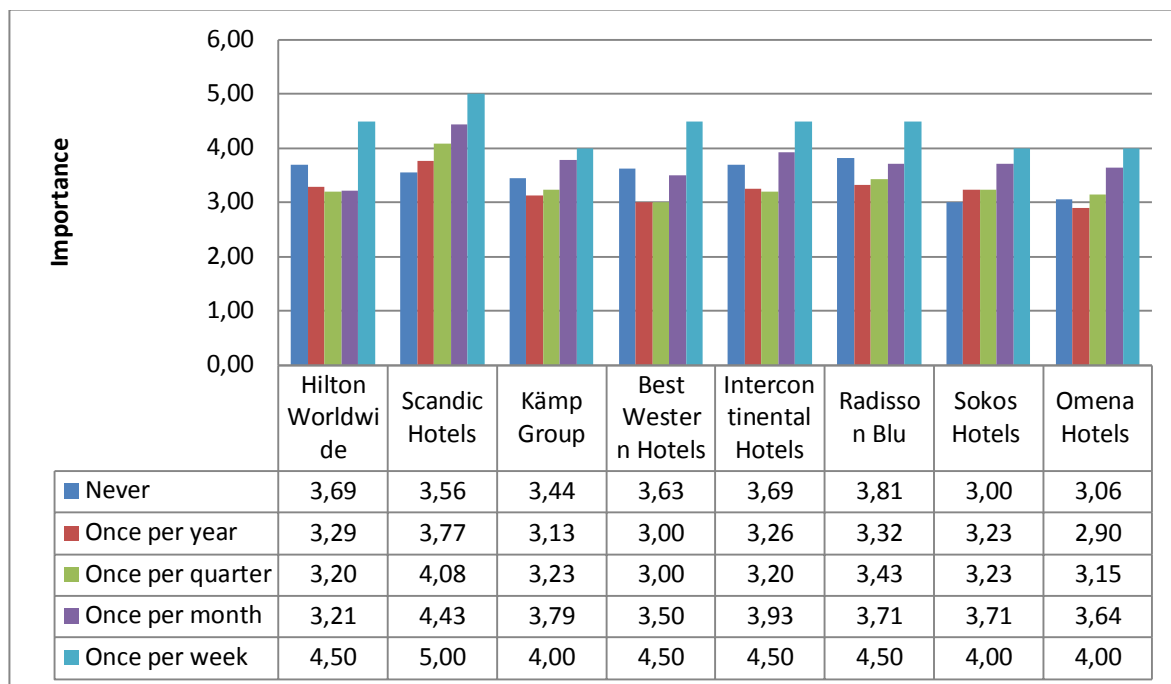


Figure 27. Frequency vs. Guest Perception (N=103)

Business travellers tend to perceive Scandic Hotels more sustainable than leisure travellers. The business traveller is often a more experienced traveller than a leisure traveller. By sleeping in a hotel more often he or she becomes more familiar with what makes a hotel sustainable or not. This is also shown interestingly, the more frequent a guest travels the more sustainable they rate Scandic as a hotel chain. If a guest stays in a specific hotel chain more than once he or she becomes more familiar with the brand. Or the information which is shared with regular guests is different from what is shared with non-regular guests.

As of now the survey has shown that guests do not take the sustainability policy of a hotel into account when booking a room. Yet when the respondents choose between an unsustainable hotel and a sustainable one, they most likely choose the sustainable hotel. When looking at Scandic Hotels in the Helsinki market the chain is perceived to be the most sustainable. Thus Scandic is communicating effectively to the guest, or acting in a sustainable manner.

The next step is therefore to analyse how Scandic Hotels delivers their message to the guests and what works most effectively. Table 9 shows the various communication methods Scandic Hotels uses. The in room signs and the website are the most effective methods of communication. Yet in order to see what works most effectively the results can be broken down per target. As mentioned by Oh and Lee (2013, 52) the right message must be communicated to the right target.

Table 9. Communication distribution

\$Combined Frequencies				
		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Communication ^a	Website	57	29,7%	55,3%
	Newsletter	2	1,0%	1,9%
	In hotel magazine	28	14,6%	27,2%
	In-room sign	79	41,1%	76,7%
	No communication	26	13,5%	25,2%
Total		192	100,0%	186,4%

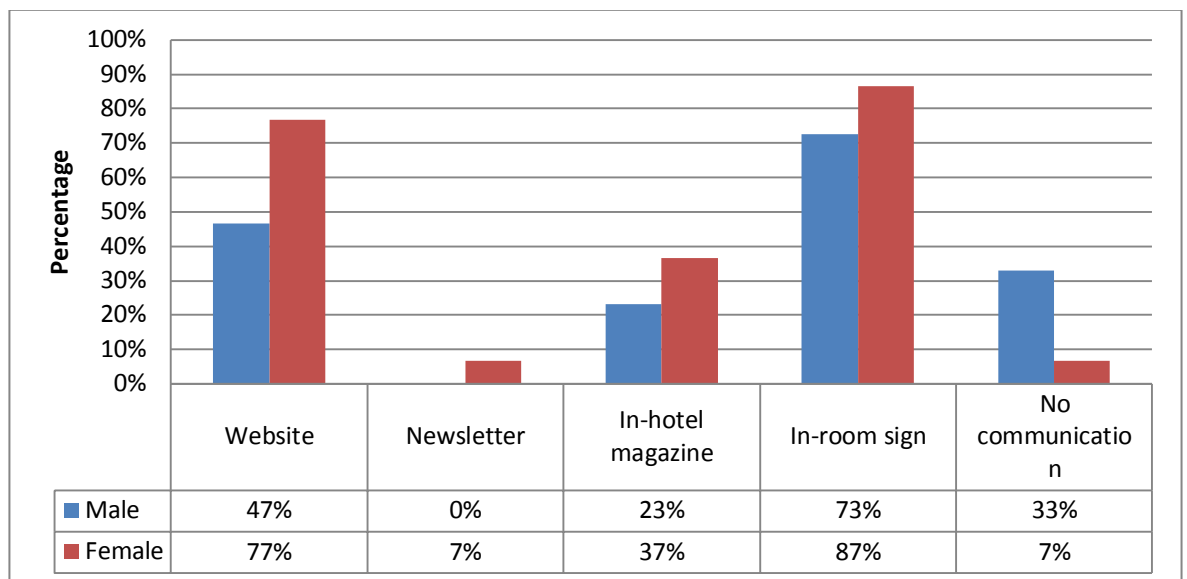


Figure 28. Gender vs communication (N=103)

As can be seen in Table 9 and Figure 28 most of the information which guest receive comes from within the room. Women tend to read more information during their stay than men do, both on the website and in the hotel magazine. Due to the fact that women read more about sustainability this could explain why they value it more when choosing a hotel. Figure 29 shows how communication is received according to origin.

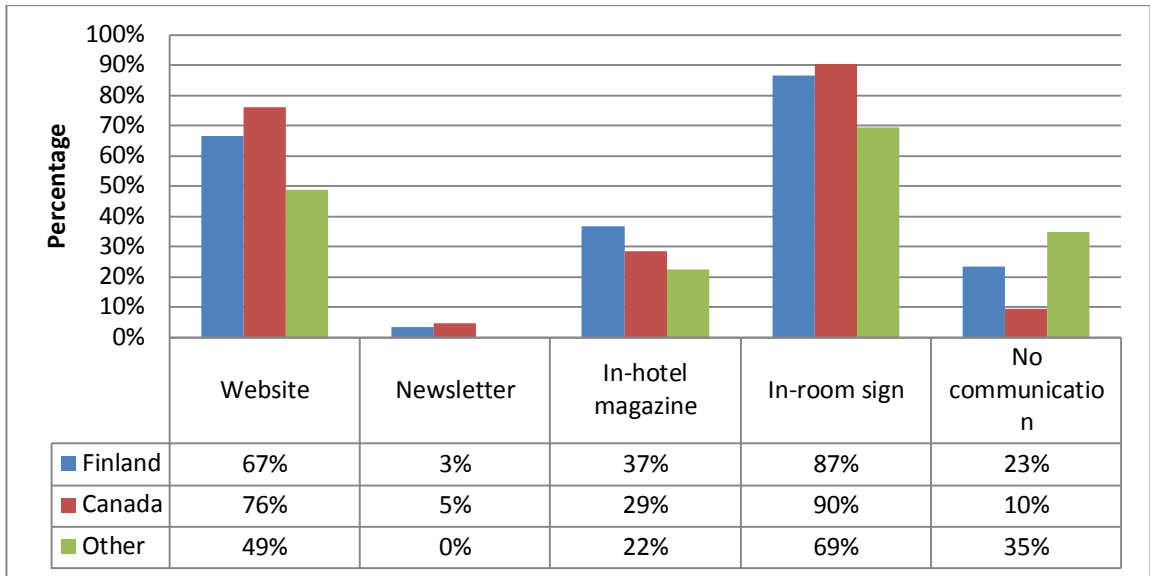


Figure 29. Origin vs communication (N=103)

When looking at the origin of guests all categories receive most information within their room. Finnish guests read more in hotel magazines than Canadians and guests from other origins. Canadians receive 76% of their information from the internet compared to 67% of the Finns. Finally the Canadians have received the most information when comparing to other origins. Yet if we would look at the origin of guests and their gender what would the table then look like?

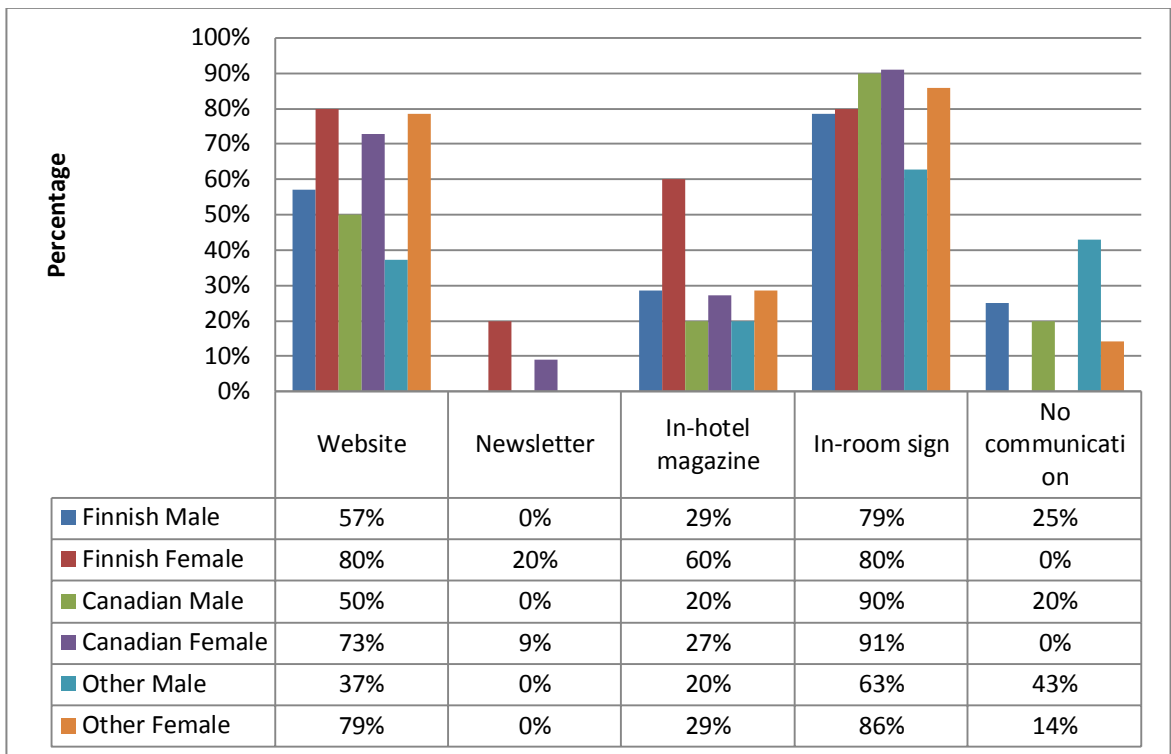


Figure 30 Origin gender vs communication (N=103)

As can be seen in Figure 30 Finnish females tend to read more in hotel magazines than any other guest. The men from other countries feel there is no communication at all. In addition the men from other countries receive little information from the in-room signs.

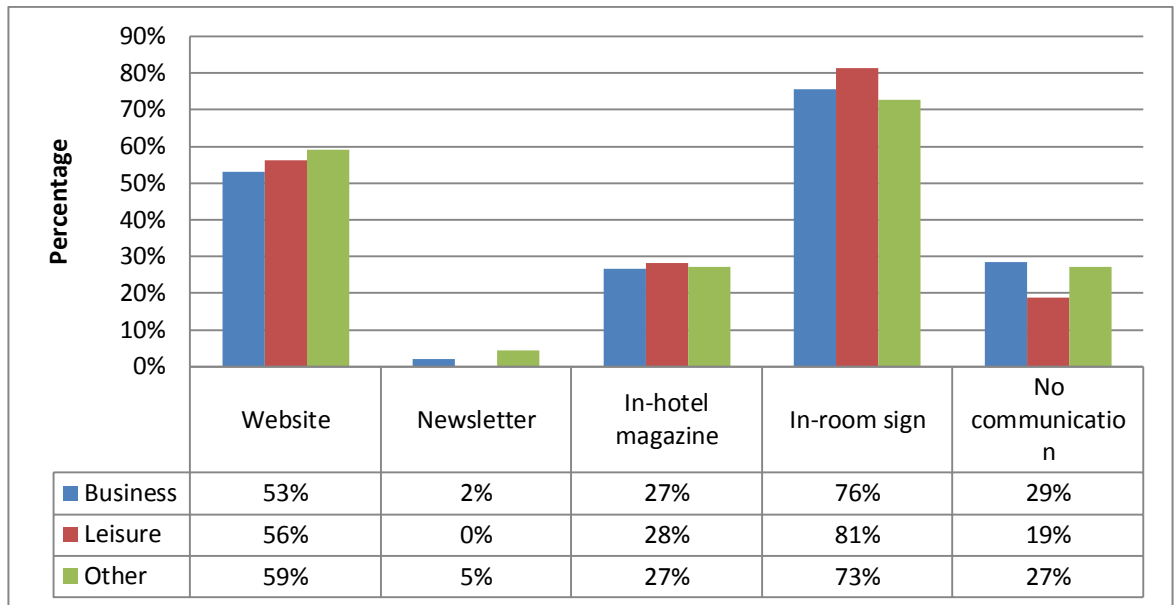


Figure 31. Purpose vs communication (N=103)

Figure 31 shows that the business traveller feels there is no communication. In addition he uses the website the least of all guests. This could explain why the business traveller feels there is no communication. The other communication methods are being read in similar manners.

The results of purpose of travel can be combined with the gender of the guest. This will show if a specific gender with a different purpose receives different information. When looking at Figure 32 the female business traveller gets all her information from the website. The female leisure traveller receives all her information in the room. Interestingly the business and leisure female both feel there is information. Both business and leisure male receive more information from staying in the hotel than from looking at the website. This shows that women do more research into the hotel they are going to stay in than men.

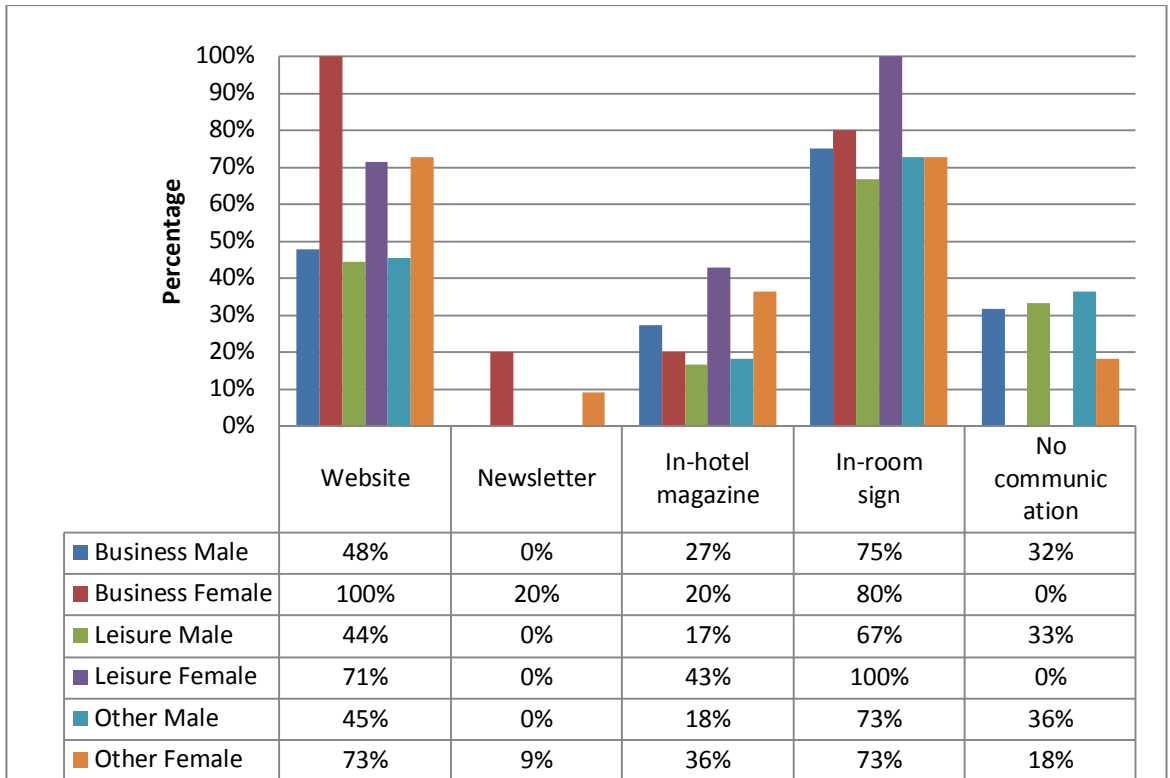


Figure 32. Gender purpose vs communication (N=103)

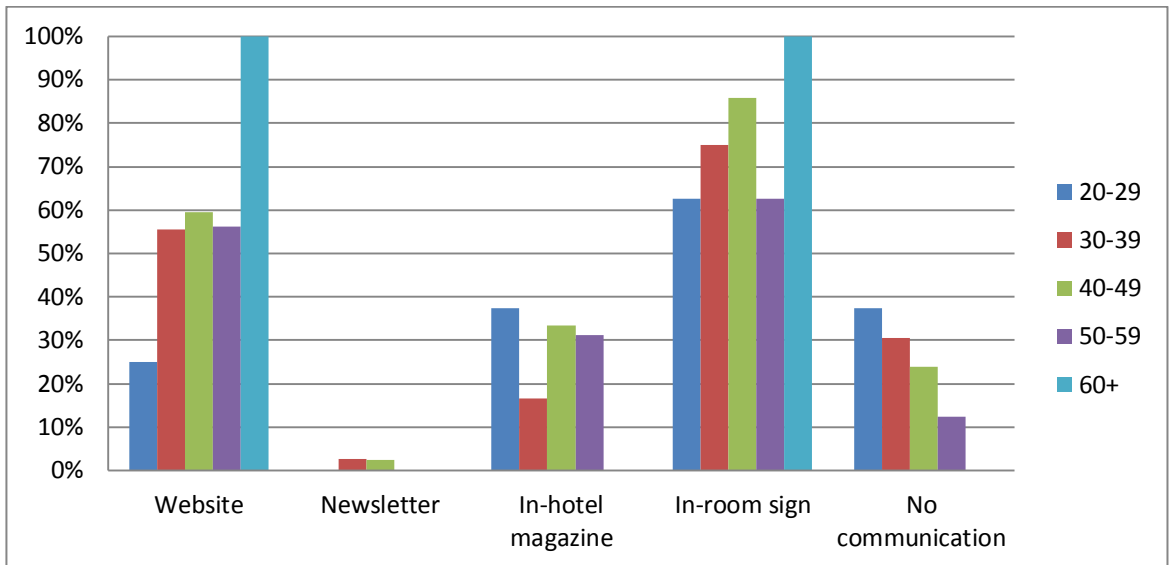


Figure 33. Age vs. communication (N=103)

When looking at the age and communications one can conclude that younger guests feel there is no communication with them. In addition the younger guests use the website least to find out information about Scandic Hotels. The younger generation receives their information in a different manner, and Scandic is not yet meeting their needs.

Finally when looking at frequency of travel Figure 34 shows that frequency, the more a guest travels the more information he or she receives by in room signs. In addition the guests that stay within a Scandic Hotel once per week feel there is not enough communication whereas a guest who stays one per month feels there is. This could mean that to a certain point frequent travellers read information. This can be seen on the website for example. When a guest is relatively new to a hotel he or she tends to read more on the website than a frequent traveller.

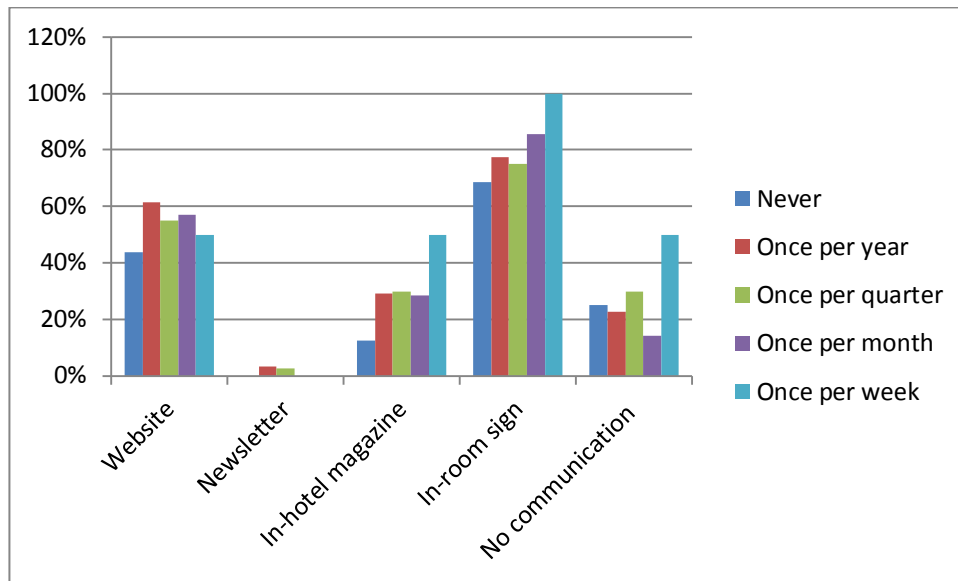


Figure 34. Frequency of travel vs communication (N=103)

Most of Scandic Hotels communication comes from in-room signs or the website of the hotel. The company uses varied communications mix which to communicate with the guest. As can be found in the theoretical framework Scammel (2006) claims the importance of a good communication mix per target group.

Now that we know how Scandic communicates with the guest the next step is to research if the message Scandic wants the guest to receive actually arrives. The following figures will look at each target and if they feel the energy consumption, water consumption, guest waste and co2 emissions have increased or decreased in the past 20 years. On a likert scale 1 stands for a high decrease whereas 4 stands for high increase. As mentioned in 2.3 the “right message” must be written for the “right person” as claimed by Oh and Lee (2013, 52)

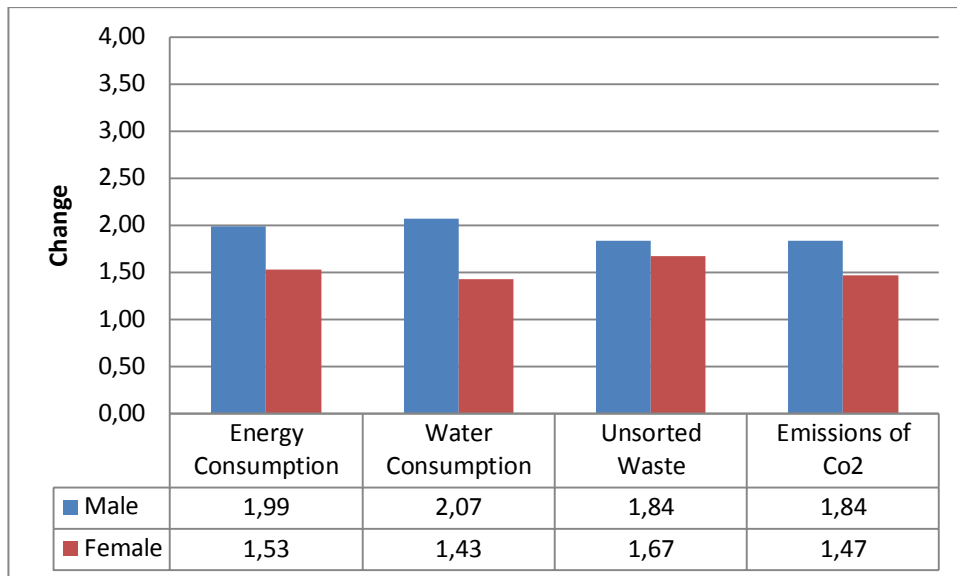


Figure 29. Gender vs message (N=103)

As can be seen in in Figure 29 women believe the energy, water, waste and emissions have decreased more than men think. This confirms the previous findings where women perceive Scandic Hotels as more sustainable than men do. As discovered earlier in Figure 19 women value sustainability more than men. The communication of the sustainability policy is therefore more effective for women than for men.

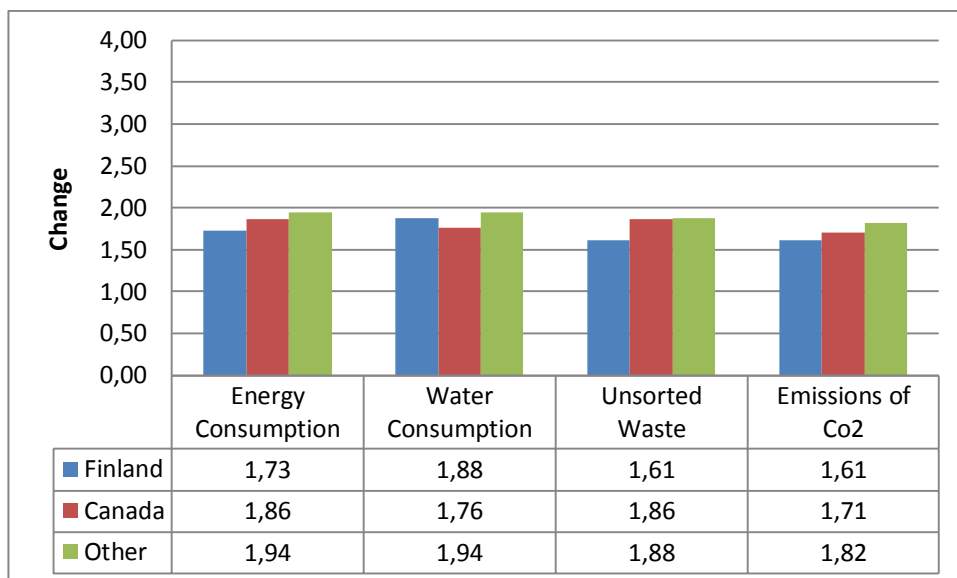


Figure 30. Origin vs message (N=103)

Figure 30 shows the effectiveness of communication in regards to the origin of the guest. Interestingly what was previously discovered regarding origin is not confirmed with these results. Even though Canadians value sustainability more and perceive

Scandic Hotels as more sustainable than Finns and guests from other countries, according to Canadians the impacts on society have only decreased a little even though they have decreased a lot.

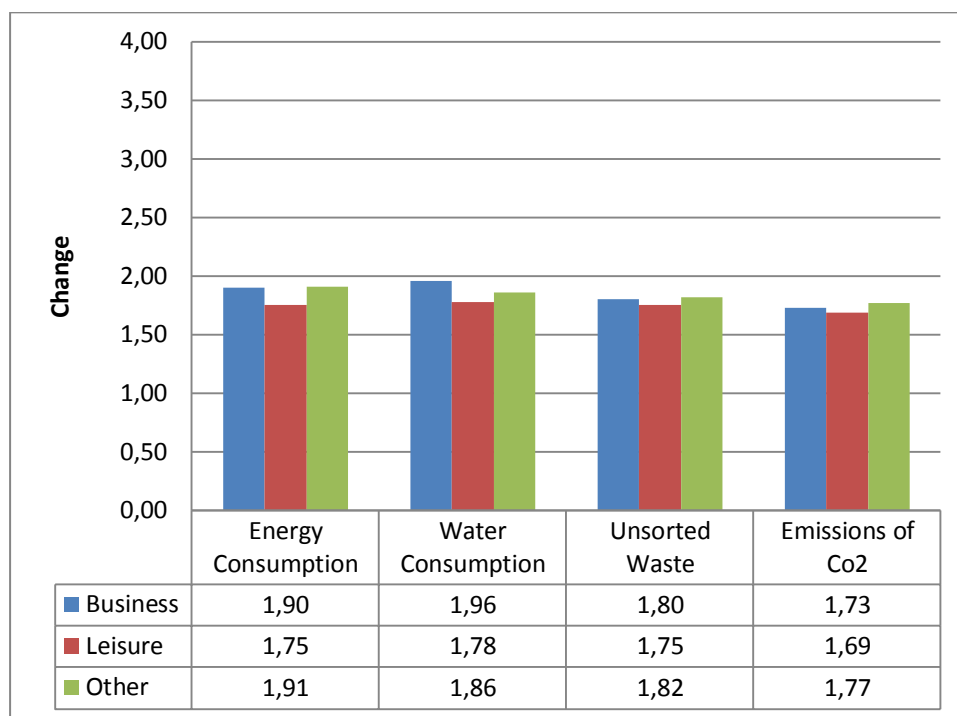


Figure 31. Purpose vs message (N=103)

As has been discovered previously business travellers find the sustainability policy of a hotel the least important factor when booking a room. When looking at the rating of Scandic Hotels in comparison to the competition the business traveller rates Scandic as most sustainable. Yet when looking at the how the emissions have increased or decreased the business traveller thinks the figures have only decreased a little in the past 20 years. The leisure and other travellers rate the decrease in emissions much higher.

Finally it is interesting to see if a more frequent traveller has better knowledge of how the emissions have changed in the past 20 years. Previously the findings have shown that the more frequent a guest travels, the less important the sustainability policy of a hotel is when booking. In addition the more frequent traveller rates Scandic as the most sustainable hotel in the market. Yet when looking at Figure 32 one can see that the frequent traveller thinks the emissions have only decreased a little. Therefore even

though they rate Scandic Hotels as more sustainable they do not necessarily know how much more sustainable Scandic compared to the competition.

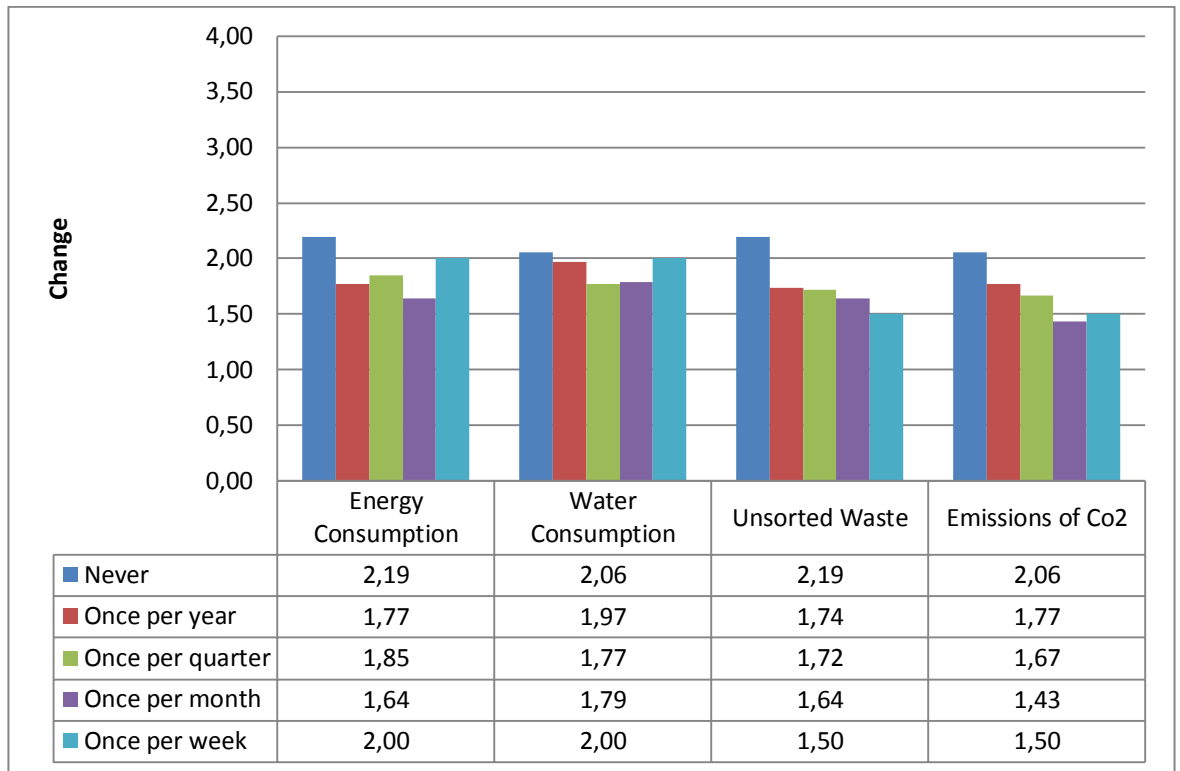


Figure 32. Frequency vs. message (N=103)

All target groups believe that Scandic Hotels have decreased their emissions in the past 20 years. Therefore the message which Scandic is trying to communicate to its guests is arriving correctly. In addition to asking the respondents about the emissions the research looked at what the respondents thought could be improved.

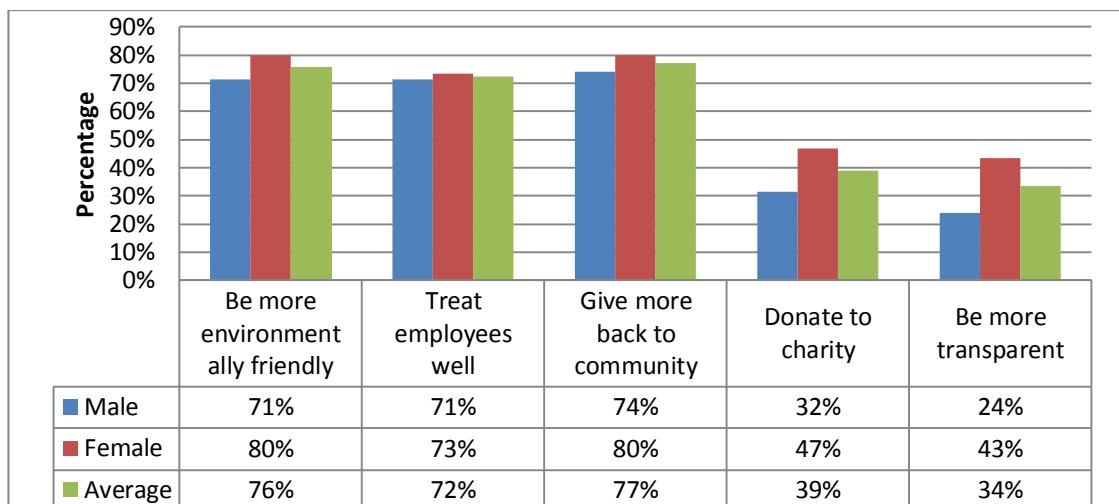


Figure 33. Gender vs improvement (N=103)

When taking a look at what Scandic Hotels could still improve regarding their sustainability policy there are no statistical significant differences as can be seen in Table 10. 76% of the respondents believe Scandic Hotels should be even more environmentally friendly that they already are. 72% believes they should treat employees better and 77% believes they should give more back to community. When looking at the other two option donating to charity and being more transparent about their business only 39% and 34% believe they should improve respectively. Reason for this could be the amount of information which is available to the consumer is mostly about donations made and being transparent about business.

Table 10. Statistical Significance Gender vs improvement (N=103)

		Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Interval of the	
Improvement_Scandic	Equal variances assumed	3,855	,052	,572	101	,568	,58539	1,02258	-1,44313	2,61391
	Equal variances not assumed			,637	69,401	,526	,58539	,91920	-1,24817	2,41894

When looking at Figure 34 a breakdown is given of origin and what could be improved. There is no difference regarding the results. Therefore the actual message which Scandic Hotels is giving to its guests is consistent.

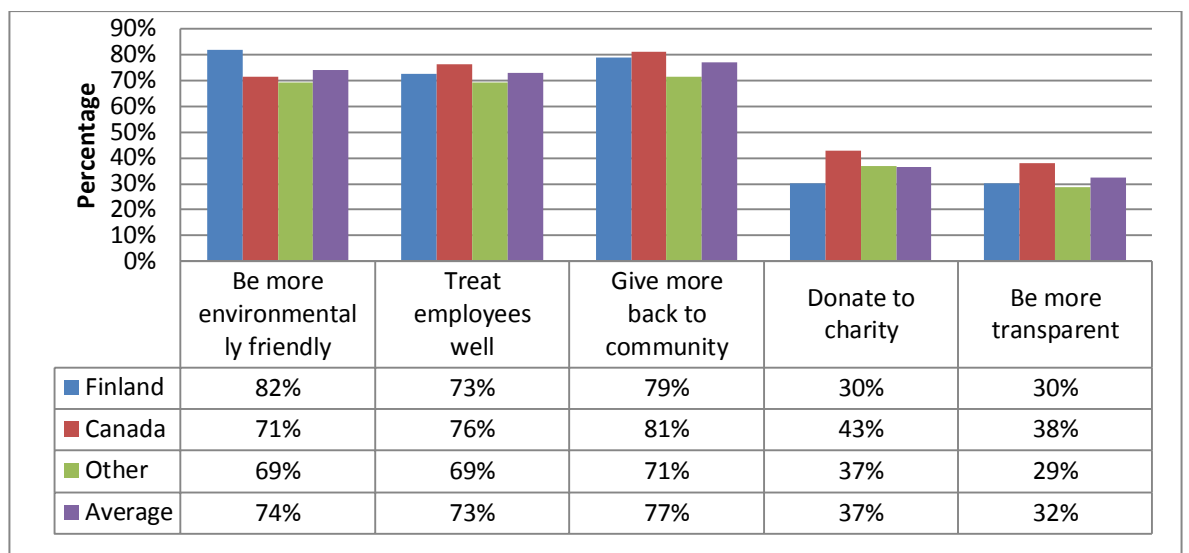


Figure 34. Origin vs improvement (N=103)

The final question of the survey which will be analysed is if guests are willing to pay more for staying in a sustainable hotel. This question was asked in order to see how guests would like to contribute to a sustainable hotel. As can be seen in Table 11 only 19.4% of the guests would be willing to pay more. 45.6% of the respondents would pay the same as they do now.

Table 11. Willingness to pay more (N=103)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I would pay more	20	19,4	19,4	19,4
	I would pay the same	47	45,6	45,6	65,0
	I would pay less	4	3,9	3,9	68,9
	My company pays	29	28,2	28,2	97,1
	I do not know	3	2,9	2,9	100,0
	Total	103	100,0	100,0	

As can be seen in Figure 35 women would pay more than men for a sustainable hotel. Due to the fact that women value sustainability higher than men this makes sense. Men would pay less for a sustainable hotel with the reasoning the savings should be added on to the customer. Why pay for not having your room cleaned?

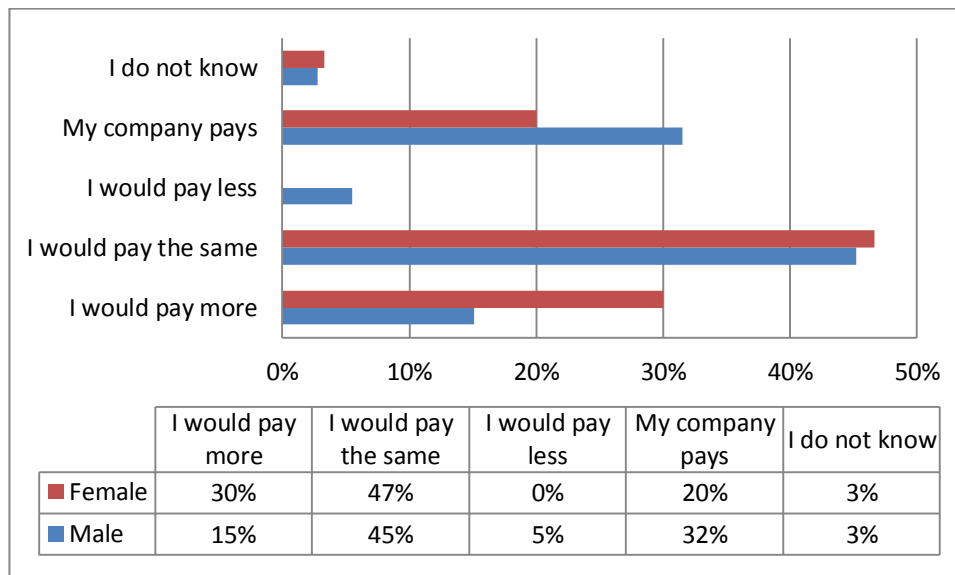


Figure 35. Gender vs willingness to pay (N=103)

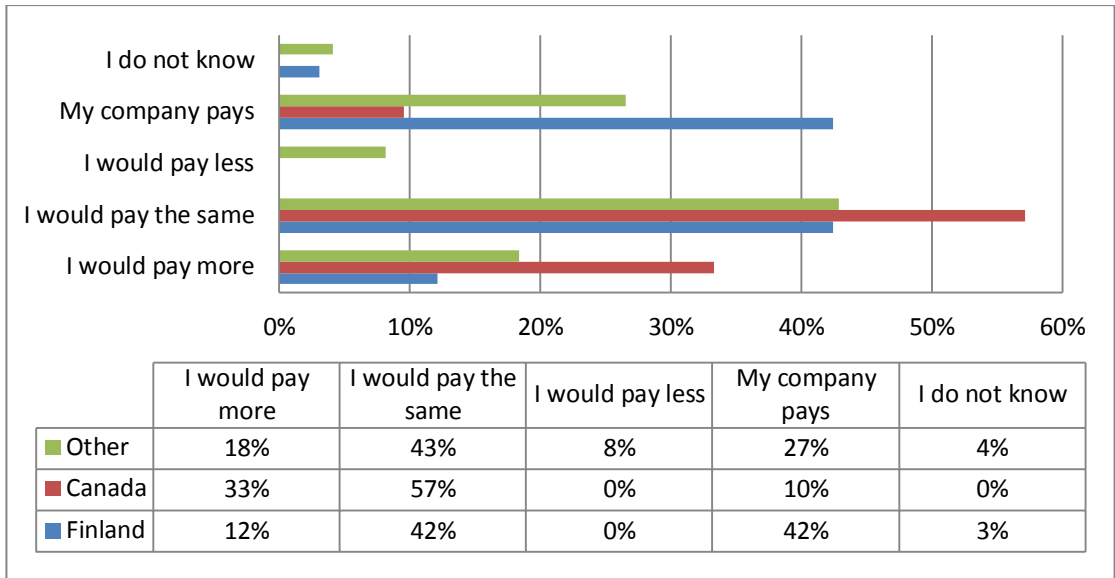


Figure 36. Origin vs. willingness to pay (N=103)

As seen in the previous results the Canadians are willing to pay more for a sustainable hotel than the Finns or guests from other countries. Therefore the previous results are strengthened with this question. On the contrary when looking at the Finns, 42% of the respondents companies were paying for the hotels in comparison to only 10% of the Canadians. Therefore purpose of travel must be distinguished. As can be see in Figure 37 31% of leisure travellers would pay more for a sustainable hotel. 49% of the business travellers had their companies pay for the room, but of the remaining business travellers 10% would still be willing to pay more for a sustainable hotel.

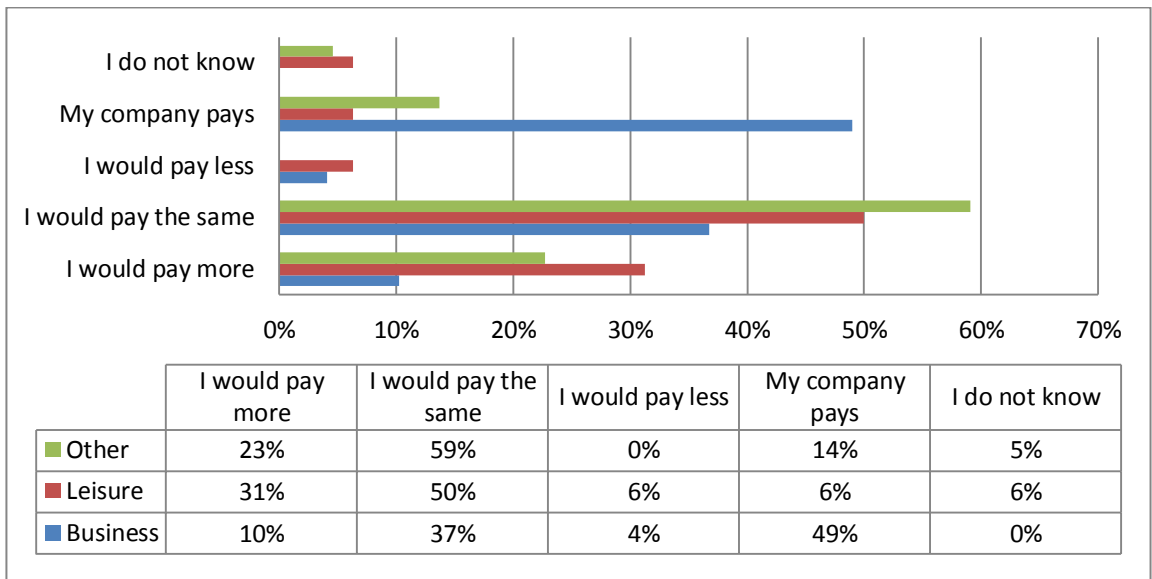


Figure 37. Purpose of travel vs willingness to pay (N=103)

Next the age of the traveller is analysed to see if this influences the willingness to pay for a sustainable hotel. As can be seen in Figure 38 24% of the guests aged between 40-49 years old is willing to pay more for a sustainable hotel. The reason behind this can be the job higher spending capability of this traveller and the level of education.

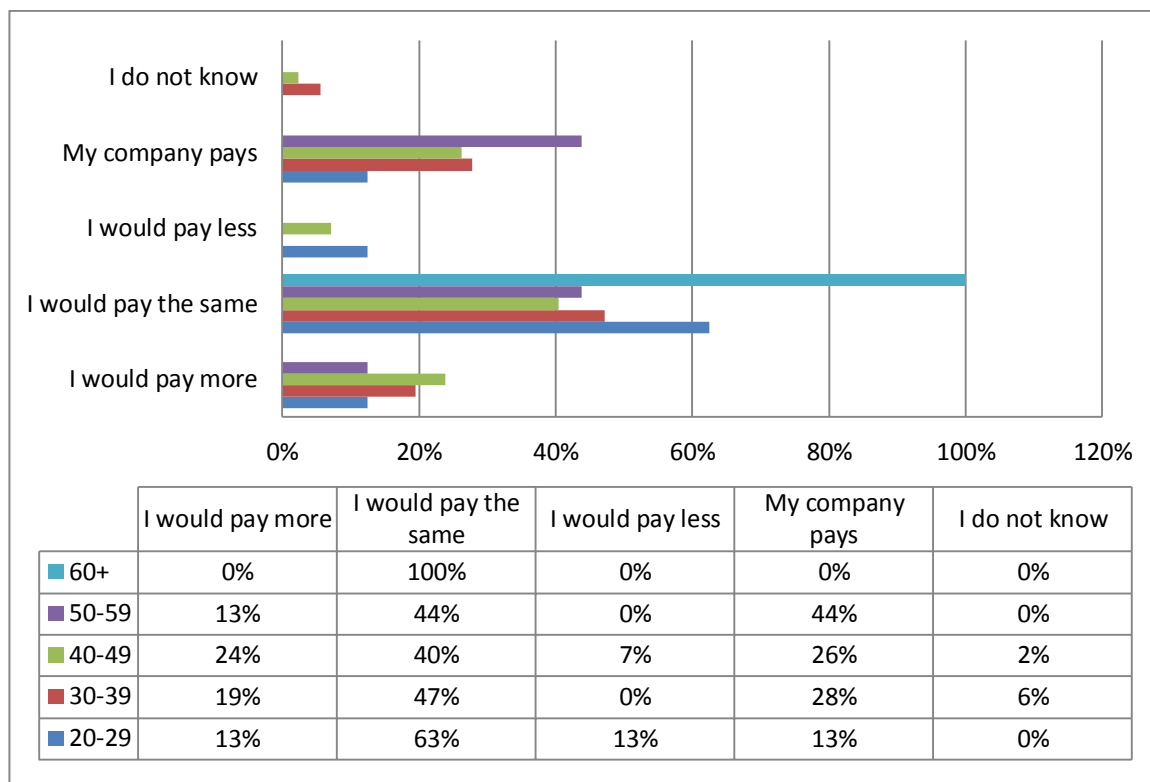


Figure 38. Age vs. willingness to pay (N=103)

Finally when looking at frequency of travel 32% of guests who stay with Scandic Hotels once a year would be willing to pay more for a sustainable hotel. According to the results, the more frequent travellers have their companies pay for their hotel stays and therefore do not care about that price. All results can be seen in Figure 39.

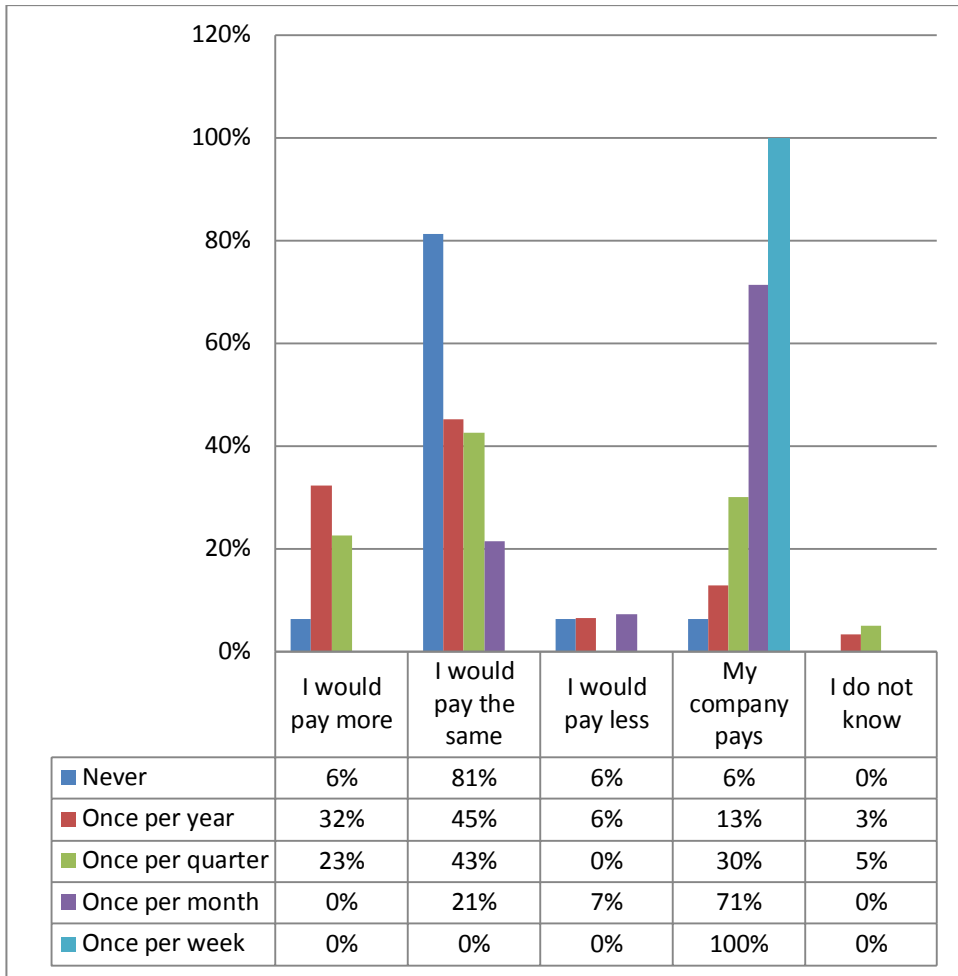


Figure 39 Frequency vs willingness to pay (N=103)

7 Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to discover if consumers recognize Scandic as one of the leaders in Corporate Social Responsibility in the Hospitality Industry. This research question was further broken down into the following sub-questions.

5. How does Scandic succeed in branding and communicating its sustainable efforts to its guests?
6. Has Scandic been able to create a competitive advantage using CSR?
7. Do the guests perceive the sustainable efforts Scandic has implemented?
8. Do guests value CSR, and are they willing to pay more for staying in a corporate socially responsible hotel?

After a thorough theoretical framework, research into the company and surveying the guests of Scandic Hotels these questions can be answered.

7.1 Conclusion Sub Questions

1. How does Scandic succeed in branding and communicating its sustainable efforts to its guests?

The research results show that Scandic Hotels has understood the importance of implementing CSR in the core values of the company. All efforts the company has taken in the past and the strategic decisions which have been made for the future reflect this. As can be seen in chapter 3 Scandic the hotel chain has taken various actions in the people, planet and profit dimensions. Therefore the full triple bottom line of Elkington (1997) is reflected upon. The company operates its policy on economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic levels in reference to Carrol (1991). This creates value for the customer as claimed by Cavagnaro and Curiel (2012)

The findings show that the company has created a special micro site showing all of their achievements in the past years in addition to posting special case studies and sustainability reports on a regular basis. The company shows its efforts to the guests staying in the hotels as can be seen in the questionnaire results.

2. Has Scandic been able to create a competitive advantage using CSR?

Yes, Scandic Hotels has been able to create a competitive advantage with their CSR policy when analysing the research results. The company uses its CSR policy as its unique selling point and as the diversification strategy (Barney 2007, 368). Scandic provides its guests with information about their policy on special websites, using in-hotel magazines and in-room signs. Scandic implements their policy in the triple bottom line perspective. Therefore when asking the guests of Scandic how they perceive the hotel chain Scandic Hotels is rated with a 3.97 on a scale of 1 to 5. However there is a difference in how gender, origin, purpose of travel, age and frequency influence the perception of the brand.

As can be seen in the maturity levels of stakeholder engagement model by Noguel and Houillier (2014, 4) Scandic Hotels has a proactive attitude towards stakeholder engagement. Whether the stakeholders are guests or other partners all of them are involved. Therefore the company is a leader in the industry.

3. How do the guests perceive the sustainable efforts Scandic has implemented?

To a certain extent Scandic guests are receiving the message which Scandic is trying to send regarding their sustainable efforts according to the findings. The example which can be given has to do with how the emissions have decreased in the past 20 years. Guests perceive the emissions have decrease in the past 20 years. According to guests the decrease was only little, whereas the actual decrease which can be seen in 3.4 measurement and Figure 8. are high.

There is also a major difference in how gender effects the perception of the brand. Therefore Scandic Hotels should take a deeper look in what message is communicated to which target. As mentioned by Oh and Lee (2013, 52) the “right message” needs to be communicated in to the “right target” through the “right communication channel.” It would be worthwhile for Scandic Hotels to improve these efforts in the future, and study this more in depth.

4. Do guests value CSR, and are they willing to pay more for staying in a CSR hotel?

With their CSR policy, Scandic Hotels has been able to create a competitive advantage and create value for the guest. Yet the sustainability policy of a hotel is not a factor which guests take into account when booking a hotel room according to the research results. When asking guests the question if they would like to stay in a sustainable hotel versus an unsustainable one roughly 75% of the guests choose a sustainable hotel. Therefore guests are willing to stay in a hotel which is better for the environment, but it is not a factor which convinces them to stay in the hotel.

When asking guests if they would pay more for a sustainable hotel only 19.4% say they would. The amounts range from 1€-15€ more per night or a maximum of 20% of the room rate. The Canadians are willing to pay more, as is the older guest. A new pricing strategy according to these target groups could be implemented by Scandic Hotels.

7.2 Conclusion Main Research Questions

In conclusions, based on this data guests recognize Scandic as one of the leaders in Corporate Social Responsibility in the Hospitality Industry? Yes Scandic Hotels has adapted corporate social responsibility into their core values as can be seen in the theoretical framework. This gives them a competitive advantage over the competition because everything Scandic Hotels implements the impact on the environment has been taken into account. Guests perceive the value which Scandic is trying to create.

Unfortunately, even though guests perceive the added value of a corporate socially responsible company they are not yet willing to pay a premium price for the efforts. Yet due to the effect CSR has on the triple bottom line of a company Scandic will still benefit from its efforts in both the long and short term.

7.3 Further Research

In order to see if Scandic Hotels is one of the leaders in Corporate Social Responsibility in the Hospitality Industry further research must be conducted. The researched focused on the Helsinki market. Scandic Hotels operates in different markets and countries. In order to make the claim that Scandic Hotels is the leader in CSR the research must be conducted in all the hotels in each country.

In order to understand why there are various differences between gender, origin, purpose of travel, age and frequency exist further research can be conducted into the various target groups. Previous research has already been done therefore the results of this research and those target specific researches can be combined. This will then give Scandic Hotels more detailed information on how to communicate their brand even better. The importance of what message to send to which target and through which communication method is of great importance.

In the future, this questionnaire could be done among other hotels. This would give a more reliable result because the questionnaires will not only be answered by guests staying in a Scandic Hotel.

Finally further research could be done into the values of the guests. Why do guests not take CSR or sustainability into account when booking a hotel room yet they would rather stay in a sustainable hotel over an unsustainable hotel?

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9 Appendices

a. Appendix I – Guest Perception Survey

Scandic Guest Perception Survey

1. What is your gender? *

- Male
- Female

2. What country are you from? *

3. What is your age? *

- 20 and below
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60 and above

4. What is the purpose of your travel? *

- Business
- Leisure
- Other

5. How often do you stay with a Scandic Hotel? *

- Never

- Once per year
- Once per quarter
- Once per month
- Once per week

6. How important are the following factors when booking a hotel? *

	Not at all important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely important
Price	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Location	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sustainability Policy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Safety	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Brand Loyalty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. How sustainable do you rate the following hotel chains? *

Sustainability focuses on reducing the environmental, social and economic impacts of the hospitality sector

	Not at all sustainable	Slightly sustainable	Moderately sustainable	Very sustainable	Completely sustainable
Hilton Worldwide	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Scandic Hotels	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kämp Group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Best Western Hotels	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Intercontinental Hotels	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Radisson Blu	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sokos Hotels	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Omena Hotels	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. Please respond to the following statement: I have a personal responsibility to help make a difference in the world by choosing a sustainable hotel *

- Completely disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Completely agree

9. As a guest would you prefer to stay in a sustainable hotel or an unsustainable hotel?
*

- More likely a sustainable hotel
- It does not matter
- More likely an unsustainable hotel

10. Would you be willing to pay more or less on a sustainable hotel? *

- I would pay more
- I would pay the same
- I would pay less
- My company pays, therefore it does not matter to me
- I do not know

11. If you answered more, how much more would you be willing to pay?

12. How important are the following factors for a hotel? *

	Not at all important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely important
Commitment to sustainability values	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having all information available for guests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environment / Water / Waste measures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Having sustainable products in the hotel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having sustainable partners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coming up with innovative sustainable solutions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using renewable energy sources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lowering Emissions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. In your opinion, what are the three most important reasons for a hotel to invest in sustainability? *

- Maintaining or improving brand
- Improving efficiency and lowering costs
- Meeting consumer expectations
- Creating new growth opportunities
- Government regulations
- Attracting, motivating and retaining employees
- Standing out from competition
- Meeting the expectations of partners and distributors

14. In your opinion what things could Scandic Hotels do to become more sustainable? *

- Be more environmentally friendly, create energy efficient products
- Treat employees well, give them equal opportunities and better pay
- Give more back to the community
- Donate to charity
- Be more transparent about their business

15. How are Scandics environmental efforts communicated to you as a guest? *

- Website
- Newsletter
- In-hotel magazine

- In-room signs
- There is no communication

16. Do you believe the following measurements have decreased or increased in the past 20 years in Scandic Hotels?

	Decreased a lot	Decreased a little	Increased a little	Increased a lot
Energy consumption per guest night	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Water consumption per guest night	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unsorted waste per guest night	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emissions of Co2 per guest night	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. What have you done while staying in a Scandic Hotel to help the environment?
