



Integration of CSR and travelers' ascription of responsibility toward electric ride-hailing continuous intention in Vietnam

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Abstract

In response to growing environmental concerns and the increasing emphasis on sustainable tourism, this study investigates the influence of corporate social responsibility (CSR), including environmental CSR and customer-related CSR, and travelers' ascription of responsibility (AOR) on their continuous intention to use electric ride-hailing services while traveling in an emerging economy, Vietnam. The study employed a quantitative method using a questionnaire survey and data were collected through non-probability sampling methods. The results demonstrated that all three factors positively influenced travelers' continuous intention, with AOR exhibiting the most vital role. On top of that, customer-related CSR has a slightly higher impact on travelers' continuous intention compared with environmental CSR. The study contributes to understanding sustainable behavior in the context of tourism mobility and offers insights for promoting green transportation models. The findings also highlight the need for combined efforts from both service providers and travelers, suggesting strategies that integrate individual awareness, customer-oriented CSR actions, and environmental commitment.

Keywords: electric ride-hailing, corporate social responsibility, ascription of responsibility, continuous intention, travel behavior

Introduction

Climate change is one of the most serious challenges confronting mankind in the 21st century, with increasingly obvious appearances such as rising global temperatures and sea levels, or extreme weather events, and human activities are responsible for these negative phenomena (IPCC, 2023). The transport sector is regarded as one of the major causes of greenhouse gas emissions, typically accounting for one-fifth of global carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions, and the majority of which come from road transport (Ritchie, 2020). Not just greenhouse gases, fossil fuels that are widely used in transportation can also form in the environment many secondary pollutants, most concerning fine particulate matter (such as carbon black, heavy metals, or micro- and nano-plastics) that have an obvious direct impact on

human health (Shah et al., 2021; Van Fan et al., 2018). However, controlling such an issue has become challenging owing to the rapid urbanization and increased demand for personalized vehicles, necessitating the creation of sustainable or green transportation models (Shah et al., 2021). Vietnam, an emerging economy, is claimed to be facing an imbalance between rapid economic growth and environmental protection, with the capital, Hanoi, even being named as the world's most polluted city in early 2025 (Nguyen, 2025). Of which, the transport sector accounted for 11% of the nation's total emissions in 2023 (ATO, 2024); yet consider that in urban areas, it derived up to 70% of total dust and gas emissions into the air and was responsible for around 3.8 million premature deaths per year (Vu, 2022). One of the main reasons comes from the difficulty in convincing people to give up personal vehicles to switch to more sustainable alternatives, as well as similar initiatives having fallen short in the past (Nguyen, 2025).

It can be easily observed that transportation is a mandatory and indispensable need when it comes to tourism. At the same time, ride-hailing services have been playing an important role in altering travel habits in major cities. Embedding electric motorbikes and cars into the service ecosystem is not only a strategic action by businesses to adapt to emission reduction policies but also an attempt to express their commitment to social responsibility and sustainable development (Danang FantastiCity, 2025). Previous studies have shown the particular contribution of perceived corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainable development goals (SDG) in changing attitudes and behaviors toward ride-hailing services (Boar et al., 2023; Jeon et al., 2020). However, current empirical investigations remain limited in scope, in particular in Vietnam, as well as lacking in adoption in tourism backgrounds. On the other hand, it is critical to understand that isolated efforts are insufficient to accomplish sustainable tourism development, meaning that not only businesses but also travelers must strive to implement sustainable practices. Even while later research, including in the context of Vietnam, has emphasized travelers' environmental concerns or knowledge (Aktan et al., 2024; Raza et al., 2024; Van Huy et al., 2024), this may not be sufficient to shape "sustainable travelers" owing to these concerns still being awareness in nature. In order to overcome this limitation, ascription of responsibility is believed to provide a greater comprehension as it goes beyond ordinary awareness and that travelers actually perceived their own responsibility for an initial problem awareness (Han, 2014).

Considering that efforts must come from both sides, i.e., supplier and consumer, the study integrates two aspects, namely corporate social responsibility (CSR) and travelers' ascription of responsibility (AOR) and examines how they influence their continuous intention to use electric ride-hailing services while traveling. It is undeniable that AOR will activate personal norms and hence promote sustainable behavior, yet the direct effects of AOR on travelers' intentions remain inadequate in the research and thereupon this paper is concentrated on this gap. The study used a quantitative method with a survey questionnaire distributed to young travelers, a customer group more familiar with ride-hailing in Vietnam, who had used electric ride-hailing services on their previous trip. Furthermore, Vietnam is an ideal and highly practical scope for the empirical investigation since the nation is a developing market with rapid urbanization and domestic tourism growth, and it has begun to witness the emergence of sustainable taxi and ride-hailing models. The findings drawn from the formal analysis are

desired to provide both academic and practical values related to pro-behavior of consumers toward electric ride-hailing services, with the investigated practical context being in the tourism industry, aiming to contribute to sustainable tourism development in particular and sustainable economy in general.

Literature Review

Corporate social responsibility

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is considered a complex construct, and it is difficult to “frame” in a fixed way about what is “good” in diverse settings. Regarding definition, CSR is “a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis” (European Commission, 2020). It refers to careful business practices to enhance societal well-being while achieving a balanced integration of people, planet and profit objectives (Madanaguli et al., 2022). Carroll (1991) first presented the pyramid model of CSR and pointed out four aspects of CSR, including economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic. Recent studies have increasingly attempted to simplify the CSR construct, such as with three dimensions - social, environmental and legal (Hameed et al., 2018), or only two aspects - internal and external (Rupp & Mallory, 2015). However, although it is essential for business orientation toward CSR, from the customers' view, we argue that it is difficult (or even impossible) for them to fully observe these aspects due to the heterogeneity in goals between businesses or in the nature between localities, as well as between a business with multiple operating locations. This could be even more evident in the tourism context, as when travelers go to places they may not be familiar with. In this study, we select two dimensions of CSR that can be well observed by travelers, which are “Environmental CSR” (ECSR) and “Customer-related CSR” (CCSR), since they are closely associated with the customers themselves and their surroundings. Customers are increasingly attracted to companies that perform well in CSR, so it is of great significance in creating value that drives customers' behavioral intentions in both the context of tourism and ride-hailing services (Akbari et al., 2020; Jeon et al., 2020; Wut et al., 2021). Therefore, the hypotheses established include:

- H1: Environmental CSR has a positive impact on travelers' continuous intention toward ride-hailing services while traveling.
- H2: Customer-related CSR has a positive impact on travelers' continuous intention toward ride-hailing services while traveling.

Ascription of responsibility

Travelers are indispensable in sustainable tourism development, as they may have the power to dictate which products and services are offered/demanded, as well as be able to ask for certain policies and advocate for change toward sustainability (Roxas et al., 2020). The Norm Activation Model (NAM) was initially proposed by Schwartz (1977) to explain how individuals are motivated to take part in sustainable behaviors, whereby personal norms are

activated when they are aware of consequences and perceive they personally have a responsibility in solving them (Duong, 2025). In reality, opportunities for changing behavior voluntarily, such as navigating to more friendly modes of transportation, are given increasing attention in the light of rapid urbanization (Gössling, 2020). Adopted for this study, ascription of responsibility (AOR) can be described as the extent to which travelers recognize themselves as accountable for addressing negative issues caused by vehicles using fossil fuels. It matters to comprehend that individuals must take the effort to assume responsibility for environmental concerns, due to the fact that merely concerning about them is insufficient (Jakučionytė-Skodienė & Liobikienė, 2021). At the same time, selecting environmental alternatives, electric vehicles for example, is regarded as being meaningful, as it demonstrates a dedication and commitment to addressing climate change worries (Hourdequin, 2011). Duong (2025) suggested that, despite individuals with high AOR being likely to engage in sustainable actions to mitigate their impacts, the direct correlation between AOR and intentions is restricted. This study agrees with the aforementioned idea because a strong sense of personal responsibility may be able to directly trigger action even when norms are not clearly formed. Therefore, the proposed research hypothesis is:

H3: Ascription of responsibility has a positive impact on travelers' continuous intention toward ride-hailing services while traveling.

Conceptual framework

Based on the above arguments, the study proposes the conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 1. Accordingly, the two aspects of CSR, Environmental CSR and Customer-related CSR, together with Ascription of responsibility, serve as independent variables and have a direct impact on the dependent variable, Continuous Intention towards electric ride-hailing while traveling.

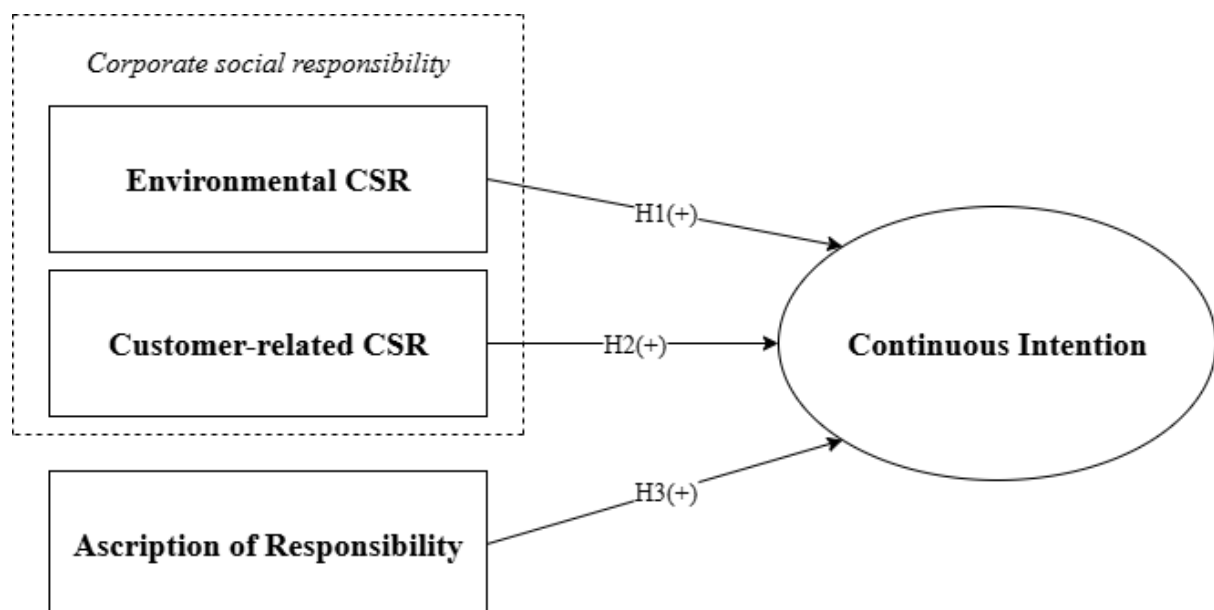


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

Research Method

The study used a quantitative research method using a questionnaire survey to empirically assess how ECSR, CCSR, and AOR influence travelers' continuous intention towards electric ride-hailing while traveling in Vietnam. The measurement items for all constructs used in the study are validated scales applied from previous studies and adjustments were made to be more relevant in the context of electric ride-hailing in tourism. Of which, four measurement items for ECSR were adopted from Yin et al. (2021); five measurement items for CCSR were adopted from Pérez & del Bosque (2015); four measurement items for AOR were adopted from He & Zhan (2018); and three adapted items to measure continuous intention are from Al-Emran et al. (2020). The study's official scale applied consisted of 16 items. All the constructs and items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale with anchors of 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree". The study used non-probability sampling methods through convenience and snowball sampling techniques. On top of that, due to the ratio 20:1 was best suggested by Rahman (2023), the survey aimed for 320 responses as required for the formal analysis.

To ensure all the questions are easy to understand, the survey was tested with 20 individuals and some adjustments were made for the final questionnaire survey. The official questionnaire was widely distributed to young travelers from 18 to 30 years old, a customer group more familiar with ride-hailing in Vietnam, who had used electric ride-hailing services on their previous travel. All participants were clearly affirmed that their involvement in the investigation was completely voluntary and that the provided information would only be used for research purposes, which was stated at the beginning of the survey. The official survey was conducted in a 2-month period, April and May 2025, and collected 392 valid responses that can be used for formal analysis, accounting for 92.9% of all recorded responses. With the target of 320 responses, it can be seen that the sample size in this study is qualified. Finally, the study used and Smart PLS-3 software to analyze data, with the PLS-SEM was utilized to test the research hypotheses. The authors confirm that the study was conducted honestly, without leaving out any important parts of the research, and any changes from the original plan have been explained.

Research Results

Socio-demographic

Table 1 reveals the demographics of the 392 valid samples participating in the survey of the study. Regarding gender, 43.9% were male and 56.1% were female, indicating a slightly higher participation from female respondents but still relatively even. In terms of income, the largest group reported earning between 5 and 10 million VND per month (43.6%), followed by individuals earning less than 5 million (31.4%), and finally, the group of more than 10 million (25.0%), demonstrating that participants belonging to the middle-income bracket take the lead of the sample. For occupation, college students made up the largest portion at 40.6%, followed by manual labor/non-office workers (28.0%), office workers (18.9%), and freelance workers

(12.5%), and this variety shows that ride-hailing is used across different occupational groups. Interestingly, 126 respondents (32.1%) adopted electric ride-hailing services for 50% or more of their ride-hailing trips out of total ride-hailing usage during the most recent trip, while 266 respondents (67.9%) admitted less than half. This indicates that most travelers involved in this survey still prefer traditional ride-hailing services more than electric ones, which may stem from the fact that this model is still quite new and the number of electric vehicles is somehow still absent when comparing. Nonetheless, nearly one-third of respondents already choose electric ride-hailing for at least half of the times they ask for this kind of service, showing growing acceptance of electric ride-hailing in the market.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the study sample

	Identification	Frequency	Proportion (%)
Gender	Male	172	43.9
	Female	220	56.1
Income	< 5 million VND	123	31.4
	5-10 million VND	171	43.6
	> 10 million VND	98	25.0
Occupation	College student	159	40.6
	Office worker (all ranks)	74	18.9
	Manual labor/Non-office worker	110	28.0
	Freelance worker	49	12.5
Percentage of electric ride-hailing services out of total ride-hailing usage during the most recent trip	From 50% above	126	32.1
	Below 50%	266	67.9

Source: Data processing by the authors

Measurement model

To evaluate the reliability and convergent validity of the measurement model, four main indices were examined, including Cronbach's Alpha, rho_A, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Overall, all constructs met the accepted thresholds for internal consistency and convergent validity (Table 2). All Cronbach's Alpha and rho_A values exceed 0.7, demonstrating that the scale is reliable, plus all CR values are greater than 0.8, indicating good internal consistency among items measuring each construct. Besides, all AVE values were above the threshold of 0.5 for all constructs, ranging from 0.584 (ECSR) to 0.706 (CI), indicating the convergent validity is assured as more than 50% of the variance in the indicators is captured by the respective constructs. The Outer loading values were examined and recorded that most of the items were greater than 0.7, i.e., reflecting a high degree of relevance of each item to the variable it measures. The Outer loading of ECSR2 was only recorded at 0.664 but is still acceptable to retain if the overall construct reliability and validity are not affected (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 2. Assessment of construct reliability and convergent validity

	Outer loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	CR	AVE
Environmental CSR (ECSR)					
ECSR1	0.760	0.762	0.793	0.848	0.584
ECSR2	0.664				
ECSR3	0.772				
ECSR4	0.849				
Customer-related CSR (CCSR)					
CCSR1	0.816	0.860	0.863	0.899	0.641
CCSR2	0.805				
CCSR3	0.783				
CCSR4	0.812				
CCSR5	0.788				
Ascription of Responsibility (AOR)					
AOR1	0.824	0.815	0.818	0.878	0.643
AOR2	0.761				
AOR3	0.817				
AOR4	0.804				
Continuous Intention (CI)					
CI1	0.859	0.792	0.792	0.878	0.706
CI2	0.829				
CI3	0.833				

Source: Data processing by the authors

In addition, discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). As presented in Table 3, the Square Roots of AVE values for all constructs were greater than their corresponding inter-construct correlations and therefore satisfying the Fornell-Larcker criterion. Furthermore, all HTMT values fell below the conservative threshold of 0.85. These values provide strong evidence of discriminant validity, confirming that all constructs are conceptually and statistically distinct from one another. Thus, it is confirmed that there is no need to remove item ECSR2 as stated above.

Table 3. Assessment of discriminant validity

	AOR	CCSR	CI	ECSR
Fornell-Larcker Criterion				
AOR	0.802			
CCSR	0.614	0.801		
CI	0.525	0.489	0.841	
ECSR	0.41	0.403	0.416	0.764
Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)				
AOR				
CCSR	0.727			
CI	0.652	0.589		
ECSR	0.511	0.483	0.524	

Source: Data processing by the authors

Moreover, to check whether there is multicollinearity of independent variables, the VIF index is included in the test. As shown in Table 4, all constructs in the model exhibited VIF values below the conservative threshold of 3.3, indicating that multicollinearity is not a concern. In addition, the examination of full collinearity test also showed that all values met the requirement of the threshold, i.e., common method bias can be considered not exist as a problem (Kock, 2015).

Table 4. Inner VIF values

	AOR	CCSR	CI	ECSR
AOR			1.691	
CCSR			1.68	
CI				
ECSR			1.258	

Source: Data processing by the authors

Structural model

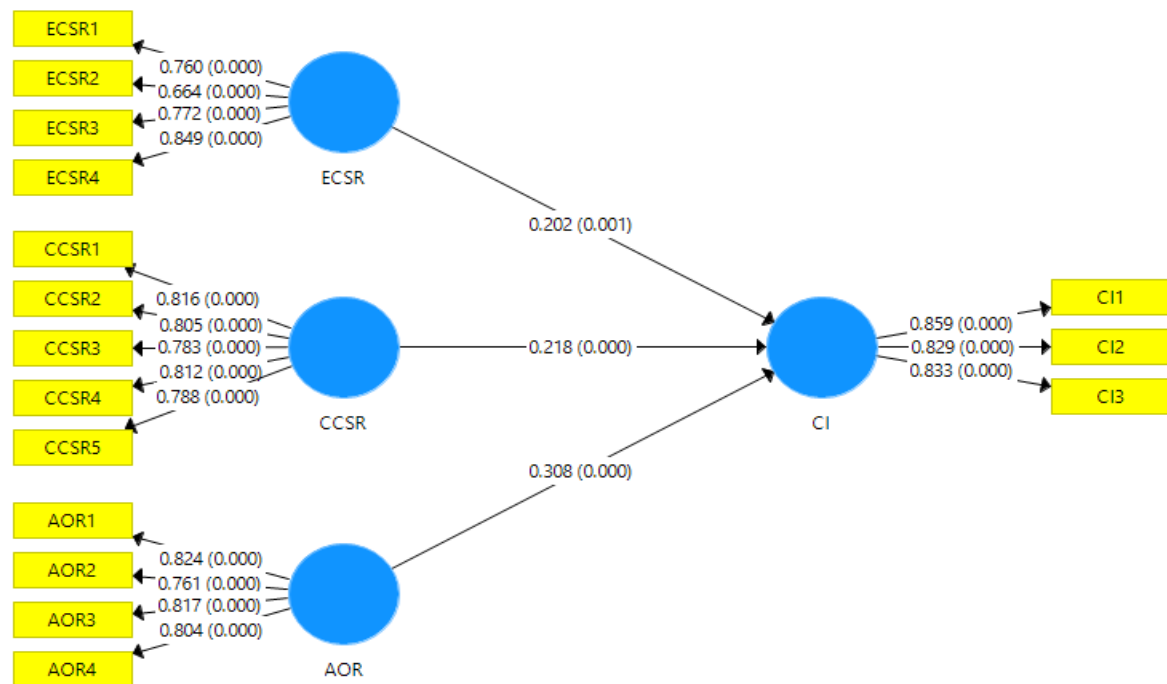
Before proceeding with the specific evaluation of the hypotheses, the R-square and Q-square were considered to assess the variance explained and predictive fit of the model. For CI, the R-square value is 0.353 and the Q-square value is 0.245, indicating that the model has moderate explanatory power and acceptable predictive relevance for this construct. Following that, all hypotheses were tested using the bootstrapping procedure with 5.000 resamples. One hypothesis is accepted when its p-value is less than 0.05 and the original sample (O) is greater than 0, since all hypotheses were proposed with a positive relationship. Detailed results of hypothesis testing are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Results of testing research hypotheses

Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	p-values
ECSR -> CI	0.202	0.203	0.058	3.472	0.001
CCSR -> CI	0.218	0.221	0.061	3.568	0.000
AOR -> CI	0.308	0.306	0.058	5.351	0.000

Source: Data processing by the authors

The results revealed that all proposed hypotheses are supported. Firstly, ECSR positively influences travelers' continuous intention ($\beta = 0.202$, $t = 3.472$, $p = 0.001$), meaning that if travelers can perceive that ride-hailing service providers engage in environmental actions and present their responsibility, they are more likely to continue using the services. Secondly, CCSR also shows a significant positive impact on travelers' continuous intention ($\beta = 0.218$, $t = 3.568$, $p < 0.001$), implying that socially responsible actions directed toward customers can enhance their willingness to keep using the service. Lastly but most interestingly, AOR has the strongest positive impact on the continuous intention ($\beta = 0.308$, $t = 5.351$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting the role of personal responsibility in shaping behavioral intention in a direct manner. The findings underscore the importance of multilateral efforts toward sustainable behavior. In short, the summary results of the study are shown in Figure 2.



Source: Data processing by the authors

Figure 2. PLS-SEM results of the study

Discussion

The findings of this study provide important insights into the factors influencing travelers' continuous intention to use electric ride-hailing services within the context of sustainable tourism in Vietnam by emphasizing the parallel efforts from both service providers and travelers. Three antecedents examined, including Environmental CSR (ECSR), Customer-related CSR (CCSR), and Ascription of responsibility (AOR), all play an important role in improving sustainable behavior of travelers, i.e., continuously adopting electric ride-hailing for their travel journey.

It can be seen that the most substantial impact on travelers' continuous intention is derived from AOR. That is, travelers who perceive themselves as responsible for reducing the negative environmental impact of fossil fuel vehicles are more willing to adopt and continue using electric ride-hailing services. This underlines the vital role of perceived personal responsibility in shaping sustainable behaviors, suggesting that cultivating a sense of individual responsibility is key to promoting continuous use of eco-transportation alternatives in their travel. The findings confirm the view that AOR can directly promote behavioral intentions (Duong, 2025). As inferred, the stronger the sense of personal responsibility, the more strongly travelers intend to engage in action even when norms are not fully formed. The study also recognizes the need for real efforts rather than merely concerning, as well as the importance of promoting voluntary behavior in selecting environmental alternatives, which, compiled from previous studies (Gössling, 2020; Jakučionytė-Skodienė & Liobikienė, 2021; Hourdequin,

2011), were also found to be practical in the current context. Furthermore, it can also be expanded with the understanding of the “responsible traveler” concept by illustrating how ascription of responsibility encourages travelers not only to pursue sustainable behaviors but also to maintain these behaviors over time. In short, this aligns with the growing recognition that travelers’ behavior change in a positive manner is pivotal for achieving sustainable tourism goals.

On the other hand, albeit to a lesser degree, the two CSR dimensions, which are CCSR and ECSR, still proved their positive and important effects in enhancing travelers’ continuous intention toward electric ride-hailing services. These results are generally consistent with previous findings on CSR (Akbari et al., 2020; Jeon et al., 2020; Wut et al., 2021), but viewed in terms that travelers can more easily grasp. In comparison, CCSR has a slightly higher impact, which may be due to the fact that it is more directly related to the customers themselves, while the environment is a relatively familiar element in their concerns. It can be claimed that CSR practices function as trust-building mechanisms that enhance the perceived value and credibility of the ride-hailing service, especially emphasizing the human-centered aspect of sustainability. Travelers tend to support brands that demonstrate ethical treatment and care for their customers. Nonetheless, the company’s commitment to environmental goals should not be underestimated, such as reducing emissions or investing in sustainable initiatives. CSR strategies, when aligned with both user expectations and environmental values, can become a vital part of the business’s long-term positioning within sustainable tourism ecosystems.

The study’s results offer several practical implications for businesses and policymakers aiming to promote the prioritization of electric ride-hailing services selection in the tourism sector, contributing to developing sustainable tourism in particular and sustainable economy in general. The strong influence of AOR and ECSR suggest that awareness campaigns should concentrate on reinforcing the idea that travelers’ individual choices can meaningfully contribute to sustainability. Integrating educational content into ride-hailing platforms, for example, through carbon-saving notifications or eco-impact summaries after each ride may be useful. In addition, providers should invest in customer-focused initiatives such as loyalty programs or responsive service, which can strengthen trust and engagement, especially since young travelers are quite tech-savvy and socially aware. Regarding the efforts toward the environment, it remains essential to be more visible through tangible actions, such as transparent reporting on emission reductions or partnerships with green tourism campaigns. Cross-collaboration between ride-hailing, tourism, and environmental organizations can further enhance the integration of green mobility into the tourism experience. Thus, a holistic strategy that combines personal accountability, organizational responsibility, and technological implementation can foster not only initial adoption but also sustained behavioral intentions toward electric ride-hailing, orienting to broader sustainable goals.

Conclusion

This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on sustainable tourism and green transportation choices by examining how corporate social responsibility (CSR) and

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travelers' ascription of responsibility (AOR) influence their continuous intention to use electric ride-hailing services while traveling in Vietnam. Grounded in the context of increasing environmental challenges and the transition toward sustainable transportation, the findings highlight the importance of both organizational initiatives and individual accountability in shaping long-term behavioral intention among travelers. The results revealed that all three examined predictors, including both selected dimensions of CSR (ECSR and CCSR) and AOR, positively enhance travelers' continuous intention, with AOR having the strongest impact. This underscores the critical role of perceived personal responsibility in driving sustainable behavior and reinforces the relevance of fostering responsible tourist mindsets. Meanwhile, CSR practices, both environmental and customer-focused, still serve as must-have mechanisms. From these findings, the study drew practical implications for businesses and policymakers aiming to integrate sustainable transportation options into the travel experience. Accordingly, strategies that combine individual awareness, customer-oriented CSR actions, and environmental commitment are likely to be most effective in promoting and sustaining the selection of electric ride-hailing services.

Limitation

However, the study is not without limitations. First, the data were collected from a specific demographic, young Vietnamese travelers, who may differ compared to other age groups in the nation or compared to other nations in general. Future research may consider broader and more diverse samples to improve comparison ability. On top of that, the study focused only on travelers who had already experienced electric ride-hailing, so further investigation into potential customers or those hesitant to adopt such services could provide some more valuable insight. Lastly, future research could explore other psychological or contextual factors, such as perceived behavioral control, destination identity, or self-congruity, that may interact with CSR and AOR in influencing sustainable behavior in tourism.

Declaration of conflicting interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in this work.

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