Environmental policies and procedures in the hospitality industry: A study of policies of Grecotel hotel chain in Greece

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Abstract

The year 2020-21 has been an exceptional period for countries across the globe. During the world pandemic the debate is increasing on the environmental policies and their effective implementation. Many hotels, now-a-days, develop environmental policies and they use their policies as a marketing tool – to attract sales (Hsieh, 2012). According to an unofficial perceptual survey of a small sample, indicates that Grecotel is a prime hotel chain in Greece and it maintains a superior environmental policy. That is why, this study employed content analysis of policy documents to Grecotel hotel in Greece. This study analyzes the five annual policy document and sentiments from Twitter to understand the different ways and means to prepare, develop, and implement the better environmental policies. For a better understanding of the collected data, Word Cloud, Tree Map, along with the graphical representation of sentiments of stakeholders (customers, local residents, and policy makers) is presented in the paper. The paper identifies three crucial aspects of the policy – water, sustainability, energy, consumption, farm, training, recycled, fluorescent, environment, and savings for the hospitality sector. This paper also discusses the sentiment analysis. It was found that most of the visitors consider their policy as a positive and efficient marketing result.

Keywords: hotel chain, resorts, thematic analysis, content analysis, environmental policy, user generated contents, Grecotel*, Greece*

1. Introduction to Grecotel Hotels and Resorts

Grecotel Hotels and Resorts (GHR) is dedicated to the art of creating luxurious vacation experiences for travelers in the most beautiful destinations in the country. Many of the Grecotel's 39 luxury hotels and resorts, from the quality of the location, award-winning restaurants to the unique details, evoke the essence of genuine Greek hospitality, all on the cusp of a wonderful beach. GHR is a part of the N. Daskalantonakis Group of Companies, which includes amongst others a number of urban and resort businesses, the AgrecoFarms, a farm and local museum in Rethymnon Crete.

Grecotel shares satisfaction that its 40-year luxury journey in Greece has allowed it to obtain over 2000 awards from international stakeholders and organizations. It is an extraordinary achievement that they have managed to collect nearly 2000 awards throughout their fascinating global travel journey and have received a reputation for being professional, honest and accommodating. Grecotel receives support from such illustrious clients and

international organizations that have given these awards, and have acted as a faithful guide for Greece's tourism history.

2. Methodology

Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) was employed to learn the concerns and focus of environmental policies and procedures of Grecotel hotel chain in Greece. The qualitative method provides in-depth, socio-contextual and elaborate descriptions along with insightful interpretations (Holloway & Galvin, 2016; Smith, & Cheater, 2011). The NVIVO 12 Plus was used for the analysis of the present paper.

Qualitative analysis research adopts a prevalent form, which analyzes documents. The important policy and other forms of documents were analyzed and interpreted by the researcher to give meaning to an assessment framework (Bowen, 2009; Chima, 2020). There are two major categories of documents, which could be analyzed. These are as follows (O'Leary, 2014):

Public Records: The documents which are available on public platforms, like websites, newspaper, repositories, mission statements, annual reports, policy manuals, student handbooks, strategic plans, annual budget, syllabi, etc.

Personal Documents/Archives: Documents related to an individual's actions, experiences, and beliefs. Examples include e-mails, blogs, posts on Facebook, and incident reports.

Analyzing documents, policies, and archives are a social and crucial research tool. It is an invaluable part of most schemes of triangulation (Bowen, 2009; Birt, et al., 2016).

The environmental policy documents of Grecotel Hotel chain were downloaded from their official website (www.grecotel.com). The English version of the documents were used for analysis. For the specified purpose of this study, five different policy documents were downloaded (refer table 1 for more details on the names of policy considered for this analysis). These policy documents and twitter based posts were then analyzed to achieve the research objectives.

Table 1: Names of policy from Grecotel

Name of Policy	Year of Release
Sustainability Report – Grecotel Casa Marron	2018
Sustainability Report – Creta Palace Luxury Resort	2018
Sustainability Report – LUX ME Grecotel RHODOS	2018
Grecotel Policies – Creta Palace Grecotel Luxury Resorts	2017
Sustainability Report – Grecotel Caramel Boutique Resort	2017

The second source of data was extracted from Twitter. NCapture, a utility offered by NVivio, was utilized to capture the tweets for analyzing the sentiments about the policy. The string used for the search was ("Grecotel" AND "Environmental_policy"). In total, 219 tweets were downloaded. The extraction was based on language, i.e. tweets that are not in English and abusive language was not considered (Figure 1).

Figure 1: An Approach of Using Natural Language Preprocessing for Understanding Textual Contents (source: authors, customized and followed: Kaurav, Suresh, Narula, & Baber, 2020)
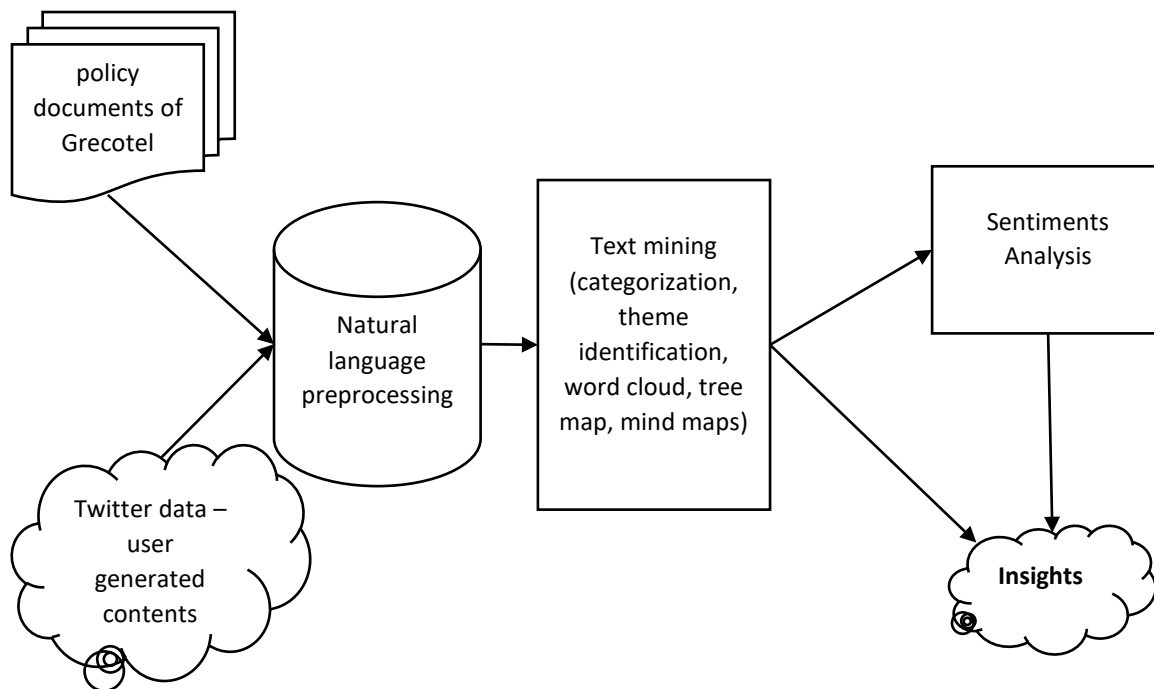
The data was analyzed through the flexible tool of thematic analysis which allows modifications as per the need of the research contributing with detailed, trustworthy data (Nowell, et al., 2017); Braun & Clarke, 2006). The method of thematic analysis was adopted due to its innate ability to felicitate the inquiry of the human experiences in objective settings (Percy, et al., 2015). Thematic analysis is a method that helps in recognizing, examining, and reporting a pattern in the detailed data and often helps in the interpretation of various aspects of the research topic (Alhojailan, 2012).

The data was analyzed in six steps as illustrated by Braun & Clarke (2006) which was initiated by the process of familiarization with the data, creation of initial codes, and identifying the main themes and their sub-themes. Qualitative data analysis software was employed for meticulous efficacy by adding rigor to the study (Alhojailan, 2012).

3. Data Analysis

To allow rigor and efficiency to the findings of the research, NVivo software was extensively used throughout the data analysis process. The data set (policy document from Grecotel and UGC downloaded from Twitter) revealed that the organizations are considering a lot about environmental policies. These policies are about – water, sustainability, energy, consumption, farm, training, recycled, fluorescent, environment, and savings for the hospitality sector.

3.1 Word Cloud and Tree Map

For better visualization of the results, Word Cloud and Tree Map was generated, based on frequency and percentage of words. Figure 1, shows a Wordcloud where the keywords are represented according to their frequency in the dataset (Sinclair & Cardew-Hall, 2008; Kaurav, Suresh, Narula, & Baber, 2020).
Figure 2 indicates the standard words related to hospitality businesses. These are in the center, surrounded by the other preferential words associated with the policy, which are primarily focus of the policy makers (environmental, policy, water, sustainable, Grecotel), terms on the second priority of the policy documents (employee, community, development, consumption, responsible). Then the whole policy was surrounded by the third level of precedence, i.e. efficiency, resources, products, training, services, and back-end etc. Finally, the fourth priority is indicated by the very small words, i.e., procedure, participation, safety, social, traditions, performance, needs etc.

Figure 2: Wordcloud Based on the Policy Documents (source: authors)

A tree map is a type of tree that organogram that organizes data in a hierarchical fashion, rectangular format, with several different dimensions and dimensions of varying sizes. The percentage increase or decrease in size is determined by the number of customers. It scales down to the size that offers the best for the tree. The relative sizes of the areas and areas play a role in the overall expansion of the primary networks, thus producing wider rectangles This kind of shows the words that tend to be longer vis-à-vis longer rests, on the other side, shorter words appear towards the bottom (NVivo Help, 2020; Kaurav, Suresh, Narula, & Baber, 2020).

The Tree map resulted out of this analysis has shown three different aspects of the policies form Grecotel (Figure 3, Table 2). Following are the different aspects:

Table 2: How the policy makers are taking Concerns, Focus, and Anecdotes, Based on a Policy Documents of Grecotel (source: authors)

Concerns	Focus	Anecdotes
hotel, water, environmental, local, policy, guests, employees, sustainable, energy, resort, product, consumption	services, development, training, community, environment, improve, waste, responsibly, protection, support, tourism, quality, season, staff, social, activities, ensure, human, reduce, recycling, safety, report	luxury, natural, health, resources, impact, system, aware, traditional, beach, process, need, area, child

Figure 2, also streamline the clear and distinctive line among the concerns, focus and anecdotes of the environmental policy of Grecotel. The tree map indicates that this hospitality organization is quite concerned about the environmental issues and challenges. Most of the time their focus is on: water, environmental, sustainable, energy, and consumption. The tree map also indicates that their focus is on: development, training, community, improve, waste, responsibly, protection, support, quality, social, activities, human, reduce, recycling, and safety. Simultaneously, the organization is also creating their profile to develop the solutions of the problems, like – sustainability and environmental policies. For identifying the solution, they are looking into: natural, health, resources, impact, system, aware, beach, and process. The surprising thing to note is that they are using these anecdotes for creatively solving their day to day operations related challenges.

Figure 3: Tree map of Essential Concerns, Focus, and Anecdotes, Based on a Policy Documents of Grecotel (source: authors)

3.2 Thematic analysis (policy documents and twitter data)

Thematic analysis is commonly used approaches of research in social sciences. This paper discusses the analysis of environmental policies of Grecotel, which is one of the large players in the hospitality business in Greece. This is a discussion paper, comprising an analytical overview and discussion of the different important policy parts of the Grecotel. It means that measuring the frequency of different categories and themes is possible in thematic analysis and importance of different words can be interpreted in different ways. It can be observed from Table 4 and Figure 4, that these aspects were considered more important than all other business concerns, i.e., water,

sustainability, energy, consumption, farm, training, recycled, fluorescent, environment, and savings (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017).

Table 4: Important themes and their overall frequency of repetition (source: authors)

Important theme in policy	Frequency in thematic analysis
water	82
sustainability	71
energy	47
consumption	45
farm	33
training	22
recycled	21
fluorescent	19
environment	17
savings	15

However apart from the very important themes, the thematic analysis has also depicted several other concerns (Figure 4). Some of them are: fluorescent (colors of curtains, wall paints and electricity equipment for saving electricity consumption), areas (the policy makers have decided the make some specific areas – mobile free zones, organic food zone – for making it socially acceptable), training (they focused that training for all the employees is very essential), and performance (was considered for two different dimensions – market, perceptual).

**Figure 4:** Visualization of thematic analysis (source: authors)
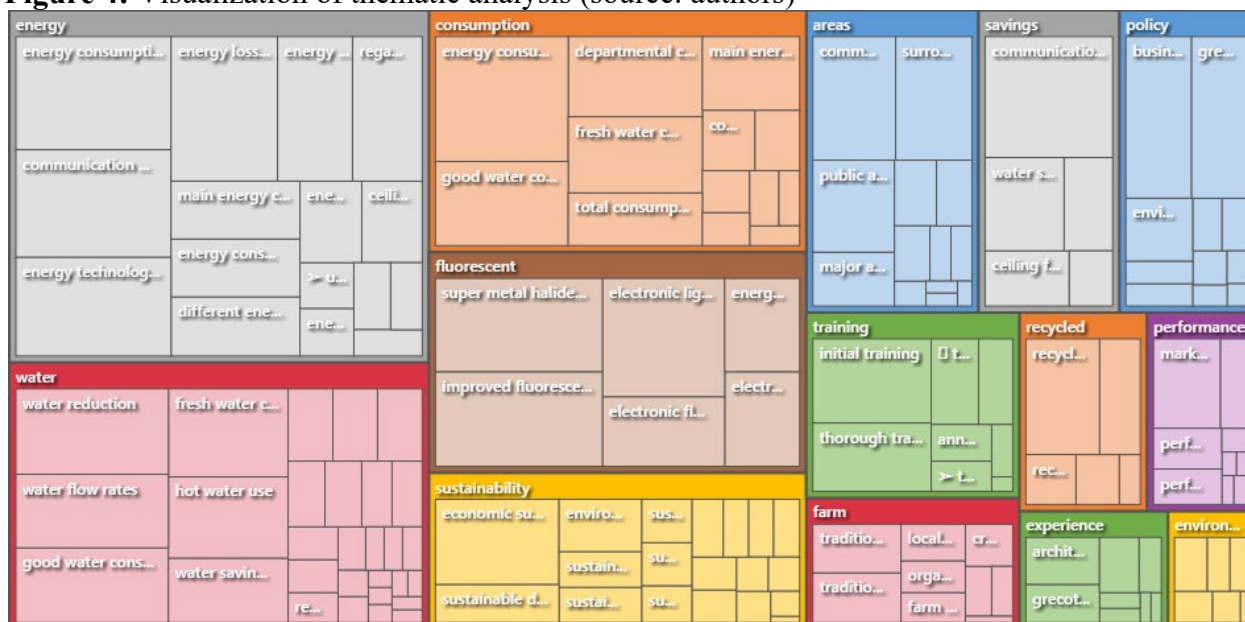
3.3 Sentiment Analytics

Sentiment analysis is the systematic identification, extraction, quantification, and study of affective states and subjective information through the use of natural language processing, text analysis, computational linguistics, and biometrics (subjective information). Sentiment analysis is extremely useful in social media monitoring, on any specific matter or subject. The researchers, nowadays, are performing it to gain an overview of the wider public opinion behind certain topics. In this paper we have utilized the sentiments to understand that how others (mainly consumers) are finding it.

Figure 5: Twitter-sources of tweets (source: authors)

Just to understand the sources of Twitter users, who are involved in in posting Tweets, a popular form of User Generated Contents (UGC). A place location was recorded and a world map was created in the Twitter users. Figures 5, indicating most of users were form Middle-East European subcontinent. A few were form upper and lower North America. This indicates the reliability of the data posted on twitter.

Figure 6: Bar Chart of Sentiments of Stakeholder (source: authors)
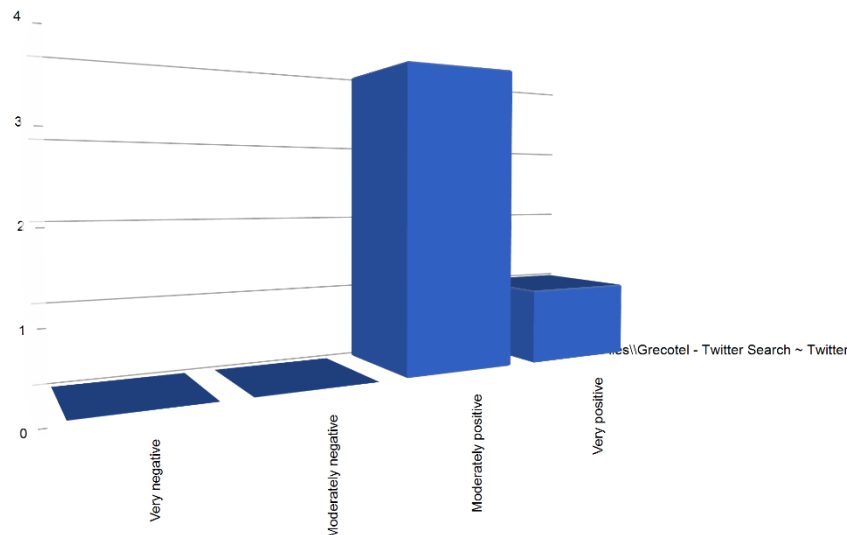
In Figure 6, the bar chart of tweets made either positive or negative is presented. A small number of negative tweets have been found, they are almost zero. Most of the tweets found on the twitter were moderately positive. Also, a range number of tweets falling into the category of very positive. Positive sentiments indicate the welcome and acceptance step of the environmental policies of Grecotel.

4. Conclusion

This study analyzes the five annual policy documents and sentiments from Twitter to understand the different ways and means to prepare, develop, and implement the better environmental policies. It was found that most of the people consider their policy as a positive and was as a result of the policies. The paper identifies three crucial aspects of the policy – water, sustainability, energy, consumption, farm, recycled, fluorescent, environment, and savings.

CAQDAS was employed to learn the concerns and focus of environmental policies and procedures of Grecotel hotel chain in Greece. In total, 219 tweets were downloaded to achieve the research objectives. The data was analyzed through the thematic analysis which allows modifications as per the need of the research. Five different documents were downloaded for the purpose of this study. These policy documents and twitter based posts were then analyzed. The method of thematic analysis was adopted due to its innate ability to felicitate the inquiry of the human experiences in objective settings.

Data was analyzed in six steps as illustrated by Braun & Clarke (2006) The data set (policy document from Grecotel and UGC downloaded from Twitter) revealed that the organizations is considering a lot about environmental policies. Qualitative data analysis software was employed for meticulous efficacy by adding rigor to the study. For better visualization of the results, Word Cloud and Tree Map were generated, based on frequency and percentage of words. This paper discusses the analysis of environmental policies of Grecotel, which is one of the large players in hospitality business in Greece. Thematic analysis is commonly used approaches of research in social sciences. It means that measuring the frequency of different categories and themes is possible in thematic analysis and importance of different words can be interpreted in different ways. Some of the other concerns are:

fluorescent (colors of curtains, wall paints and electricity equipment for saving electricity consumption), areas (mobile free zones, organic food zone – for making it socially acceptable), training (they focused that training for all the employees are very essential), and performance.

Just to understand the sources of Twitter users, who are involved in in posting Tweets. A place location was recorded and a world map was created in the Twitter users. Most of the tweets found on the twitter were moderately positive. Positive sentiments indicate the welcome and acceptance step of the environmental policies of Grecotel.

5. Limitations of the study

The findings on environmental policies and practices are limited to the information available on their website (www.grecotel.com). Sometimes business demonstrates a different philosophy to implement and share with other parties. However, the results of sentiment analytics are verifying their concerns and philosophies are same for implementing and delivering. Another important limitation is that the information on websites are subject to change at any time. Also, a comparative analysis was not performed, due to limitation of the data.

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