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Article

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Annals of Tourism Research Empirical Insights

Provided in Cooperation with:

Elsevier

Suggested Citation: Dieu Thi Thanh Tran; Kiet Tuan Nguyen; Da Van Huynh; Stangl, Brigitte (2025) : Satisfaction with response: The impact on potential customers' perceived service quality and intent to stay, Annals of Tourism Research Empirical Insights, ISSN 2666-9579, Elsevier, Amsterdam, Vol. 6, Iss. 1, pp. 1-19,
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annale.2025.100179>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/337836>

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Satisfaction with response: The impact on potential customers' perceived service quality and intent to stay

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ARTICLE INFO

Editor Name: Dr. Lorenzo Masiero

Keywords:

Managerial responses

Online reviews

SERVQUAL

Intent to stay

Satisfaction with review responses

ABSTRACT

Limited research exists on the types of responses to online reviews that effectively meet the expectations of potential hotel guests, and whether their satisfaction with these responses leads to improved perceived service quality and intent to stay. This study examines the Vietnamese Mekong Delta as an emerging destination, investigating how different response approaches and content impact guest perceptions. It is the first to explore how potential guest satisfaction with hotel responses influences service quality perception and intent to stay. A 3 (response approaches namely full response, selective response and no response) x 2 (response content types namely customized response and rote response) between-subject experiment was conducted with 260 participants via Qualtrics.com. Using ANOVAs and PLS-SEM, results reveal that full, customized responses yield the highest satisfaction and perceived service quality. Satisfaction with responses positively impacts intent to stay directly and indirectly via perceived service quality. Given the increased attention to online review management strategies in the post-pandemic context, this study provides valuable insights and managerial recommendations for hoteliers in emerging destinations.

1. Introduction

Hospitality industry relies heavily on online information for marketing, communication, and customer engagement (Kim et al., 2015; Sakas et al., 2022). Beyond high-quality hotel websites, every online interaction - including guest reviews - shapes decision making, trust building, and brand reputation (Casaló et al., 2015; Nguyen & Coudounaris, 2015; Shaheen et al., 2020). Online reviews and managerial responses contribute Zero-Moment-of- Truth (ZMOT), presenting both challenges and opportunities in shaping service quality perceptions (Lecinski, 2011; Zeithaml et al., 2018). For customers without prior service experience, ZMOT shapes their impressions and perceived service quality (Lovell et al., 2012; Zeithaml et al., 2018). To leverage ZMOT effectively, hotels should devise strategies approaches to manage and respond to online reviews. Research emphasizes the importance of timely, professional, and personalized responses (Li et al., 2017; Liu et al., 2021; Min et al., 2015). Min et al. (2015) found that responses incorporating paraphrasing and empathy enhance potential guests'

satisfaction. However, whether such satisfaction translate into improved service quality perception and behavioral outcomes remains unexplored.

This research starts with a systematic literature review of online reviews and managerial responses, complementing Schuckert et al.'s review article (2015) by analyzing 17 articles published from 2014 onward. Prior studies highlighted the importance of review responses in enhancing hotel performance (Lui et al., 2018; Xie et al., 2014; Xie, Kwok, & Wang, 2017), satisfaction of complaining customer (Gu & Ye, 2014; Zhao et al., 2020), customer trust and concern (Sparks et al., 2016), perceived service quality, and online recommendation (Roy et al., 2020). However, there has been a debate about the optimal response strategy. Some researchers suggested focusing on negative online reviews rather than to positive online reviews (Wang et al., 2020; Wang & Chaudhry, 2018). Regarding response content, most researchers agreed that the responses should be specific and customized (Liu et al., 2021; Meng et al., 2018; Min et al., 2015; Piehler et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2020; Xie, So, & Wang, 2017; Zhang et al., 2021) while others

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annale.2025.100179>

Received 3 September 2024; Received in revised form 6 March 2025; Accepted 20 April 2025

Available online 26 April 2025

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implied that hoteliers should use customized responses only for negative online reviews (Wang et al., 2020). Industry perspectives further complicate the discussion, as scholars (Lui et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2020) argued against responding to all reviews, whereas platforms like Booking.com, Tripadvisor and TrustYou encourage it. These mixed findings underscore the need for more systematic research to reconcile these perspectives.

Travelers increasingly expect review responses, with 90 % considering it a sign of customer-oriented hotels (Brinza, 2023). However, responses faced challenges due to high review volumes, seasonal variations, resource constraints, staff shortages and turnover (Nguyen & Coudounaris, 2015). In 2023 only 62.5 % of online reviews received replies—leaving 37.5 % undressed (Shiji Group, 2024). This represents a missed opportunity, especially as the pandemic has intensified reliance on online reviews and concerns about safety and hygiene (Davras & Durgun, 2022; Pappas & Glyptou, 2021). Thoughtful responses can enhance trust in service quality, trigger intention to stay, and provide a competitive advantage (Lui et al., 2018; Sparks et al., 2016), particularly for hotels in emerging destinations seeking credibility (Marques et al., 2021). Moreover, effective review management boosts search engine optimization, increases visibility for lesser-known attractions (Nayak et al., 2023), and fosters community engagement and local business collaboration (Iglesias-sánchez & Jambrino-maldonado, 2019).

This study examines how guest satisfaction with online review responses impacts perceived service quality and intent to stay, particularly in emerging destinations. A3 (full response vs selective response vs no response) x 2 (customized response vs rote response) between-subject experiment was conducted with potential hotel guests worldwide. The study focuses on hotels in the Vietnamese Mekong Delta, a rapidly growing but under-digitalized destination (Huynh et al., 2025). In 2023, the region attracted nearly 45 million tourists, generating USD 1832 million (+ 216.9 % vs. 2021) through attractions such as Can Tho, Vinh Long, Cai Be, and Ben Tre, with over 3000 accommodations (VMD Tourism Association, 2022). However, the region lacks effective online review response strategies, making it suitable case for this study.

This study contributes to online review response management literature in two ways: (1) it examines how different response approaches and content influence potential customers' satisfaction with review responses and perceived service quality, and (2) it is among the first to explore the impact of satisfaction with review responses on service quality perception and intent to stay. Beyond theoretical contributions, the study offers practical guidelines for hoteliers; providing structured strategies to help marketing and general managers, who still handle reviews responses, delegate the task more effectively.

2. Literature review and hypotheses development

2.1. Managerial response

Following the literature review by Schuckert et al. (2015) our literature review (see Appendix 1) confirmed that academics have primarily researched two attributes of review response strategies, namely response approach (the selected strategy of whether to respond or not) (Gu & Ye, 2014; Li et al., 2017; Lui et al., 2018; Roy et al., 2020; Xie et al., 2014; Xie, Kwok, & Wang, 2017; Zhao et al., 2020) and response content (i.e., how to write the response) (Liu et al., 2021; Meng et al., 2018; Piehler et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2021).

2.1.1. Response approach

Lui et al. (2018) identified four review response approaches, namely No response (i.e., to never respond), Strategic customer orientation (respond to the most extreme reviews), Full response (respond to all) and No strategy (respond randomly). Their findings suggested while using a full response strategy signals the hotel's attention to all customers, it is not always the best choice. Instead, responses have the strongest positive impact when they address extreme reviews. Similarly,

Wang et al. (2020) found that while responding to all online reviews shows a customer-centric approach, it is not always the best option. As a result, firms with sufficient budget should respond to every negative online review using highly tailored responses, and selectively respond to positive online reviews, using low-tailored responses. For firms with limited budgets, responding to extreme negative online reviews using highly tailored responses is the optimal strategy.

2.1.2. Rote vs tailored response

Rote responses are characterized by standard content and repetitive phrases, often including generic acknowledgments or invitations for guests to give the hotel another opportunity (Liu et al., 2021; Wang & Chaudhry, 2018). Many hotel managers find rote responses fast and cost-effective while demonstrating the hoteliers' helpfulness so they heavily rely on rote responses in their communication (Li et al., 2017; Liu et al., 2021). Another reason for this common practice is the managerial perception that using standard responses demonstrates the hotel's consistent and professional attitude, concern, and service recovery measures (Gu & Ye, 2014; Liu et al., 2021). However, rote responses are considered redundant, lack empathy, and sometimes are not relevant (Liu et al., 2021; Zhang, Qiao, et al., 2020). Rote responses are also considered as low-quality information as they fail to address the "asymmetric information" phenomenon (i.e., potential customers' perception that they have not enough information and always want to collect more to reduce uncertainty/risks) and negatively impact review valence (Liu et al., 2021). In contrast, from the practical point of view, leading review platforms such as Booking.com and Tripadvisor.com, which possess more than 50 % of the global online review sources (ReviewPro, 2022) advocate for unique/personalized and sincere responses.

2.1.3. Effects of response approach and response content

Generally, managerial responses, encompassing both approaches and content types, impact hotel performance, subsequent review behaviors, and purchase intention. Firstly, research indicates that higher response volumes enhance hotel performance and higher RevPAR (Lui et al., 2018; Xie et al., 2014; Xie, Kwok, & Wang, 2017), though excessive reliance on generic responses can diminish it (Xie, So, & Wang, 2017). Secondly, response strategies in terms of approach and especially content, impact future review behaviors. Frequent, fast responses encourage continued customer engagement, whereas rote responses discourage customer engagement (Liu et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2021). Finally, the personalization of responses increase booking likelihood, whereas rote responses may weaken this effect (Piehler et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2020). Another key effect is reviewer satisfaction – review responses can impact the satisfaction of the original reviewer (Gu & Ye, 2014; Min et al., 2015; Zhao et al., 2020), yet its influence on prospective guests remains underexplored. Further research examining how managerial responses impact potential guests' satisfaction and booking decisions is needed.

2.2. Theoretical underpinnings

2.2.1. Expectancy-disconfirmation theory

According to expectancy-disconfirmation theory, customer satisfaction arises from comparing perceived service performance with pre-purchase expectations (Oliver, 1980; Yüksel & Yüksel, 2001). Guest reviews are a key factor in shaping these expectations (Lee & Kim, 2020; Mauri & Minazzi, 2013). In the context of online reviews, such reviews influence not only expectations about hotel services but also expectations regarding management responses (Zhang, Gao, & Zheng, 2020). Effective responses can therefore satisfy both review writers and review readers (Min et al., 2015). This suggests that different response strategies may either confirm or disconfirm review readers' expectations, leading to satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

2.2.2. Attribution theory

Attribution theory suggests that people infer the causes of events through an attributional process influenced by information, beliefs and motivation, (Folkes, 1988; Kelley & Michela, 1980). Attributions vary by three dimensions: locus of causality (internal vs. external), controllability (perceived controllability of the cause), and stability (perceived stability of the cause) (Folkes, 1988; Weiner, 1985). In the context of online reviews, attributions shape bystanders' support for negative reviews (Zhang & Weng, 2024), while managerial responses, especially customized ones, can shift attributions of locus and controllability (Chang et al., 2015). Responding to online reviews is a form of service recovery (Kapeš et al., 2022; Treviño & Morton, 2017), influencing perceptions of responsibility (locus) and recurrence likelihood (stability) (Swanson & Kelley, 2001). Beyond appeasing dissatisfied reviewers, effective responses can attract potential guests (Kapeš et al., 2022). Prior research indicates that personalized managerial responses enhance customer perceptions of firm commitment and controllability, leading to higher satisfaction and engagement (Sparks et al., 2016). In contrast, rote responses may be perceived as obligatory, leading potential customers to attribute them to a lack of active listening, potentially diminishing trust and reducing satisfaction (Min et al., 2015). In fact, rote responses may fail to provide the empathy or detailed information needed address customer concerns effectively (Liu et al., 2021). These attributions, in turn, may impact their perceived service quality and intent to stay.

2.3. Hypotheses development

2.3.1. Response approaches, response content types and satisfaction

From the expectancy-disconfirmation theory perspective, online reviews shape expectations, which, when mediated by disconfirmation, influence customer satisfaction (Picazo-Vela, 2009; Qazi et al., 2017). Brand managers should respond to the negative reviews to reassure readers of the company's trustworthiness (Picazo-Vela, 2009). Given that potential customers form varying expectations based on online reviews, hoteliers should actively respond to meet these expectations.

Min et al. (2015) were among the first to introduce the concept of satisfaction with responses, finding that responses with a paraphrase of complaints (enhancing personalization) are favored by prospective customers. However, this study focused on US. millennials and warrants comparison with other demographic segments. Additionally, response strategies should be examined across negative, positive and mixed reviews (Min et al., 2015). Addressing these gaps, our study proposes the following hypothesis.

H1. *There are differences in customer satisfaction with responses as a result of different combinations of response approach (i.e., full response vs selective response vs no response) and review response content type (i.e., customized response vs rote response).*

2.3.2. Response approaches, response content types and service quality

The SERVQUAL framework (Zeithaml et al., 1993) has been widely applied in hospitality and tourism (Saleh & Ryan, 2013), yet its use in online reviews contexts remains limited. Ahmad and Guzmán (2021) explored its application in restaurant reviews, revealing that negative reviews concerning tangibility, responsiveness, and empathy have a more detrimental effect on brand equity than those related to assurance and reliability. Service quality is a critical driver of brand equity and value (Bamert & Wehrli, 2005; Zameer et al., 2019) as consistently high-quality services foster positive perceptions, trust, and loyalty (Setó-Pamies, 2012). Prioritizing exceptional service, including effective online review responses, strengthens brand presence (Roy et al., 2020). From an attribution theory perspective, potential customers may attribute the efforts to customize responses to a high commitment to service quality. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H2. *There are differences in service quality as a result of different*

combinations of response approach (i.e., full response vs selective response vs no response) and review response content type (i.e., customized response vs rote response).

2.3.3. Satisfaction with responses and service quality

González et al. (2007) identified bidirectional causal relationships between service quality and satisfaction, with each influencing behavioral intentions. However, treating perceived quality as a dependent variable of satisfaction yield a better model fit. This study supports the view that satisfaction precedes perceived service quality, as satisfaction arises from an immediate reaction to a single service experience, whereas perceived quality develops through accumulative satisfaction over time (Lovell et al., 2012). This perspective aligns with prior research (e.g. Bitner, 1990; Bolton & Drew, 1991; Carman, 1990; González et al., 2007).

Given the transparency of online platforms, review responses can impact the satisfaction of both review writers and prospective customers (Gu & Ye, 2014). Responses serves as a form of service recovery (Ho, 2017), directly affecting perceived service quality (Gil et al., 2006). Moreover, online service recovery efforts shape perceptions among "observers", or potential customers (Huang & Ha, 2020). Based on these insights, we propose the following hypothesis:

H3. *Satisfaction with review responses has a positive impact on perceived service quality.*

2.3.4. Satisfaction with responses and intent to stay

Customer satisfaction is crucial for hoteliers because it drives behavioral intentions (Clemes et al., 2011; González et al., 2007; Ladhari, 2009). However, most studies focus on general satisfaction, overlooking the specific impact of satisfaction with responses. Effective managerial responses, such as customizing responses and involving senior staff-not only address negative reviews but also enhance customer engagement, brand experience and re-patronage intent (Islam et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2022). Personalized responses restore consumer satisfaction but also improve hotel evaluations among potential consumers (Jin et al., 2023). Hotel image and overall perception are key predictors of intent to stay and, in some cases, influence return intentions (Avant, 2013). Higher topic matching in managerial response enhances hotel ratings (Zhang, Qiao, et al., 2020), while ratings from major travel communities like TripAdvisor significantly enhance booking intentions (Casaló et al., 2015). Service recovery responses to negative reviews enhance hypothetical intent to stay (Meng et al., 2018), and while managerial responses combining an explanation with compensation positively influences purchase intentions (Piehler et al., 2019). Public responses may shape potential customers' purchasing intentions (Zhang, Gao, & Zheng, 2020). Based on these findings, we propose the hypothesis:

H4. *Satisfaction with review responses has a positive impact on intent to stay.*

2.3.5. Perceived service quality and intent to stay

Service quality impacts behavioral intentions both directly and indirectly through satisfaction (Clemes et al., 2011; Ladhari, 2009; Olorunniwo et al., 2006). In online environments, perceived service quality drives purchase intention through trust (Qalati et al., 2021). In hotel sharing economy models (i.e. Airbnb), service quality positively influences behavioral intention via satisfaction (Lin et al., 2011). Additionally, perceived service quality has a significant positive relationship with behavioral intentions (Kuruuzum & Deniz, 2010; Raza, Nabeel, Awan, & Khuram, 2012). Building on prior research (Alexandris et al., 2002; Ladhari, 2009), this study examines the impact of perceived service quality on intent to stay.

H5. *Perceived service quality has a positive impact on intent to stay.*

In summary, the conceptual framework of the present study is

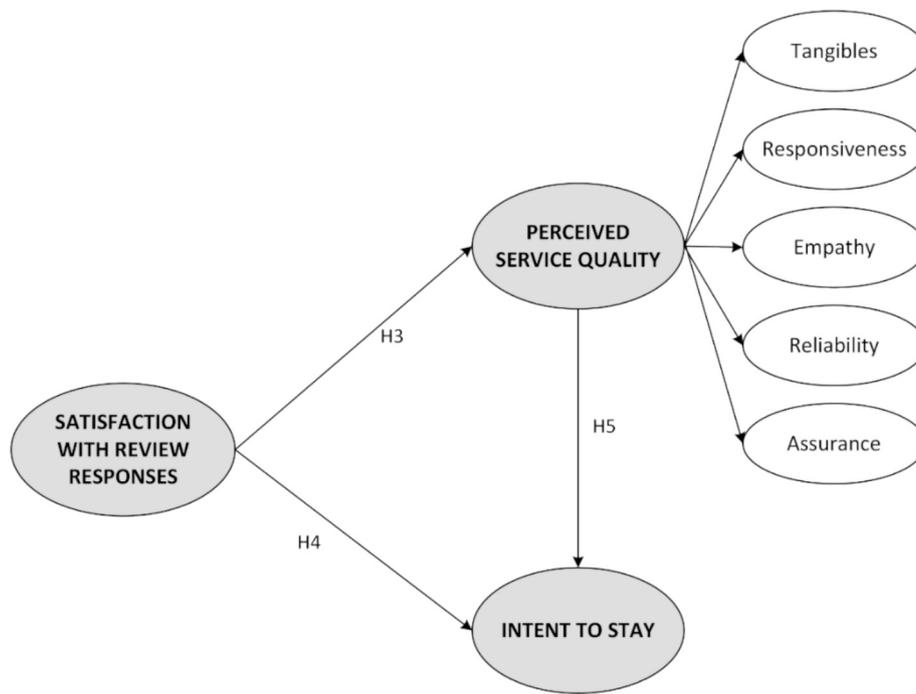


Fig. 1. The conceptual framework.

Note: Response approaches are full response vs selective response vs no response and content are either customized response or rote responses. The design of the combinations is presented in the methodology chapter.

Table 1
Overview of the five scenarios.

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4	Scenario 5
15 online reviews, of which 10 are positive (+) and 5 negative (-).	3 (2+, 1-) Tangibles dimension 3 (2+, 1-) Reliability dimension 3 (2+, 1-) Responsiveness dimension 3 (2+, 1-) Assurance dimension 3 (2+, 1-) Empathy dimension				
Response strategy	No response at all	Selective response to only negative online reviews	Selective response to only negative online reviews	Response to all online reviews	Response to all online reviews
Response content (customized or rote)		Rote response	Customized response	Rote response	Customized response

illustrated in Fig. 1.

3. Methodology

3.1. Stimulus materials

To develop the scenarios, we selected real online reviews and responses from a hotel in the Vietnamese Mekong Delta, that actively engages with reviews on Booking.com. At the time of December 27, 2022, the hotel has received 368 reviews, averaging a rating of 8.4 (very good). While the hotel responded to nearly all reviews, its responses were largely rote responses. To minimize potential confounding effects from prior brand familiarity, we used a pseudonym for the hotel, (Wang et al., 2020). The experiment included 10 positive (+) and 5 negative (-) reviews, aligning with Melián-González et al.'s findings (2013) that 66.67 % of reviews are positive and following Wang et al.'s design (2020) of 12 positive and 4 negative reviews.

To ensure realism, we consulted three managers from four to five-star hotels. They confirmed that reviews' authenticity and suggested refinements, including extending response length beyond the reviews, restating issues and clarifying resolutions.

Table 1 outlines the five experimental scenarios. Scenario 1 excluded all responses. Scenario 2 retained rote responses for only five negative reviews. In scenario 3 five responses were rephrased to customize them

to address negative reviews. Scenario 4 mirrored the hotel's original approach. Scenario 5 replaced all responses with customized ones. Fig. 2 illustrates the online reviews and responses.

3.2. Pre-study: Manipulation check

A pre-study was conducted to ensure that participants could distinguish between customized and rote responses and to assess the realism of the review and responses. Using Qualtrics.com, an online questionnaire was sent to 55 potential guests from the Vietnamese Mekong Delta, asking them to identify the customized responses (compared to the rote responses). Results showed that 75.4–88.4 % correctly identified them. When asking about the realism of the responses, 89.9 % perceived them realistic. Therefore, the manipulation of rote responses and customized responses was valid.

3.3. Questionnaire design

We conducted a five-part online questionnaire incorporated the pre-tested scenarios in a 3 (full response vs. selective response vs. no response) x 2 (customized response vs. rote response) between-subject designed experiment. The first part comprised a qualifying question to confirm participants' experience searching for accommodations on OTA websites, followed by questions regarding their online review reading

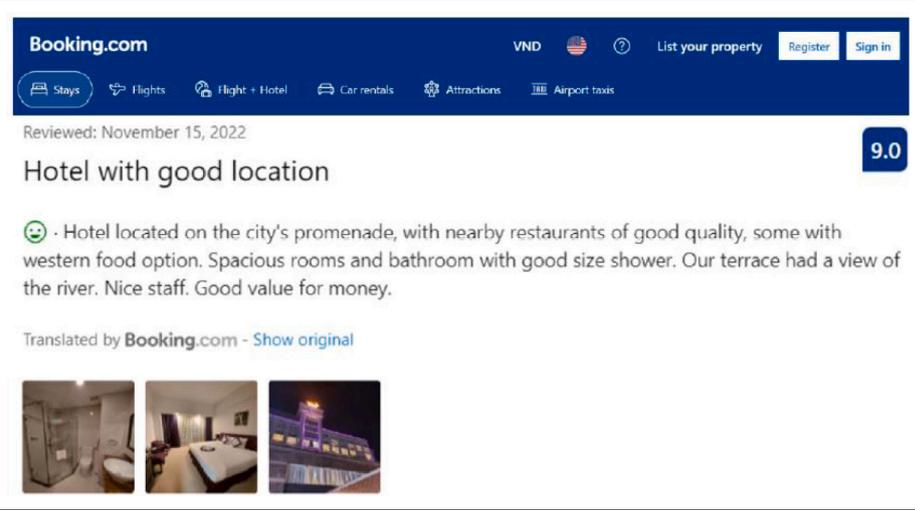
<p><i>Review 1</i></p>	 <p>Reviewed: November 15, 2022</p> <p>Hotel with good location 9.0</p> <p>😊 · Hotel located on the city's promenade, with nearby restaurants of good quality, some with western food option. Spacious rooms and bathroom with good size shower. Our terrace had a view of the river. Nice staff. Good value for money.</p> <p>Translated by Booking.com - Show original</p>
<p><i>Rote response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mr. Juan Francisco Arroyo Guzman, Warmest greetings from Thank you for your comments posted on Booking.com following your recent stay at our hotel. We sincerely appreciate that you spent your time sharing your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back soon to Can Tho city. Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Customized response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mr. Juan Francisco Arroyo Guzman, Thank you for your comment about the location, food, amenities and the staff of Hotel X following your recent stay. We are glad that you had great stay at our hotel. On behalf of staffs, I sincerely appreciate that you spent your time sharing your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back soon to Can Tho city. Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Review 2</i></p>	 <p>Reviewed: November 21, 2022</p> <p>good location but (current) too loud 5.0</p> <p>😊 · good view of the river. Walking distance to restaurants and boat drop for the floating market. Staff at reception helped us with recommendations on where to go and on what to do</p> <p>😞 · it was very loud. the windows are not soundproof. you can hear loud music until late at night. in addition, the air conditioning + fridge in the room is loud. and it is being renovated really loudly in the hotel, which we were not aware of in advance.</p>
<p><i>Rote response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mr/Ms. Doreen, Warmest greetings from Thank you for your comments posted on Booking.com following your recent stay at our hotel. Besides, we truly apologize for any inconvenience when you stayed here. We sincerely appreciate that you spent your time sharing your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back soon in Can Tho city. Yours sincerely,</p>

Fig. 2. The review and responses in five scenarios.

<p><i>Customized response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mr/Ms. Doreen,</p> <p>Thank you for your comments about our hotel view, location and staff posted on Booking.com following your recent stay. Besides, we truly apologize for your imperfect experience relating to the sound and it's apparent that we did not excel in this case. I did work with the operation team to ensure the renovation completion, and guarantee to bring distinguished guests with comfortable experience during their stay. On behalf of our team, I sincerely thank you for your feedback and hope to give you greater experience if you give us another chance.</p> <p>We are looking forward to welcoming you back soon in Can Tho city.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Review 3</i></p>	<p>Reviewed: May 4, 2020 10</p> <p>perfect stay I will return with pleasure.</p> <p>😊 · Hotel ideally located close to everything with a beautiful view of the river. Helpful and competent staff. Very good breakfast. Within walking distance. Mini supermarket close to the hotel.</p> <p>😞 · more sunbeds at the pool.</p> <p>Translated by Booking.com - Show original</p> 
<p><i>Rote response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mr and Mrs. Jean-Pierre,</p> <p>Warmest greetings from hotel !</p> <p>Thank you for your comment following your recent stay at our hotel.</p> <p>Besides, we truly apologize about your inconvenience when you stayed here. Such feedback like yours motivates us to strive to bring our guests wonderful experiences and excellent services.</p> <p>We sincerely appreciate that you spent your time to share your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back soon in Can Tho city.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Customized response</i></p>	<p>Dear Mr and Mrs. Jean-Pierre,</p> <p>Thank you for your comment on location, breakfast and our staff following your recent stay at Hotel X.</p> <p>Besides, we would like to acknowledge your suggestion on more sunbeds and we will try under the right conditions to better serve our distinguished guests. Your feedback is our motivation to improve and bring a great accommodation experience with excellent service to our guests.</p> <p>On behalf of staff team, I would like to sincerely thank you for sharing your thought about Hotel X and are honored to welcome you on your next trip in Can Tho city.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Review 4</i></p>	<p>🌟 Reviewers' choice Reviewed: November 17, 2022 10</p> <p>Exceptional</p> <p>😊 · All of the staff were super kind and helpful. They also speak English pretty well, which was a big advantage compared to the place we stayed in the nights before. We felt very welcome the moment we arrived. The hotel is in top-notch condition and we regretted that we had to miss out on the extensive breakfast because our tour to the floating markets left at 6AM.</p> <p>😞 · Cannot think of anything, honestly.</p>

Fig. 2. (continued).

<p><i>Rote response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mr. Yurrit Avonds, Warmest greetings from Thank you for your comments posted on Booking.com following your recent stay at our hotel. We sincerely appreciate that you spent your time sharing your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back soon to Can Tho city. Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Customized response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mr. Yurrit Avonds,</p> <p>Thank you for your comments about our staff following your recent stay at Hotel X. I have forwarded your feedback to the service team and try best to bring excellent experiences for distinguished guests. On behalf of staffs, I sincerely appreciate that you spent your time sharing your wonderful feedback about Hotel X and look forward to welcoming you back soon to Can Tho city.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Review 5</i></p>	<p>Reviewed: May 2, 2022</p> <p>Fair 5.0</p> <p>☹️ · We requested the shuttle and confirmed the price and time, but upon arrival we could not find anyone, at our complaints at the reception we were told that they had no availability and, without warning us, they left us. breakfast is only with asian foods, no sweets poor juices and undrinkable coffee. Non-existent cleaning.</p>
<p><i>Rote response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mr. Giovanni, Warmest greeting from _____ ! Thank you for your comments posted on Booking.com following your recent stay at our hotel. Besides we truly apologize for your inconvenience when you stayed here. We sincerely appreciate that you spent your time to share your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back soon in Can Tho city. Yours sincerely.</p>
<p><i>Customized response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mr. Giovanni, Thank you for your comments about the hotel's shuttle service and breakfast. We're sorry that your experience was not good during your stay. I did worked with staff and restaurant to ensure a better experience for distinguished guests during their stay. On behalf of the staff, I sincerely thank you for your comments and look forward to providing you with a more wonderful stay if you give us another chance. We look forward to welcoming you back to Can Tho city soon. Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Review 6</i></p>	<p>Reviewed: March 30, 2023</p> <p>excellent stay 10</p> <p>😊 · very attentive and pleasant staff</p> <p>☹️ · Medium quality restaurant.</p>

Fig. 2. (continued).

and writing behavior. In the third part, respondents were randomly assigned to one of five scenarios. The experiment was followed by measurement scales for service quality (Parasuraman et al. (1988) and

Wong et al. (1999), including Tangibles (9 items) Reliability (6 items), Responsiveness (4 items), Assurance (6 items), and Empathy (5 items), satisfaction with online review responses (3 items; Patterson et al.

<p><i>Rote response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mr. Bernard Ramos, Warmest greetings from [redacted] ! Thank you for your comments posted on Booking.com following your recent stay at our hotel. We sincerely appreciate that you spent your time sharing your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back soon to Can Tho city. Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Customized response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mr. Bernard, Thank you for your comments about the service staff following your recent stay at Hotel X. Besides, we would like to acknowledge your comments about the restaurant and will try to do better under suitable conditions. I have shared your comments with the team and strive more to ensure a wonderful stay for distinguished guests at our hotel. On behalf of the entire staff, I would like to thank you for sharing your feedback about the hotel and we look forward to welcoming you back in Can Tho soon. Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Review 7</i></p>	<p>Reviewers' choice Reviewed: August 22, 2022 9.0</p> <p>Great hotel</p> <p>😊 · Beautiful facility, excellent breakfast and very kind staff. We decided to leave a day early because we had finished our cantho tour and was refunded the night we booked on booking. Very kind!</p> <p>😞 · A bit of a sewer smell in the bathroom. But clean. Some lighting is missing in the room</p>
<p><i>Rote response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Ms.Priscilla, Warmest greetings from hotel [redacted] ! Thank you for your comment following your recent stay at our hotel. Besides, we truly apologize about your inconvenience when you stayed here. Such feedback like yours motivates us to strive to bring our guests wonderful experiences and excellent services. We sincerely appreciate that you spent your time to share your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back soon in Can Tho city. Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Customized response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Ms.Priscilla, Thank you for your compliments on our architecture, breakfast and service staff following your stay at Hotel X. Besides, we would like to acknowledge your comments about the bathroom and lighting system and will try harder to bring distinguished guests with more excellent experiences. On behalf of the entire staff, I would like to thank you for taking the time to share your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back to Can Tho City soon. Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Review 8</i></p>	<p>Reviewed: February 9, 2020 10</p> <p>Exceptional</p> <p>😊 · Everything is exceptional: the reception, the location, the room, the pool, the breakfast and especially the staff. We were able to keep the room until 1pm and then enjoy the pool until we left for the night bus.</p> <p>😞 · Nothing.</p>

Fig. 2. (continued).

<p><i>Rote response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mr Jean-Paul Lapeyre,</p> <p>Thank you for your comments posted on Booking.com following your recent stay at our hotel. Such feedback like yours motivates us to strive to bring our guests wonderful vacation experiences and excellent services. We sincerely appreciate that you spent your time to share your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back soon in Can Tho city.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Customized response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mr. Jean-Paul Lapeyre,</p> <p>Thank you for your comments regarding the location, swimming pool, breakfast and service staff following your stay at Hotel X. I have shared your compliment with the staff and take it as a our motivation to bring distinguished guests with wonderful experiences with perfect services. On behalf of the staff, I would like to thank you for sharing your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back to Can Tho soon.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Review 9</i></p>	<p>Reviewed: March 28, 2022 1.0</p> <p>Too bad</p> <p>Liked · Nothing</p> <p>Disliked · Old room, smelly carpet, old sheets. Can't imagine this is a 4* hotel. Breakfast was very bad, the food was half-cooked, the guests were noisy and did not wear masks, but the cafeteria staff just stood around talking and staring when the guests ate very rudely, there was no one. out to remind noisy guests. The hotel has a Karaoke service that is not soundproof, sings all night, and then still sings loudly to disturb the rooms, guests have to ask the new staff to remind guests to sing (although at first it was still said that the hotel has now guests' party, said it would stop singing at 10:30pm. It's incomprehensible).</p>
<p><i>Rote response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mrs,</p> <p>Warmest greeting from</p> <p>Thank you for your comments posted on Booking.com following your recent stay at our hotel. Besides we truly apologize about your inconvenient when you stayed here. Such feedbacks like yours motivate us to strive to bring our guests wonderful vacation experiences and excellent services. We sincerely appreciate that you spent your time to share your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back soon in Can Tho city.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Customized response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Ms.Thi,</p> <p>Thank you for your comments about the services you experienced during your stay at the hotel. We are sorry for the imperfect experience in your vacation. I have worked with all relevant departments to ensure the improvement and better service for distinguished guests during their stay at the hotel. On behalf of the staff, I would like to acknowledge your feedback and we hope to provide you with a greater hotel experience if you can give us another chance.</p> <p>We look forward to welcoming you back to Can Tho city soon.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p>

Fig. 2. (continued).

<p><i>Review 10</i></p>	<p>Reviewed: November 1, 2022</p> <p>wouldn't go there again 5.0</p> <p>😊 · ?</p> <p>☹️ · Photos don't correspond with reality. Old style, shabby look.</p>
<p><i>Rote response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Ms. Tatjana Figl-Wolfsberger, Warmest greetings from Thank you for your comments posted on Booking.com following your recent stay at our hotel. Besides, we truly apologize for any inconvenience when you stayed here. We sincerely appreciate that you spent your time sharing your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back soon in Can Tho city. Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Customized response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Ms. Tatjana Figl-Wolfsberger, Thank you for your review of our hotel services. We apologize that you did not experience your expected standard of service at the hotel. I have worked with the media officer and would really appreciate if you could provide us with more information about the photos via email or inbox to our fanpage. We really hope that you give us another chance. We look forward to welcoming you back to Can Tho city soon. Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Review 11</i></p>	<p>★ Reviewers' choice Reviewed: April 9, 2023 10</p> <p>Great stay at excellent location</p> <p>😊 · Everything was fantastic. from breakfast (very extensive), to rooms (large and squat clean), regular excursions (flawless), transport to next hotel, etc. and all by a great and very helpful staff.</p> <p>☹️ · I can't think of anything.</p>
<p><i>Rote response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mr. Martin, Warmest greetings from Thank you for your comments posted on Booking.com following your recent stay at our hotel. Besides, we truly apologize for any inconvenience when you stayed here. We sincerely appreciate that you spent your time sharing your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back soon in Can Tho city. Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Customized response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mr. Martin, Thank you for your comment about our breakfast, facilities, staff and service quality after your stay at Hotel X. I have shared your compliments with the entire staff and I think that's the motivation for us to bring better experiences to distinguished guests. On behalf of the staff, I would like to thank you for sharing your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back to Can Tho soon. Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Review 12</i></p>	<p>Reviewed: March 18, 2021 10</p> <p>Wonderful stay!</p> <p>😊 · The hotel is exceptional. Service, wonderful river view room. Great food. My second stay at the hotel. So nice to be remembered! Wonderful hotel staff! I'll be back.</p>

Fig. 2. (continued).

<p><i>Rote response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response: Dear Mr.Michael, Warmest greeting from Thank you for your comments posted on Booking.com following your recent stay at our hotel. We sincerely appreciate that you spent your time to share your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back soon in Can Tho city. Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Customized response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response: Dear Mr. Michael, Thank you for trusting and using the service at Hotel X. We sincerely thank you for your review of our hotel view, food and service staff following your stay. I have shared your compliment with the entire staff and I think it is the motivation for us to bring great experiences to our distinguished guests. On behalf of the staff, I would like to thank you for sharing your wonderful feedback about Hotel X and look forward to welcoming you back to Can Tho soon. Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Review 13</i></p>	<p>Reviewed: October 26, 2022 10 Go to this hotel with your eyes closed 😊 · The quality of the service and the exceptional attention of all the staff. 😐 · I liked everything</p>
<p><i>Rote response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response: Dear Mr. Denis, Warmest greetings from Thank you for your comments posted on Booking.com following your recent stay at our hotel. We sincerely appreciate that you spent your time sharing your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back soon to Can Tho city. Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Customized response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response: Dear Mr Denis, Thank you for your review of our service staff following your recent stay at Hotel X. I have shared your compliments to the staff and strive to deliver a greater service experience with excellent service to distinguished guests. On behalf of the staff, I would like to thank you for to sharing wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back to Can Tho soon. Best regards,</p>
<p><i>Review 14</i></p>	<p>Reviewed: March 5, 2020 10 Exceeding our high expectations 😊 · Very attentive customer service staff. Could not be better. Well located. 😐 · Nothing</p>
<p><i>Rote response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response: Dear Valued guest, Warmest greetings from hotel ! Thank you for your comment following your recent stay at our hotel. We sincerely appreciate that you spent your time to share your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back soon in Can Tho city. Yours sincerely,</p>

Fig. 2. (continued).

<p><i>Customized response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear distinguished customer,</p> <p>Thank you for your comments following your recent stay at hotel X, especially when you mention the hotel location and our staff. Your feedback is the motivation for us to strive to bring guests great experiences with excellent services.</p> <p>We sincerely thank you for sharing your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back to Can Tho soon.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Review 15</i></p>	<p>Reviewed: March 31, 2022</p> <p>Too disappointed 2.0</p> <p>😊 · Relatively good food</p> <p>😞 · The front desk staff lacks professionalism</p>
<p><i>Rote response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mrs, Warmest greeting from</p> <p>Thank you for your comments posted on Booking.com following your recent stay at our hotel. Besides we truly apologize about your inconvenient when you stayed here. Such feedbacks like yours motivate us to strive to bring our guests wonderful vacation experiences and excellent services.</p> <p>We sincerely appreciate that you spent your time to share your wonderful feedback about our hotel and look forward to welcoming you back soon in Can Tho city.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p>
<p><i>Customized response</i></p>	<p>Hotel response:</p> <p>Dear Mr. Hung,</p> <p>Thank you for your comment about the quality of hotel staff service during your stay. In addition, we are sorry for your not-so-good experience during your stay. I have worked with the staff and ensure to improve for better performance. On behalf of the staff, I would like to acknowledge your comments and look forward to providing you with a great hotel experience if you can give us another chance.</p> <p>We sincerely thank you for sharing your feedback on our hotel's food and look forward to welcoming you back to Can Tho soon.</p> <p>Best regards,</p>

Fig. 2. (continued).

(2006)), and intention to stay (3 items, Meng et al. (2018); Hu et al. (2009)). The final section comprised an attention check and demographics (i.e., age, location, gender, income, level of education, employment, and marital status). See Appendix 3.

3.4. Data collection and analysis

The pre-tested survey was distributed globally via Reddit groups (r/booking, r/Vietnam, r/takemysurvey), an cost-effective platform for high-quality data (Jannik & Lane, 2017; Medvedev et al., 2019). Participants were offered a 2.0 USD to ensure commitment (Gajic et al., 2012; Vashistha et al., 2015). Out of the 299 fully completed questionnaires, 260 were useable after data cleaning.

Data analysis included ANOVAs and Chi-Square tests to examine differences between the five groups. Reliability and validity were assessed using indices and thresholds recommended by Hair et al. (2019) in the Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM).

4. Results

4.1. Sample description

Each group comprised 50 to 54 respondents of which roughly 43 % were female and 57 % male. The average age is 29.53 (STD = 7.735, max = 55, min = 18). Overall, the monthly income ranges from 600 USD to below 800 USD (14.2 %); from 800 USD and above (18.5 %); below 200 USD (18.8 %); from 200 USD to below 400 USD (23.8 %); and 400 to under 600 USD (24.6 %). Most respondents hold a Bachelor' degree or above (89.2 %) working full-time (68.5 %). The majority are married (43.8 %) or were never married (42.7 %). Most respondents are from Vietnam (63.5 %) and the United States of America (28.1 %). A comparison of demographics and behavioral variables shows that there are no group differences (see Appendix 2).

Table 2
ANOVA results on outcomes between scenario groups.

		Mean Difference	Sig. of differences of all scenarios	Sig. of differences of each pair
SAT	Scenario 1-Scenario 5	-1.06679*	<0.001	<0.001
	Scenario 2-Scenario 3	-0.65196*		0.007
	Scenario 2-Scenario 4	-0.47840*		0.044
	Scenario 2-Scenario 5	-1.26333*		<0.001
	Scenario 3-Scenario 5	-0.61137*		0.012
SERVQUAL	Scenario 1-Scenario 5	-0.37627*	0.36	0.038
	Scenario 2-Scenario 3	-0.35690*		0.048
	Scenario 2-Scenario 5	-0.58196*		0.001

4.2. Differences in satisfaction and service quality across response configurations

To get first insights, we wanted to understand if potential customers answered differently to satisfaction and service quality depending on which response content and approach configuration they got. The ANOVA results with a post hoc Least Significant difference (LSD) test presented in Table 2 show that there are differences between all and every pairs of scenario (*p*-values ranging from <0.001 to 0.048) for all two concepts.

Considering the mean differences between the scenarios presented in Table 2 results show scenario 5 results in the highest outcome for both potential customer' satisfaction with responses and service quality. In addition, scenario 3 results in higher potential customers' satisfaction and SERVQUAL compared to scenario 2. For SERVQUAL, scenario 4 leads to better results compared to scenario 2. Thus, H1 and H2 are all confirmed.

4.3. Model analysis

A two stage approach was applied to analyze perceived service quality (Becker et al., 2012). First, latent scores for each dimension of service quality (tangibles, responsiveness, empathy, reliability and assurance) were extracted to low-order constructs. These scores were then used to construct the high-order construct of service quality.

Regarding the evaluation of the measurement model, all Cronbach's Alpha (0.896- > 0.915) and Composite Reliability (0.936 - > 0.940) were higher than the threshold of 0.7, indicating a good level of scale

Table 3
Construct reliability and validity.

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted (AVE)
INTENT TO STAY	0.897	0.936	0.829
SATISFACTION	0.904	0.940	0.839
SERVQUAL	0.915	0.937	0.747

Table 4
Measurement model test results: Discriminant validity.

	Fornell-Lacker Criterion			Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio	
	INTENT TO STAY	SATISFACTION	SERVQUAL	INTENT TO STAY	SATISFACTION
INTENT TO STAY	0.910				
SATISFACTION	0.759	0.916		0.842	
SERVQUAL	0.777	0.684	0.865	0.856	0.749

reliability (Hair et al., 2019). All variables had a variance inflation factor (VIF) of less than 5.0 (range: 2.193–3.538), guaranteeing a low probability of multicollinearity (Hair et al., 2019). Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all three factors ranged from 0.747 to 0.839, higher than 0.5 which shows convergent validity (Hair et al., 2019) (See Table 3).

In terms of discriminant validity (Table 4), the values of the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT) were satisfactory given a threshold of 0.85 (Hair et al., 2019). Also, the square root of the AVE values of all constructs was higher than the inter-structure correlations, indicating discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

In terms of the structural model, the values of R-Square of intent to stay and SERVQUAL are 0.701 and 0.468, respectively, estimating that the model had a good degree of interpretation of those 2 constructs. The model's SRMR value is 0.044 which is less than the threshold of 0.08, and the NFI is 0.904 indicating a good fit of the model (Hair et al., 2019).

Satisfaction with review responses significantly influences SERVQUAL ($\beta = 0.684, p < 0.001$) and intent to stay ($\beta = 0.484, p < 0.001$). SERVQUAL has a positive impact on intent to stay ($\beta = 0.428, p < 0.001$). SERVQUAL also mediates the relationship between satisfaction with responses and intent to stay ($\beta = 0.331, p < 0.001$). Considering f-square shows that the impacts of the model are at a medium level (satisfaction with review response on intent to stay, f-square = 0.326) or at a great level (satisfaction- > SERVQUAL, f-square = 0.878 and SERVQUAL- > intent to stay, f-square = 0.416). Therefore, hypotheses H3, H4, and H5 are confirmed.

5. Discussion

5.1. Satisfaction with responses, perceived service quality and response attributes

Managerial responses can influence review behaviors, with Chevalier et al. (2018) suggesting they may trigger more negative reviews by making because potential reviewers feel their voice matters. Wang et al. (2020) found that work better for positive reviews to avoid skepticism, while negative reviews require full, customized responses. However, our study indicates that responding to all reviews with customized responses maximizes potential customer satisfaction and perceived service quality. This discrepancy may arise because prior studies analyzed positive and negative reviews separately (Chevalier et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2020), whereas our study considers the realistic scenario where hotels receive both. Supporting Proserpio and Zervas (2017), our findings reinforces the benefits of managerial responses, and align with Jin et al. (2023), confirming that increased customization enhance perceived helpfulness.

Regarding satisfaction with responses, our study affirms that potential customers are more satisfied with customized responses for all reviews. Supporting prior studies, we confirm that increasing enhance response frequency improve of hotel performance (Lui et al., 2018; Xie et al., 2014; Xie, Kwok, & Wang, 2017), satisfaction of complaining customer (Gu & Ye, 2014; Zhao et al., 2020), customer trust and concern (Sparks et al., 2016), perceived service quality, and online recommendation (Roy et al., 2020). Regarding response content, our results align with research advocating specific, customized responses (Liu et al., 2021; Meng et al., 2018; Min et al., 2015; Piehler et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2020; Xie, So, & Wang, 2017; Zhang et al., 2021). Extending Roy et al. (2020), we demonstrate that effective responses not only moderate the

relationship between eWOM and perceived service quality but also directly enhance service quality perceptions.

5.2. From satisfaction with response to perceived service quality and intent to stay

Our findings indicate that well-executed response strategy can enhance potential customers' perception of service quality and intent to stay. Responding to online reviews is a crucial service recovery mechanism (Ho, 2017), not only addressing guest feedback but also shaping public perceptions (Huang & Ha, 2020). Given the transparency of online communication, managerial responses influence both existing customers and potential customers (Gu & Ye, 2014).

Beyond the known relationship between service satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Clemes et al., 2011; González et al., 2007; Ladhari, 2009), our study extends this understanding by demonstrating that satisfaction with managerial responses also significantly increase intent to stay. Applying attribution theory, we support Sparks et al. (2016) in showing that customized responses signal higher controllability and commitment, leading potential customers to attribute higher service quality to the hotel. In contrast, rote responses may be perceived as obligatory, reducing trust and perceived quality (Liu et al., 2021; Min et al., 2015). By shifting attributions from passive obligation to active service commitment, customized responses foster stronger perceptions of service quality and booking intent.

6. Conclusion

6.1. Theoretical contribution

Our study contributes to the literature on review responses in three ways. Firstly, it extends the application of expectancy disconfirmation theory to online reviews and managerial responses. While prior studies (Picazo-Vela, 2009; Qazi et al., 2017) examined how online reviews shape customer expectations and post-service satisfaction, we demonstrate that managerial responses can confirm or disconfirm review readers' expectations, influencing their satisfaction or dissatisfaction. This highlights the need for tailored responses and broadens the application of expectancy disconfirmation theory in online review management.

Second, we establish the impact of satisfaction with responses on perceived service quality and on intent to stay. Expanding on Min et al. (2015), our study is among the first to confirm that satisfaction with responses significantly influences these outcomes. This aligns with prior studies (Lui et al., 2018; Xie et al., 2014; Xie, Kwok, & Wang, 2017) and industry guidelines (Booking.com, Tripadvisor and TrustYou), empathizing the critical role of agile engagement in review management.

Finally, our study explores managerial responses in emerging destinations where hotels often struggle with credibility, recognition and reputation (Marques et al., 2021). Professional responses to online reviews can help alleviate skepticism about safety, infrastructure, and overall experience (Chittiprou et al., 2021) while enhancing competitive advantage (Iglesias-sánchez & Jambrino-maldonado, 2019). Our findings provide practical insights for hotel managers in emerging destinations to craft effective response strategies and serve as a foundation for future comparative studies across destinations at different stages of development.

6.2. Practical implication

In practice, companies often prioritize responding to experienced reviewers' negative reviews (i.e., 1–3 stars) over their positive ones (4–5 stars); particularly those addressing fixed attributes or covering multiple topics (Wu et al., 2023). Our findings suggest that hoteliers should reconsider this approach, as managerial responses influence various online audiences. Responding to all reviews with customized responses yields the highest satisfaction among potential customers and enhances perceived service quality. Satisfied potential customers are more likely to perceive higher service quality and show greater intent to stay, emphasizing the importance of managerial responses. This aligns with platforms like Booking.com and Tripadvisor, which advocate for through engagement with online reviews.

Based on our findings, hotel managers can adopt response strategies tailored to the resource levels. For hotels with sufficient budget, responding to all reviews using customized responses is most effective. Hotels with limited resources should selectively respond to negative reviews, ensuring customized responses over rote ones. Even with minimal capacity, responding to all reviews with rote responses is more effective than selectively addressing negative reviews generically.

6.3. Limitation and direction for future research

Future research should examine actual behaviors - rather than scenario-based - to add value to the literature. Another research direction is to integrate the SERVQUAL dimensions (Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Empathy, and Assurance) into the response attributes. For example, which combination of response approach and content yields a better outcome in terms of a specific service quality dimension? Next, future research can be directed to further examine (for example quantifying) the impacts of response attributes on satisfaction with responses. By doing so, we can streamline the antecedents of satisfaction with responses and its various outcomes.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Dieu Thi Tran: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Validation, Software, Methodology, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Kiet Tuan Nguyen:** Writing – original draft, Supervision, Methodology, Formal analysis, Conceptualization. **Da Van Huynh:** Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Conceptualization. **Brigitte Stangl:** Writing – review & editing, Conceptualization.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Acknowledgement

This research is funded by Vietnam National Foundation for Science and Technology Development (NAFOSTED) under grant number 504.01-2023.16. This research is funded by University of Economics Ho Chi Minh City (UEH), Vietnam.

Appendix A. Appendix

Appendix 1

Overview of publications about OR response management since 2014.

Author (Year)	Research focus	Dependent variables	Main conclusion
Gu and Ye (2014)	RA	Satisfaction of complaining customer	Management responses are important to low satisfied guests but little influence on the others Management responses can decrease future satisfaction of complaining customers who observe but do not receive responses.
Xie et al. (2014)	RA	Hotel performance	The volume of management responses are positively correlated with hotel performance.
Min et al. (2015)	RC and RA to negative OR	Customer satisfaction with response to review	The responses mentioning the complaint are more individualized and less generic and more favored.
Sparks et al. (2016)	RA and content	Customer inferences of trust and concern	The presence of management response inferences that the potential customers' inference about trustworthiness and customer care of the company. Timely responses with a human voice bring more favorable inferences.
Li et al. (2017)	RA	Review rating, review volume, the volume of helpful votes, hotel popularity rank.	Travelers' engagement in terms of the number of reviews, average valence, helpfulness votes and popular ranking is enhanced following frequent and faster Responses.
Xie, So, and Wang (2017)	RC and approach	Hotel financial performance	Timely and lengthy responses bring higher future financial performance . Responses that simply repeat topics in the online review lowers future financial performance .
Xie, Kwok, and Wang (2017)	RA	Hotel performance (RevPAR)	More managerial responses lead to higher hotels' RevPAR .
Meng et al. (2018)	RC to negative online comments	Hotel image, customer attitude, Intent to stay	Responses having a service recovery to negative online reviews improve hotel image, attitude, and intent to stay .
Wang and Chaudhry (2018)	RA and content	Subsequent reviewer ratings.	Manager responses to negative reviews positively impact subsequent opinion (MR-N) but manger responses to positive reviews (MR-P) bring negative impact. Tailored manager responses yield positive (negative) impact of MR-N (MR-P) on subsequent opinion.
Lui et al. (2018)	RA	Hotels' competitive performance	The volume of responses significantly influences competitive performance . These effects are stronger with responses addressing extreme reviews .
Piehler et al. (2019)	RC	Customers' purchase intentions	Responses that include both an explanation and compensation is most effective. Lacking both elements bring the least effective effect.
Zhao et al. (2020)	RA	Satisfaction of complaining customer	Management Responses enhance customers' satisfaction in additional reviews. The effects are mainly due to the management responses to non-positive initial reviews
Roy et al. (2020)	RA	Perceived service quality, online recommendation	eWOM response moderates the effect of eWOM stimulus on perceived service quality and online recommendation .
Wang et al. (2020)	RC and RA	Consumers' consumption likelihood	Firms with sufficient budget should respond to all negative online review using high tailored responses, and selectively responding to positive online reviews, using low-tailored responses. Those with insufficient budget should respond to negative online reviews using high-tailored responses.
Wu et al. (2020)	RC to positive reviews	Consumer repurchase intention	Active-constructive response combined with a friendly style increases repurchase intention.
Zhang et al. (2021)	RC	Customer engagement behavior	Customer engagement in terms of future review volumes decrease when management responses mention causal explanations and certain words
Liu et al. (2021)	RC	The volume of subsequent positive/negative reviews	The increase in roteness of manager responses leads to a decrease in review volumes and valence.

RA = Response approach; RC = Response content.

Appendix 2

Profile of the experiment participants.

Variable		Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4	Scenario 5	Sig. (p-value)	Test
Age	Min	19	19	20	18	18	0.782	ANOVA
	Max	42	40	89	55	80		
	Male	34	26	31	30	27		
Gender	Female	17	21	17	22	20	0.839	Chi-square
	Non-binary / third gender	2	4	3	2	3		
	Prefer not to say	0	1	0	0	0		
	<200 USD	9	9	11	8	12		
Monthly income	200 USD - <400 USD	9	9	18	12	14	0.056	Chi-square
	400 USD - <600 USD	8	21	10	14	11		
	600 USD - <800 USD	13	7	5	9	3		
	800 USD and above	14	6	7	11	10		
	Completed Primary	0	1	0	1	0		
Education level	Completed High school	0	1	2	3	2	0.804	Chi-square
	Vocational or Similar	4	5	2	3	4		
	University Bachelor's degree and above	49	45	47	47	44		
Employment status	Working full-time	39	39	33	39	28	0.363	Chi-square
	Working part-time	2	4	5	2	11		
	Unemployed and looking for work	1	1	1	1	0		
	A homemaker or stay-at-home parent	0	0	1	0	0		

(continued on next page)

Appendix 2 (continued)

Variable	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4	Scenario 5	Sig. (p-value)	Test	
Marital status	Student	11	7	10	9	8	0.881	Chi-square
	Retired	0	0	0	1	1		
	Other	0	1	1	2	2		
	Married	22	19	22	29	22		
	Living with a partner	6	5	3	2	5		
	Widowed	0	1	2	1	0		
	Divorced/separated	2	3	1	2	2		
Read online reviews On OTAs website	Never married	23	24	23	20	21	0.962	ANOVA
	1. Never	2	1	2	1	1		
	2	3	2	5	3	3		
	3	5	7	9	8	9		
	4	14	17	7	16	14		
	5	16	13	16	15	6		
Make reservations on OTAs website	6. Very often	13	12	12	11	17	0.838	ANOVA
	1. Never	3	2	1	2	2		
	2	8	4	6	2	6		
	3	5	5	9	11	12		
	4	11	17	12	17	11		
	5	16	15	12	16	10		
Write online reviews on OTAs website	6. Very often	10	9	11	6	9	0.997	ANOVA
	1. Never	11	8	9	7	9		
	2	3	5	6	5	4		
	3	7	10	6	9	9		
	4	9	7	13	15	8		
	5	12	17	6	11	9		
Count		53	52	51	54	50		

Appendix 3

Qualifying, online review behavior questions and measurement instrument in the questionnaire.

Qualifying question	Have you ever searched for accommodation information on the websites of Online Travel Agencies (Booking.com , Expedia.com , Agoda.com , Traveloka.com , etc.)? Which Online Travel Agencies do you often use? How often have you done each of following activities within the last 3 years? Read online reviews about hotels on the websites of Online Travel Agencies (1) Make accommodation reservations on the websites of Online Travel Agencies (2) Write online reviews about accommodation on the websites of Online Travel Agencies (3)
OR Behavior	Have you travelled to Vietnamese Mekong Delta within the last 3 years? Have you ever stayed in any Vietnamese Mekong Delta accommodation establishments within last 3 years? Please rank your priority concerning following criteria in term of booking your hotel (from 1 = most important to 5 = least important). Tangibles: Hotel's physical facilities, equipment and appearance of staff. (1) Reliability: Hotel's ability to perform promised service accurately. (2) Responsiveness: Hotel (staff) is willing to help guests and provide prompt service. (3) Assurance: Hotel (staff) inspire trust and confidence. (4) Empathy: Hotel (staff) pay individual attention and care to each guest. (5)

Appendix 4

Measurement instrument in the questionnaire.

Code	Factor/ observed variable	Reference(s)
<i>Perceived Service Quality_Tangibles</i>		
TAN1	The hotel has up-to-date equipment	(Parasuraman et al., 1988; Wong et al., 1999)
TAN2	The hotels' physical facilities are visually appealing.	
TAN3	I trust the hotel's employees are well dressed and appear neat.	
TAN4	The appearance of the physical facilities of the hotel is in keeping with the type of services provided.	
TAN5	Materials are visually appealing.	
TAN6	Fixture and fittings are comfortable	
TAN7	I trust equipment and facilities are easy to use.	
TAN8	I trust equipment and facilities are generally clean.	
TAN9	I trust variety of food and beverages meet guests' needs.	
<i>Perceived Service Quality_Reliability</i>		
REL1	I trust when the hotel promises to do something by a certain time, it does so.	(Parasuraman et al., 1988; Wong et al., 1999)
REL2	I trust when guests have problems, the hotel is sympathetic and reassuring.	
REL3	The hotel is dependable.	

(continued on next page)

Appendix 4 (continued)

Code	Factor/ observed variable	Reference(s)
REL4	The hotel provides its services at the time it promises to do so.	
REL5	I trust the hotel keeps its records accurately.	
REL6	The hotel performs the service right the first time.	
<i>Perceived Service Quality_Responsiveness</i>		
RES1	The hotel tells customers exactly when services will be performed.	(Parasuraman et al., 1988; Wong et al., 1999)
RES2	Employees of the hotel give prompt service.	
RES3	Employees of the hotel are always willing to help.	
RES4	Employees of the hotel are never busy to respond to guests' requests promptly.	
<i>Perceived Service Quality_Assurance</i>		
ASS1	Guests can trust employees of the hotel.	(Parasuraman et al., 1988)
ASS2	Guests feel safe in their transactions with the hotel's employees.	
ASS3	Guests feel safe and secure in their stay.	
ASS4	Employees of the hotel are polite and courteous.	
ASS5	Employees have the knowledge to answer questions.	
ASS6	Employees have the skill to perform the service.	
<i>Perceived Service Quality_Empathy</i>		
EMP1	The hotel gives guests individual attention.	(Parasuraman et al., 1988)
EMP2	I trust the hotel deals with guests in a caring fashion.	
EMP3	Employees of the hotel understand guests' specific needs.	
EMP4	I trust the hotel has guests' best interests at heart.	
EMP5	I trust the hotel has operating hours convenient to all their guests.	
<i>Satisfaction</i>		
SAT1	I am satisfied with the manager response.	(Patterson et al., 2006)
SAT2	I am happy with the manager response.	
SAT3	I think that the hotel did a good job responding to the reviews.	
<i>Intent to stay</i>		
INT1	I will make reservations at this hotel.	(Hu et al., 2009; Meng et al., 2018)
INT2	I will stay at this hotel in the future.	
INT3	I plan to make reservations at this hotel.	

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