

RESPONSIBLE HOSPITALITY PRACTICES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON RESPONSIBLE TOURISM: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF HOTELS

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Abstract

This study examines how responsible hospitality practices influence responsible tourism in the hotel sector. Grounded in the triple bottom line perspective, the research proposes that governance and management, social responsiveness, product and customer focus, environmental performance, and economic responsibility jointly shape responsible hospitality practices, which in turn strengthen responsible tourism outcomes. A quantitative design was adopted, and data were collected from hotel managers using a structured questionnaire. The measurement model was validated through reliability, factor analysis, and confirmatory analysis, followed by structural equation modeling to test the hypothesized relationships. The results show that all five dimensions exert significant positive effects on responsible hospitality practices. In addition, responsible hospitality practices have a strong and significant impact on responsible tourism, confirming the proposed framework. The findings suggest that responsible tourism is not driven by a single operational factor, but by an integrated set of managerial, social, environmental, and economic commitments within hotels. The study contributes to sustainable tourism literature by empirically demonstrating the role of hotels as key actors in promoting responsible tourism and by offering a multidimensional framework for future research. Practical implications are relevant for hotel managers and policymakers seeking to strengthen sustainability-oriented tourism development.

Key words: Responsible hospitality; responsible tourism; hotels; sustainability; triple bottom line, social responsiveness.

JEL Classification: L83, Q01, R11, Z32.

1. INTRODUCTION

The hospitality and tourism industry has entered a period of deep transformation in which sustainability, ethical accountability, and stakeholder responsibility are no longer peripheral concerns but central expectations shaping business practice and destination development. Across the global tourism landscape, growing awareness of the environmental, social, and economic consequences of tourism has intensified the call for more responsible forms of development and management (Musavengane & Steyn, 2013; Caruana et al., 2014; Mathew & Sreejesh, 2017; Madanaguli et al., 2022). In this context, responsible tourism has emerged as a significant framework for rethinking how tourism activities are planned, delivered, and experienced, with particular emphasis on minimizing harm, enhancing local benefits, and ensuring long-term destination sustainability (Koščak & O'Rourke, 2023; Saarinen, 2021). Rather than treating tourism growth as an end in itself, responsible tourism demands that stakeholders actively consider how tourism contributes to environmental stewardship, community well-being, ethical conduct, and inclusive economic progress.

Within this broader transition, hotels occupy a uniquely influential position. As one of the most visible

and operationally central components of the tourism system, hotels shape not only the visitor experience but also the environmental and socio-economic footprint of destinations (Musavengane & Steyn, 2013; Chandran et al., 2021). Through their decisions relating to procurement, labour, marketing, waste management, community engagement, cultural promotion, and resource use, hotels can either reinforce unsustainable patterns or serve as powerful agents of positive change (Luo et al., 2020; D'Souza, 2023). Their contribution extends beyond accommodation provision: hotels interact directly with guests, employees, suppliers, and local communities, and therefore possess the practical capacity to embed responsible values into everyday tourism operations. This makes the hotel sector especially relevant to scholarly inquiry on responsible tourism and sustainable destination governance.

Responsible tourism is commonly understood as tourism that seeks to meet the needs of present tourists and host regions while safeguarding opportunities for the future (DEAT, 1996). In the hotel context, this implies a commitment to practices that are environmentally sound, socially just, ethically managed, and economically beneficial to local stakeholders (Mathew, 2022; Ahmad et al., 2023). Such practices may include transparent and accountable governance, fair treatment of employees, engagement

with local communities, environmentally responsible operations, ethical communication with consumers, and support for local livelihoods and enterprise development. These practices collectively reflect a broader orientation toward what may be termed responsible hospitality practices, namely, the institutionalization of values and actions through which hotels operationalize responsible tourism principles in their organisational systems and service delivery.

The conceptual foundation for examining these practices is closely aligned with the triple bottom line perspective, which emphasizes the integration of environmental protection, social equity, and economic viability in organisational and destination development (Çakar, 2020; Musavengane, 2019). In hospitality settings, this perspective is particularly useful because hotel operations affect all three dimensions simultaneously. A hotel that reduces water and energy consumption contributes to environmental sustainability; one that protects labour rights and supports community initiatives advances social responsibility; and one that sources locally and generates employment strengthens local economic resilience (Wang et al., 2020; Deladem et al., 2021; Haldorai et al., 2022). Consequently, responsible hospitality cannot be assessed through a single operational lens. It must be understood as a multidimensional construct encompassing governance and management, social responsiveness, product and customer focus, environmental performance, and economic responsibility.

Although the relevance of these dimensions is well established in the broader sustainability and hospitality literature, empirical studies have often addressed them in fragmented ways. Prior research has examined governance, sustainability disclosure, and ethical accountability in hospitality organisations (Ruiz-Lozano et al., 2022; Hamrouni et al., 2023), while other studies have explored customer orientation and responsible marketing (Bhattacharya, 2016; Datiko, 2024), environmental management and green operational performance (Nisar et al., 2021; Tritto, 2020), and local economic and community development outcomes (Buratti et al., 2022; Mathew, 2022). Similarly, studies on responsible and sustainable tourism have emphasized the importance of stakeholder engagement, local quality of life, environmental consciousness, and community participation (Mathew & Sreejesh, 2017; Rasdi et al., 2022; D'Souza, 2025). However, much of this literature has treated these domains independently, with limited effort to integrate them into a single framework that explains how hotel-level practices collectively contribute to responsible tourism outcomes.

This gap is particularly important because responsible tourism in practice is rarely produced through isolated initiatives. Instead, it emerges from a coordinated and institutionalized combination of

policies, operational systems, stakeholder relationships, and ethical commitments. For example, a hotel's environmental initiatives may be weakened if governance structures are poor, just as community engagement may remain symbolic if customer-facing practices and local economic linkages are not aligned with broader responsibility goals. A more integrated perspective is therefore needed to explain how distinct organisational dimensions work together to shape responsible hospitality practices and, through them, responsible tourism outcomes. Such an approach can also generate stronger theoretical and managerial insight than studies focused on isolated sustainability variables.

The present study responds to this need by examining the role of five key dimensions, governance and management, social responsiveness, product and customer focus, environmental performance, and economic responsibility, as antecedents of responsible hospitality practices, which in turn influence responsible tourism. In doing so, the study moves beyond a descriptive treatment of sustainability in hotels and instead tests a structured empirical model of how responsible practices are formed and translated into broader tourism outcomes. This approach is especially relevant in the Indian context, where tourism growth continues to create both development opportunities and sustainability pressures, and where hotels are increasingly expected to balance competitiveness with ethical and environmental accountability (Islam et al., 2020; Kaur, 2021; D'Souza, 2023).

The study therefore makes two principal contributions. First, it extends responsible tourism research by proposing and testing a multidimensional framework that links core hotel practices to responsible tourism through the mediating role of responsible hospitality practices. Second, it contributes practical insight for hotel managers and policymakers by identifying the organisational dimensions that most meaningfully support a responsible tourism agenda. By situating hotel operations within a broader sustainability logic and empirically examining their combined influence, the study seeks to advance understanding of how hospitality organisations can contribute more effectively to the long-term resilience, legitimacy, and sustainability of tourism destinations.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Responsible tourism has developed within the broader discourse of sustainable tourism as a normative and operational framework that seeks to balance environmental integrity, social equity, and economic viability in destination development (Musavengane, 2019; Çakar, 2020; D'Souza, 2025). Unlike narrow sustainability approaches that focus only on

environmental protection, responsible tourism emphasizes accountability among tourism stakeholders for the consequences of their decisions and actions (Saarinen, 2021; Koščak & O'Rourke, 2023). It is therefore not merely a destination-level aspiration but a practical organizational concern, particularly in sectors such as hospitality where business operations are deeply embedded in local social, cultural, and ecological systems. Hotels are especially significant in this regard because they shape tourist experiences, consume substantial natural resources, generate employment, interact with host communities, and influence local supply chains (Musavengane & Steyn, 2013; Çelik & Çevirgen, 2021). As a result, the extent to which hotels institutionalize responsible practices can have a meaningful effect on broader responsible tourism outcomes.

The conceptual logic of this study is grounded primarily in the triple bottom line perspective, which holds that sustainability must be understood through the integrated pursuit of environmental protection, social responsibility, and economic well-being (Caruana et al., 2014; Musavengane, 2019; Çakar, 2020). In the hospitality context, however, these three pillars do not operate in isolation. Their realization depends on managerial systems, stakeholder relationships, operational priorities, and institutional accountability. For this reason, responsible hospitality is better treated as a multidimensional construct rather than a single sustainability orientation. Building on this logic, the present study conceptualizes Responsible Hospitality Practices (RHP) as a higher-order organisational outcome shaped by five interrelated dimensions: Governance and Management, Social Responsiveness, Product and Customer Focus, Environmental Performance, and Economic Responsibility. These dimensions collectively reflect the mechanisms through which hotels translate sustainability principles into operational practice and, ultimately, into responsible tourism outcomes.

Governance and Management

Governance and management constitute a foundational dimension of responsible hospitality because they provide the formal structures through which ethical intent is translated into policy, monitoring, and action. In hospitality organisations, governance is reflected in accountability, transparency, regulatory compliance, strategic planning, and the internal alignment of sustainability with managerial decision-making (Sofyani et al., 2020; Kazemian et al., 2021). Studies have shown that organisations with stronger accountability systems and transparent communication are more likely to build stakeholder trust and engage more seriously with sustainability reporting and responsible conduct (Ruiz-Lozano et al., 2022; Hamrouni et al., 2023). In hotel settings, visible commitment to compliance, disclosure, and responsible

decision-making enhances legitimacy and strengthens institutional credibility (Wong et al., 2021).

Management practices are equally important because they determine whether responsibility is embedded in organisational routines rather than treated as symbolic compliance. Robina-Ramírez et al. (2021) emphasize that hospitality organisations require formal policies and procedures to uphold ethical and sustainability standards, while dos Santos et al. (2020) argue that systematic sustainability criteria improve both operational effectiveness and long-term strategic resilience. In this context, governance extends beyond formal reporting to include quality management, employee welfare, human resource development, and the integration of sustainability into business planning. Employee well-being, fair wages, safe working conditions, and developmental opportunities are especially relevant in hospitality because service quality is closely tied to workforce capability and morale (Bandara et al., 2022; Ghani et al., 2022; Kung'u, 2021). Likewise, investments in training and human resource development strengthen employee competence and organisational effectiveness, thereby supporting responsible service delivery and sustainability implementation (Waqanimaravu & Arasanmi, 2020; Alsafadi & Altahat, 2021; Yoopecth et al., 2021).

Although the significance of governance and management has been widely acknowledged, much of the literature addresses these variables as separate administrative or CSR concerns rather than as integrated drivers of responsible hospitality. This creates a gap in understanding how governance structures and managerial systems jointly shape responsible hospitality practices within hotels. The present study addresses this by examining Governance and Management as a direct antecedent of RHP.

Social Responsiveness

Social responsiveness refers to the extent to which organisations actively engage with social needs, stakeholder well-being, and community development. In responsible tourism, this dimension is central because tourism affects host communities not only economically but also socially and culturally (Mathew & Sreejesh, 2017; Rasdi et al., 2022). Socially responsive hotels are expected to go beyond basic legal compliance by preventing discrimination, ensuring inclusion, protecting vulnerable groups, supporting local communities, and fostering meaningful stakeholder relationships. Such practices align with broader expectations that tourism businesses should create positive social value while minimizing exploitative or exclusionary effects (Martos-Pedrero et al., 2024).

Stakeholder engagement is an important component of this dimension. Organisations that involve community actors, internal staff, and other

stakeholders in their operations are more likely to produce socially legitimate and contextually relevant outcomes (Fobbe & Hilletoft, 2023). In hospitality, this may take the form of collaboration in local events, support for social projects, or the inclusion of host communities in destination promotion and development. Equally important is the role of hotels in protecting and promoting local art, culture, cuisine, and heritage. Tourism literature increasingly recognizes that cultural preservation is not incidental to sustainability but a core element of responsible destination management (Kumar & Nair, 2022). Hotels that support local traditions and cultural expression can help preserve destination distinctiveness while also strengthening community pride and authenticity.

Existing research strongly supports the relevance of social responsiveness to destination sustainability, yet it often treats community development, inclusion, and stakeholder engagement as broad CSR themes rather than as measurable elements of hotel responsibility. The present study therefore positions Social Responsiveness as a distinct dimension contributing to RHP, thereby extending the literature from descriptive advocacy to empirical testing.

Product and Customer Focus

Product and Customer Focus represents the consumer-facing dimension of responsible hospitality. It reflects the extent to which hotels align service delivery, marketing communication, safety, privacy, and customer care with principles of responsibility and ethical conduct. In hospitality, customer satisfaction remains an essential determinant of organizational success, but within a responsible tourism framework it must be understood more broadly than service efficiency alone (Floričić, 2020). Responsible hospitality requires hotels to create experiences that are not only satisfying but also safe, transparent, respectful, and aligned with sustainable destination values.

A customer-centric orientation has been identified as an important factor in tourism and hospitality management, particularly in contexts where long-term trust, destination loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth shape competitive advantage (Datiko, 2024; D'Souza, 2023). Hotels that systematically assess customer satisfaction and respond to feedback are better positioned to improve service quality and strengthen guest trust. At the same time, responsible marketing is crucial because promotional activities shape tourist expectations and destination image. Bhattacharya (2016) argues that responsible marketing requires honesty, transparency, and a concern for broader societal impact. In tourism settings, this implies avoiding misleading claims, respecting local contexts, and presenting products and destinations in ways that are both ethical and accurate (Chung, 2020; Jia et al., 2023).

Despite growing interest in customer-centric and ethical marketing approaches, the literature has not sufficiently integrated these concerns into responsible tourism models at the hotel level. Product and customer focus is often examined in relation to competitiveness or service quality, but less often in relation to responsible hospitality as an organisational capability. This study addresses that gap by treating Product and Customer Focus as a direct antecedent of RHP.

Environmental Performance

Environmental performance is one of the most visible and established dimensions of sustainability in hospitality research. Hotels are major consumers of water and energy and generate considerable waste, emissions, and other environmental externalities, making environmental stewardship a central aspect of responsible practice (Nisar et al., 2021; Haldorai et al., 2022). Within this domain, resource conservation, energy efficiency, waste reduction, pollution control, and wastewater treatment are frequently cited as key operational indicators of sustainability.

Research has shown that resource conservation practices such as water-saving systems, efficient energy use, and environmentally conscious operational design can reduce ecological pressure while also improving cost efficiency (Jhariya et al., 2021; Ali et al., 2021). Similarly, effective waste management systems including segregation, recycling, composting, and disposal controls help reduce environmental degradation and strengthen environmental responsibility in hotel operations (Pham Phu et al., 2019; Tansel et al., 2021). Environmental performance also has reputational value, as guests increasingly associate environmental responsibility with service quality, ethical commitment, and destination appeal (Han et al., 2020; Ratnasari et al., 2022). In heritage and sensitive tourism areas, environmental practices are especially important because they influence both resource protection and the long-term viability of local tourism systems (Tritto, 2020).

Although the importance of environmental management is well established, prior research often focuses on isolated green practices or environmental technologies rather than locating them within an integrated responsible hospitality model. This study therefore incorporates Environmental Performance as a core dimension of RHP, recognizing that environmental responsibility must be operationally embedded and strategically aligned with other aspects of hotel responsibility.

Economic Responsibility

Economic responsibility refers to the contribution of hotel operations to inclusive and locally grounded economic development. Within responsible tourism, this dimension extends beyond profitability to include local employment generation, skill

development, support for local suppliers, and enterprise development that benefits host communities (Masum et al., 2020; Mathew, 2022). From this perspective, hotels are not merely economic actors seeking internal efficiency; they are institutions whose purchasing, hiring, and partnership decisions influence the distribution of tourism benefits.

Studies have shown that local hiring and investment in workforce development can improve community participation in tourism and strengthen the socio-economic resilience of destinations (Wang et al., 2020; Deladem et al., 2021). Hotels can also support local economic systems by purchasing locally sourced goods and services, encouraging community entrepreneurship, and creating market opportunities for local producers and small enterprises (Bainton & Jackson, 2020; Buratti et al., 2022). This is especially relevant in tourism destinations where local authenticity, cultural products, and community enterprises are important parts of the visitor experience (Prevolšek et al., 2024). In such contexts, economic responsibility reinforces both destination competitiveness and social legitimacy.

Nevertheless, this dimension remains underdeveloped in much hotel sustainability literature, where economic performance is often interpreted primarily in terms of organizational profitability rather than local economic inclusion. The present study addresses this limitation by positioning Economic Responsibility as a direct predictor of RHP, thereby linking hotel economic conduct with responsible tourism objectives more explicitly.

Synthesis and Research Gap

Taken together, the literature demonstrates that governance, social engagement, customer orientation, environmental stewardship, and economic inclusion are all relevant to sustainability and responsibility in the hospitality sector. However, most previous studies have examined these dimensions separately, often within narrower discussions of CSR, green management, service quality, or community engagement. This fragmented treatment limits understanding of how these dimensions work together to form a coherent responsible hospitality system. It also leaves insufficient clarity about the mechanism through which hotel-level responsibility contributes to broader responsible tourism outcomes.

The present study addresses this gap by proposing an integrated framework in which Governance and Management, Social Responsiveness, Product and Customer Focus, Environmental Performance, and Economic Responsibility are conceptualized as antecedents of Responsible Hospitality Practices, which in turn influence Responsible Tourism. This framework reflects the argument that responsible tourism is not produced through isolated initiatives but through the

institutionalization of coordinated organisational practices. By empirically testing this multidimensional model in the hotel context, the study contributes to a more integrated understanding of responsible hospitality and extends the application of the triple bottom line perspective to tourism operations.

The preceding review indicates that responsible tourism in the hotel sector is best understood as the outcome of an integrated organisational system rather than a set of isolated sustainability initiatives. Existing literature consistently shows that hotels influence destination sustainability through their managerial structures, stakeholder relationships, service design, environmental conduct, and local economic engagement (Musavengane & Steyn, 2013; Caruana et al., 2014; Çelik & Çevirgen, 2021). However, much of the available research remains fragmented, typically examining governance, environmental management, customer orientation, or community engagement as separate themes. While this body of work has contributed valuable insights, it offers only limited explanation of how these dimensions interact to shape a coherent pattern of responsible hospitality and how such practices ultimately translate into responsible tourism outcomes.

This limitation is theoretically important because the triple bottom line perspective does not imply the simple coexistence of environmental, social, and economic concerns; rather, it implies their operational integration within organisational systems (Musavengane, 2019; Çakar, 2020). In hospitality settings, such integration depends on the institutional capacity of hotels to transform broad sustainability principles into concrete practices embedded in governance routines, service encounters, human resource systems, environmental operations, and local economic relationships. The present study therefore conceptualizes Responsible Hospitality Practices (RHP) as the organisational mechanism through which these dimensions are consolidated and enacted. In this formulation, RHP serves as the immediate expression of hotel-level responsibility, while Responsible Tourism (RT) represents the broader outcome of these institutionalized practices.

This framework is also consistent with stakeholder-oriented reasoning, even where not explicitly foregrounded, because hotels operate within a network of interdependent actors including guests, employees, suppliers, regulators, and host communities. Governance and management shape accountability to these actors; social responsiveness reflects community and societal engagement; product and customer focus addresses ethical service delivery and consumer trust; environmental performance reflects ecological responsibility; and economic responsibility concerns the distribution of tourism benefits within local systems. When these dimensions are aligned, hotels are more likely to institutionalize

responsible hospitality practices that support sustainable and responsible tourism development.

On this basis, the present study proposes that Governance and Management, Social Responsiveness, Product and Customer Focus, Environmental Performance, and Economic Responsibility function as direct antecedents of Responsible Hospitality Practices. In turn, Responsible Hospitality Practices are expected to positively influence Responsible Tourism. This model addresses the conceptual gap identified in the literature by advancing a multidimensional and empirically testable framework that captures the internal logic through which hotel practices contribute to responsible tourism outcomes.

Hypotheses Development

Responsible Hospitality Practices and Responsible Tourism

Responsible tourism does not emerge automatically from tourism growth or from symbolic sustainability claims. It depends on the extent to which tourism organisations embed responsibility into their operational systems and stakeholder relationships. In the hotel sector, responsible hospitality practices provide the practical means through which sustainability values are translated into destination-level outcomes. Prior studies have shown that responsible tourism is strengthened when tourism businesses align their activities with community well-being, environmental stewardship, and ethical service provision (Mathew & Sreejesh, 2017; Ahmad et al., 2023; Govekar et al., 2024). Similarly, hotels that institutionalize responsible practices are better positioned to influence tourist behavior, enhance destination legitimacy, and contribute to more sustainable tourism systems (Musavengane & Steyn, 2013; Mathew, 2022). Accordingly, it is proposed that stronger responsible hospitality practices will lead to stronger responsible tourism outcomes.

H1: Responsible Hospitality Practices (RHP) have a significant positive effect on Responsible Tourism.

Governance and Management and Responsible Hospitality Practices

Governance and management are central to the institutionalization of responsibility because they establish the formal structures through which organisational values are translated into policy, compliance, communication, and performance monitoring. Transparency, accountability, ethical oversight, strategic planning, and employee-oriented management systems all strengthen an organisation's capacity to act responsibly and consistently (Sofyani et al., 2020; Ruiz-Lozano et al., 2022; Hamrouni et al., 2023). In hospitality settings, responsible governance also includes employee welfare, regulatory compliance, training, and the integration of

sustainability into organisational planning (Robina-Ramírez et al., 2021; Wong et al., 2021). Hotels with stronger governance and management systems are therefore more likely to institutionalize responsible hospitality practices as part of routine operations rather than as ad hoc or symbolic measures.

H2: Governance and Management have a significant positive effect on Responsible Hospitality Practices (RHP).

Social Responsiveness and Responsible Hospitality Practices

Social responsiveness reflects the extent to which hotels engage meaningfully with societal expectations, community needs, and stakeholder well-being. The literature on responsible tourism consistently emphasizes the importance of inclusion, anti-discrimination, community development, stakeholder participation, and cultural preservation as essential components of tourism responsibility (Rasdi et al., 2022; Martos-Pedrero et al., 2024). In hospitality, socially responsive organisations are more likely to support local communities, protect vulnerable groups, and foster mutually beneficial stakeholder relationships. Such actions strengthen the legitimacy and ethical grounding of hotel operations and contribute directly to the formation of responsible hospitality practices.

H3: Social Responsiveness has a significant positive effect on Responsible Hospitality Practices (RHP).

Product and Customer Focus and Responsible Hospitality Practices

Product and customer focus captures the extent to which hotels align service delivery and marketing behaviour with ethical, transparent, and customer-centered principles. Responsible tourism depends not only on what hotels do internally but also on how they interact with guests and represent their services and destinations. Research suggests that customer satisfaction, truthful communication, safety, privacy, and responsible marketing are important components of trust-building and sustainable service relationships in hospitality (Bhattacharya, 2016; Chung, 2020; Datiko, 2024). Hotels that pay greater attention to these areas are more likely to develop service systems consistent with responsible hospitality, thereby strengthening the overall institutionalization of RHP.

H4: Product and Customer Focus has a significant positive effect on Responsible Hospitality Practices (RHP).

Environmental Performance and Responsible Hospitality Practices

Environmental performance is one of the most visible indicators of responsibility in hotel operations. Hotels that conserve water and energy, reduce waste,

manage pollution, and invest in environmentally sound practices demonstrate a clear commitment to sustainability and stewardship (Nisar et al., 2021; Haldorai et al., 2022). Resource conservation and waste management have been identified as especially important in reducing the ecological footprint of tourism businesses and in supporting long-term destination viability (Jhariya et al., 2021; Tansel et al., 2021). Since these practices reflect a hotel's willingness to operationalize environmental responsibility in measurable ways, stronger environmental performance is expected to contribute positively to responsible hospitality practices.

H5: Environmental Performance has a significant positive effect on Responsible Hospitality Practices (RHP).

Economic Responsibility and Responsible Hospitality Practices

Economic responsibility refers to the extent to which hotels contribute to inclusive local development through employment generation, skill development, local procurement, and support for local enterprise. Responsible tourism requires that tourism benefits are not concentrated narrowly within firms but shared more broadly with host communities and local economies (Mathew, 2022; Deladem et al., 2021). Studies suggest that hotels can support destination resilience and legitimacy by hiring local employees, sourcing from local suppliers, and encouraging community-based economic participation (Wang et al., 2020; Buratti et al., 2022; Prevolšek et al., 2024). These practices reflect a substantive commitment to economic inclusion and therefore form an important basis for responsible hospitality.

H6: Economic Responsibility has a significant positive effect on Responsible Hospitality Practices (RHP).

III.METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to examine the influence of responsible hospitality dimensions on responsible tourism outcomes, consistent with established empirical approaches in hospitality research. The measurement instrument was adapted from the scale developed and validated by Mathew and Kuriakose (2017), comprising 56 items across five dimensions: Governance and Management, Social Responsiveness, Product and Customer Focus, Environmental Performance, and Economic Responsibility. Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Prior to the main survey, a pilot study was conducted with 40 hotel professionals across Goa and

Karnataka to assess clarity, reliability, and contextual relevance of the instrument. Minor modifications in wording were made based on expert feedback and pilot responses, ensuring content validity and suitability for the Indian hospitality context.

The study focuses on classified hotels (3-star to 5-star) located in Goa, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Kerala. These states were purposively selected due to their prominence as leading tourism destinations in India, representing diverse tourism typologies—coastal (Goa, Kerala), urban and business tourism (Maharashtra), and mixed leisure-cultural tourism (Karnataka). This regional diversity enhances the generalisability of findings across varied hospitality contexts.

A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure representation across hotel categories and locations. A total of 420 questionnaires were distributed to hotel managers and senior executives, yielding 312 valid responses (response rate: 74.3%), with proportional representation from Goa (92), Karnataka (78), Maharashtra (81), and Kerala (61).

IV.RESULTS

Respondent profile

The final sample comprised 312 hotel managers and senior executives drawn from classified hotels across the four selected states. As shown in Table 1, male respondents constituted 63.5 percent of the sample, while female respondents accounted for 36.5 percent. In terms of age, the largest proportion of respondents fell within the 31–45 years category (50.6 percent), followed by those above 45 years (28.9 percent) and those below 30 years (20.5 percent). With regard to professional experience, 42.9 percent had between 5 and 10 years of experience, 34.0 percent had more than 10 years, and 23.1 percent had less than 5 years of experience. Overall, the respondent profile indicates that the data were obtained primarily from experienced managerial personnel, thereby strengthening the suitability of the sample for evaluating organisational practices related to responsible hospitality.

Table 1. . Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	198	63.5
	Female	114	36.5
Age	<30	64	20.5
	31–45	158	50.6
	>45	90	28.9
Experience	<5 years	72	23.1
	5–10 years	134	42.9
	>10 years	106	34.0

Exploratory factor analysis

An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed to

examine sampling adequacy and the underlying factor structure of the measurement items. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value of 0.734 indicates acceptable sampling adequacy, while Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2=1203.424$, $df=68$, $p<0.05$), confirming that the correlation matrix was suitable for factor analysis. As reported in Table 2, all retained items loaded above the minimum threshold of 0.50, and the scale dimensions demonstrated strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.878 to 0.912. The cumulative variance explained was 69.791 percent, indicating that the retained factors accounted for a substantial proportion of the variance in the observed items. Taken together, these results support the adequacy of the measurement structure for further multivariate analysis.

Table 2. Exploratory Factor Analysis Summary

Construct / Item	Description	Loading	Cronbach's Alpha
Governance & Management (G&M)			0.912
G&M1	Board decisions communicated	0.78	
G&M2	Reports shared with stakeholders	0.82	
G&M3	Regular reviews and accountability	0.85	
G&M4	Guests provided code of conduct	0.77	
G&M5	Quality control implemented	0.80	
G&M6	Adoption of policy guidelines	0.84	
G&M7	Use of ICT	0.79	
G&M8	Written responsible management policy	0.86	
G&M9	Sustainability in business planning	0.82	
G&M10	Use of sustainability experts	0.76	
G&M11	Safe work environment	0.84	
G&M12	Adequate wages and payment	0.88	
G&M13	Employee welfare facilities	0.82	
G&M14	Training for employees	0.80	
G&M15	Training needs assessment	0.83	
G&M16	Training on environmental/safety	0.85	
G&M17	Training on legal requirements	0.82	
G&M18	Skill development opportunities	0.87	
G&M19	Career advancement opportunities	0.86	
Social Responsiveness (SR)			0.895

SR20	Equal employment opportunities	0.81	
SR21	Facilities for special needs	0.77	
SR22	Policy against exploitation	0.85	
SR23	Policy against sexual harassment	0.80	
SR24	Prohibition of child labour	0.79	
SR25	Community development initiatives	0.83	
SR26	Promotion of community tourism	0.82	
SR27	Spending for community development	0.79	
SR28	Engagement with local communities	0.85	
SR29	Cooperation in social projects	0.81	
SR30	Tourism promotion events	0.78	
SR31	Promotion of local culture	0.85	
SR32	Incorporation of local cuisine	0.84	
SR33	Promotion of local artisans	0.82	
Product & Customer Focus (PCF)			0.883
PCF34	Customer satisfaction in decisions	0.82	
PCF35	Satisfaction measurement systems	0.85	
PCF37	Corrective actions taken	0.80	
PCF38	Customer privacy ensured	0.83	
PCF39	Health and safety ensured	0.86	
PCF40	Accurate promotional materials	0.79	
PCF41	Ethical marketing practices	0.85	
PCF42	Promotion of local attractions	0.84	
Environmental Performance (EP)			0.904
EP43	Renewable energy use	0.84	
EP44	Resource conservation communication	0.82	
EP45	Water conservation practices	0.87	
EP46	Environmental protection activities	0.83	
EP47	Solid waste management	0.86	
EP48	Pollution prevention initiatives	0.89	
EP49	Wastewater treatment and reuse	0.82	

Economic Responsibility (ER)			0.878
ER50	Preference to local candidates	0.80	
ER51	Training for local people	0.84	
ER52	Skill development sponsorship	0.85	
ER53	Support for local enterprises	0.79	
ER54	Support for social enterprises	0.81	
ER55	Local product purchasing	0.86	
ER56	Local procurement practices	0.83	

Collinearity and normality diagnostics

Before estimating the structural model, additional diagnostic checks were undertaken to confirm that the dataset satisfied the assumptions of multivariate analysis. As shown in Table 3, all tolerance values exceeded 0.10 and all VIF values were below 2.0, indicating the absence of problematic multicollinearity among the predictor constructs. This suggests that the independent variables were sufficiently distinct to permit reliable estimation of their structural effects.

Table 3. Collinearity Diagnostics

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
Constant	5.713	0.578	—	9.886	0.000	—	—
GM	0.160	0.046	0.214	3.485	0.001	0.810	1.234
SR	0.138	0.046	0.176	3.016	0.003	0.899	1.112
PCF	0.142	0.050	0.172	2.858	0.005	0.842	1.188
EP	0.155	0.048	0.185	3.230	0.002	0.850	1.176
ER	0.148	0.045	0.180	3.288	0.001	0.835	1.197

Source: Own elaboration

The normality of the study constructs was then assessed through skewness and kurtosis statistics. Table 4 shows that the skewness values ranged from -0.198 to 0.145 and the kurtosis values ranged from -1.210 to -0.850, all of which fall within acceptable limits for multivariate analysis. These findings indicate that the data approximated normal distribution sufficiently to proceed with confirmatory and structural modeling.

Table 4. Skewness and Kurtosis Statistics (N = 312)

Statistic	GM	SR	PCF	EP	ER
Valid	312	312	312	312	312
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Skewness	-0.182	0.145	-0.052	0.198	0.115
Std. Error of Skewness	0.147	0.147	0.147	0.147	0.147
Kurtosis	-1.210	-1.150	-1.180	-0.850	-0.920
Std. Error of Kurtosis	0.293	0.293	0.293	0.293	0.293
Minimum	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Maximum	15.00	15.00	15.00	15.00	15.00

Source: Own elaboration

Note: All skewness and kurtosis values fall within acceptable thresholds for normality assessment.

Reliability and validity of constructs

Following the preliminary diagnostics, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to assess the reliability and validity of the measurement model. As presented in Table 5, all Composite Reliability (CR) values exceeded 0.70 and all Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were above 0.50, demonstrating satisfactory internal consistency and convergent validity across the constructs. In addition, the Maximum Shared Variance (MSV) for each construct was lower than the corresponding AVE, and the square root of AVE for each construct exceeded its inter-construct correlations, supporting discriminant validity. These results confirm that the constructs were both reliable and empirically distinct, thereby supporting their inclusion in the structural model.

Table 5. Reliability and Validity of Constructs

Constructs	CR	AVE	MSV	Max R(H)	GM	SR	PCF	EP	ER
GM	0.912	0.650	0.235	0.925	0.806				
SR	0.895	0.620	0.280	0.902	0.410	0.787			
PCF	0.883	0.610	0.215	0.895	0.355	0.420	0.781		
EP	0.904	0.640	0.250	0.910	0.380	0.450	0.390	0.800	
ER	0.878	0.600	0.220	0.885	0.430	0.410	0.370	0.440	0.775

Source: Own elaboration

Note: Diagonal values represent the square root of AVE. CR = Composite Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted; MSV = Maximum Shared Variance.

Model fit assessment

The fit of the proposed measurement and structural model was evaluated using standard goodness-of-fit indices. As shown in Table 6, the values for GFI (0.917) and CFI (0.918) exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.90, while AGFI (0.865) was above the acceptable cutoff of 0.80. The RMSEA value of 0.085 also fell within the acceptable range, indicating that the model achieved an adequate fit with the observed data. Collectively, these indices provide sufficient evidence that the proposed model was statistically appropriate for hypothesis testing.

Table 6. Summary of Model Fit Indices

Goodness of Fit Statistics	Value	Recommended Value	Statistical Fit
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	0.085	<0.10	Good fit
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	0.917	>0.90	Good fit
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.918	>0.90	Good fit
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	0.865	>0.80	Good fit

Source: Own elaboration

Structural model and hypothesis testing

After confirming the adequacy of the measurement model, the structural model was estimated using maximum likelihood procedures with bootstrapping in AMOS to test the hypothesised relationships.

Table 7. Structural Path Estimates and Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Path	β	p-value	Result
H2	G&M $\rightarrow$ RHP	0.32	<0.001	Supported
H3	SR $\rightarrow$ RHP	0.26	<0.01	Supported
H4	PCF $\rightarrow$ RHP	0.21	<0.05	Supported
H5	EP $\rightarrow$ RHP	0.29	<0.001	Supported
H6	ER $\rightarrow$ RHP	0.18	<0.05	Supported
H1	RHP $\rightarrow$ RT	0.54	<0.001	Supported

Source: Own elaboration

Note: RHP = Responsible Hospitality Practices; RT = Responsible Tourism

The results, presented in Table 7, show that all proposed paths were positive and statistically significant, indicating support for all six hypotheses. Among the antecedents of Responsible Hospitality Practices, Governance and Management exerted the strongest effect ($\beta=0.32$, $p<0.001$), followed closely by Environmental Performance ($\beta=0.29$, $p<0.001$), Social Responsiveness ($\beta=0.26$, $p<0.01$), Product and Customer Focus ($\beta=0.21$, $p<0.05$), and Economic Responsibility ($\beta=0.18$, $p<0.05$). In addition, Responsible Hospitality Practices had a strong positive effect on Responsible Tourism ($\beta=0.54$, $p<0.001$), thereby supporting the central proposition of the study that responsible hotel practices contribute meaningfully to responsible tourism outcomes

V. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine whether Governance and Management, Social Responsiveness, Product and Customer Focus, Environmental Performance, and Economic Responsibility function as significant antecedents of

Responsible Hospitality Practices, and whether Responsible Hospitality Practices subsequently strengthen Responsible Tourism outcomes in the hotel sector. The revised results provide consistent support for all six hypotheses, indicating that responsible tourism in hotels is best understood not as the outcome of isolated sustainability initiatives, but as the product of a coordinated organisational system in which managerial, social, environmental, customer-facing, and local economic commitments are institutionalised into practice. This pattern strongly aligns with the study's conceptual logic that the triple bottom line operates most meaningfully in hospitality when environmental, social, and economic responsibilities are embedded through governance and operational systems rather than pursued independently.

The strongest structural effect in the model was the path from Responsible Hospitality Practices to Responsible Tourism ($\beta=0.54$, $p<0.001$), which confirms the central proposition of the study. This finding suggests that when hotels formalise responsible values into their routines, service delivery, stakeholder engagement, and operational conduct, they make a direct contribution to broader responsible tourism outcomes. The result is consistent with earlier research arguing that responsible tourism depends on concrete organisational action rather than rhetorical commitment, and that tourism businesses can shape destination sustainability through everyday practices affecting communities, environments, and visitor experiences. In particular, this finding resonates with the work of Mathew and Sreejesh (2017), Ahmad et al. (2023), and Musavengane and Steyn (2013), all of whom emphasize that responsible tourism becomes meaningful when industry actors align their operations with community well-being, ethical service, and sustainability goals. The comparatively stronger coefficient for this path also implies that the organisational institutionalisation of responsibility may be more consequential than any single antecedent dimension considered in isolation.

Among the antecedents of RHP, Governance and Management recorded the strongest positive effect ($\beta=0.32$, $p<0.001$). This is a theoretically important result because it indicates that responsible hospitality is anchored first in organisational structures, leadership systems, and internal accountability mechanisms. The finding is highly consistent with literature that identifies governance, transparency, compliance, strategic alignment, and managerial oversight as critical conditions for embedding sustainability into organisational behaviour, especially in service industries where responsibility must be routinised rather than treated as an occasional add-on. Studies by Sofyani et al. (2020), Robina-Ramírez et al. (2021), Ruiz-Lozano et al. (2022), Hamrouni et al. (2023), and Wong et al. (2021) similarly suggest that organisations with stronger governance environments are better able

to sustain responsible conduct, disclose accountability, and convert ethical intent into operational consistency. The present finding extends that line of research by showing that governance is not only an administrative or reporting concern but a substantive driver of responsible hospitality capability. It also reinforces the argument in the literature review that employee welfare, training, safe work conditions, and strategic planning are part of responsible governance rather than separate human resource issues, thereby linking organisational discipline with the institutionalisation of RHP.

Environmental Performance emerged as the second strongest predictor of RHP ($\beta=0.29$, $p<0.001$), underscoring the centrality of ecological stewardship in hotel responsibility. This result is unsurprising in one sense, because environmental practices remain the most visible and most extensively studied element of sustainability in hospitality scholarship. At the same time, the finding is valuable because it shows that environmental performance is not merely an independent green practice domain; rather, it materially strengthens the broader organisational system of responsible hospitality. This supports prior work highlighting the importance of energy efficiency, water conservation, waste management, pollution control, and environmentally conscious operations in hotel sustainability, including studies by Nisar et al. (2021), Haldorai et al. (2022), Jhariya et al. (2021), Tritto (2020), and Tansel et al. (2021). It also aligns with Han et al. (2020) and Ratnasari et al. (2022), who note that environmental responsibility increasingly shapes both operational legitimacy and guest perceptions in hospitality settings. The present study, however, adds novelty by empirically locating environmental performance within a larger integrated model rather than treating it as a stand-alone sustainability outcome. In theoretical terms, this strengthens the triple bottom line argument by showing that the environmental pillar becomes more meaningful when connected to an organisational responsibility framework.

Social Responsiveness also had a significant positive effect on RHP ($\beta=0.26$, $p<0.01$), indicating that hotels that engage more actively with social inclusion, stakeholder well-being, community participation, and cultural support are more likely to institutionalise responsible hospitality practices. This finding is strongly aligned with prior responsible tourism research, which consistently emphasises that tourism responsibility is inseparable from host-community welfare, stakeholder engagement, and the social legitimacy of tourism development. In particular, the result converges with Mathew and Sreejesh (2017), Rasdi et al. (2022), and Martos-Pedrero et al. (2024), whose work highlights the importance of inclusion, anti-exploitation measures, local participation, and community-oriented value creation. It also supports the argument by Fobbe and Hilletofth (2023) that

stakeholder engagement practices are crucial to more responsible and sustainable organisational systems. A noteworthy implication is that social responsiveness in the hotel context should not be reduced to symbolic community outreach; rather, it appears to function as an operational dimension of responsibility with measurable consequences for the consolidation of RHP. This adds empirical weight to claims in the literature that cultural promotion, local collaboration, and social justice concerns are not peripheral but central to responsible tourism formation.

Product and Customer Focus showed a positive and statistically significant influence on RHP ($\beta=0.21$, $p<0.05$), though the effect was somewhat weaker than those of governance, environment, and social responsiveness. This still matters conceptually because it confirms that responsible hospitality is shaped not only by internal management systems and stakeholder obligations, but also by how hotels design, communicate, and deliver their services to guests. The result is consistent with scholarship on customer-centric service, ethical marketing, transparency, privacy, and safety, including Bhattacharya (2016), Chung (2020), Datiko (2024), and Jia et al. (2023), all of whom show that responsible market behaviour can strengthen trust, long-term legitimacy, and sustainable consumer relationships. At the same time, the relatively smaller coefficient may suggest that customer-facing responsibility, while important, is not sufficient on its own to produce a robust responsible hospitality system unless it is supported by deeper organisational and sustainability-oriented structures. This pattern is theoretically sensible: ethical promotion, guest safety, and customer satisfaction mechanisms are visible manifestations of responsibility, but they may depend on governance systems, staff capability, and environmental or social commitments already being in place. Thus, the study contributes novelty by showing that customer-oriented responsibility is a valid component of RHP, while also demonstrating that it functions within a broader institutional architecture of responsibility rather than above it.

Economic Responsibility, although the weakest among the five antecedents, still exerted a significant positive effect on RHP ($\beta=0.18$, $p<0.05$). This finding supports the literature arguing that local hiring, skill development, support for local enterprises, and local procurement remain meaningful mechanisms through which hotels contribute to inclusive destination development. The result is broadly consistent with Mathew (2022), Wang et al. (2020), Deladem et al. (2021), Buratti et al. (2022), Prevolšek et al. (2024), who collectively suggest that tourism businesses enhance legitimacy and resilience when they spread benefits through local economic systems rather than concentrating them narrowly within the firm. However, the comparatively lower coefficient may reflect the practical realities of hotel operations, where local

procurement and community-oriented economic support can be constrained by supply-chain limitations, standardisation pressures, cost considerations, or uneven local market capacity. Rather than weakening the importance of the economic dimension, this pattern may indicate that economic responsibility is often more difficult to embed fully than governance or environmental measures. In this sense, the finding is both supportive and instructive: it confirms the relevance of economic inclusion to responsible hospitality, but also suggests that this dimension may require stronger enabling conditions if it is to exert a larger influence.

Theoretical contributions

The findings support the triple bottom line perspective in a more operationally integrated form where organisational governance functions as the enabling architecture through which social, environmental, customer-facing, and economic responsibilities are translated into practice. This is important because the literature review identified fragmentation as a major weakness in existing hospitality research, with governance, CSR, green management, customer orientation, and community development often studied in isolation. The present findings respond directly to that gap by empirically demonstrating that these dimensions are related components of a higher-order responsible hospitality system. In doing so, the study advances the conceptualisation of RHP as an organisational mechanism through which broad sustainability ideals are converted into responsible tourism outcomes. The results also carry a stakeholder-oriented implication, even though stakeholder theory was not explicitly foregrounded as the principal lens: each significant path represents a domain of accountability to a different stakeholder group, including employees, communities, guests, regulators, local suppliers, and the natural environment. The model therefore shows that responsible tourism in hotels is produced through multi-stakeholder alignment rather than through a single sustainability strategy.

VI. LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE FOR FUTURE

RESEARCH

The findings should be interpreted in light of a few limitations. First, the study used a cross-sectional design, which restricts the ability to make strong causal claims about how these dimensions evolve over time or how responsibility becomes institutionalised longitudinally. Second, the data were collected from hotel managers and executives, which means the findings reflect managerial perceptions rather than the direct views of employees, guests, community

stakeholders, or local suppliers. This raises the possibility of perceptual bias and socially desirable responses, particularly in a domain such as responsibility where respondents may be inclined to present their organisations favourably. Third, the empirical model was tested in the hotel context and within a specific regional setting, which may limit generalisability to other tourism subsectors or institutional environments. Fourth, although the measurement model demonstrated acceptable reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and overall fit, one wording inconsistency in the results materials regarding RT as either “Responsible Tourism” or “intention to adopt sustainable tourism” highlights the importance of tighter construct standardisation in future manuscript revisions. Finally, while all hypothesised relationships were significant, the model does not examine potential mediators, moderators, or contextual contingencies that may explain why some dimensions, such as governance and environmental performance, are stronger predictors than others.

These limitations point directly to future research opportunities. Longitudinal studies would help examine whether responsible hospitality practices deepen over time and whether their effect on responsible tourism strengthens, stabilises, or varies across changing market and policy conditions. Multi-stakeholder designs incorporating employees, guests, community representatives, and local business partners would also provide a richer and less manager-centric account of how responsible hospitality is enacted and perceived. Comparative studies across destinations, hotel categories, or tourism subsectors could clarify whether the relative strength of governance, environmental, social, customer, and economic dimensions is context dependent. Future research should also test mediating and moderating mechanisms, such as organisational culture, leadership commitment, destination governance, certification systems, or stakeholder pressure, to better explain how and under what conditions these dimensions influence RHP. Finally, there is clear value in refining and extending the construct of RHP itself, including its possible higher-order dimensionality, its behavioural consequences for tourists, and its relationship with community well-being, destination resilience, and sustainability performance indicators.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study examines how responsible hospitality practices are shaped by governance and management, social responsiveness, product and customer focus, environmental performance, and economic responsibility, and how these practices in turn influence responsible tourism in the hotel sector. The findings provide clear empirical support for the proposed framework, confirming that all five

dimensions significantly strengthen responsible hospitality practices and that responsible hospitality practices have a strong positive effect on responsible tourism. This confirms that responsible tourism is not produced by isolated initiatives, but by an integrated organisational approach in which ethical, social, environmental, and economic commitments are embedded into hotel operations.

Among the antecedents, governance and management emerged as the strongest driver, indicating that responsibility begins with leadership, accountability, policy direction, and internal coordination. Environmental performance also showed a substantial effect, reinforcing the view that resource conservation, waste management, and pollution prevention remain central to hospitality responsibility. Social responsiveness, product and customer focus, and economic responsibility were also significant, suggesting that responsible tourism depends not only on environmental action, but equally on fair treatment of stakeholders, ethical service delivery, and support for local development.

The study contributes to theory by extending the triple bottom line perspective into a more integrated hospitality framework. Rather than treating social, environmental, and economic responsibility as separate tracks, the findings show that they function together through responsible hospitality practices as a higher-order organisational construct. This adds clarity to responsible tourism scholarship by demonstrating the organisational mechanism through which hotels can influence destination-level sustainability outcomes. The results also strengthen the argument that hotels are not passive service providers, but active institutional

actors in responsible tourism development.

From a practical standpoint, the study suggests that hotel managers should prioritise governance systems, staff development, environmental controls, community engagement, ethical marketing, and local economic linkages as mutually reinforcing elements of responsibility. Policymakers and industry bodies should also encourage integrated sustainability frameworks rather than fragmented compliance measures, since the evidence shows that responsibility becomes more effective when embedded across multiple operational domains.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. The cross-sectional design limits causal inference, and the use of managerial respondents means the findings reflect organisational perceptions rather than the views of all stakeholders. The study was also context-specific, so caution is needed in generalising the findings to other destinations or hospitality segments. Future research should therefore adopt longitudinal designs, include multiple stakeholder perspectives, and test the model across different tourism contexts. Further work could also examine mediators and moderators such as leadership style, organisational culture, destination governance, and certification systems to better explain how responsible hospitality is translated into responsible tourism outcomes.

Overall, the study demonstrates that responsible tourism in hotels is most effectively advanced through a coordinated and institutionally supported model of responsible hospitality. This offers a useful direction for both research and practice in sustainable tourism development.

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