

## DIFFERENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR BY SOCIAL DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF ACCOMMODATIONS' MANAGERS

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**DOI No. – 08.2020-25662434**

### Abstract

*The objective of the article is to analyze the difference between environmental responsible behaviors by socio-demographic characteristics of managers. Based on primary data collected by surveying 134 top managers of 134 accommodations (including: 3 five star hotels, 6 four star hotels, 11 three star hotels, 30 two star hotels, 27 one star hotels, 29 unrated hotels, 20 guest houses/tourist motels, 5 homestays and 3 others) in Can Tho City, Vietnam, descriptive statistical analysis, Cronbach's alpha, T-test and Anova were applied. Environmental responsible behavior of managers is classified into 3 groups: direct behavior, indirect behavior and general behavior. The research results showed that: (1) There are differences in 3 types of behavior according to years of working experience in the tourism industry and according to years of working as a manager; (2) Managers of different age groups have different indirect and general behavior, but do not have differences in terms of direct behavior; (3) No difference was found in environmental responsible behavior by positions, gender and education level of managers.*

**Keywords:** *Environmental responsible behavior, direct behavior, indirect behavior, socio-demographic characteristics, working experience, accommodation, hotels, top managers.*

### INTRODUCTION

Environmental sustainability is a multidisciplinary topic and its scope has attracted the attention of researchers from different scientific fields. According to Rosa & Silva (2018), environmental management in the accommodation sector highlights two areas of concern: first, the economic contribution of the accommodation sector to the tourism industry in particular and the economy in general. shared; second, the negative environmental impacts caused by the business activities of accommodation enterprises need to be managed and dealt with.

Child (1997) points out in strategic choice theory that top managers are the ones who play an important role in strategic decision making. Influenced by socio-demographic characteristics, senior managers will have different personal environmental behaviors in the same economic and political contexts. Many experts (Hines, Hungerford, & Tomera, 1987; Schultz, Oskamp, & Mainieri, 1995) agree that the group of factors related to individual characteristics greatly influences the relationship between environmental awareness and environmental behaviour. Sociodemographic factors that significantly influence the relationship between environmental awareness and environmental behavior include: gender, age and education level. For a long time, many studies by sociologists have demonstrated the influence of gender on the relationship between environmental awareness and behavior. The studies of Hines, Hungerford, and Tomera (1987), Derksen and Gartell

(1993); Guagnano, Dietz and Stern (1994), Schultz, Oskamp, and Mainieri (1995) find that young, high-income, educated women tend to make active contributions to environmental protection. Education is also proven by many experts to be an important factor. In some countries, individuals with higher education are more concerned with the environment and have more frequent environmental behavior (Arcury & Christianson, 1993; Chanda, 1999; Hsu & Rothe, 1996). Only the study of Grendstad & Wollebaek (1998) finds the opposite. Synodinos (1990), McKingt (1991) and Tikka, Kuitnen, and Tynys (2000) again find evidence that occupation training will also affect the relationship between environmental awareness and environmental behavior. In addition, Egri & Herman (2000) indicate that women are more likely to adhere to NEP than men. Fryxel & Lo (2003) argue that the element of Education shows a clear relationship with knowledge about the environment.

Currently, there is no research examining the difference in behavior by sociodemographic characteristics of senior managers in Can Tho, Vietnam. This article was conducted to answer the question of whether or not there is a difference in environmental responsible behavior of managers in Can Tho, Vietnam.

## RESEARCH METHODS

Some experts define "environmental responsible behavior" as the actions of an individual or group with an interest in environmental issues and ecological knowledge (Sivek & Hungerford, 1990; Cottrell & Graefe, 1997). In addition, environmental responsible behavior is an expression of an individual or group's willingness to protect the environment in their daily activities in order to reduce negative impacts on the environment (Cottrell, 2003; Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002; Meijers & Stapel, 2011, Stern, 2000).

In a study by Stern (2000), which showed that measuring environmental behavior was a multidimensional construct, environmental responsible behavior was classified into 2 groups, public and private. Public behavior only indirectly affects the environment by influencing public policy, while private behavior has a direct influence on the environment (Dietz et al, 1998). Also according to Dietz et al (1998), environmental responsible behavior is classified into 3 groups: consumer behavior, environmental citizenship and policy support.

Another approach to measuring behavior is environmental management behavior through waste management activities, including waste reduction, reuse and recycling (Barr, 2007; Min, 2011; Du, Wang et al, 2018; Yang et al, 2020).

Thus, it can be seen that the behavior is a multidimensional construct and there are two main approaches in defining it: individual behavior and management behavior. First, the Cronbach's alpha test method is used to test the reliability of the scale of environmental responsible behavior, then the statistical method will help summarize the socio-demographic characteristics of managers. management and level of performance in environmental responsible behavior. Finally, T-test and Anova were used to find the difference in environmental responsible behavior according to the sociodemographic characteristics of managers.

## RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Summary of sociodemographic characteristics of managers

The sample includes 134 businesses in the field of accommodation in Can Tho city. The subjects interviewed for the study were the hotel managers/owners. Sample was collected mainly in Ninh Kieu district, some participants came from Cai Rang, Binh Thuy and Phong Dien. The survey was conducted in November 2021. General information about the business is listed including relevant information on operating time, type of business, number of rooms, room capacity and information related to green practices of the hotel. Based on the table below, it could be seen that the respondents are very diverse in terms of age, gender, qualifications and work experience.

**Table 1. Demographic characteristics of managers**

Demographic characteristics	Frequency (%)	M (SD)
<b>Position</b>		
Manager	119(88.8)	
Owner	15(11.2)	
<b>Gender</b>		
Femal	69(51.5)	
Male	65(48.5)	
<b>Education level</b>		
Primary	2(1.5)	
High school	13(9.7)	
College	13(9.7)	
University	81(60.4)	
Graduate	25(18.7)	
<b>Age</b>		36.00 (8.642)
Below 30 years old	41(30.6)	
From 31 to 40 years old	57(42.5)	
From 41 to 50 years old	27(20.1)	
Above 50 years old	9(6.7)	
<b>Work experience</b>		11.00* (8.058)
Form 1 to 10 years	59(44.0)	
From 11 to 20 years	56(41.8)	
From 21 to 30 years	15(11.2)	
Above 30 years	4(3.0)	
<b>Experience in the tourism industry</b>		8.46 (5.737)
From 1 to 5 years	52(38.8)	
From 6 to 10 years	48(35.8)	
From 11 to 20 years	28(20.9)	
Above 20 years	6(4.5)	
<b>Years of managing experience</b>		5.00* (4.787)
From 1 to 5 years	70(52.2)	
From 6 to 10 years	45(33.6)	
From 11 to 20 years	18(13.4)	
Above 20 years	1(0.7)	

Note: M is the mean value

SD is the standard deviation

\* the median (Median) because the sample's distribution is skewed

Source: Survey 2021

### **Position**

Based on the analysis results of Table 1, it can be seen that the respondents holding the

management position account for a very high rate of 88.8%, the direct owners who operate the accommodation establishments account for only 11.2%.

### **Gender**

There is not much difference in the ratio between men and women, though male seems a bit more than female. Specifically, among 134 respondents interviewed, 65 respondents are female, accounting for 48.5% and 69 respondents are male, accounting for 51.5%. This ratio is consistent with the results of the survey on tourism human resources in Can Tho City in 2020 (Huy et al (2020)

### **Education level**

The respondent has a relatively high level of education. The details of the respondents' education level in the field of accommodation are dispersed in 5 groups of education levels, but majority is mainly classified at 2 levels: undergraduate and postgraduate. In fact, undergraduate and graduate respondents accounts for 60.4% and 18.7% respectively. This shows that the position of management/owners in the accommodation sector is in high demand, as they are responsible for implementing the activities of the accommodation establishment, this qualification is suitable for the quality of work for such positions.

### **Age**

According to Table 1, it can be seen that the respondents aged 31 to 40 accounted for the highest proportion of 42.5%, the age group under 30 accounted for 30.6%. This shows that today the management team of accommodation facilities tends to rejuvenate to adapt to the new situation and is also more dynamic. The age group from 41 to 50 years old accounted for 20.1% and the lowest age group was over 50 years old (6.7%). The average age of respondents in the research sample is 36 years old, this is an age suitable for management positions, so the survey sample will be suitable for the purpose of the study.

### **Years of working experience**

*It can be seen that years of working experience focus on 2 groups- the group from 1 to 10 years accounts for 44% (59 respondents) and the group from 11 to 20 years accounted for 41.8% (56 respondents). Both groups are approximately the same and accounted for the highest proportion of total respondents. This is consistent with the age structure of the respondents when the young management group is dominant. The group with working experience from 21 to 30 years is 11.2% (15 respondents) and the group with 30 years or more accounts for the lowest proportion is 3%. The average number of years of work experience is 11 years..*

### **Years of working experience in the tourism industry**

The results of Table 1 show that the working experience of two groups of respondents: 38.8% from 1 to 5 years (52 respondents) and 35.8% from 6 to 10 years (48 respondents) are approximately the same and account for the highest proportion. Group from 11 to 20 years is 20.9% and the lowest group is over 20 years is 4.5%. The average number of years of work experience in the tourism industry is 8.46 years.

### **Years of managing experience**

Based on the results of Table 1, the group that has from 1 to 5 years of managing experience is accounted for the highest proportion (52.2%). The group that has from 6 to 10 years of managing

experience is accounted for 33.6% and the group that has from 11 to 20 years of managing experience is accounted for 13.4%. The group that has over 20 years of managing experience has only 1 respondent, accounting for 0.7%. The average number of years of managing experience is 5 years.

### ASSESS THE RELIABILITY OF THE SCALE ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR

**Table 2 Reliability test the scale of environmental responsible behavior**

N <sup>o</sup>	Items description	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
<b>Direct behavior (Cronbach's Alpha=0.875)</b>			
1	I buy eco-friendly products whenever possible	0.828	0.798
2	I reduce household waste whenever possible	0.704	0.850
3	I use recycled products whenever possible	0.646	0.871
4	I buy organic food whenever possible	0.750	0.832
<b>Indirect behavior (Cronbach's Alpha=0.758)</b>			
1	I am a member of an environmental organization	0.520	0.730
2	I donate money to support an environmental organization	0.675	0.639
3	I subscribe to an environmental magazine / subscribe to an environmental channel	0.668	0.637
4	I will coordinate with law enforcement to protect the environment	0.390	0.780

Source: Survey 2021

The item "I will coordinate with law enforcement agencies to protect the environment" have Cronbach's alpha coefficient if the item is deleted is 0.780, which is larger than initial total Cronbach's alpha coefficient of Behavior indirect (0.758). This means that this item should be deleted. However, the author decided to keep this item for further analysis for two reasons: (1) The degree of difference is not high; (2) During the interview, the respondents had many concerns and discussed a lot about this issue. All other items meet the requirements of the Cronbach Alpha test, so all items of the scale will be kept to be used in the next analysis.

The mean of environmental responsible behavior of an individual manager is shown in Table 3 below

**Table 3 Environmental responsible behavior**

N <sup>o</sup>	Items description	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Direct behavior</b>		<b>3.99</b>	<b>0.644</b>
1	I buy eco-friendly products whenever possible	3.94	0.792
2	I reduce household waste whenever possible	4.11	0.753



3	I use recycled products whenever possible	4.00	0.704
4	I buy organic food whenever possible	3.91	0.770
<b>Indirect behavior</b>		<b>3.44</b>	<b>0.700</b>
1	I am a member of an environmental organization	3.00	1.062
2	I donate money to support an environmental organization	3.55	0.863
3	I subscribe to an environmental magazine / subscribe to an environmental channel	3.25	0.913
4	I will coordinate with law enforcement to protect the environment	3.97	0.822

Source: Survey 2021

Nhìn chung kết quả đánh giá của hầu hết các yếu tố trong hành vi có trách nhiệm với môi trường của nhà quản lý đều được thực hiện ở mức khá tốt đến tốt (3,25 - 4,11). Điểm trung bình chung của hành vi trực tiếp là 3,99 cao hơn so với điểm chung bình chung của hành vi gián tiếp, cho thấy hành vi trực tiếp được thực hiện tốt hơn. Riêng biến "Tôi là thành viên của một tổ chức môi trường" có điểm đánh giá ở mức thấp nhất là 3,00. Nguyên nhân có thể là do ở Cần Thơ hoạt động của các tổ chức vì môi trường chưa thật sự nổi bật và chưa thu hút được sự quan tâm của nhiều người biết đến và tham gia. Đồng thời độ lệch chuẩn của biến "Tôi là thành viên của một tổ chức môi trường" cũng là cao nhất, cho thấy có sự chênh lệch lớn trong đánh giá của các đáp viên ở tiêu chí này.

In general, most of the factors in environmental responsible behavior of managers are performed at a fairly good to good level (3.25 - 4.11). The overall mean score of direct behavior is 3.99 higher than the overall mean score of indirect behavior. This indicates that direct behavior is better executed. Particularly the item "I am a member of an environmental organization" has the lowest rating of 3.00. The reason may be that in Can Tho, the activities of environmental organizations are not really prominent and have not attracted the attention of people who know about it. At the same time, the standard deviation of the variable "I am a member of an environmental organization" is also the highest, showing that there is a large difference in the assessment of the respondents in this criterion.

#### EVALUATION OF DIFFERENCES IN ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR ACCORDING TO THE SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF MANAGERS

**Table 4 Differences in environmental responsible behavior according to the sociodemographic characteristics of managers**

Sociodemographic characteristics	Direct behavior M (SD)	Indirect behavior M (SD)	Environmental responsible behavior M (SD)
<b>Position</b>			
Manager (n = 119)	3.97 (0.670)	3.42 (0.728)	3.70 (0.624)
Owner (n = 15)	4.15 (0.351)	3.58 (0.397)	3.87 (0.336)
	$p = 0.311^{ns}$	$p = 0.205^{ns}$	$p = 0.114^{ns}$

<b>Gender</b>			
Female (n = 69)	4.03 (0.570)	3.50 (0.696)	3.76 (0.550)
Male (n = 65)	3.95 (0.717)	3.38 (0.704)	3.67 (0.649)
	$p = 0.480^{ns}$	$p = 0.357^{ns}$	$p = 0.360^{ns}$
<b>Education level</b>			
Sơ cấp (n = 2)	4.00 (0.000)	4.13 (0.177)	4.06 (0.088)
Trung cấp (n = 13)	4.04 (0.558)	3.62 (0.527)	3.83 (0.438)
Cao đẳng (n = 13)	3.83 (0.534)	3.69 (0.647)	3.76 (0.574)
Đại học (n = 81)	3.99 (0.617)	3.40 (0.662)	3.69 (0.557)
Sau đại học (n = 25)	4.05 (0.845)	3.31 (0.888)	3.68 (0.824)
	$p = 0.894^{ns}$	$p = 0.234^{ns}$	$p = 0.853^{ns}$
<b>Age</b>			
Below 30 years (n = 41)	4.04 (0.515)	3.55 (0.537)	3.80 (0.459)
From 31 to 40 years (n = 57)	4.04 (0.614)	3.42 (0.711)	3.73 (0.611)
From 41 to 50 years (n = 27)	3.95 (0.782)	3.51 (0.842)	3.73 (0.711)
Above 50 years (n = 9)	3.56 (0.836)	2.89 (0.663)	3.22 (0.602)
	$p = 0.188^{ns}$	$p = 0.074^*$	$p = 0.074^*$
<b>Experience in the tourism industry</b>			
From 1 to 5 years (n = 52)	4.12 (0.557)	3.54 (0.661)	3.83 (0.542)
From 6 to 10 years (n = 48)	4.02 (0.537)	3.47 (0.579)	3.74 (0.458)
From 11 to 20 years (n = 28)	3.88 (0.792)	3.35 (0.914)	3.61 (0.796)
Above 20 years (n = 6)	3.21 (0.886)	2.79 (0.485)	3.00 (0.602)
	$p = 0.007^{***}$	$p = 0.078^*$	$p = 0.009^{***}$
<b>Years of managing experience</b>			
From 1 to 5 years (n = 70)	3.99 (0.594)	3.43 (0.649)	3.71 (0.551)
From 6 to 10 years (n = 45)	4.13 (0.481)	3.63 (0.614)	3.88 (0.451)
From 11 to 20 years (n = 18)	3.68 (1.021)	3.06 (0.945)	3.37 (0.921)
Above 20 years (n = 1)	3.50	3.25	3.38
	$p = 0.071^*$	$p = 0.030^{**}$	$p = 0.019^{**}$

Note: M is Mean

SD is the Standard deviation

\*Significance at the .05 level. \*\*Significance at the .01 level. \*\*\*Significance at the .001 level

ns: insignificant

Source: Survey 2021

From Table 4, it is shown that the respondents have the following socio-demographic characteristics: (1) the owner of the accommodation; (2) female; (3) elementary level of education; (4) belongs to the age group under 30 years old; (5) have 1 to 5 years of working experience in the tourism industry and (6) have been in management for 6 to 10 years have better environmental responsible behavior

At the same time, the test results from the above table also show that:



- Regarding position: There is no difference in environmental responsible behavior between management and owner
- Regarding gender: There was no difference in environmental responsible behavior between men and women
- Regarding education level: There is no difference in environmental responsible behavior between different educational attainment groups
- Regarding age: There is no direct difference in behavior between different age groups. There is a difference in indirect behavior and general behavior between different age groups at the significance level  $\alpha = 10\%$
- Regarding working experience in the tourism industry:
  - + There is a difference in direct behavior and general behavior between different experience groups in the tourism industry at the significance level  $\alpha = 1\%$
  - + There is a difference in indirect behavior between different experience groups in the tourism industry at the significance level  $\alpha = 10\%$
- Regarding number of years of managing experience
  - + There is a difference in direct behavior among other management experience groups at the significance level  $\alpha = 10\%$
  - + There is a difference in indirect behavior and general behavior between different management experience groups at the significance level  $\alpha = 5\%$

## CONCLUSION

The study provides an overview of performance of environmental responsible behavior according to the characteristics of accommodations in Can Tho City, Vietnam. In this study, 134 managers working in 134 accommodations (including: 3 five star hotels, 6 four star hotels, 11 three star hotels, 30 two star hotels, 27 one star hotels, 29 unrated hotels, 20 guest houses/tourist motels, 5 homestays and 3 others) in Can Tho City, Viet Nam has been participated in the survey. All items measured managers' environmental responsible behavior perform at a fairly good to good level (3.25 - 4.11). Respondents who are property owners; female; have elementary level of education; belong to the age group under 30 years old; have 1 to 5 years of experience working in the tourism industry and 6 to 10 years of managing experience have better environmental responsible behavior than the rest. In addition, the test results show that only age, number of years of working experience in the tourism industry and number of years of managing experience are statistically significant, the remaining other characteristics such as: position, gender education level do not have significant differences. This could be consider as new findings, because the result is contrary to what have been found by most of scholars (e.g. Hines, Hungerford, and Tomera (1987), Derksen and Gartell (1993); Guagnano, Dietz and Stern (1994), Schultz, Oskamp, and Mainieri (1995), Arcury & Christianson (1993), Chanda (1999), Hsu & Rothe (1996))

This study has some limitations that give directions for future research. One limitation is that the study only looked at the individual behavior of managers on environmental issues, but did not consider the influence of managers' personal behavior on their intentions in implementing the best practices. According to Chan (2014), people's intention to implement green practices in hotels will also be positively affected by their past ecological behavior. The second limitation is that this study was only conducted in accommodation facilities in Can Tho, Viet Nam.

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