



Why Green Hotels Have Not Become The Main Choice For Indonesian Consumers: An Academic Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The concept of a green hotel is part of a sustainable business strategy that integrates eco-friendly practices into the hospitality industry. Globally, trends show a significant increase in consumer preferences for eco-friendly accommodations. However, this phenomenon has not been matched by an adequate level of adoption in Indonesia. This research aims to analyze the factors causing the discrepancy between the green hotel campaign and consumer responses in Indonesia. The study uses a qualitative method with a literature review approach, examining scientific publications, official reports, and relevant secondary data published in the last 10 years. The results indicate a value–action gap, which is the gap between positive attitudes and actual consumer behavior. The main contributing factors include relatively high prices, low environmental education, a consumption culture that is not pro-environment, and inconsistencies in the implementation of green practices by hotels. This research recommends a collaborative strategy between industry, government, and consumers to enhance awareness, trust, and perceived value of green hotels in Indonesia.

Keyword: Green Hotel, Sustainable Tourism, Consumer Behavior, Hotel Strategy

ABSTRAK

Konsep *green hotel* merupakan bagian dari strategi bisnis berkelanjutan yang mengintegrasikan praktik ramah lingkungan ke dalam industri perhotelan. Secara global, tren menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan terhadap preferensi konsumen pada akomodasi ramah lingkungan. Namun, fenomena tersebut belum diikuti oleh tingkat adopsi yang memadai di Indonesia. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis faktor-faktor yang menyebabkan ketidaksesuaian antara kampanye *green hotel* dan respons konsumen di Indonesia. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi literatur, mengkaji publikasi ilmiah, laporan resmi, dan data sekunder relevan yang terbit dalam 10 tahun terakhir. Hasil kajian menunjukkan adanya *value–action gap*, yaitu kesenjangan antara sikap positif dan perilaku aktual konsumen. Faktor penyebab utamanya meliputi harga yang relatif tinggi, rendahnya edukasi lingkungan, budaya konsumsi yang belum pro-lingkungan, serta inkonsistensi implementasi praktik hijau oleh pihak hotel. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan strategi kolaboratif antara industri, pemerintah, dan konsumen untuk meningkatkan kesadaran, kepercayaan, serta persepsi nilai terhadap *green hotel* di Indonesia.

Keyword: Green Hotel, Pariwisata Berkelanjutan, Perilaku Konsumen, Strategi Hotel



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1. Introduction

The issue of environmental sustainability has increasingly permeated various industrial sectors, including tourism and hospitality. One of the manifestations of this growing environmental awareness is the emergence of the Green Hotel concept—hotels that adopt environmentally friendly practices in their operations. These practices include minimizing negative environmental impacts, enhancing energy efficiency, and supporting

sustainable development (Yusof et al., 2017). Green Hotels are part of broader sustainable business practices that have become a global trend, particularly in countries with strong environmental consciousness.

Globally, the Green Hotel trend has experienced significant growth. According to Future Market Insights (2024), the eco-hotel tourism market is projected to reach USD 190 billion by 2025 and expand to USD 360 billion by 2035, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of approximately 6.5%. Furthermore, a report by Aura Group (2024) indicates that around 70–83% of global travelers express a preference for hotels implementing environmentally friendly practices when such options are available. These findings reflect a steadily increasing global market interest in eco-friendly hotels, supported by positive consumer responses that have contributed to the widespread acceptance of Green Hotels.

However, the reality in Indonesia reveals a discrepancy between the intentions of Green Hotel campaigns and actual consumer behavior. Consumer adoption levels in Indonesia remain low, despite several hotels implementing environmentally friendly principles. This is supported by Alkotdriyah (2024) study, which concludes that the implementation of Green Hotel practices in Indonesia—particularly in Java and Bali—has yet to reach optimal levels due to consumers' low awareness of the concept and standards of eco-friendly hotels. Similarly, Sugianto and Kurniawan (2017) found that not all Green Hotel programs significantly influence consumer purchase intentions; only energy-saving and consumption-reduction initiatives have demonstrated a tangible effect.

Another challenge lies in the gap between positive attitudes and actual behavior. Many Indonesian consumers express concern for environmental issues, but this concern is not reflected as a primary factor in their hotel selection decisions (Wardhani et al., 2023). This indicates that positive perceptions of environmental issues have not yet been translated into concrete consumer actions.

From the industry perspective, hotel participation in green certification programs remains limited. For example, out of 290 hotels invited to the Green Hotel Award by the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism, only 76 participated, and merely 31 passed the initial verification (Ni Luh, 2013, as cited in Saptari & Adnyani, 2019). This indicates that the adoption of Green Hotel practices in Indonesia is still largely symbolic and has yet to become a core strategy within the hospitality sector. Therefore, it is essential to understand why Green Hotels have not become the primary choice among Indonesian consumers, despite the increasing momentum of sustainability campaigns. Such understanding will provide a foundation for the development of educational strategies, green marketing communications, and public policy formulations that can more effectively support the sustainable transformation of the hospitality sector.

2. Research Methodology

This research employs a qualitative method with a literature review approach. This approach is chosen to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of low adoption of green hotels in Indonesia and to identify the factors causing it.

2.1 Data Sources.

The research data is obtained from scientific publications, official government reports, policy documents, and indexed journal articles relevant to the topics of green hotels, consumer behavior, green marketing, and sustainable tourism. The inclusion criteria for the sources include: published 2015-2025, relevant to the research focus, and publicly accessible.

2.2 Data Collection Procedures.

Data was collected through database searches such as Scopus, ScienceDirect, Google Scholar, and the Garuda portal using keywords: "green hotel", "eco-friendly accommodation", "sustainable tourism", "consumer behavior", and "Indonesia". All documents that met the inclusion criteria were analyzed in depth.

2.3 Data Analysis Techniques.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, grouping findings into main themes: definitions and principles of green hotels, implementation in Indonesia, gaps between campaigns and consumer responses, barriers to adoption, and strategies to increase consumer interest.

3. Discussion

3.1 Green Hotel and Its Context in Indonesia

Definition and Principles of Green Hotels

Green Hotels (or eco-hotels) are accommodation establishments that comprehensively integrate environmentally friendly operational principles—ranging from energy efficiency and water conservation to the use of sustainable building materials, waste management, and local community engagement (Mbulu

& Gunadi, 2018). The Indonesian Ministry of Tourism (2016) has issued guidelines specifying 14 key aspects to guide the implementation of Green Hotel practices, including energy efficiency, waste management, air quality, and staff training.

According to an experimental study, hotel guests in Jakarta and Bandung exhibited positive attitudes toward Green Hotel practices, provided that their comfort and price remain uncompromised (Lemy Brian & Pah, 2022). The operational definition commonly applied in Indonesia refers to the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf, 2016), which specify that hotels must integrate technical, managerial, and educational aspects for both guests and staff as integral components of the Green Hotel concept.

3.2 Implementation in Indonesia

Various case studies in Indonesia illustrate diverse implementations of Green Hotel practices:

1. **Aston Hotel & Resort Bogor, Neo Hotel, and Fave Hotel** have adopted most of the 14 aspects specified in the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf). However, certain elements—such as staff training and active guest involvement—remain incompletely implemented (Mbulu & I Made, 2018).
2. **Harris Hotel & Convention Malang** presents a similar trend. The management has adopted several Green Hotel measures mandated by the Ministry primarily to ensure compliance with regulations. Consequently, staff training and guest education are still limited. The hotel has refrained from branding itself as a Green Hotel due to concerns that doing so may negatively affect customer satisfaction (Putri, Suharyono, & Pengestuti, 2020).
3. **Swarga Suites Hotel Berawa, Bali**, practices efficient land use, water conservation, waste management, and the use of environmentally friendly construction materials. These efforts have bolstered its reputation as an environmentally conscious hotel that creatively engages the local community (Dianthy et al., 2023).
4. **Casa Kandara Hotel in East Sumba** has implemented green initiatives including energy and water efficiency, utilization of local products, and environmentally responsible waste management. This implementation serves as a concrete example of Green Hotel practices in a regional setting within East Nusa Tenggara (Prayogi, Susila, & Wisnawa, 2024).
5. **Hilton Bali Resort**'s Front Office Department has achieved a 91.1% implementation rate of key Green Hotel indicators—including energy saving, low pollution, and recyclables—demonstrating that Green Hotel principles can be effectively realized when management proactively involves all operational departments (Ariawan, Winia, & Sari, 2022).

Although promising examples of Green Hotel implementation exist, studies across various locations reveal variations in the level of adoption, influenced by available resources, management commitment, and staff and guest education levels. The majority of hotels adopting the concept remain limited to independent or boutique establishments (such as eco-lodges and villas) in Bali and Sumba, with limited adoption in urban star-rated hotels. The lack of survey-based buyer data documentation, coupled with generally low consumer awareness, constitutes a significant barrier to enhancing local market demand. This low consumer awareness is partly attributable to limited commitment and awareness among hotel management to support Green Hotel initiatives fully.

3.3 Discrepancy between Green Hotel Campaigns and Consumer Responses

The Phenomenon of the Value-Action Gap in the Context of Green Hotels

Although many Indonesian consumers claim to be environmentally conscious, their positive attitudes do not always translate into actual behavior. This phenomenon is commonly known as the attitude–behavior gap or value–action gap (Wiastuti, Liawatimena, & Masatip, 2022). For instance, a study by Lemy Brian and Pah (2022) in Jakarta and Bandung found that hotel guests expressed positive attitudes toward Green Hotel practices, provided that their comfort and service prices were not compromised. However, this does not imply that they will consistently choose Green Hotels.

Intention vs Realization: Studies in Indonesia

A study by Sugianto and Kurniawan (2017) found that only two Green Hotel programs—specifically consumption reduction and energy-saving measures—had a significant influence on consumers' purchase

intentions, while other aspects such as products and services and recyclable practices were not statistically significant. This suggests that consumers' intentions are limited to particular dimensions of green practices rather than the Green Hotel concept as a whole. Furthermore, research by Kusuma and Tunjungsari (2024) found that the intention to visit Green Hotels remains low, although environmental knowledge and consumer trust significantly influence visitation intentions. In contrast, environmental concern was not found to have a significant effect on these intentions.

Factors Causing the Discrepancy

Several factors contribute to the discrepancy between Green Hotel campaigns and actual consumer responses:

1. Limited environmental knowledge, which results in consumers' insufficient understanding of the practical benefits and added value associated with Green Hotels (Sugianto & Kurniawan, 2017).
2. Consumer skepticism toward Green Hotel claims. While attributes such as environmental contributions and the use of recycled materials help build trust, they do not significantly affect consumers' willingness to pay a premium (Wiastuti, Liawatimena, & Masatip, 2022).
3. Misconceptions that Green Hotel practices compromise guest comfort or escalate costs. Yuniati (2021) notes that many tourists have yet to fully grasp the Green Hotel concept, and some believe that its implementation could increase expenses or diminish comfort.
4. Low consumer awareness of in-room environmental messages encouraging energy and water conservation or towel reuse. Due to inadequate communication and limited promotion by hotel management, many guests fail to notice these campaigns. For instance, a study revealed that 7 out of 15 respondents were unaware of such in-room environmental initiatives (Putri, Suharyono, & Pengestuti, 2020).

Table 1. Summary of the Discrepancy Model Phenomenon

Aspect	Key Findings
<i>Attitude vs. Action</i>	Consumers exhibit positive attitudes toward Green Hotel practices but rarely choose them when price or comfort is perceived to be compromised (Lemy Brian & Pah, 2022).
<i>Dimensions of Influence of Green Programs</i>	Consumption reduction and energy-saving programs significantly influence consumer behavior, whereas recyclable and product-related initiatives appear less significant (Sugianto & Kurniawan, 2017).
<i>Role of Knowledge & Trust</i>	Environmental knowledge and consumer trust significantly affect consumer intention, while environmental concern alone is insufficient (Kusuma & Tunjungsari, 2024).
<i>Behavioral Control & Norma</i>	Eco-attitude and perceived behavioral control strongly influence intention, whereas social norms do not have a significant effect (Sugianto & Kurniawan, 2017).
<i>Consumer Perception of Barriers</i>	Consumers regard Green Hotels as unpopular, not widely known, and often associate them with increased costs or reduced comfort (Yuniati, 2021).

3.4 Analysis of Barriers from the Consumer Perspective

Price as a Predominant Factor

A study conducted in Surabaya by Fernandez and Tjoanda (2017) revealed that within the Green Hotel context, the green price component—defined as environmentally friendly pricing—exerts the strongest influence on consumers' green purchasing behavior. Despite expressing environmental concern, consumers tend to avoid selecting eco-friendly hotels when faced with higher prices (Sugianto & Kurniawan, 2017). These findings underscore pricing as a key obstacle in consumers' decision-making process regarding stays at Green Hotels.

Low Levels of Environmental Education

Kristaung and Pratomo (2020) empirically demonstrated that knowledge of Green Hotels functions as a crucial mediator between consumer attitudes and behavioral intentions. Insufficient environmental education hampers consumers' ability to comprehend both the practical benefits and economic value of Green Hotels, causing positive intentions to fail in translating into actual purchasing behavior (Lemy Brian & Pah, 2022). Consumers often perceive Green Hotel initiatives merely as operational efficiencies undertaken by hotels, which are ultimately passed on to guests as higher costs. This perception renders such initiatives disadvantageous, if not burdensome, from the consumers' standpoint. Within this framework, government involvement is indispensable. Therefore, Indonesia urgently needs more comprehensive campaigns and educational programs aimed at raising public awareness to facilitate the successful adoption and promotion of Green Hotel practices nationwide.

Consumer Culture Lacking a Pro-Environmental Orientation

Indonesian consumers generally demonstrate eco-friendly attitudes and perceived behavioral control that significantly shape their intentions to support environmentally sustainable practices within the hotel sector. However, subjective norms—defined as social or environmental expectations imposed by others—exert no significant influence, as reflected by the minimal impact of social norms and pro-environmental cultural values on consumers' accommodation decisions (Sugianto & Kurniawan, 2017). Furthermore, entrenched consumption patterns that deprioritize environmental considerations give rise to a disparity between consumers' elevated environmental concern and their relatively low engagement in tangible pro-environmental behaviors.

Inconsistency in the Implementation of Green Hotel Practices by Management

Sinangjoyo (2015) identified frequent inconsistencies in the execution of Green Hotel practices by hotel staff in Yogyakarta, accompanied by inadequate communication efforts toward guests, and a prevailing perception that adopting Green Hotel standards would escalate operational costs and compromise guest comfort. These factors contribute to consumer skepticism regarding the environmental claims made by hotels, fostering hesitation despite the presence of sustainability campaigns. A comparable situation was observed at Harris Hotel & Convention Malang, where the hotel owner had not established formal objectives to become a certified Green Hotel. Consequently, management implemented only a limited subset of government-mandated green regulations, without earnest engagement or effective promotion of the program among both staff and guests (Putri, Suharyono, & Pengestuti, 2020).

Table 2. Summary of Inhibiting Factors

Faktor	Brief Explanation
Price	Higher prices lead consumers to reconsider choosing green hotels (Fernandez & Tjoanda, 2017).
Consumer Education	Limited knowledge makes it difficult for consumers to link environmental concern with actual behavior (Pratomo & Kristaung, 2020).
Consumer Culture & Social Norms	Weak environmental social norms result in low levels of supportive behavior despite positive attitudes (Tannur & Jokom, 2022).
Inconsistent Hotel Implementation	Inconsistent green practices, poor communication, and perceptions of reduced comfort foster consumer skepticism (Sinangjoyo, 2015).

3.5 Academic Argument: A Balanced Approach to Enhance Consumer Interest from the Hotel Industry Perspective

From the Hotel Industry Perspective

1. Effective Green Marketing Strategies

Fernandez and Tjoanda (2017) identified green price (environmentally friendly pricing) and green product as the most influential dimensions within green marketing strategies in the hotel industry, with green price serving as the dominant factor shaping green consumer behavior. Consequently, hotel operators must find an equilibrium between adopting sustainable practices and offering

pricing that remains affordable or delivering clear added value to consumers. This balance is essential for fostering consumer willingness to engage with Green Hotels without compromising their expectations regarding cost and quality.

2. The Importance of Visible and Tangible Green Attributes

A study conducted in Bekasi by Suprpto and Haryanto (2024) revealed that the accessibility and availability of green products—encompassing environmentally friendly facilities and amenities—significantly enhance the linkage between consumer intentions and actual pro-environmental behavior. This underscores the necessity for hotels to ensure that green attributes are not only genuinely available but also prominently visible to guests. Complementing this, the research by Putri, Suharyono, and Pangestuti (2020) highlights the critical role of strategically positioning stickers, tags, and other visual cues that invite and encourage hotel guests to engage in environmentally responsible actions. These tangible cues function dually as communicative instruments and as invitations for guest participation in sustainability initiatives, concurrently signaling the hotel's active commitment to Green Hotel programs.

3. Enhancing Consumer Knowledge and Perceived Value

Teng, Lu, and Huang's (2018) study in Taiwan demonstrated that low-carbon knowledge coupled with strong environmental values significantly elevates consumers' perceived value of Green Hotels, subsequently driving both intention and actual behavior to stay. From an industry standpoint, comprehensive market education and transparent communication of operational benefits—such as energy efficiency, enhanced comfort, and durability—are critical strategic components. When effectively implemented, these strategies empower hotel guests to actively support environmental initiatives, as they gain a clear understanding of the underlying rationale and the cause-and-effect dynamics inherent in green hospitality practices.

4. Strengthening Consumer Trust in Green Attributes

Wiastuti, Liawatimena, and Masatip (2022) identified that specific green attributes—including contributions to environmental conservation, pristine natural surroundings, and utilization of recycled materials—significantly bolster consumer trust, which in turn positively shapes their intention to select Green Hotels. Nonetheless, increased trust does not invariably translate into a higher willingness to pay a premium. These findings suggest that the hotel industry should prioritize cultivating trust and transparency through honest communication and demonstrable environmental commitment, rather than relying solely on pricing strategies to justify premium rates.

From the Consumer Perspective

1. Stimulating the Development of Attitudes and Subjective Norms

Within the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) framework, Kristaung and Pratomo (2020) identified Green Hotel Knowledge as a crucial mediating variable that shapes consumers' attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, thereby influencing their behavioral intentions. Consumers possessing a thorough understanding of Green Hotel concepts and practices are more inclined to form strong intentions to select and participate in environmentally responsible lodging behaviors.

2. Consumer Values as Key Motivators

Agustin, Anindita, and Ekasari (2023) found that biospheric, altruistic, and collectivistic values, together with environmental knowledge, exert a significant positive influence on consumers' attitudes and intentions to stay at Green Hotels. Accordingly, public education initiatives that highlight social and environmental solidarity values have the potential to effectively strengthen consumer motivation toward selecting environmentally sustainable accommodations.

3. Monetary and Digital Motivations as Behavioral Triggers

Leveraging the digital era presents a promising approach to educate and engage younger generations in green hotel initiatives. According to Wang, Wang, and Wong (2021), financial motivations (e.g., discounts or competitive pricing) and virtual motivations (such as social media engagement and digital testimonials) positively influence consumers' attitudes and intentions to choose green hotels—particularly among younger demographics.

Table 3. Combined Strategies of Industry and Consumers

Perspektive	Key Strategies	Ultimate Goal
Hotel Industry	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offer competitive pricing strategies (green pricing) 2. Provide tangible and prominently visible green attribute 3. Educate consumers on the intrinsic value of Green Hotels 4. Enhance transparency and foster consumer trust 	Enhancing consumers' perceived value and trust
Consumer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educate on environmental values and knowledge 2. Promote social and ecological values 3. Motivate through incentives and digital testimonials 	Transform attitudes and intentions into actual behavior

3.6 Strategic Recommendations

The following strategies synergize the efforts of the industry, government, and consumers to expedite the widespread adoption of green hotels as the preferred accommodation option in Indonesia.

Strategic Recommendations for the Hotel Industry

1. Standardization and Open Certification

Adopting recognized international certification frameworks such as Green Key International—which encompass criteria on energy and water management, waste minimization, stakeholder engagement, and environmental education—can significantly enhance hotel credibility and foster consumer trust.

2. Green Accounting and Operational Transparency

Implementing green accounting practices, exemplified by Bali hotels, that promote energy efficiency, local sourcing, and effective waste management reinforces operational transparency. This transparency strengthens the hotel's green reputation and elevates perceived consumer value.

3. Human Resource Development and Green HRM

The deployment of Green Human Resource Management, involving comprehensive staff training and active employee participation in sustainable operations, has been evidenced to boost employee engagement and ensure consistent, guest-visible green practices.

4. Collaboration with Local Communities and Enterprises

According to Astawa et al. (2019), five-star hotels in Bali engage systematically with local entrepreneurs and communities through CSR and tourism initiatives. Such partnerships confer competitive advantages and sustain consistent environmental practices.

3.7 Strategic Recommendations from Government and Consumer Perspectives

1. Public Education and Environmental Campaigns Based on Social-Ecological Values

Government, hotel associations like PHRI, and other stakeholders should coordinate campaigns that emphasize biospheric, altruistic, and collectivistic values. These initiatives are instrumental in elevating public awareness and strengthening consumer intentions to opt for green hotels.

2. Financial Incentives and Competitive Pricing Mechanisms

Given that price often impedes adoption, promoting mechanisms such as eco-friendly discounts, tax relief for certified green hotels, and cost savings via energy efficiencies is crucial. These efforts aim to sustain competitive pricing while preserving added value propositions.

3. Leveraging Social Media and Digital Testimonials

Facilitating digital content production—including guest reviews, behind-the-scenes eco-efficiency footage, and CSR narratives—serves to heighten awareness, build consumer trust, and broaden the reach of green marketing campaigns, especially targeting younger demographics.

4. Establishing Robust Monitoring and Reporting Systems

To guarantee compliance with Green Hotel SOPs, instituting a rigorous system encompassing internal audits, third-party assessments, and publicly accessible reporting is essential. Such standardization mitigates consumer skepticism and fortifies perceptions of operational integrity in green practices.

Table 4. Recommended Strategic Approaches

Stakeholders	Key Strategies	Objectives
Hotel Industry	Green Key certification, green accounting, Green Human Resource Management (Green HRM), community partnerships	Strengthen credibility and enhance operational engagement

Government & Associations	Public education programs, fiscal incentives, certification subsidies	Promote environmental awareness and improve price competitiveness
Hotel Owners & Management	Transparent reporting, regular audits, utilization of digital testimonial media	Build a strong reputation and foster consumer trust

4. Conclusion

Green hotels possess substantial potential to advance sustainable tourism development in Indonesia. Nevertheless, significant barriers persist on the consumer front—including pricing concerns, environmental education gaps, cultural influences, and inconsistent implementation. Achieving a meaningful transition requires concerted, synergistic collaboration among all stakeholders to elevate the green hotel concept beyond a superficial label to a deeply rooted consumer preference. This transformation transcends mere adoption of eco-friendly technologies, it fundamentally involves reconstructing consumer perceptions, meanings, and values associated with green hospitality. Until green hotels shed their prevalent associations with elevated costs and compromised comfort, widespread adoption will remain constrained.

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