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Tourists’ Perceptions of AI Ethics, Privacy Concerns, and Responsible Adoption of Artificial Intelligence in Hospitality Services

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Abstract

AI is revolutionizing hospitality services with its chatbots, virtual assistants, recommendation systems, service robots, automated customer services, and generative AI. Previous studies have found that technology can improve personalisation, convenience, and efficiency along with customer experience. However, greater attention seems to be needed towards ethical and responsible uses. This review examines the tourists’ views on the ethics, privacy and responsible practices in the hospitality industry. The study used on secondary sources covering data protection, trust, transparency, fairness, accountability, and human oversight. The review concluded that the trust and acceptance of the tourists over the use of AI relies for several reasons including its usefulness and convenience. They rely on its efficiency, reliability and fairness along with its security and transparency of AI powered services. The study also confirms that unauthorized collection of data, profiling and surveillance can diminish this trust and intention to adopt. The study finally concluded that an efficient and responsible use of AI is based on several parameters such as transpermeable, privacy protection, fairness, accountability, user control, accuracy and a human-centred approach to AI usage.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Hospitality Services, AI Ethics, Privacy Concerns, Responsible AI Adoption

INTRODUCTION

AI has established its application in every field and the field of hospitality and tourism does not remain untouched. Organizations in the hospitality and tourism industry are rapidly increasing the use AI associated technologies for streamlining the services and keeping their customers satisfied. AI’s application in the field have increased to a huge level such as AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants, recommendation systems, service robots, automatic customer-service platforms, etc. that help tourists in finding desired information and make convenient travel decisions (Budholi & Yadav, 2025). There are several studies on AI and robotics in the hospitality and tourism sector that clearly suggests that AI and robotics are continuously being researched and advanced for improvement of consumer service and operational areas (M. Zhang et al., 2026).

The rise in AI adoption is closely tied to the anticipated ability of AI to offer personalised recommendations, quicker responses, convenience, better customer experiences, and efficiency. By understanding customer preferences and activity, AI can provide more relevant services and cut down on the time spent on mundane interactions. New studies indicate that AI-driven hospitality services can also improve the functionality of service offerings and customer experience, but again, this will rely on the openness of the customer to these technologies (Kumar et al., 2026; Sanoussi et al., 2026).

The conversation around AI in the hospitality and tourism industry is slowly shifting from the polarizing topic of whether or not tourists are willing to use the technology or will accept it. The issue of the ethics, trust, transparency and responsibility of AI applications are being discussed more and more.

Recent studies highlight privacy, bias, transparency and fairness, misinformation, trust, autonomy and accountability as ethical issues that are interconnected in AI-powered hospitality and tourism (Ivanov & Umbrello, 2021; A. Zhang et al., 2025).

The change is significant given the growing ability of AI systems to gather, analyze, and draw conclusions about tourists and how these systems could potentially use the data to create personalized recommendations or make decisions related to services. As a result, privacy and data governance issues have the potential to directly impact tourists' trust in hospitality organisations. This review, thus, does not focus on the development of AI but on three dimensions of AI adoption from the tourist/customer point of view, namely AI ethics, privacy concerns and responsible AI adoption.

AI Applications in Hospitality and Tourists' Perceptions of AI-Based Services

AI is playing an increasingly significant role in the delivery of hospitality services, aiding in the service of customers as well as day-to-day operations. It has implications for conversational technologies, recommendation systems, service robots, automated services, and generative AI, all of which impact the ways tourists can access information, make travel choices, engage with hotels, and assess their service experiences (Sousa et al., 2024). The perception of usefulness, convenience, efficiency, personalisation, intelligence, and interactivity of AI-driven services influence tourists' perceptions of it. Tourists might think that there is more value and satisfaction in the AI when it delivers precise information in a timely

manner, comprehends their preferences, and suggests relevant options (Alharbi et al., 2026). Personalized AI services are one of the major advantages that attract the organization in the tourism industry as it provides personalized and tailored recommendations to the customers. This attracts customers and they feel valued. This also implies that an efficient and controlled use of AI can be evidently sustainable in the long-run (Kafy et al., 2022).

Major technology-based applications in hospitality include:

- i. **Chatbots and virtual assistants:** Used to answer tourist queries, provide information, and assist with travel decisions.
- ii. **Personalised hotel and travel recommendations:** Customer preferences and past behaviour are used to suggest suitable hotels, destinations, activities, restaurants, and travel options.
- iii. **Service robots:** Robots assist with reception, information services, item delivery, and other routine hotel activities.
- iv. **Automated check-in/check-out:** Digital systems make routine hotel procedures faster and help reduce waiting time.
- v. **Generative tools for travel information and content:** Tools such as ChatGPT help tourists plan itineraries, explore destinations, and obtain travel information.
- vi. **Automated customer-service systems:** These systems handle routine enquiries, identify customer needs, and support faster service delivery.

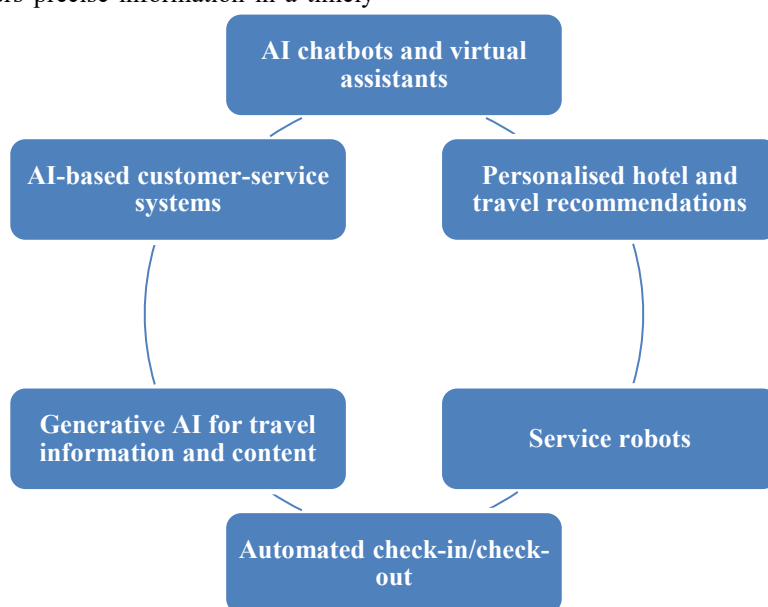


Figure 1: Major AI applications in hospitality

Ethical Concerns in AI-Enabled Hospitality Services

While AI is increasingly adopted in the hospitality industry, it has the potential to enhance service efficiency and personalisation, it also raises ethical questions as AI becomes more intrusive in customer interactions, recommendations, pricing, and decisions. Research on AI ethics in the tourism and hospitality industry singles out the following key issues: transparency, fairness, bias, privacy, misinformation, autonomy, accountability and human interaction (Tuo et al., 2024). These issues are particularly important in hospitality because service quality depends not only on technology, but also on trust, human judgement, and personal relationships.

- i. **Transparency and explainability:** Tourists may not understand how AI generates recommendations, prices, or personalised offers.
- ii. **Fairness and algorithmic bias:** Incomplete or unbalanced data can lead to biased recommendations and unequal treatment of customers.
- iii. **Autonomy and human control:** Excessive personalisation may influence tourists' choices and reduce their ability to make independent decisions.
- iv. **Accountability and responsibility:** Clear human responsibility is needed when AI produces incorrect recommendations or causes harm.
- v. **Misinformation and accuracy:** AI-generated tourism information may contain errors, making verification important before it is relied upon.
- vi. **Human interaction and dehumanisation:** Excessive automation may reduce staff–customer interaction and weaken the personal touch in hospitality.

Table 1: Ethical Concerns and potential issues for tourists in AI-Enabled Hospitality Services

Ethical concern	Potential issue for tourists	Responsible requirement
Transparency	Unclear AI decisions	Explainable AI
Bias	Unequal treatment	Fair and representative data
Autonomy	Unwanted influence	Human choice and control
Accountability	Unclear responsibility	Human oversight
Misinformation	Incorrect travel information	Verification and accuracy
Dehumanisation	Reduced human interaction	Appropriate human–AI balance

Tourists' Privacy Concerns, Data Protection and Trust in AI

The rich and comprehensive collection and processing of tourist data are vital to the functioning of AI-powered hospitality solutions, enabling them to deliver personalised and efficient services. This can be personal data, booking and transaction data, location and travel habits, preferences and browsing habits, and, if applicable, biometric or voice data. With the growing adoption of data-driven technologies, information privacy and security is a major consideration in tourism and hospitality studies. Customers' privacy concerns vary across different technologies, while research on smart tourism has highlighted the need for stronger attention to tourists' information privacy and security (Goel et al., 2022).

Data collection and profiling can raise issues regarding the storage, analysis, sharing and reuse of personal data by hotels, online travel platforms, and AI systems. Personalised recommendations and services are welcomed by tourists but too much data collection can lead to discomfort if tourists feel their activities and preferences are constantly being monitored (Ali & Ali, 2026). This is a key privacy-personalisation balance: personal information can enhance the relevance of the service, but also can heighten people's sense of privacy risks. AI-driven personalisation in online travel platforms has been studied recently, and findings indicate that privacy concerns and perceived discrimination can have a detrimental effect on trust and future engagement, whereas user control can minimize privacy concerns (Mensah et al., 2026).

Trust and acceptance of AI in the hospitality sector are also intricately linked with privacy issues. The study of voice AI in hotel guests' rooms revealed that the concern of information collection had a negative relationship with intention to use, while voice AI trust had a positive association with intention to use. Likewise, the study on AI travel planning revealed that privacy issues have a negative impact on user attitudes towards AI (Du et al., 2026). Therefore, informed consent and robust data security, transparency, and user control are key to responsible use of AI, as is the concern about surveillance and unauthorised access to information, and the possibility of its secondary use. Ethical data governance shouldn't just be a matter of law, but should also be about fostering trust between hospitality businesses and travellers (Tanković et al., 2025).

Responsible AI Adoption in Hospitality: Building Trust, Transparency and Human Oversight

In the eyes of the tourist, the application of AI in the hospitality industry in a responsible way is one that offers tourists the benefit of technology without infringing on their rights, interests, or capability to make informed decisions. Therefore, systems need to be transparent, fair, privacy-preserving, secure, accountable and human-centred to be responsible AI. The present study builds on recent tourism research that considers safety, human oversight, fairness, transparency, and explainability as key characteristics of responsible AI, and emerging evidence that supports the notion that responsible generative AI can enhance functional and human-like trust among tourists (Kashif & Muhammad, 2026).

In cases where AI aids decision-making that can have substantial impacts on tourists, such as recommendations, service recovery, or customised offers, human oversight is especially crucial. Hospitality organisations should maintain the rights to review, correct or override AI output, rather than having AI running without meaningful human control (Sirivadhanawaravachara, 2025). It's also crucial that tourists are clearly informed when they're dealing with an AI and not a human employee. Tourism studies reveal that when tourists understand that AI is being used, it can impact their sense of responsibility and satisfaction, especially in situations involving collaborative AI services. Studies in tourism have demonstrated that the awareness of AI involvement can shape tourists' sense of responsibility and satisfaction, particularly in cases where AI is collaborating with humans in service (Al-Hyari et al., 2023).

Responsible adoption also demands that people have meaningful control over their data and choice as well as responsible data collection and privacy-by-design. Bias, misinformation, security issues and discrimination should be monitored regularly in AI systems, and there should be a system in place to address issues when they do arise (Solanas et al., 2026). Meanwhile, there is a need for a good balance between the use of technology and the presence of humans in the hospitality service, as too much technology can diminish the personal aspect of hospitality (Din et al., 2026).

In the end, ethical practices can help build tourists' trust, satisfaction, acceptance, and the use of AI services. Transparency, fairness, security, accountability, and user control can help alleviate uncertainty and enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of AI-supported services. Therefore, the adoption of AI should be viewed not just as an increase in technology use, but as the development of

trustworthy and human-centred experiences that will still meet the efficiency requirements of tourists and their rights (To & Yu, 2025).

Table 2: Key Dimensions of Responsible AI Adoption in Hospitality

Responsible AI Dimension	Key Requirement	Relevance to Tourists
Transparency	Clearly explain how AI is used and how outputs or recommendations are generated	Helps tourists understand and evaluate AI-supported services
Fairness	Prevent algorithmic bias and discriminatory treatment	Ensures tourists receive equitable recommendations and services
Privacy Protection	Collect only necessary personal information and protect it from misuse	Reduces privacy risks associated with personalisation and profiling
Data Security	Safeguard customer information against unauthorised access, loss, or misuse	Increases tourists' confidence in AI-enabled hospitality services
Accountability	Establish clear responsibility for AI-generated decisions and errors	Ensures that tourists have appropriate channels for correction or complaints
Human Oversight	Allow hospitality employees to review, correct, or override important AI decisions	Maintains human judgement when automated decisions may negatively affect tourists
AI Disclosure	Inform tourists when they are communicating with AI rather than a human	Enables informed interaction and prevents misleading service experiences
User Choice and Control	Give tourists meaningful control over their personal data and AI interactions	Supports informed consent and strengthens tourists' autonomy
Accuracy and Monitoring	Regularly monitor AI for misinformation, bias, errors, and discriminatory outcomes	Reduces the possibility of tourists receiving unreliable or unfair services
Human-Centred Service	Maintain an appropriate balance between automation and human interaction	Preserves the personal and interpersonal aspects of hospitality
Trust and Satisfaction	Integrate ethical practices into AI service delivery	Can strengthen trust, satisfaction, acceptance, and continued AI use

LITERATURE REVIEW

(Hu & Min, 2025) This study examines the impact of information transparency on customers' privacy concerns and hospitality behavioural intentions toward engaging with hospitality robots through the theoretical lens of situational tests and an intervention. Anthropomorphic robots driven by artificial intelligence were used in two tests and an exploratory research. Information transparency is weak in practice, according to the exploratory research. According to Study 1, customers' behavioural intentions are negatively impacted by such transparency since it increases their situational awareness, which raises their privacy concerns and decreases their behavioural intentions. The impact of situational awareness on privacy concerns became non-significant when privacy assurance was offered, according to Study 2, which also found that privacy assurance might mitigate the negative effects of information transparency on customers' behavioural intentions. This study adds to the body of knowledge on technological innovation in hospitality and tourism and provides guidance on how to manage customers' privacy in an ethical manner.

(Banerjee & Bhat, 2025) By 2027, the worldwide hospitality industry is expected to reach an astounding \$5.8 trillion, highlighting the increasing need for digital transformation, especially through the Internet of Things (IoT) and artificial intelligence (AI). Using secondary data from over 500 traveller surveys and 10 thoroughly documented case studies including Japan, the United Arab Emirates, and portions of Scandinavia, this study conducts a thorough analysis. The study evidently showed a positive progression in the hospitality industry. The use of AI-driven personalisation and IoT-enabled automation has contributed to better guest experiences. At the same time, the study highlighted serious cybersecurity concerns, particularly in developing countries where outdated IT systems and inadequate infrastructure can affect data security and operational reliability. The findings suggest that hospitality organisations need flexible and context-specific frameworks that encourage innovation while maintaining environmental responsibility and strong data protection.

(Antczak, 2025) By increasing tourist attractiveness and engagement, the tourism industry has undergone a transformation thanks to the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into marketing efforts. With an emphasis on how AI-driven tools and technologies are changing how places sell themselves and engage with potential visitors, this research attempts to investigate how AI affects tourist attractiveness from a marketing standpoint. Tourism marketers may use AI

to analyse massive volumes of data in order to spot patterns, tailor marketing campaigns, and forecast tourist trends. "Chatbots, virtual assistants, and recommendation systems" are examples of AI applications that offer personalised experiences, increasing customer pleasure and loyalty. Additionally, marketers may optimise campaigns by targeting particular demographics with customised content thanks to AI-powered data. The results will further knowledge of how AI may improve marketing tactics and have useful ramifications for tourism stakeholders looking to use AI to gain a competitive edge.

(Bulchand-gidumal et al., 2024) Comprehending the ways in which Artificial Intelligence (AI) affects organisational operations enables stakeholders to make appropriate preparations and benefit from these advancements. By empowering the augmented worker, enabling data and content as competitive catalysts, and carrying out mass personalisation and customisation, AI reengineers internal processes and procedures. By calculating return on investment, enhancing sustainability, and regulating ethical and legal elements of data usage, AI also affects interactions with stakeholders. By concentrating and integrating organisations and changing distribution patterns, AI helps the networks to which the organisations belong. By employing predictive and enhanced product and service design, as well as smart and predictive customer care, AI revolutionises customer processes and services. The study develops a research agenda and raises conversation topics for academic and industry practitioners, respectively, by illuminating the changes that AI is projected to bring to hospitality and tourism marketing.

(Binesh & Syah, 2026) This scoping study summarises the data on AI ethics in the hospitality and tourism industry. As AI grows more prevalent, its ethical implications are still dispersed and mostly unexplored. We assessed 32 articles and categorised the results into nine cross-cutting themes, along with related research gaps and future concerns, after conducting "a PRISMA-guided search and screening of Web of Science, Scopus, and Emerald". We analyse the literature using epistemology and the ethics of belief in order to expand on previous descriptive work. We look at how AI systems in service contexts create, defend, and act upon "beliefs" (such as "inferred preferences, risk scores, and recommendations") and how unjustified beliefs can result in ethical harms. With practical implications for managers, politicians, and academics looking to deploy AI responsibly, the paper develops a theory-based understanding of AI ethics in human-centric service businesses.

(Belkaid & Kummitha, 2026) In light of SDGs 8, 12, and 13, this study critically investigates how artificial intelligence (AI) might promote sustainable tourism. Unlike technology-focused studies that mainly examine efficiency and adoption, this study considers AI as a driver of sustainable development. It evidently highlighted the role of governance, digital infrastructure, regional development and regulation in shaping sustainability outcomes. The findings suggest that AI can support sustainability when guided by transparent governance, suitable policies, and context-specific implementation.

(Gaji et al., 2024) In the context of Iran's hospitality industry, this study investigates how artificial intelligence (AI) affects consumer attitudes and behaviour in the hotel, restaurant, and airline sectors. Analysing how AI impacts "consumer trust, brand engagement, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), and visitors'" preparedness to adopt AI technology is the main goal. This study tests theories on how artificial intelligence affects several aspects of customer interaction using surveys and a comparative analytic technique. The results show important connections between the quality of AI and customer engagement indicators, such brand loyalty and trust, which are essential for comprehending and forecasting consumer behaviour in reaction to technological developments. Theoretical presumptions regarding sustainability in these sectors in developing nations are established by this study, which also serves as a foundation for future empirical research that may confirm these presumptions and investigate more general implications of AI integration in improving sustainable practices within the hospitality industry.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the various AI applications in hospitality and tourists' perceptions of AI-based services.
2. To study the ethical concerns in AI-enabled hospitality services.
3. To study the tourists' privacy concerns, data protection and trust in AI
4. To study the tourists' perceptions of responsible AI adoption in hospitality, with particular emphasis on trust, transparency, privacy, and human oversight.

RESEARCH GAP

Recent studies have examined AI adoption, usefulness, personalisation, customer experience, and efficiency in hospitality. However, limited attention has been given to responsible AI from the tourists' perspective and to the combined effect of privacy, transparency, fairness, trust, and

human oversight. Few of the major research gaps found are as follows:

- i. Limited focus on responsible AI adoption.
- ii. Insufficient attention to tourists' perspectives.
- iii. Privacy concerns studied separately.
- iv. Limited research on transparency and fairness.
- v. Lack of focus on meaningful user control.
- vi. Limited attention to AI-use disclosure.
- vii. Insufficient focus on human oversight.
- viii. Limited study of trust and privacy together.
- ix. Need to examine these factors as interconnected issues.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative review-based research methodology to examine tourists' perceptions of AI ethics, privacy concerns, and responsible AI adoption in hospitality services. The study is based on secondary information obtained from peer-reviewed research articles, systematic reviews, scoping reviews, and conceptual studies published in the field of artificial intelligence, hospitality, tourism, customer experience, privacy, ethics, and responsible technology adoption. Relevant studies were examined thematically according to the objectives of the review. The analysis focused on four major areas: AI applications and tourists' perceptions, ethical concerns associated with AI-enabled hospitality services, privacy and data protection in relation to trust, and responsible AI adoption involving transparency, fairness, user control, and human oversight. Findings from the selected literature were compared and synthesised to identify common themes, emerging concerns, and research gaps. The methodology therefore provides an integrated understanding of responsible AI adoption from the tourist perspective.

DISCUSSION

The study evidently showed that AI has improved personalisation, convenience, and service efficiency in the hospitality industry. However, concerns related to privacy, data security, and reduced human interaction remain important. Responsible use of AI is necessary to maintain customer trust and satisfaction.

- i. AI improves personalisation and service efficiency.
- ii. AI enhances convenience and access to travel information.
- iii. Privacy and data security remain major concerns.
- iv. Algorithmic bias and lack of transparency affect customer trust.

- v. Excessive automation may reduce human interaction.
- vi. Responsible AI use is important for customer satisfaction.
- vii. Human oversight helps maintain trust in AI-based services.
- viii. Hospitality companies should balance technology with personal service.

CONCLUSION

AI is transforming the hospitality industry, from making personalized recommendations to providing conversational support, streamlining processes, integrating service robots, creating personalized travel content with generative AI, and powering data-driven customer service. The literature reviewed shows that these applications can improve convenience, efficiency, personalisation, satisfaction and customer experience. Technology alone does not guarantee continued acceptance among tourists. Concerns about privacy and ethics have become more important as AI systems collect personal data, making recommendations and interacting with the customers directly. Tourists also consider transparency, fairness, accuracy, accountability, data security, autonomy, and human interaction when evaluating AI-based hospitality services.

The review shows that responsible AI requires a tourist-focused approach. Hospitality providers need clear data practices, proper disclosure, data protection, regular monitoring, and human oversight. Human involvement is particularly important when AI decisions may significantly affect tourists or when services involve personal interaction. Responsible use of AI can improve trust, satisfaction, and continued acceptance when technological benefits are balanced with privacy, autonomy, and customer expectations.

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