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## **THE ROLE OF ENGLISH TRAVEL MATERIALS IN PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE TOURISM BEHAVIOR IN TRA QUE VEGETABLE VILLAGE**

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### **Abstract:**

Tourism is a crucial driver of Vietnam's economy, with sustainable tourism receiving increasing attention. Among Vietnam's ecotourism destinations, Tra Que Vegetable Village (TQVV) in Hoi An stands out for its cultural heritage and ecological significance. While sustainability initiatives are in place, challenges remain in effectively promoting responsible tourism behaviors. This study examines the role of English-language travel materials (ETMs), including guidebooks, brochures and online articles on travel websites in fostering sustainable tourism practices in TQVV. Adopting a mixed-method approach, the research integrates document analysis, surveys with international tourists, and interviews with local stakeholders. Findings reveal that while ETMs help raise awareness of sustainability issues, they often lack persuasive messaging, interactive features, and engaging narratives. The study underscores the need for clearer sustainability-focused content, the integration of digital tools, and more visually compelling materials. Based on these insights, practical recommendations are proposed to enhance ETMs, including improved storytelling techniques, QR code integration, and culturally relevant sustainability messages. These findings provide valuable guidance for local tourism authorities and content creators in strengthening responsible tourism communication and supporting the sustainable development of TQVV.

### **Keywords:**

English Travel Materials, Responsible Behaviours, Sustainable Tourism, TQVV



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## Introduction

Tourism has grown rapidly in recent decades, driving economic growth, cultural exchange, and community development around the world. Yet this growth has also exposed destinations to growing environmental pressures and cultural disruption (Fennell & Cooper, 2020; Revfine, 2024). In response, the idea of sustainable tourism has emerged to promote a more balanced approach - one that maintains economic vitality while protecting the environment and local cultures for future generations. Central to realizing sustainability is the principle of shared responsibility among tourists, local communities, and businesses to minimize negative impacts on destinations (Goodwin, 2011; Miller et al., 2010). Converting this principle into actionable practice depends heavily on effective communication, and English-language travel materials (ETMs) play a crucial, yet often underestimated, role in shaping how travelers understand and act on sustainability (Cesiri, 2017; Mieli & Zillinger, 2020). In Vietnam, Tra Que vegetable village (TQVV) in Hoi An, a UNESCO World Heritage site, has gained recognition for its eco-friendly and community-based initiatives. Despite notable efforts to promote organic farming, waste reduction, and cultural preservation, challenges persist in fostering responsible tourism behaviours among visitors (Juvan & Dolnicar, 2014). However, there is a noticeable lack of in-depth research on the specific contribution of ETMs including guidebooks, brochures, and online articles on travel websites in promoting responsible tourism to the public, especially foreign tourists. This study, therefore, aims to investigate how English travel materials (ETMs) influence tourists' perceptions and actions toward sustainability in TQVV.

## Literature Review

### *Definition of Sustainable Tourism*

Sustainable tourism has been widely conceptualized in academic literature as a development approach that seeks to balance the economic, environmental, and sociocultural dimensions of tourism to ensure long-term viability. Butler (1999) defines sustainable tourism as "tourism which is developed and maintained in such a manner and at such a scale that it remains viable over an indefinite period and does not degrade or alter the environment, while maintaining the quality of life of local communities and visitor satisfaction" (p. 11). Similarly, Fennell and Cooper (2020) emphasize that sustainable tourism represents a "holistic framework" aimed at maintaining equilibrium between the needs of visitors, host communities, and ecosystems through responsible planning and management.

Although tourism significantly contributes to local economies and employment generation, it simultaneously places pressure on natural and cultural resources. Problems such as environmental depletion, habitat destruction, cultural commodification, and increased greenhouse gas emissions highlight the urgency of sustainable management practices

(Bramwell & Lane, 2011; Revfine, 2024). To address these challenges, sustainable tourism must uphold three interrelated pillars: (i) environmental sustainability, which ensures the protection of ecological systems and biodiversity; (ii) socio-cultural sustainability, which safeguards the authenticity and heritage of host communities; and (iii) economic sustainability, which promotes equitable distribution of benefits and long-term livelihood security (Fennell & Cooper, 2020).

The successful implementation of sustainable tourism depends on active collaboration among governments, businesses, local residents, and tourists. As Fennell and Cooper (2020) asserts, achieving genuine sustainability requires “shared responsibility and participatory decision-making” (p. 47), ensuring that tourism development enhances both destination resilience and visitor awareness. In this sense, sustainable tourism not only mitigates adverse impacts but also fosters more meaningful and responsible travel experiences that contribute to global sustainability goals.

### ***Sustainable Tourism and Responsible Tourism***

Responsible tourism extends beyond minimizing the negative impacts of travel; it is fundamentally about creating better places for people to live in and better places for people to visit (Goodwin, 2011). Emerging from the *Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism in Destinations (2002)*, this concept emphasizes that all stakeholders - including governments, tourism operators, local communities, and tourists - share accountability in making tourism more sustainable and equitable. Responsible tourism seeks to enhance local well-being by generating economic benefits, improving working conditions, and encouraging inclusive participation in tourism-related decision-making. It also prioritizes cultural integrity and environmental stewardship, ensuring that tourism contributes positively to both host communities and visitors (Fennell & Cooper, 2020; Responsible Tourism Partnership, 2025). In essence, responsible tourism aligns with the broader sustainability agenda by focusing on ethics, accountability, and mutual respect among all participants in the tourism system.

Emerging in the 1980s, responsible tourism has been closely linked with sustainable tourism (Krippendorff, 1987). However, while the two terms are often used interchangeably, they differ in emphasis. Sustainable tourism focuses on long-term industry viability and intergenerational equity, with shared responsibility across governments, businesses, and organizations. In contrast, responsible tourism highlights individual actions, encouraging ethical behavior and informed decision-making by tourists and industry players (Dimitrova, 2018). Although sustainable tourism is more commonly referenced in English travel materials (ETMs), the active engagement of tourists is best realized through the lens of responsible tourism. When individuals adopt responsible tourism practices, they contribute meaningfully to sustainability goals.

### ***Responsible Tourism Behaviors***

Responsible tourism behaviours refer to ethical, culturally sensitive, and environmentally sustainable actions undertaken by tourists to reduce negative impacts and enhance the positive contributions of their visits to host destinations (Goodwin, 2011). This concept underscores the idea that sustainable tourism depends not only on industry practices but also on the conscious choices of individual travelers (Fennell & Cooper, 2020). Early scholars such as Krippendorff (1987) highlighted responsible tourists as those who travel with awareness, respect local

traditions, and contribute to the well-being of host communities and the preservation of natural environments. Building on these foundations, François-Lecompte and Prim-Allaz (2009) identified five key behavioural attributes of responsible tourists: willingness to sacrifice personal comfort for sustainability, preference for responsible tour operators, commitment to protecting local resources, readiness to limit travel distances to reduce environmental impact, and dedication to safeguarding cultural and natural heritage. Collectively, these behaviours reflect an emerging ethos of “conscious travel,” where tourists take active responsibility for the environmental, socio-cultural, and economic sustainability of destinations. In the context of Tra Que Vegetable Village (TQVV), responsible tourism behaviours can be understood through three key dimensions: (i) environmental responsibility (such as waste reduction and energy conservation), (ii) socio-cultural responsibility (respecting local customs and supporting community engagement), and (iii) economic responsibility (purchasing local products and contributing to community livelihoods).

### ***Discourse Analysis of Travel Materials***

Discourse analysis is a key methodological approach in linguistics that examines how language operates beyond the sentence level to construct meaning in social contexts. It explores how language both reflects and shapes social relations, ideologies, and identities across diverse communicative settings. As Fairclough (1995) argues, discourse functions simultaneously as a form of social practice and as a mechanism through which ideologies are produced, reproduced, and contested. By analyzing spoken or written texts, discourse analysis reveals how language legitimizes particular worldviews, influences thought, and structures social realities. This critical perspective is particularly valuable for understanding how linguistic choices guide behavior, establish social norms, and perpetuate cultural values.

In tourism studies, discourse analysis provides a useful lens for examining how destinations are linguistically and visually constructed to influence travelers’ perceptions and behaviors. Travel materials - including guidebooks, brochures, handbooks, leaflets, and digital platforms such as websites and mobile applications - employ persuasive language, narrative framing, and visual strategies to shape tourist experiences (Smith & Robinson, 2019). As Jaworski and Thurlow (2010) observe, tourism discourse is inherently ideological, often framing destinations through selective storytelling that highlights exoticism, authenticity, or sustainability. These representations not only construct tourists’ expectations but also reinforce broader socio-cultural power dynamics, such as the commodification of local cultures or the portrayal of tourists as moral agents of environmental responsibility. Furthermore, the use of modality, evaluative language, and imperatives, such as “Travel responsibly” or “Respect local traditions”, serves as a form of soft governance, subtly encouraging compliance with responsible tourism norms (Dann, 1996; Pritchard & Morgan, 2001). Through such analysis, discourse analysis uncovers how travel materials extend beyond mere information-sharing to become instruments that influence attitudes, behaviors, and cultural understandings within global tourism.

### ***Research Questions***

The study aims to address the following questions:

- What are the linguistic and content features of ETMs related to TQVV?
- How do linguistic and content features of these materials contribute to promoting responsible tourism behaviours in TQVV?

- What recommendations can be proposed to enhance the effectiveness of these ETMs to promote responsible tourism behaviours in the village?

### ***Research Methodology***

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of how English-language travel materials (ETMs) promote sustainable tourism in Tra Que Vegetable Village (TQVV). The qualitative approach was used to describe and analyze the linguistic and content features of ETMs, while the quantitative approach examined the frequency of these features and gathered survey data from key tourism stakeholders: tourists, local businesses, and tour guides.

### ***Data Source and Participants***

The study combined two main data sets: (1) textual materials and (2) stakeholder perspectives. A total of 11 ETMs, including two guidebooks, one handbook, one brochure, three leaflets, and four online travel articles about TQVV, were collected through official sources namely such as the Hoi An Office of Tourist Services, Hoi An Center for Culture, Sports, Radio and Television, Quang Nam Tourism Promotion Center, and Hoi An Eco Travel. These materials were selected based on relevance, publication recency (within five years), and accessibility to international tourists.

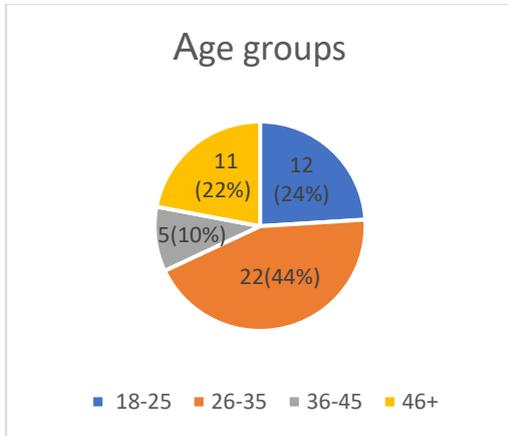
In addition to document analysis, human participants were involved through surveys and interviews. The survey included 50 international tourists who visited TQVV between December 2024 and March 2025, while two local business owners and two tour guides participated in semi-structured interviews. Participants were chosen using purposive sampling to ensure relevant experiences with ETMs and sustainable tourism practices.

### ***Data Collection Instruments***

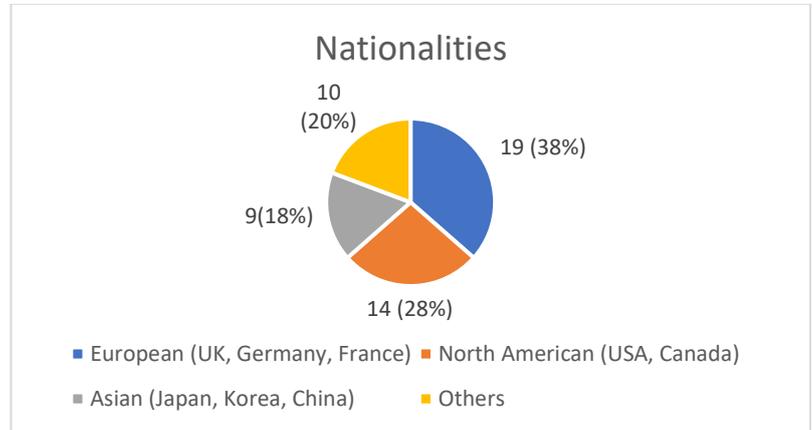
Data for this study were collected through three complementary methods: document analysis, questionnaire surveys, and semi-structured interviews. The document analysis involved examining English-language travel materials (ETMs) to identify the linguistic and content features that promote sustainability in Tra Que Vegetable Village. The questionnaire, adapted from Mieli and Zillinger (2020), comprised 11 questions divided into three sections: demographic information, perceptions of ETMs (including accessibility, credibility, and persuasiveness), and the extent to which ETMs influence responsible tourism behaviours. To maximize participation and inclusivity, both Google Forms and paper-based surveys were employed (Hallur, 2016). In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with local stakeholders and adapted from Sustainable-Responsible Tourism Discourse - Towards 'Responsustainable' Tourism (Mihalic, 2016). The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analysed using thematic content analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Responses were coded and categorized using Dedoose 9.0.46 to identify recurring themes. to gain deeper insights into how ETMs are used and perceived in practice. The interview questions focused on the types of ETMs available, the sustainability messages they communicate, and suggested improvements to enhance their effectiveness in promoting responsible tourism.

## Findings

Survey data indicate that the majority of foreign visitors to TQVV are young adults, predominantly aged 26-35 (44%), followed by the 18-25 age group (24%). The tourists mainly come from Europe (38%), North America (28%), and Asia (18%).

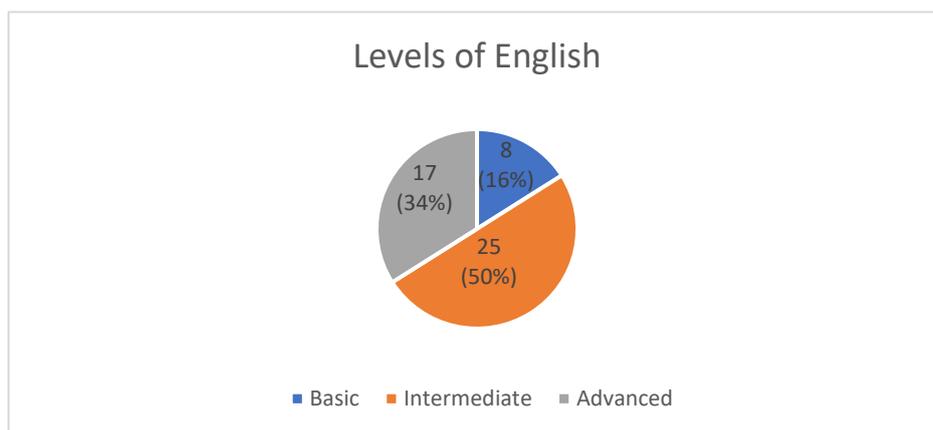


**Figure 1: TQVV Foreign Tourists by Age**



**Figure 2: TQVV Foreign Tourists by Nationality**

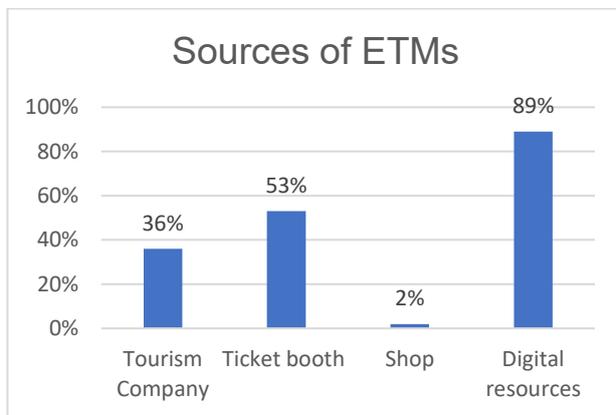
Regarding English proficiency, 50% of tourists possess an intermediate level, 34% are advanced, and 16% are at a basic level. These findings suggest that most visitors have sufficient English proficiency to engage with ETMs related to sustainable tourism as well as responsible tourism behaviours.



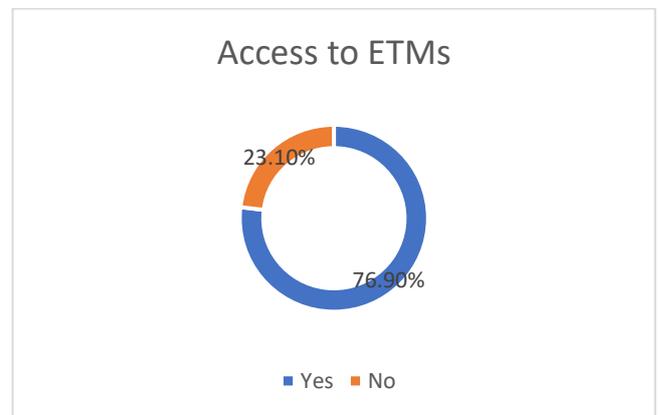
**Figure 3: TQVV Foreign Tourists by English Level**

ETMs for TQVV primarily consist of printed resources such as brochures, guidebooks, information handbooks and leaflets distributed by tourism companies and at ticket points. Despite the increasing digitalization of travel information, no official digital resources, such as mobile applications or interactive websites, are available. While 90% of surveyed tourists access online sources (e.g., travel blogs and vlogs), this fragmented information flow may

hinder comprehensive understanding of sustainable tourism practices and tourists' responsibility at TQVV.



**Figure 4: Sources of ETMs**



**Figure 5: Access to ETMs**

The linguistic and content analysis of ETMs reveals a strategic use of action-oriented verbs (e.g., "experience," "immerse," "discover") to promote tourist engagement. The materials employ a descriptive tone when portraying TQVV's cultural and agricultural heritage, while an instructive tone is used for historical records and procedural guidance. However, the persuasive strength of ETMs remains moderate, suggesting that sustainability messages lack urgency and personal relevance. Additionally, the materials rarely use inclusive pronouns such as "we" and "our," which could foster a sense of collective responsibility among visitors.

Questionnaire and interview data highlight that tourists prioritize experience-based content over logistical or sustainability-related information. The most frequently consulted sections of ETMs include descriptions of activities and services ( $M = 4.4$ ,  $SD = 0.62$ ), scenic imagery ( $M = 3.84$ ,  $SD = 0.86$ ), and maps ( $M = 3.38$ ,  $SD = 0.71$ ). In contrast, sustainable tourism practices ( $M = 2.1$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ) and cultural insights ( $M = 2.6$ ,  $SD = 1.02$ ) receive less attention, reinforcing the well-documented attitude-behavior gap in sustainability engagement.

ETMs effectively promote interactive sustainability experiences, particularly eco-friendly farming ( $M = 4.66$ ,  $SD = 0.53$ ) and vegetable-oriented meals ( $M = 4.28$ ,  $SD = 0.72$ ). However, behaviors requiring restrictions are less emphasized and have lower tourist engagement, such as reducing plastic waste ( $M = 2.47$ ,  $SD = 0.64$ ) and avoiding gasoline vehicles ( $M = 2.19$ ,  $SD = 0.92$ ). A moderate correlation ( $r = 0.401$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) exists between tourists' awareness of sustainability and their adoption of responsible tourism behaviors, suggesting that while ETMs influence behavior, external factors such as cultural background and personal values also play a role.

Regional differences in sustainability engagement are notable. European tourists show greater interest in sustainability topics, frequently inquiring about waste management and organic farming. In contrast, Asian tourists tend to prioritize wellness-related experiences, such as organic food consumption. These variations suggest that ETMs could be more effective by tailoring content to align with the distinct interest of diverse tourist demographics.

The combined insights from questionnaires, interviews, and linguistic analysis highlight key areas for improvement in English-language travel materials. Visual and digital innovations, such as high-quality images, QR codes, and social media integration, should be incorporated to enhance accessibility. The language used in ETMs should be clearer and more persuasive, simplifying complex sustainability jargon and using stronger directives to encourage behavioral change. In addition, inclusive and action-oriented messaging should be employed by increasing the use of "we" and "our" to promote shared responsibility and restructuring information to emphasize sustainability through problem-solution frameworks. Experiential learning should be prioritized, framing sustainability messages within engaging activities such as farming workshops and cooking classes, which align with tourist preferences. To cater to different audiences, content should be tailored to highlight environmental conservation for European tourists and wellness benefits for Asian visitors, ensuring greater relevance and engagement. By implementing these recommendations, ETMs can enhance their role in promoting responsible tourism practices in TQVV.

## Discussion

### *The Role of Linguistic Features on Responsible Tourism Behaviours*

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Linguistic Features on Responsible Tourism Behaviours**

Linguistic Features	N	M	SD
Descriptive Verbs	50	3.75	0.86
Main Clause Emphasis	50	3.10	0.90
End-focus (new info last)	50	3.20	0.88
Cohesion	50	2.45	0.74
Emphasis Markers	50	2.60	0.70
Descriptive Tone	50	4.20	0.65
Persuasive Tone	50	4.10	0.68
Instructive Tone	50	3.01	0.83
Direct Address Pronouns	50	3.05	0.82
Inclusive Pronouns	50	3.72	0.77
Action-Oriented Phrasing	50	4.60	0.55

According to the survey responses from 50 foreign visitors to TQVV, the most influential linguistic feature in promoting responsible behaviours was Action-Oriented Phrasing, which received the highest mean score ( $M = 4.60$ ,  $SD = 0.55$ ). This result highlights the power of imperatives and dynamic verbs including "immerse yourself in rural life," "join a farming workshop," or "respect the farmers and their traditions" to evoke direct and immediate actions from readers. This finding supports Pink's (2011) assertion that motivational language activates behavioral responses, especially when aligned with emotionally compelling verbs. Mejtoft et al. (2021) also emphasized that well-designed calls-to-action drive engagement and decision-making, which explains the strong impact of this feature in the context of responsible tourism.

Following closely, Descriptive Tone ( $M = 4.20$ ,  $SD = 0.65$ ) and Persuasive Tone ( $M = 4.10$ ,  $SD = 0.68$ ) also scored highly. These features leverage vivid imagery and emotionally appealing narratives that transport tourists into the local context. Through descriptions, tourists gain a sensory understanding of the village and its eco-values. As argued by Coffin et al. (2003),

such tone enhances reader immersion, while Hyland (1998) noted that persuasive language, when carefully balanced with factual content, encourages belief revision and behavior change. Descriptive Verbs ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = 0.86$ ) and Inclusive Pronouns ( $M = 3.72$ ,  $SD = 0.77$ ) were also rated relatively high by respondents, indicating their important contribution to promoting responsible tourism behaviours. Descriptive verbs provide vivid and specific action imagery that enhances the concreteness of the message, while inclusive pronouns such as “we” or “our” foster a shared sense of community and mutual responsibility between tourists and locals. Although these features are slightly less directive than action-oriented phrasing, their strong presence supports pro-social engagement and reinforces the emotional and ethical framing of sustainable tourism.

Features such as Main Clause Emphasis ( $M = 3.10$ ), End-Focus ( $M = 3.20$ ), Instructive Tone ( $M = 3.01$ ), and Direct Address Pronouns ( $M = 3.05$ ) showed moderate influence. While these enhance syntactic clarity and personalize content, their behavioral influence appeared not significant. This finding resonates with Whang (2020), who noted that clarity structures like “given-before-new” aid comprehension but do not inherently persuade.

Finally, Cohesion ( $M = 2.45$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ ) and Emphasis Markers ( $M = 2.60$ ,  $SD = 0.70$ ) were the least influential. Cohesive devices such as “this” or linking phrases helped ensure flow but were not sufficient in motivating tourists. Similarly, emphasis markers like “especially” or typographic cues did not significantly affect readers’ commitment to responsible actions. As Cialdini (2009) suggests, without emotionally resonant framing or behavioral relevance, such structural features may be overlooked.

In terms of perceived impact on promoting responsible tourism behaviours, the survey results clearly indicate a hierarchy of effectiveness: direct and emotionally engaging language are more successful than grammatical or structural tools. These findings underline the necessity for ETMs to prioritize motivational language strategies in both form and function.

### ***The Role of Content Features on Responsible Tourism Behaviours***

#### ***Environmental Responsibility***

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Environmentally Responsible Content Features on Responsible Tourism Behaviours**

	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
Organic farming & sustainable practices	50	4.66	0.53
Eco-friendly water source	50	2.08	0.88
Hands-on eco-practice during tourist visits	50	4.70	0.48
Reduction in use of gasoline vehicles	50	2.19	0.92
Choose eco-friendly accommodation	50	1.94	0.67

Features that require direct tourist involvement in environmental practices including Hands-on eco-practice during tourist visits ( $M=4.7$ ,  $SD=0.48$ ). This suggests that when responsible tourism behaviours are framed as an interactive and immersive cultural experience, it is more likely to resonate with tourists and lead to behavioral adoption.

The success of these behaviours in engaging visitors can be explained by experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984), which claims that people learn more effectively through direct participation rather than passive observation. Eco-friendly farming experiences at TQVV allow

tourists to cultivate and harvest vegetables using traditional, organic methods, thereby reinforcing environmental consciousness, encouraging responsible tourism behaviours by immersing visitors in sustainable agricultural practices. However, content promoting more passive or restrictive behaviors (e.g., reducing the use of gasoline vehicles, choosing eco-accommodation) generated lower engagement ( $M < 2.5$ ). This discrepancy suggests that while these behaviours are theoretically promoted, they are not effectively communicated or made sufficiently appealing to visitors. One possible explanation is that sustainability efforts that require behavioral restrictions are often perceived as inconvenient, whereas experiential sustainability offers an immediate and enjoyable payoff (Dolnicar et al., 2015).

This supports observations from both tourists and tour guides in TQVV, who reported that while certain practices were mentioned in ETMs, they were not clearly explained or visually emphasized. As a result, many visitors relied on in-person clarification:

*“Some people who have already found some sustainable tourism information in Tra Que, they have known some ways to cook food or do some farming activities in there. but some said that on their guidebook they saw some sustainable practices mentioned but it’s not clear and they don’t know what are sustainable practices. For some people, they have no idea about some practices, especially how to make sure vegetable are fresh without fertilizer, prevent too much visitors or...manage trash so they ask me a lot of questions.” (Tour Guide 1 – Appendix 1)*

### ***Socio-Cultural Responsibility***

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Socio - Cultural Responsible Content Features on Responsible Tourism Behaviours**

	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
Cultural immersion	50	4.81	0.31
Participation in community rituals	50	4.23	0.52
Recognition, preservation of cultural heritage	50	3.69	0.85
Traditional farming methods and generational knowledge	50	4.84	0.33
Vegetable-oriented local meals	50	4.28	0.72
Avoided overcrowded tourist sites	50	2.43	0.56

Emphasizing sustainable farming and cultural heritage is a common strategy to attract tourists interested in authentic and environmentally friendly experiences. This approach is consistent with the European Travel Commission’s recommendations, which advocate for promoting local culture and responsible behaviours to enhance a destination’s appeal (European Travel Commission, 2016). Similar to the Environmental Responsibility dimension, features within the Socio-Cultural Responsibility category emphasizing experiential engagement such as cultural immersion and traditional farming practices demonstrate a significantly higher motivational impact. Moreover, ETMs highlighting authentic cultural activities received the highest mean ratings across all categories.

As shown in the SPSS results, traditional farming methods and generational knowledge received the highest motivation score ( $M = 4.84$ ,  $SD = 0.33$ ), closely followed by cultural immersion ( $M = 4.81$ ,  $SD = 0.31$ ). When tourists can observe and practice age-old farming techniques or immerse themselves in local customs, they develop stronger emotional and ethical connections to the community. Furthermore, moderately high scores for Vegetable-oriented local meals ( $M = 4.28$ ,  $SD = 0.72$ ) and Participation in community rituals ( $M = 4.23$ ,  $SD = 0.52$ ) further demonstrate that sensory and social activities such as shared meals or festival rituals enhance tourists' intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The promotion of vegetable-oriented meals aligns with global sustainability trends that advocate for plant-based diets, minimize meat-oriented meals to reduce environmental impact, an approach supported by studies highlighting the role of food tourism in shaping consumer attitudes toward sustainable eating habits (Robinson & Getz, 2016).

In contrast, avoiding overcrowded tourist sites registered the lowest mean ( $M = 2.43$ ,  $SD = 0.56$ ), indicating that visitors are far less compelled by messaging that emphasizes restraint rather than participation given the lack of the immediacy and personal reward that drive behavioral adoption, as predicted by self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Studies in sustainable tourism marketing suggest that the effectiveness of sustainability messaging depends largely on how well the information is framed (Font & McCabe, 2017). Currently, these practices may be presented in a way that feels detached from the tourist experience, failing to connect personal visitor choices with broader environmental outcomes. Not only do the tourists think so, but the interview responses also indicate that the ETMs for TQVV provide limited information on waste reduction and strategies to prevent overcrowding:

*“Some people who have already found some sustainable tourism information in Tra Que, they have known some ways to cook food or do some farming activities in there.”* (Tour Guide 1 – Appendix 1)

### ***Economic Responsibility***

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Economic Responsible Content Features on Responsible Tourism Behaviours**

	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
Direct local benefits	50	2.79	0.90
Local employment and service innovation	50	3.02	0.88
Tourist engagement supports traditional livelihoods	50	3.65	0.81

The analysis of economic responsibility features reveals moderate motivational effects, with notable variation between items. Among the three features measured, Tourist engagement supports traditional livelihoods received the highest score ( $M = 3.65$ ,  $SD = 0.81$ ), followed by Local employment and service innovation ( $M = 3.02$ ,  $SD = 0.88$ ), while Direct local benefits ranked lowest ( $M = 2.79$ ,  $SD = 0.90$ ).

This pattern suggests that tourists are more responsive to content that illustrates how their personal engagement fosters local well-being (e.g., preserving traditional livelihoods) than to abstract references to economic distribution (e.g., how ticket revenue supports farmers). This finding is consistent with empowerment framework of Scheyvens (1999), which posits that perceived community benefit and visitor participation are critical to successful promotion of responsible tourism behaviours.

Moreover, the relatively low rating of Direct local benefits might reflect the lack of visibility or emotional resonance in such messaging. As Dolnicar, Crouch, and Long (2015) argue, responsible behaviors are less likely to be adopted when the connection between tourist action and its economic impact remains unclear or indirect.

The moderate score for “local employment and service innovation” (M = 3.02) further indicates that while the concept of supporting community enterprise holds some appeal, it lacks the interactive and relational dimension that characterizes more engaging features in the socio-cultural and environmental categories. This aligns with assertion of Font and McCabe (2017) that sustainability communication is most effective when it ties visitor agency to local outcomes.

*“Some tourists read about Tra Que and they come to try local food, but not all. Some just come for picture, take photo, and go back to Hoi An town to eat.” (Business Owner 2 – Appendix 2)*

Moreover, insights from local business owners suggest that the effectiveness of ETMs in promoting sustainable behaviors remains uncertain. One restaurant owner noted that while some visitors engage with the local food culture after reading about TQVV, others primarily visit for sightseeing and return to urban areas for dining. This observation is consistent with findings of Cohen and Avieli (2004), which highlight challenges in converting tourists’ interest in culinary tourism into direct economic benefits for local producers.

**Table 5: Comparative Mean Scores of Content Features by Dimensions of Responsible Tourism Behaviours**

	<i>M</i>
<i>Environmental Responsibility</i>	3.11
<i>Socio-Cultural Responsibility</i>	4.05
<i>Economic Responsibility</i>	3.15

Among the three sustainability dimensions evaluated, Socio-Cultural Responsibility emerged as the most influential in motivating responsible tourism behaviours, with the highest average score (M = 4.05). This confirms the earlier finding that tourists are most inspired when content emphasizes interactive cultural practices such as immersion in local traditions, food, or farming methods (Cohen & Cohen, 2012). The alignment with experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984) further reinforces that cultural features that allow hands-on participation are more effective than passive or abstract messages. By contrast, Environmental Responsibility scored the lowest (M = 3.11), largely due to low ratings on features such as “Reduction in the use of gasoline vehicles” and “Choose eco-friendly accommodation”. These behaviors are perceived as restrictive or inconvenient, which may explain their weaker motivational impact (Dolnicar et al., 2015).

Economic Responsibility, while slightly higher than environmental, remained relatively neutral (M = 3.15). This suggests that tourists may be less emotionally engaged by economic narratives unless they involve direct relational engagement, such as helping sustain traditional livelihoods (M = 3.65). This supports view of Scheyvens (1999) that economic empowerment is only compelling when it’s visible and participatory. The data clearly indicate that ETMs are most effective when promoting responsible tourism behaviours by highlighting socio-cultural features rooted in experiential and immersive participation. While economic and environmental

aspects of sustainability are relevant, their messaging needs to be reframed to emphasize personal relevance and emotional connection to increase their impact.

### *TQVV Tourists and Their Responsible Tourism Behaviors*

**Table 6: Correlation Between Tourists' Attention to Sustainable Practices and Responsible Tourism Behaviours Encouraged in ETMs Adopted by Tourists**

	Correlation coefficients	Tourists' attention to sustainable practices (Question 4.9-II.1)	Responsible tourism behaviours promoted in ETMs and adopted by tourists (Question 2,3-II.2)
Tourists' attention to sustainable practices (Question 4.9-II.1)	r	1	0.401**
	p		.000
	N	50	50
Responsible tourism behaviours promoted in ETMs and adopted by tourists (Question 2,3-II.2)	r	0.401**	1
	p	.000	
	N	50	50
**p<0.001			

The findings from Table 6 indicate a moderate positive correlation ( $r = 0.401$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) between tourists' attention to sustainable practices (Question 4.9-II.1) and the responsible tourism behaviours encouraged in ETMs (Question 2,3-II.2). This suggests that tourists who pay more attention to sustainability are also more likely to adopt the responsible tourism behaviours promoted in ETMs. This aligns with elaboration likelihood theory (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), which suggests that individuals who are more engaged with a topic are more likely to process related persuasive messages deeply, leading to higher behavioral adoption.

The findings also resonate with research by Dolnicar et al. (2015), who observed that travelers with greater environmental awareness are more responsive to sustainability messages in tourism materials. However, the correlation value ( $r = 0.401$ ) suggests that while ETMs influence responsible tourism behaviours, other external factors also play a role. These may include pre-existing environmental attitudes, social norms, and situational constraints such as convenience and cost (Miller et al., 2010).

### **Recommendations to Enhance the Effectiveness of the ETMs**

#### *Using Visual Elements*

Visual design plays a pivotal role in attracting tourists' attention and shaping their understanding of sustainability. Research in tourism communication demonstrates that high-quality imagery, infographics, and interactive layouts enhance engagement and message retention (Gretzel, Fesenmaier, & O'Leary, 2017). ETMs should therefore integrate vivid photographs of organic farming, visual guides on eco-friendly practices, and interactive maps. Clear definitions and examples contextualized within TQVV's local practices can make sustainability concepts more tangible and relatable to diverse audiences.

### ***Using Simple and Clear Language***

The analysis revealed that existing ETMs often employ complex or generic language, limiting accessibility for international tourists and local stakeholders. Effective sustainability communication requires linguistic simplicity, transparency, and contextualization (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Replacing abstract phrases such as “reduce your carbon footprint” with concrete directives like “choose solar-powered homestays” can make messages more actionable. Additionally, the use of directive verbs (“commit,” “support,” “contribute”) can encourage compliance with sustainable practices (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Ensuring linguistic clarity through concise sentences and a logical “given-before-new” information flow improves comprehension and engagement.

### ***Delivering Persuasive Messages***

Persuasion remains a central component of sustainability communication. Current ETMs were only moderately persuasive ( $M = 3.02$ ,  $SD = 0.73$ ), suggesting the need for stronger motivational framing. Persuasive communication theories indicate that emphasizing urgency and benefits - both personal and collective - enhances message impact (Cialdini, 2009; Ajzen, 1991). Incorporating modal verbs such as “must” and “should,” alongside testimonials and storytelling, can heighten emotional resonance and encourage behavioral change (Green & Brock, 2000). Narratives that highlight community benefits, such as improved livelihoods and cultural preservation, can further align tourists’ intentions with responsible actions.

### ***Employing Inclusive Pronouns***

Inclusive language fosters collaboration and shared accountability between visitors and local communities. Using collective pronouns like “we” and “our” rather than solely addressing tourists as “you” can create a sense of belonging and joint responsibility (Goodwin, 2011). For instance, phrases such as “Together, we preserve the traditions of Tra Que” transform tourists from passive consumers into active contributors. This linguistic shift promotes emotional connection and social identification, reinforcing the communal aspect of responsible tourism.

### ***Enhancing Emphasis Techniques***

To strengthen message salience, key sustainability messages should be visually emphasized using distinct sections, bullet points, or typographic contrasts (Mocini, 2005). Structuring ETMs using a problem-solution framework - introducing environmental challenges followed by actionable solutions - enhances message clarity and motivation (Pritchard & Morgan, 2001). Rhetorical questions, such as “How can we preserve Tra Que’s heritage together?” can also stimulate reflection and personal engagement.

### ***Providing Specific Calls to Action (CTAs)***

Effective CTAs bridge awareness and action by presenting clear, socially reinforced directives. Behavioral research demonstrates that messages incorporating specific, normative cues significantly increase participation in sustainable practices (Cialdini, 2003). For instance, “Join 85% of visitors who dine at village-owned restaurants” provides a concrete social reference, while QR codes can facilitate instant access to eco-tour booking or sustainability information. Such interactive elements translate responsible intentions into immediate behavior.

### ***Focusing on Experiences Rather Than Instructions***

Framing sustainability as an experience rather than a rule promotes deeper engagement. Experiential learning encourages emotional connection and lasting behavioral change (Kim, Airey, & Szivas, 2011). ETMs should therefore highlight participatory experiences - such as farming, cooking, or eco-tours rather than listing regulations. Richards (2018) emphasizes that storytelling and personal narratives of local farmers can evoke empathy and enhance authenticity. Activities like cooking classes using organic produce and hands-on farming workshops exemplify how immersive experiences foster both enjoyment and environmental awareness (Okumus, Koseoglu, & Ma, 2018).

### ***Applying Digital Innovations***

Integrating digital tools enhances accessibility and interactivity. QR codes, for instance, can provide instant links to multimedia guides, sustainability videos, and interactive maps, thus increasing tourists' engagement with responsible tourism practices (Tussyadiah, Wang, & Jia, 2019). Furthermore, social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok offer dynamic channels for disseminating sustainability narratives to global audiences (Liu, Pennington-Gray, & Krieger, 2021). Emerging technologies like augmented reality (AR) also hold potential for visualizing eco-friendly practices and cultural heritage (Han, Jung, & Gibson, 2021), transforming ETMs into immersive educational tools.

### ***Tailoring Information to Target Audiences***

Audience segmentation is crucial for effective message design. European travelers, who often demonstrate high environmental awareness, respond positively to content emphasizing conservation and community participation (Dolnicar & Leisch, 2008; Higham & Font, 2020). Conversely, Asian tourists, particularly from China and Korea, tend to value wellness and culinary authenticity (Kim, Park, & Lee, 2019). ETMs targeting Asian visitors should therefore highlight health benefits of organic produce and stress-relieving aspects of agricultural activities (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2017). Tailoring content in this way ensures cultural relevance and maximizes behavioral impact.

### ***Providing Detailed and Actionable Information***

Many ETMs describe sustainable practices superficially without specifying actionable steps for tourists. Detailed, context-specific guidance is essential to bridge the awareness-behavior gap (Juvan & Dolnicar, 2014). Including explicit recommendations, such as bringing reusable bottles, using eco-transport, or buying organic produce, encourages practical involvement. Sims (2009) notes that tourists are more likely to adopt sustainable behaviors when provided with clear examples of how their actions directly benefit local communities. Thus, ETMs should combine informative content with concrete participation pathways that reinforce TQVV's identity as a sustainability-driven destination.

## Conclusions

This study provides several key recommendations for stakeholders in TQVV to enhance the role of ETMs in promoting responsible tourism behaviors.

For tourism authorities, the findings highlight the need for standardized guidelines in the design and implementation of ETMs to ensure consistency in sustainability messaging. These materials should be carefully structured to balance informational, persuasive, and instructional content while maintaining accessibility for a diverse audience. Additionally, government agencies should adopt a more proactive role in monitoring and refining the sustainability narratives within ETMs used in TQVV, ensuring alignment with broader sustainable tourism policies.

For content creators and marketers, the research underscores the importance of using engaging, action-driven, and visually appealing materials to capture tourists' interest. Tourism brochures, guidebooks, and websites should incorporate high-quality visuals, storytelling techniques, and clear calls to action that encourage tourists to adopt responsible tourism behaviors. The integration of digital tools, such as QR codes linking to sustainability resources, can also enhance accessibility.

For local businesses and tour operators, the study suggests that stronger collaboration is needed in aligning marketing materials with sustainability principles. Local tourism businesses can work with content developers to ensure that ETMs accurately reflect sustainable tourism practices, highlight eco-friendly accommodations and activities, and promote local products and services that support the community's economic sustainability.

Despite its valuable contributions, this study has certain limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, the research primarily examined ETMs from a linguistic perspective, focusing on how language use, tone, and content features contribute to promoting responsible tourism behaviours. However, it did not offer insights into marketing strategies, visual design, or user experience, which are also crucial in shaping tourists' perceptions and behaviours. Factors such as color psychology, typography, and digital interactivity in ETMs may significantly influence their effectiveness in fostering responsible behaviours, yet these aspects remain unexplored in this study. Secondly, the sample size was relatively small, with data collected from a limited number of international tourists within a specific timeframe. While the findings provide valuable insights, a larger and more diverse sample including tourists from various cultural backgrounds, travel preferences, and levels of prior sustainability awareness would yield a more comprehensive understanding of how ETMs influence responsible tourism behaviors. The study also did not extensively examine longitudinal behavioral changes, meaning it remains unclear whether tourists who read ETMs maintain responsible tourism behaviours beyond their visit to TQVV.

Given these limitations, future research should adopt a multidisciplinary approach, integrating insights from marketing, tourism psychology, and design studies to better understand how ETMs can effectively shape sustainable tourist behaviours. Additionally, expanding the sample size and duration of data collection by including pre- and post-visit assessments or analyzing tourists' digital engagement with ETMs could provide deeper insights into the long-term impact of these materials. By addressing these gaps, future studies can contribute to the

development of more persuasive, visually appealing, and behaviorally impactful ETMs, ensuring their role in promoting responsible tourism behaviours is fully optimized.

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