

Anticipating Customer Loyalty In Hospitality: The Role Of Wellness Packaging And Sustainability Trends

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Abstract

This study focused on a critical investigation of how wellness packaging and sustainability practices interact in customer loyalty within the hospitality sector. The study leveraged secondary data and extensive literature, as its basis to answer three key research questions: how wellness packaging can affect loyalty, how sustainability affects consumer choice, and how the two variables interact at the level of long-term retention. Thematic coding framework was used to synthesise the findings of twenty-two academic and industry sources using an interpretivist philosophy, an inductive method, and a qualitative case study approach. The results underscore the fact that wellness packaging, with an experiential design, including spa treatments, yoga retreats, and wellness culinary, can bring about emotional, immersive value and reinforce repeat patronage, albeit due to affordability and accessibility, which make it less inclusive. Sustainability became a factor influencing consumer decision, and environmentally friendly technologies, CSR, and green branding earned trust and brand image, despite the threat of greenwashing and the inconvenience factor undermined loyalty results. Notably, wellness and sustainability i.e. eco-spa retreats, holistic wellness resorts have been identified to create competitive differentiation although over commercialisation and authenticity remain issues. The relationship is also complicated by gender-specific and demographic differences, as women were actually indicated to control the demand of wellness travel with male-oriented experiences under investigation. The research is able to conclude that a multidimensional relationship exists between the experiential value, sustainability perceptions, and trust-based relationships in determining loyalty in hospitality.

Keywords: Hospitality, Packaging, Sustainability and Long-term retention

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I. Introduction

The loyalty of customers has been considered to be one of the pillars of success in the hospitality industry. It is not merely a means of guaranteeing repeat business and consistent revenues but also a means of cutting marketing costs by developing positive word-of-mouth. The reputational benefits created by loyal customers are difficult to realize in new marketing campaigns. Loyalty was traditionally perceived as a byproduct of transactional satisfaction: when the service was satisfactory, it was more likely that the guest will think of returning.

According to Bardukova, the digitalisation, individual experiences, and the incorporation of wellness have become crucial factors of the modern loyalty strategies that enable hotels and resorts to maintain a competitive advantage in the ever-evolving market situations [5]. These empirical studies further support this multidimensionality recognition. Lakićević, Pantovic and Fedajev showed that loyalty in wellness spas was created in a sequential cycle starting with the quality of service, followed by satisfaction and trust and then loyalty (Lakićević et al., 2024). In the same manner, Kim, Han and Ariza-Montes identified that attributes of hotels that influenced the perception of safety and wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic increased loyalty, since guests increasingly emphasized holistic and protective experiences [20].

The increasing popularity of wellness tourism all over the world explains why wellness has become a critical determinant to customer selection. Wellness packaging is no longer limited to spas and massages, but includes mindfulness programmes, nutritional advice, physical exercise, and holistic retreats. Jones pointed out that wellness has also established itself positively in the mainstream of international tourism, and it transcends hotels, resorts, and retreats as consumers are more willing to reduce stress, stay healthy, and enliven their everyday lives [18].

This observation is supported by the data at the industry-level. According to Global Market Insights, in 2024, the global wellness tourism market is estimated to be USD 995.3 billion and is expected to increase to USD 3.3 trillion in 2034 with a compound annual growth rate of 13.2 percent [12]. Notably, consumption patterns are gendered as well with women constituting 78 percent of the market, however, men are also taking up activity-

based wellness like boot camp and high intensity training [12]. These trends demonstrate that wellness packaging is no longer on the fringes but at the core of consumer decision and consequently, loyalty strategies in the hospitality industry.

Along with wellness, sustainability is also a new aspect that defines consumer choice. Sharma noted that long-term loyalty and greater satisfaction are associated with sustainable practices such as energy conservation, eco-friendly packaging, and minimisation of waste, but also pose cost and integration issues to operators [33]. Here authenticity is crucial. Olorunsola et al. revealed that authentic practices in terms of sustainability were frequently glorified in the guest reviews of the eco-centric hotels, whereas in the negative ones, they were criticized as a form of greenwashing or excessive expenses of the eco-credentials [30].

Problem and Objectives of the Research.

Although there is an increasing body of research on wellness and sustainability as distinct constructs, there is a paucity of research on the combined impact of the two on customer loyalty. Jones admitted that despite the fact that wellness is currently on the agenda of numerous hospitality processes, it still has not been systematically aligned in the heart of corporate strategies, and wellness results have not been systematically measured [18]. Meanwhile, market research indicates a fast-paced increase in wellness tourism, which opens opportunities to build loyalty and competition, as well as increases operational expenses [12].

On the basis of this, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To determine how wellness packaging influences customer loyalty in the hospitality sector.
2. To determine the impact of sustainability practises on the consumer choice and loyalty.
3. To investigate how a wellness packaging system with sustainability affects the loyalty.

Theoretical Foundations

Hospitality customer loyalty has been extensively theorised by models that capture dynamics of behaviour and attitudinal models. Consumer Behaviour Theory underlines that the repeat patronage follows satisfaction with perceived value, but has developed into inclusion of emotional and experiential concerns. Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory also elucidates satisfaction in the difference between expectations and perceived performance with positive disconfirmation creating loyalty. This model is the premise of numerous hospitality research, including Lakicevic, Pantovic and Fedajev who proved that satisfaction based on the quality of services and trust mediates loyalty in wellness spas (Lakicevic et al., 2024). But this framework has been criticised as having a low capacity to reflect such multidimensional constructs as well-being and sustainability which are becoming of central concern in hospitality decisions.

Sustainable Consumption Theory offers a wider perspective, implying that consumers progressively incorporate environmental and moral principles in their buying behaviour. In this theory, the evidence of Modica et al. is corroborated because the researchers concluded that consumer perceptions of sustainable supply chain practises affect loyalty, even though such perceptions vary greatly with the level of consumer awareness [24]. Likewise, Lin, Nugraha and Hsu showed a positive impact of alignment to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in green hotels on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty that is mediated by brand image [23]. Sustainable Consumption Theory has the advantage of acknowledging the existence of non-functional values, but may unreasonably extrapolate the predictability of consumer behaviour because cost and convenience tend to undermine sustainable intentions.

Another theoretical aspect is the incorporation of wellness models especially holistic models of wellness, which are physical, mental, social and spiritual. Dillette, Douglas and Andrzejewski emphasised the improvement of international wellness tourism experience in various dimensions of wellness, implying that loyalty is based on other outcomes than mere service delivery [9]. The weakness of these models is that they are context-based and might not extrapolate among mainstream consumers in the hospitality sector who do not have wellness outcomes as an explicit demand.

Collectively the theoretical terrain is fractured and complementary as the traditional satisfaction-loyalty models send light to fundamental provisioning of services, whilst the emergent experiential and ethical aspects are considered through sustainable consumption and wellness frameworks. The most critical issue is to combine these views and comprehend the interaction between wellness packaging and sustainability in determining loyalty.

Customer Loyalty in the Hospitality Industry

The issue of determinants of loyalty in hospitality is still debatable because empirical evidence has shown some inconsistencies and contradictions. Veloso et al. found out that personal relationships and long-term commitment in family businesses in the hospitality industry promote loyalty and that relational capital could replace mass marketing [38]. Although informative, the fact that this study focuses on firms run by families restricts the generalisation to larger hotel chains in which standardisation prevails over personalised relationships.

According to Bardukova, to be effective, the loyalty strategies in the contemporary hotel industry, should have digitalisation, personalisation, and wellness as a part and parcel of the loyalty strategies, positioning them as survival strategies, but not a set of optional improvements [5]. The advantage of this review is that the modern trends are covered but it is more of a conceptual study which lacks empirical evidence. On the contrary, Kim, Han and Ariza-Montes reported empirical findings that hotel attributes, well-being perception, and attitudes are directly linked to brand loyalty and the COVID-19 pandemic increased the strength of this relationship [20]. Their model, with its rigorousness, is constrained by the temporal specificity; the high sensitivity that occurred during the pandemic might not continue being present in post-pandemic situations.

One more indicator is provided by Lakicevic et al. who demonstrated that loyalty directly depends on the quality of services and the trust toward wellness spas and is mediated by satisfaction (Lakicevic et al., 2024). Their quantitative methodology validates structural pathways but simplifies wellness experiences to quantifiable constructs, which may be lacking in emotional and cultural depth. On the same note, Sun et al. established that the environmental management efforts and quality of website by hotels contribute to the green customer loyalty [35]. The strength of their study is that it established a connexion between the quality of the digital interface and sustainability perception, but it has been based on self-reported survey information, which casts doubt on social desirability bias.

The evidence on the whole proves that the loyalty in hospitality is not something one-dimensional but determined by the quality of services, sustainability, online interactions, and wellness. However, the majority of studies lack contextual breadth, be it spas, green hotels, or parts of the world and hence cannot comprehensive generalisation of the market across markets.

Role of Wellness Packaging in Customer Perception and Satisfaction.

The aspect of wellness packaging has become critical element in determining customer satisfaction and loyalty. Jones noted that the concept of wellness has moved to the core of hospitality, which includes spas, resorts, retreats, and hotels, and it is motivated by consumer demand in reduction of stress and enriching the experience [18]. This theoretical discussion highlights wellness as a trend in the industry but is not empirically rich. Complementary evidence was presented by Global Market Insights which reported the wellness tourism market to be USD 995.3 billion in 2024 and is expected to grow to USD 3.3 trillion in 2034 with women occupying 78 percent of the market share [12]. Although they are strong in coverage, industry reports are not always transparent in methodology and this poses a question of reliability.

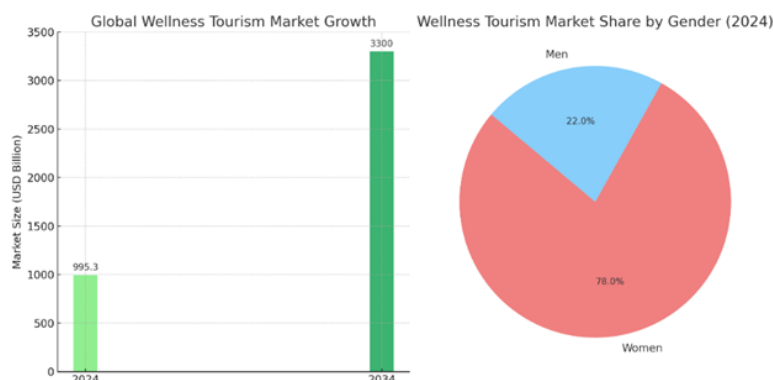


Fig: Wellness market and market share
(Source: Global Market Insights, 2025)

By focusing on how wellness tourists travel to a specific destination, Damijanić conducted an empirical division of consumers according to the motives of travelling, including relaxation, health, escape, and self-development [7]. This study is strong in that it is empirically based but it is still found wanting since it deals with motivations and not loyalty outcomes. This was extended by Dini and Pencarelli who found ten elements of wellness tourism such as spas, medical tourism, gastronomy, nature, and spirituality to offer a comprehensive picture of what is in wellness offers [10]. The weakness of their review is that it is based on secondary sources, which might not be an accurate representation of dynamic consumer behaviours.

As noted by Dillette et al., wellness tourism experiences are multidimensional, with physical, psychological, social, intellectual, and spiritual well-being being the promoted outcomes of international wellness tourism experiences [9]. This qualitative data is rich but it is not quantified on the effect these dimensions have in relation to repeat patronage. Lakićević et al., in turn, verified that quality of service and satisfaction in spas are the predictors of loyalty (Lakicevic et al., 2024). However, the spa situation, in a narrow sense, might not be applicable in general hospitality.

All in all, the evidence confirms the notion that wellness packaging increases satisfaction and loyalty because of meeting consumer well-being in various aspects. Yet, little is known in the relative significance of these dimensions and how they translate into long-term loyalty and the studies usually remain contextualised.

Sustainability Trends and Customer Behaviour Influence

Sustainability in the hospitality industry has ceased being a peripheral issue to core determinant of consumer preference and loyalty. Mukucha et al. discovered that sustainable packaging has a positive impact on the corporate image and patronage intentions, which is an example of how even minor factors impact the perception of the loyalty [26]. This finding has the strength of using supply chain concepts, but it has a weakness in that it uses intention measures as opposed to behaviour. Barbosa et al. gave complementary evidence in food retail, in which packaging-free and practises have a positive influence on loyalty through improving authenticity and ethicality [4]. Although applicable, the retail situation presented in this study can limit the direct application to hospitality.

Lin et al. have shown that green hotel alignment with SDGs enhances satisfaction, loyalty, which is mediated by the brand image [23]. This connexion of the global policy frameworks with consumer behaviour is innovative, however the research is limited and might not be applicable in non-green hotels. Gonzalez-Viralta et al. demonstrated that green practises have a positive effect on satisfaction, loyalty, word-of-mouth, and willingness to pay, which has extensive support at the empirical level (Gonzalez-Viralta et al., 2023). The strength of their study lies in breadth but once again, there is the risk of bias due to the use of self-reported surveys.

Olorunsola et al. have reviewed 183 online guest reviews of eco-centric hotels and concluded that genuine eco-wellness activities yield positive experiences, whereas greenwashing brings negative responses [30]. This content analysis is strong in terms of ecological validity but review samples are likely to be subject to self-selection bias. Kholijah investigated the economic and environmental advantages of green business practises in the hospitality and tourism industry and revealed that it would save costs and provide environmental advantages [19]. Although useful, the research is mostly descriptive and has no in-depth insight into the opinions of consumers.

Baratta and Simeoni maintained that there should be a balance between sustainability and service quality because the latter will be compromised due to overemphasis on the former [3]. Their work brings out the strains that hospitality operators go through but it is conceptual and not empirical. Sharma also examined the innovations in the business and indicated that because sustainable practises enhance satisfaction and loyalty, it is important to carefully integrate it to control costs [33].

The evidence therefore leads to the conclusion that sustainability increases loyalty in case the practises are genuine and combined in a holistic way. Critical limitations to the studies include the over-reliance on self-reports and context-specific sample which restricts generalisability.

Gaps in Existing Research

The literature review supports the idea that a combination of service quality, wellness packaging, and sustainability practises determine customer loyalty in the hospitality industry. Yet several gaps persist. To begin with, in a majority of studies, the context is limited, either to spas, green hotels or regional markets and it is hard to extrapolate the results to the hospitality industry as a whole. Second, wellness and sustainability are not studied in terms of their interaction. Although Jones and Global Market Insights emphasise on the mainstreaming of wellness, and Lin and Gonzalez Viralta show the loyalty advantages of sustainability, there is a lack of research that combines them to test synergistic impacts. Third, the methodological weaknesses have not disappeared: there is the bias of self-reports, the reviews of secondary data are not empirically based, and industry reports are not always characterised by a high level of transparency of methods used. Lastly, although research on different segments such as Damijanić indicates heterogeneity in motivations, limited studies have been able to follow these motivations up to the loyalty outcomes and the gaps in the current research remain to find out which segments are most sensitive to wellness and sustainability plans [7].

These silences indicate an incomplete discipline in which wellness and sustainability have evidence of relevancy but fall short of bringing them together in a single concept of how loyalty is developed. These gaps should be handled critically in future research to inform the academic debate as well as managerial practise in hospitality.

Conceptual Framework & Hypotheses
Conceptual Model



Fig: Smart diagram for conceptual model
(Source: self-developed)

This study has a conceptual model which incorporates the wellness packaging and sustainability as both antecedents of customer loyalty in hospitality. Consumer Behaviour Theory points out that value and satisfaction perceptions mediate behavioural results, whereas the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory demonstrates how the packaging and sustainability practises help in eliciting customer loyalty by satisfying or not satisfying their expectations. Sustainable Consumption Theory also makes the practises that are eco-friendly as a core in determining long-term patronage. The combination of these theoretical principles implies that neither wellness packaging nor sustainability is a functional driver but a complementary factor that strengthens the results of loyalty [4].; [23].

Wellness Packaging and Loyalty

Wellness packaging is a physical indication of quality of service and care that gives both practical and symbolic comfort to the customer. Studies on the wellness spa show that packaging design improves the feeling of hygiene, safety, and personalization that are closely associated with emotional attachment and loyalty [22]. Likewise, food retailing research shows that the practises of packaging-free and wellness-based food retailing are more likely to generate trust and positive repeat behaviours as they correspond to the expectations of authenticity and responsibility held by consumers [4]. These results show that wellness packaging is not merely a delivery model, but instead, it is a component of an overall customer experience, which develops loyalty.

Sustainability and Loyalty

The concept of sustainability has been demonstrated over and over again to enhance satisfaction, brand image, and loyalty whereby practises are perceived to be genuine and unchangeable. The studies of green hotels confirm that the adherence to Sustainable Development Goals increases satisfaction and loyalty, especially when we have a clear correlation between the brand image and environmental responsibility [23]. Likewise, the green supply chain literature indicates that sustainable packaging enhances corporate image and patronage intentions but these diminish when sustainability is perceived to be symbolic instead of a reality [26]. This emphasises the authenticity as a requisite to sustainability to become loyalty.

Interaction Effects

The relationship between sustainability and wellness packaging is very important. Hospitality research reveals that the perceived value of systems created by embedding wellness-related experiences in the eco-centric hotel setting is multiplied, resulting in an increased impact of satisfaction and loyalty [30]; Gonzalez-Viralta et al., 2023). The concept of packaging which simultaneously implies both wellness and sustainability thus serves as a reinforcing process, boosting up consumer confidence and long-term loyalty.

Hypotheses Development

H1: Wellness packaging has a positive impact on customer loyalty when it comes to hospitality

H2: Customer loyalty is affected by sustainability practises positively, with the condition of their authenticity

H3: Wellness packaging and sustainability have no interaction with each other in terms of their ability to generate outcomes of stronger loyalty than either aspect alone.

II. Research Methodology

Research Onion

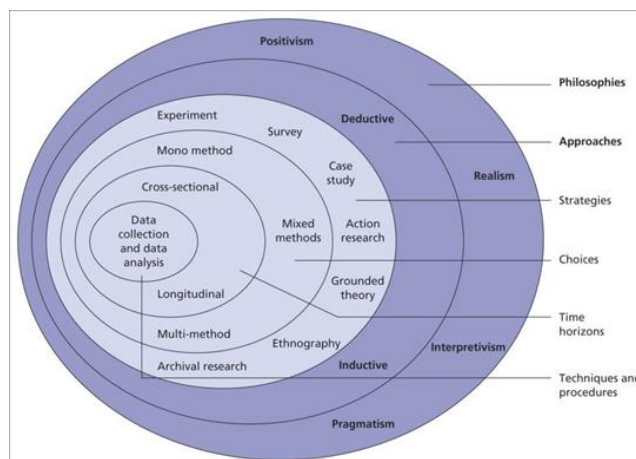


Fig: Research onion
(Source: Saunders et al. 2007)

The methodological layers that a research design develops can be presented by the use of the so-called research onion proposed by Saunders et al. (2007), where the given approach covers the philosophy, approach, strategy, methodological choice, time horizon, and methodology [32]. The onion brings out the fact that practical decisions are based on philosophical assumptions. In this research, interpretivism was selected on philosophical level, induction on approach layer, case study as approach strategy, qualitative analysis as approach methodology and secondary documentary review as approach data technique. It is an interpretive and exploratory orientation of the research in each decision. In contrast to the positivist studies, which value measurement and statistical regularities, in this onion model one can witness a movement towards flexibility, context and meaning-making.

Research philosophy and approach

Philosophy teaches the way reality (ontology) and knowledge (epistemology) should be interpreted. Positivism presupposes the existence of objective reality that can be quantified, whereas interpretivism agrees that social phenomena are constructed by the meaning of something subjective [1]. In this study, interpretivism is best suited since loyalty, wellness, and sustainability are not fixed but social constructs and are different among different situations and stakeholders.

Similar arguments are made by Zukauskas, Vveinhardt and Andriukaitienene (2018) who argue that the interpretivism approach acknowledges human agency and complexity in defining behaviour. These philosophical premises appear to echo in research on how wellness packaging and sustainability affect loyalty, with the findings being extracted through a method of narratives, practises, and secondary descriptions instead of through a quantitative approach. Loyalty to influences of positivism is based on the inability of the positivism theory to explain non-functional values, including trust, emotion, and environmental ethics, which are fundamental in hospitality.

The interpretivist position is in line with the selection of inductive reasoning. Hypotheses are tested and theory is initially deduced, and data to conceptualisation is the process of induction. As the research will be based on the synthesis of secondary documents and the extraction of the themes concerning the wellness, sustainability, and loyalty, inductive reasoning will enable the insights to come out of the data instead of rigid pre-determined hypotheses.

Research Strategy

Strategy is the point in the research onion that defines the operationalisation of philosophical and approach commitments. The case study research was chosen as it provides an opportunity to study a phenomenon holistically and, in a context, which is more detailed. Case studies are particularly appropriate when the questions are how and why as is the case with exploring the effects of wellness packaging on consumer perceptions and why sustainability practises can result in loyalty.

The current paper follows a collective case study design because it relies on the analysis of a number of secondary sources that reflect different hospitality and wellness settings. Instead of a single limited case, the design generalises examples in the industry. This approach is strong in terms of depth and flexibility, but it has a weakness of reduced generalisability. To counter this, there was a diverse array of cases, spa resorts to green hotels and wellness tourism reports, that have been reviewed and this strengthens applicability breadth.

Data Collection Method

No primary data were gathered and, therefore, documentary analysis was the only data collection technique. According to Saunders et al. (2007), secondary sources can be strong in case they are well curated under the strict inclusion and exclusion criterion [32]. The inclusion criteria were:

- Journal articles that have been published as recently as 2020 to guarantee that they relate to the present-day wellness and sustainability discussions.
- Statistics of wellness tourism and customer behaviour.
- Sources directly talking about hospitality, sustainability, wellness and loyalty.

The exclusion criteria were used to reduce non-peer-reviewed commentary, old literature, and sources with weak methodology. Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and ScienceDirect databases as well as professional repositories of tourism and hospitality research were used as databases in data collection.

Nevertheless, there exist such limitations as reliance on the quality of sources and lack of personal experiential knowledge. The weaknesses were countered by the means of triangulation of the various sources and by emphasis on credible peer-reviewed content.

Data Analysis Method

Thematic analysis was used in interpreting secondary data.

The steps were based on the six steps of familiarisation with data, generation of initial codes, searching of themes, reviewing of themes, defining and naming of themes as well as generation of the report as introduced by Braun and Clarke. Such codes as eco-centric branding, customer trust, and wellness outcomes were combined into such themes as sustainability as loyalty driver and wellness satisfaction through experience.

Breadth, in this case, was attained by including more than twenty peer-reviewed articles and reports in the industry, and it makes the study robust. Their limitation can be called the weakness of thematic analysis, which presupposes interpretive subjectivity, though, triangulation and cross-contextuality lowered the levels of bias and enhanced the level of credibility.

Constraints of Research

Limitations were mostly caused by the use of secondary data. One more limitation is time-related: the wellness tourism and sustainability is rapidly developing. The use of 2020+ publications is a partial solution to this but is not a complete solution. Access to subscription only databases was also limited by resource constraints thus we may have missed some insights. This study is exploratory in nature and therefore does not formulate hypotheses. Instead, it employs an interpretivist philosophy and inductive approach, relying on thematic analysis of secondary qualitative data to derive insights aligned with the research objectives.

Even with these shortcomings, secondary qualitative studies have breadth, credibility and ethical simplicity strengths. This method is appropriate in a study that is aimed at synthesis, not testing because many of the limitations can be addressed with the help of strong inclusion criteria and a systematic thematic analysis [32].

Thematic Process and Coding Framework

The data analysis method adopted in this study was the thematic analysis process, which took place in three different stages that are connected to one another. The initial step was the identification of major codes using the secondary sources directly. Such codes were based on certain textual evidence that reflected repeatable notions, e.g. wellness spa services, eco-friendly technologies or CSR branding. This step was to help make sure that the findings were not made based on assumptions of the researcher but in relation to the literature content.

The second step was the aggregation of the primary codes to the secondary codes which were the conceptual categories of a higher level. As an example, the main codes like the thermal spa, yoga retreat, and holistic service offerings were included in a second category called as holistic service design. Likewise, the mentions of solar-powered hotels and the water conservation technology were compartmentalised into the section of green hospitality practises. This operation gave an organised way to go forward into more interpretive categories out of descriptive units of meaning.

The third step was to synthesise the secondary codes into derived themes which were directly related to the research questions. Such themes were experience wellness packing and loyalty, sustainability as a factor of consumer choice and interaction of wellness and sustainability. Themes were matched to research questions which provided analytical coherence, whereas the potential tension and overlap could be identified through the constant comparison of sources.

The table provides a summary of the coding framework and it illustrates how certain textual references were used to make wider interpretations.

Table- Coding Framework

Primary Codes	Secondary Codes	Derived Themes	Linked RQ
“Wellness spa offerings”	“Holistic service design”	Experiential wellness packaging and loyalty	RQ1
“Repeat spa visits”	“Perceived value in retreats”	Satisfaction and retention through wellness packages	RQ1
“Eco-friendly technologies”	“Green hospitality practices”	Sustainability as a determinant of consumer choice	RQ2
“CSR and green branding”	“Trust and brand image”	Sustainability–loyalty linkage	RQ2
“Integrated green-wellness offers”	“Sustainable spa retreats”	Interaction of wellness and sustainability	RQ3
“Gender-specific preferences”	“Demographic influences”	Differentiated impacts of combined strategies	RQ3

Although the framework gives a regulated overview, it should be noted that limits between the categories were not always evident. Indicatively, eco-branding might be included in the sustainability themes, under trust and brand image, and in the wellness-related themes, under holistic service design, as the boundaries between the ethical positioning and experiential packaging are perceived as very thin. On the same note, demographic factors which include gender preferences overlap between wellness experiences and sustainable choices, making the categorisation process complicated.

This overlapping shows that hospitality loyalty is a multidimensional concept that cannot be comprehensively described using strict categories. In its turn, the thematic approach emphasises the interdependence of wellness packaging and sustainability as the determinants of consumer loyalty and mentions inconsistencies like the possibility of over-commercialisation of green branding or the varying impact of demographic variables.

This section gives the background of the analysis of the derived themes by describing the thematic process and giving the coding framework. The following parts of this chapter will thus view the way these themes fulfil the three research questions, and critically assess the strengths and limitations of the evidence base that they are based on.

III. Results / Findings

Thematic Analysis of Derived Themes

RQ1 – The Impact of Wellness Packaging on Customer Loyalty

Theme 1: Experiential wellness packaging and loyalty.

Designing wellness as an immersive experience, a spa experience or Yoga retreat, or wellness dining, has been proven many times to induce customer attachment not only due to the feeling of satisfaction but also due to emotional connexion. Jeong discovered that wellness tourism destinations have restorative environments that work to enhance perceptions of well-being, and thus lead to a subsequent increase in tourist affinity and repeat participation [17].

Experience in the packaging is the strength of experiential packaging because it allows turning the conventional service delivery into the affective memory-creating processes. Based on a series of case studies, Bočkus et al. emphasised that motivational aspects, including stress relief and holistic balance are closely interrelated with wellness tourism service design and enhance patronage in the long-term [6].



Fig: Wellness tourism market
(Source: Future Market Insights, 2025)

The wellness tourism market is projected to grow from USD 1,213.8 billion in 2025 to USD 3,276.5 billion in 2035 at a CAGR of 10.4% [11]. One of the weaknesses in this regard is accessibility. The statistics of

Global Wellness Institute indicate that 78 percent of the wellness tourism market is comprised of women, yet the high costs and geographical lack of high-quality retreats lock out large categories of consumers [13].

Theme 2: Satisfaction and retention through wellness packages.

Perceived value and consistency of experience have been linked to repeat patronage in wellness tourism. According to the Sri Lankan study by Sugathapala, wellness tourists, especially domestically based tourists, chose retreats, which were offering integrated spa, diet and mindfulness services, over and over again because they felt the value of the whole experience was holistic [34]. In the same vein, Murad et al. established that trust in the quality of the services and perceived long-term benefits of treatments are the strong predictors of retention within wellness spas [27].

However, researchers are still debating about the repeat visits as an indication of loyalty or habitual nature. Boćkus et al. found that satisfaction-based repeat visits can be delicate in the context of wellness tourism and that they depend on the novelty of destinations, which implies that the loyalty in this sector is usually marketing-inspired and can be easily broken [6]. This conforms to Arslan statement that loyalty is not only repeat buying but a strategic asset of sustainable competitive advantage, which needs a more structural assimilation of wellness into the brand as opposed to transactional satisfaction [2].

RQ2 - The Effect of Sustainability on Consumer Choice and Loyalty.

Theme 3: Sustainability as a determinant of consumer choice.

Green practises in hospitality have now become apparent as influencing factors in consumer buying decision. The researchers of Xess et al. investigated the impact of eco-technologies in the hospitality industry and discovered that such innovations like the use of renewable energy, waste minimization, and recycling of water had an effect on the perception of the guests concerning the sense of ethics and positively affected their intentions to choose this type of provider [39]. Olya et al. also made the same argument that when guests are aware of sustainability practises, their intention to change behaviour is influenced, and environmentally responsible hotels become more attractive [31].

Theme 4: Sustainability–loyalty linkage

CSR branding and trust has been found to be significant in preserving consumer loyalty in the hospitality settings. Although Dananjoyo et al. concentrated on housing, they established that sustainable service quality directly related to customer loyalty when there was trust in corporate responsibility [8]. This observation coincides with the review by Oliveras-Villanueva et al., which showed that in the hospitality industry, loyalty was determined by the concurrent production of service quality and sustainability, which established credibility in a relationship between the consumer and the hospitality provider [29].

RQ3 – The Interaction Between Wellness Packaging and Sustainability

Theme 5: Wellness and sustainability interaction

Sustainability and wellness packages are becoming more and more common in the hospitality industry. Global Market Insights estimated that the total market for wellness tourism will expand in the worldwide market with USD 1,213.8 billion in 2025 to USD 3,276.5 billion in 2035 with integrated eco-wellness packages like sustainable spa retreats taking the lead [11]. Similarly, it was highlighted in the Global Wellness Institute that the most vibrant sector of the wellness economy in the UK was the holistic spas and eco-conscious retreats, which demonstrated the joint effect of wellness and sustainability on the loyalty results [13].

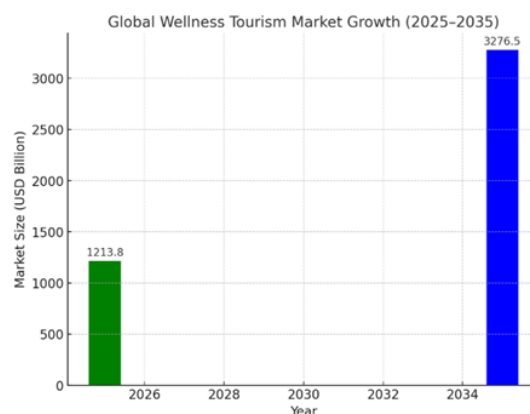


Fig: Global wellness tourism market growth
(Source: Future Market Insights, 2025).

This connexion is supported by empirical research. Murad et al. proved that hotel-based spa travellers feel more loyal when wellness is incorporated into sustainable infrastructures like environmentally friendly resorts [27]. Sugathapala also found that preferences among consumers in Sri Lanka were towards retreats that had both natural settings and holistic offerings and that wellness-sustainability synergies affect the selection [34].

Nevertheless, there are some risks created by excessive commercialisation. Hekmat et al. cautioned against the futility of introducing wellness-sustainability integration as a marketing instrument and not as a true practise consumer scepticism erodes loyalty [15]. Therefore, even though the impact of wellness on sustainability may bring in differentiation and competitive edge, its validity depends on the clear execution and not the branding.

Theme 6: Differentiated impacts of combined strategies.

Demographics play a significant role where the sustainability and wellness integrated strategies mediate on loyalty outcomes. According to the data provided by Global Wellness Institute, more than three-quarters of global wellness tourists are women, which implies that market behaviour is dominated by a gendered preference [13]. This is also confirmed by the findings of Sugathapala where women in Sri Lanka were found to have a greater need to receive integrated eco-wellness services than men [34].

Yet, evidence is not uniform. According to Jeong, restorative environments are popular among demographics, which implies that wellness-sustainability effects are not limited to gender and are influenced by socio-cultural and age-specific factors [17]. This was strengthened by Bočkus et al., who also found motivational differences between younger and older wellness tourists, whose motivations favoured novel eco-experiences and relaxation and health benefits, respectively [6].

This denotes that intersectionality makes the storey more complex. Although women are the drivers of aggregate market share, male wellness travel, in particular performance-based retreats, is gaining ground and socio-economic access continues to segregate consumer loyalty [10]. Therefore, there cannot be a universal approach to integrated strategies; the results of loyalty will be based on specific packages and demographic complexities.

IV. Discussion

Interpretation of results

A number of overlaps arise amongst wellness and sustainability themes. Eco-branding serves as an experience of wellness, as well as an ethical indicator, sustainability, and cross-categorises. The results of Gouda and Halim depict this two-sidedness as the messages about the sustainability of social media affected the loyalty through the strengthening of both wellness appeal and ethical positioning [14].

The conflicting issues emerge between consumer intentions and behaviour. Kim and Hall emphasised that consumers report a preference in favour of sustainable restaurants, but the loyalty decreases in reality when the price becomes higher or less convenient [21]. This is reflected in hospitality, in general, where pragmatic trade-offs destroy sustainability preferences [24]. The evidence also highlights the social and personal dynamics in the influence of forming the environmentally friendly behaviour in hospitality. When social norms and a stable approach to green practices promote sustainable behaviors among guests across the hotel setting, guests are more likely to use a sustainable approach and show that individual loyalty is socially grounded and context-specific [24]. On a more radical scale, push-pull motivations in sustainable tourism demonstrate that environmental issues are a pull factor and a loyalty enabling factor. Tourists who view destinations as having environmental credibility have a higher chance to show sustainable destination loyalty, which facilitates the incorporation of the ecological authenticity in the tourism policies [28].

Lastly, there are still gaps in research. A lot of the research also is based on cross-sectional surveys or case studies that are not longitudinally validated, which restrains the ability to know how loyalty changes over time. Additionally, the male portion of the wellness tourism is unexplored, as well as cultural differences beyond Western and Asiatic ones. The authenticity versus branding paradox where symbolic wellness and sustainability communications challenges actual execution has also not been studied adequately, although this is among the key elements that enforces long-term loyalty. In all themes, some overlaps and contradictions were developed especially in relation to consumer intention and actual behaviour, branding and authentic delivery. Whereas wellness and sustainability obviously strengthen loyalty, the two are effective based on credibility, affordability, and the alignment of demographics. These observations indicate that longitudinal and demographic studies contain gaps which require more in-depth analysis of authenticity, cultural difference and intersectional consumer behaviour.

Contribution of the Study

Practical Contribution

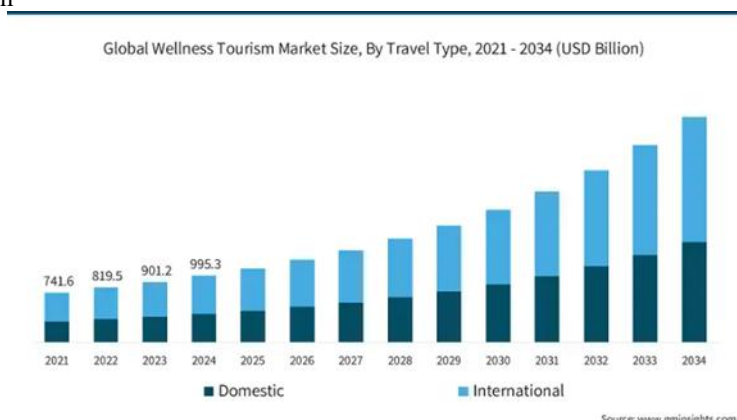


Fig: Global wellness tourism market
(Source: Global Market Insights, 2025)

The practical implications of the study are also very important. Wellness tourism has also emerged as a core growth area and Global Market Insights indicates that the global wellness tourism sector was estimated to be USD 995.3 billion in the year 2024 and is estimated to increase further to USD 3.3 trillion in the coming year 2034 with an annualized growth rate of 13.2% [12]. This type of blistering development makes wellness packaging one of the strategy pillars of hospitality operators.

This study can help managers to be more aligned to consumer expectations in their services. Jones emphasized the fact that wellness has become a popular trend in tourism, cutting across hotels, spas, and retreats as consumers seek to enhance and reduce the stress levels [18].

Concerning the sustainability dimension, Olorunsola et al. discovered that eco-centric hotels that practiced sustainability persistently (including the genuine integration of wellness into eco-hospitality) were rated positively by consumers, but the failures were often caused by the attitude towards greenwashing or high prices [30]. This implies that real, holistic sustainability and wellness practices are more useful than gimmick or piece meal practices.

There is more than that, however. The demographic evidence is nuanced. According to Global Market Insights, 78 percent of wellness tourism market in 2024 was comprised of women and men were becoming more attracted to activity-based wellness tourism like boot camps and fitness-based retreats [12]. This age gap highlights the need to focus on packaging, which will ensure that the wellness-sustainability efforts appeal to the different consumer groups.

Associating Key Findings with Contributions.

The findings affirm that loyalty in hospitality is no longer exclusively about being satisfied with the quality of the service but is co-created during immersion through wellness and sustainable authenticity. Pro-environmental initiatives are important to Generation Z, as it creates a connection between brand value and consumer value; Szkudlarek et al. found that Gen Z rewards the brand that implements believable sustainability strategies and punishes superficial behavior [36]. On the same note, Uludag et al. showed that digital engagement on green initiatives can enhance loyalty to the extent that the message sent appears credible and conversational [37].

However, in this study, there are also problems. Huang et al. discovered that green loyalty programs usually bring about short term compliance, which is due to relief of guilt or attractiveness of the staff and not lasting change of loyalty [16]. This demonstrates that loyalty mechanisms which are designed to foster sustainability are weak and need to be supported by trust and consistency so as to prevent the disappearance effects.

Overall Value of the Study

The reviewed evidence also indicates that wellness and sustainability may strengthen the loyalty, but their applicability depends on the situation, demographics, and authenticity. Green practices can be localising on sustainability conscious segments but not when it appears cosmetic. Likewise, wellness services can bring in repeat business but will be commodified by downgrading them to uniform packages. Future loyalty strategies should then be the trade-off between innovation.

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