


**THE ROLE OF HOTEL MANAGERS IN ENHANCING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN LEBANON**

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Article history:</b>  <b>Received:</b> Jun, 18<sup>th</sup> 2024  <b>Accepted:</b> Aug, 16<sup>th</sup> 2024</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> This study addresses the issue of corporate social responsibility with a special focus on Lebanese 5 star hotels. Point that a sustainable development approach has implications on organizational actions and strategies, recognize the role of managers in Lebanese hotels in applying and implementing sustainable development principles, and indicate the changes that occur in each department of the organization after the adoption of the CSR foundation.</p>
<p><b>Keywords:</b>            CSR;            Sustainable Development;            Sustainable Business;            Sustainable Hotels;            Tourism Development;            Hotel Managers.</p>	<p><b>Theoretical Framework:</b> This topic presents the main concepts on which the research is based. It highlights everything related to sustainable development, corporate social responsibility and the role of managers, providing a solid foundation for understanding the research context.</p>
	<p><b>Method:</b> The focus is on critical realist philosophy and positivism, with qualitative analysis and inductive reasoning through observation and semi-structured interviews. Secondary data come from books, published and unpublished personal sources, newspapers, websites, blogs, diaries, government documents, and podcasts.</p>
	<p><b>Results and Discussion:</b> The data collected show that the concept of sustainable development exists in Lebanon and that Lebanese hotels have become socially responsible, albeit to varying degrees. Managers have a key role to play in realizing this concept.</p>
	<p><b>Research Implications:</b> The practical and theoretical implications of this research were discussed, providing an accurate snapshot of the level of implementation of sustainable development in Lebanese hotels. It provides an information base, the application of which helps to raise the level of implementation of the concept of sustainability in hotels.</p>
	<p><b>Originality/Value:</b> The importance of the study lies in providing information on all the study variables, clarifying the role of managers in applying the concept of CSR, and highlighting the basic and sequential steps for applying CSR in Lebanese hotels.</p>
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**O PAPEL DOS GERENTES DE HOTÉIS NO APRIMORAMENTO DO DESENVOLVIMENTO SUSTENTÁVEL NO LÍBANO**

**RESUMO**

**Objetivo:** Este estudo aborda a questão da responsabilidade social corporativa com foco especial nos hotéis libaneses de 5 estrelas. Aponta que uma abordagem de desenvolvimento sustentável tem implicações nas ações e estratégias organizacionais, reconhece o papel dos gerentes dos hotéis libaneses na aplicação e implementação dos princípios de desenvolvimento sustentável e indica as mudanças que ocorrem em cada departamento da organização após a adoção dos fundamentos da RSC.

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**Estrutura Teórica:** Este tópico apresenta os principais conceitos nos quais a pesquisa se baseia. Ele destaca tudo o que está relacionado ao desenvolvimento sustentável, à responsabilidade social corporativa e ao papel dos gerentes, fornecendo uma base sólida para a compreensão do contexto da pesquisa.

**Método:** O foco está na filosofia realista crítica e no positivismo, com análise qualitativa e raciocínio indutivo por meio de observação e entrevistas semiestruturadas. Os dados secundários são provenientes de livros, fontes pessoais publicadas e não publicadas, jornais, sites, blogs, diários, documentos governamentais e podcasts.

**Resultados e Discussão:** Os dados coletados mostram que o conceito de desenvolvimento sustentável existe no Líbano e que os hotéis libaneses se tornaram socialmente responsáveis, embora em graus variados. Os gerentes têm um papel fundamental a desempenhar na concretização desse conceito.

**Implicações da Pesquisa:** As implicações práticas e teóricas desta pesquisa foram discutidas, fornecendo um retrato preciso do nível de implementação do desenvolvimento sustentável nos hotéis libaneses. Ela fornece uma base de informações, cuja aplicação ajuda a elevar o nível de implementação do conceito de sustentabilidade nos hotéis.

**Originalidade/Valor:** A importância do estudo está no fornecimento de informações sobre todas as variáveis do estudo, esclarecendo o papel dos gerentes na aplicação do conceito de RSC e destacando as etapas básicas e sequenciais para a aplicação da RSC nos hotéis libaneses.

**Palavras-chave:** RSC, Desenvolvimento Sustentável, Negócios Sustentáveis, Hotéis Sustentáveis, Desenvolvimento do Turismo, Gerentes de Hotéis.

## EL PAPEL DE LOS DIRECTORES DE HOTEL EN LA MEJORA DEL DESARROLLO SOSTENIBLE EN EL LÍBANO

### RESUMEN

**Objetivo:** Este estudio aborda la cuestión de la responsabilidad social de las empresas centrándose especialmente en los hoteles libaneses de 5 estrellas. Señala que un enfoque de desarrollo sostenible tiene implicaciones en las acciones y estrategias organizativas, reconoce el papel de los directivos de los hoteles libaneses en la aplicación y puesta en práctica de los principios del desarrollo sostenible, e indica los cambios que se producen en cada departamento de la organización tras la adopción de los fundamentos de la RSE.

**Marco Teórico:** Este tema presenta los principales conceptos en los que se basa la investigación. Destaca todo lo relacionado con el desarrollo sostenible, la responsabilidad social de las empresas y el papel de los directivos, proporcionando una base sólida para comprender el contexto de la investigación.

**Método:** El enfoque es la filosofía realista crítica y el positivismo, con análisis cualitativo y razonamiento inductivo a través de la observación y entrevistas semiestruturadas. Los datos secundarios proceden de libros, fuentes personales publicadas e inéditas, periódicos, sitios web, blogs, diarios, documentos gubernamentales y podcasts.

**Resultados y Discusión:** Los datos recogidos muestran que el concepto de desarrollo sostenible existe en Líbano y que los hoteles libaneses se han vuelto socialmente responsables, aunque en distintos grados. Los directivos tienen un papel clave que desempeñar en la materialización de este concepto.

**Implicaciones de la Investigación:** Se analizaron las implicaciones prácticas y teóricas de esta investigación, que ofrece una instantánea precisa del nivel de implantación del desarrollo sostenible en los hoteles libaneses. Proporciona una base de información cuya aplicación contribuye a elevar el nivel de implantación del concepto de sostenibilidad en los hoteles.

**Originalidad/Valor:** La importancia del estudio radica en que proporciona información sobre todas las variables del estudio, aclara el papel de los directivos en la aplicación del concepto de RSE y pone de relieve los pasos básicos y secuenciales para aplicar la RSE en los hoteles libaneses.

**Palabras clave:** RSE, Desarrollo Sostenible, Empresa Sostenible, Hoteles Sostenibles, Desarrollo Turístico, Directores de Hotel.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development is at the center of current global concerns, defined as an approach that seeks to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future

generations to meet their own needs (Zhou et al., 2020). The concept is becoming increasingly important in a world of growing environmental, social, and economic challenges. It is influencing the way business is performed around the world. CSR has emerged as a strategic solution since most companies adopt sustainable business strategies that combine economic performance with social responsibility (Bouichou et al., 2022).

The hotel industry has a significant and direct impact on the environment and society and is, therefore, particularly concerned with these developments. Lebanese hotels, in particular, have to deal with a complex environment characterized by environmental, economic, and social challenges. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become an essential solution to ensure business sustainability and meet stakeholder expectations (Dong & Khan, 2023).

Managers play a key role in embedding sustainability in hotels. They are responsible for implementing and developing corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies that align day-to-day operations with long-term sustainability goals (Ferrell et al., 2010). The success of these plans depends primarily on the manager's ability to educate their teams on the values of social responsibility while ensuring the economic profitability necessary for the company's sustainability.

## 1.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions are:

- how are the various hotel departments affected and changed by the adoption and implementation of CSR?
- how do managers approach the concept of sustainable development in hotels?
- how do the CSR initiatives adopted by the various departments contribute to improving the overall environment of the hotels?

## 1.2 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Three major hypotheses for this research:

**(H1):** Incorporating sustainable development standards in various hotel departments contributes significantly to raising the level of social responsibility awareness among employees and guests.

**(H2):** Adopting social responsibility strategies in the management of hotel departments contributes to minimizing waste and pollution.

**(H3):** Sustainable development initiatives applied in hotels are positively related to increasing the level of competition among organizations in the tourism sector.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CSR

Sustainable development, as defined by the United Nations, is based on the idea of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This concept has become a key driver for businesses, enabling them to reconcile economic performance, environmental protection, and social well-being (Mikołajek-Gocejna, 2016). Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), an essential element of sustainable development, is a voluntary commitment by companies to adopt ethical and transparent business practices that balance the well-being of society with the protection of the environment (Beckers, 2015). In the hotel industry, sustainable business strategies include resource efficiency, community involvement, waste minimization, and waste sorting and recycling promotion. This enhances the company's reputation and meets customers' growing expectations for sustainability (Font & Lynes, 2018).

### 2.2 CORPORATE MANAGERS

Managers, also called department heads, are considered the backbone of organizations. Their role is limited to strategic planning, day-to-day managing of operations, and optimizing the company's resources (Mintzberg, 2004). Managers play a key role in achieving the company's goals, especially when it comes to integrating sustainable development plans and issues into business processes (Rafael & Cordeiro, 2024). Managers must make the right decisions, maximize operational efficiency, and develop strategies that align the organization's goals with corporate social responsibility (CSR) principles (Hill et al., 2020). The complex environment requires managers to take responsibility for risk management, continuous innovation, strong external and internal communication, and contribution to the creation of sustainable value for all stakeholders (Pendi et al., 2023).

The relationship between managers and CSR is critical to the success of the foundations of sustainable development. Managers play a key role in developing and implementing CSR strategies and plans, and their role is to ensure that all sustainable actions are integrated into all aspects of the organization (Aguinis et al., 2024). Shaping the organizational culture and mentoring the teams help managers run CSR principles and subsequently embed them in the organization (Hahn et al., 2015). Proper management of CSR issues contributes to improved financial performance, enhanced employee and customer loyalty, and sustainable competitive advantage (Porter & Kramer, 2018).

### 3 METHODOLOGY

The focus is on critical realist philosophy and positivism, with qualitative analysis and inductive reasoning through observation and semi-structured interviews. Secondary data come from books, published and unpublished personal sources, newspapers, websites, blogs, diaries, government documents, and podcasts.

### 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the interviews with managers on CSR are presented in the following tables:

**Table 1**

*Room Service*

<b>Room Service</b>	<b>Standards</b>
	Using card-operated door openers and closers: When a guest leaves their room and locks it with a card, the air conditioner, radio and TV are automatically shut down. This system can reduce electricity consumption by 15 to 30%.
	Using quick-change systems (VSD) with air conditioning tools
	Setting the room temperature at 24 dg
	Setting the temperature of unoccupied rooms at 28 dg or turn off the entire system in these rooms
	Closing windows in rooms to reduce air leakage
	Cleaning light bulbs and their covers regularly
	Using small refrigerators, microwaves, coffee makers, dryers, and irons that are environmentally friendly
	Setting water heater temperatures between 49 dg and 55 dg
	Not placing televisions and light bulbs near the thermometers of air conditioners since these appliances produce heat which affects the operation of the thermometers and consumes more energy

Source: Data from interviews

Table (1) shows the CSR procedures followed in the room service department.

The table shows that housekeeping has taken several steps to stabilize and reduce the heat rate and minimize power consumption.

**Table 2**

*Laundry Department*

Laundry Department	Standards
	Washing machines and dryers must not be used between 12 pm and 5 pm from May to September. Washing machines should only be used when full.
	Using high quality appliances to reduce energy consumption (such as cleaning machines, dryers and irons)
	Using mid-size washers and dryers for small to medium quantities of garments
	Reducing the temperature of the water used in the laundry from 85 to 60 degrees to save energy and reduce costs
	Regular maintenance of insulation materials covering hot water pipes
	Regular maintenance of electrical appliances, water heaters, and plumbing systems

Source: Data from interviews

Table (2) shows the CSR standards followed in the laundry department.

The laundry department is concerned with the timing of laundry and the use of the best equipment to minimize energy and water waste.

**Table 3**

*Kitchens and Restaurants*

Kitchens and Restaurants	Standards
	Using separate electrical switches to turn off lights in unoccupied rooms
	Using ovens that run on gas instead of electricity
	Keeping restaurant walls, roofs, and kitchens clean
	Daily cleaning of all kitchen utensils and equipment
	Turning off all electrical appliances after use to prevent fire hazard
	Placing metal plates under containers to increase heat
	Letting food cool completely before putting it in the refrigerator so that it does not spoil
	Converting food into fertilizer to reduce waste (potato or apple peels, eggshells)
	Hiring experienced cooks to help determine the amount of food to cook and reduce food waste
	Using organic food (fruits and vegetables)
	Putting garbage in clear bags to make sorting easier
	Storing a limited amount of food so that it does not go to waste when not in use

Source: Data from interviews

Table (3) shows the operations performed in the kitchen and restaurant department.

The kitchen and restaurant department uses work practices that minimize food and energy waste, promote waste sorting, and keep equipment clean.

**Table 4***Corridors*

Corridors	Standards
	Using FLORESENT (CFLS) bulbs in the halls
	Setting temperature in lobbies and other facilities at 24 dg
	Using revolving doors at hotel entrances to reduce cold air leakage
	Turning off lights in daylight areas
	Cleaning light fixtures regularly
	Using separate electrical switches in seldom-used rooms (meeting rooms, storage rooms, corridors)
	Programing elevators to stay on the floors they arrive at instead of going down to the ground floor
	Disabling some lifts instead of running them all
	Using time-controlled faucets in pool locker rooms to shower in less time
	Using solar charging for pool water. Cover pools when not in use
	Using water and electricity meters in each department to monitor usage
	Installation of color-coded recycling bins near each elevator on all floors

Source: Data from interviews

Table (4) shows the sustainable working practices in the corridor section.

The corridor department is interested in promoting waste sorting, recycling, and minimizing energy waste.

**Table 5***Gardens and Irrigation*

Gardens and Irrigation	Standards
	Turning on outdoor garden lights only at night
	Turning off decorative outdoor lights at midnight after customers have gone to bed
	Irrigating plants in the morning or at night when temperatures are low to reduce the percentage of water that evaporates
	Growing plants that require the same amount of water in the same area, to avoid free watering and insufficient volume of water
	Using drip irrigation systems that can be set on timers
	Choosing plants that do not need much water and are more drought-tolerant
	Mixing fertilizer into the soil to keep it moist
	Checking sprinklers regularly for leaks
	Using soil moisture meters

Source: Data from interviews

Table (5) shows the sustainable action plans used in gardens and irrigation.

The garden and irrigation department uses practices that minimize water and energy waste.

The criteria listed in the tables above show that Lebanese 5-star hotel managers are implementing CSR provisions by integrating them into their strategies and approaches. The implementation of this concept requires the use of new equipment and business plans that are sustainable in their content. Therefore, the hypotheses (H1, H2, H3) used are accepted.

## 5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study reveals that Lebanese hotels with a five-star rating have a high percentage of CSR clauses, reflecting their commitment to sustainable development. Managers have adapted their working methods to the principles of CSR, thus developing sustainability and ethics in the management of the hotel sector. These measures have had a positive impact on the economic and social performance of hotels and have improved their reputation in the competitive market. The positive results of this study underline the importance of adhering to the implementation of CSR clauses in the hotel sector, which lays the first foundations for building a more sustainable future.

Some recommendations to consider: Increase training programs (Five-star hotels should increase the level of CSR training programs for managers and employees to ensure a general understanding and effective implementation of sustainability issues throughout the organization). Strengthen the integration of CSR into the overall business strategy (Hotels should integrate CSR clauses more systematically into their business strategies. This requires the adoption of specific performance criteria to assess the impact of implementing these points on economic, social, and environmental performance). Work with local partners (encourage collaboration with NGOs and local communities to increase support for sustainable development projects, in order to improve the social impact of hotels and boost local economies). Publish annual sustainability report (It is recommended that each hotel publishes an annual sustainability report detailing all actions taken, results, and CSR goals. This report is intended to increase transparency and accountability to stakeholders). And adopt new technologies (hotels should adopt technologies that support sustainability, such as new waste management applications and efficient resource management systems).

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