



The Influence of Luxury Brand Collaborations on Customer Perception in Five-Star Hotels in the UK

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Author Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my original work and has not previously been submitted, either in full or in part, for any other academic award. All sources of information and ideas used in this dissertation have been appropriately acknowledged and referenced in accordance with the University's academic integrity requirements.

I confirm that the research was conducted in accordance with the ethical approval granted for this study and with the policies of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

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Abstract

This study investigates how luxury brand collaborations influence customer perceptions of five-star hotels in the UK, with particular attention to prestige, exclusivity, authenticity, the overall guest experience and behavioural intentions. A quantitative research design was adopted using an online questionnaire completed by 83 respondents, of whom 81 met the eligibility criteria. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics and selected Spearman correlations.

The findings show that branded toiletries, spa and wellness partnerships, and fashion, design and art collaborations were the most recognised forms of collaboration. Overall, luxury partnerships strengthened perceptions of prestige, exclusivity and competitive differentiation. However, their influence on the overall guest experience, hotel choice and revisit intentions was more moderate. Brand fit, authenticity and meaningful integration into the guest experience were found to be more important than the prestige of the partner brand alone.

The study concludes that luxury brand collaborations create greater customer value when they are strategically compatible with the hotel, credible and supported by consistent service delivery. The findings provide practical guidance for UK five-star hotels when selecting and implementing luxury brand partnerships.

Keywords: Luxury brand collaborations, five-star hotels, customer perception, brand fit, authenticity, behavioural intentions

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The UK five-star hotel sector operates in an increasingly competitive environment in which traditional indicators of luxury, including location, architecture and service quality, are no longer sufficient on their own to sustain differentiation. Contemporary luxury consumers increasingly seek emotionally engaging, exclusive and symbolic experiences, encouraging hotels to collaborate with prestigious brands in fashion, beauty, wellness, gastronomy and jewellery (Pine and Gilmore, 1998; Vigneron and Johnson, 2004).

These customer-facing collaborations include branded amenities, designer suites, spa treatments and curated dining concepts. By transferring favourable brand associations, they strengthen perceptions of prestige, exclusivity and differentiation (Keller, 1993; Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne, 2021). However, the involvement of a prestigious partner does not automatically create value. Customer awareness, strategic fit, authenticity and meaningful integration into the wider hotel experience remain important, while perceived service quality continues to influence satisfaction and loyalty (Keshavarz et al., 2019).

Existing research has often examined luxury branding, co-branding, customer experience and service quality separately. Consequently, limited evidence explains how these factors interact within luxury brand collaborations in UK five-star hotels. This dissertation addresses that gap by evaluating how such partnerships influence customer perceptions of prestige, exclusivity, authenticity and the overall guest experience, as well as recommendation and revisit intentions.

1.2 Background of the Study

Luxury hospitality has evolved beyond high-quality accommodation and personalised service towards experiences that combine functional, emotional and symbolic value (Holbrook, 1999; Pine and Gilmore, 1998; Tsotsou, 2022). Customer perceptions are also formed before, during and after a visit through hotel websites, reviews, social media and direct experience, making visible collaborations relevant across the customer journey (Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantonello, 2009; Giglio et al., 2020; Petrescu, Girona and O’Leary, 2024).

Luxury hotel collaborations appear through branded amenities, wellness treatments, interiors, dining concepts, retail products and cultural experiences. Unlike ordinary supplier arrangements, these partnerships are deliberately incorporated into the hotel's value proposition to transfer desirable brand associations and support competitive differentiation (Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne, 2021; Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary, 2023).

London provides a particularly appropriate research setting because of its concentration of internationally recognised five-star hotels and the intensity of competition within the luxury hospitality sector. Contemporary examples include The Savoy's Royal Suite by Gucci, the Guerlain Spa at Raffles London at The OWO, Rosewood London's art-inspired afternoon teas, The Peninsula London's Macallan experience and Claridge's collaborations with luxury skincare, fashion and jewellery brands. These examples illustrate the diversity of collaboration strategies adopted by leading luxury hotels and are examined in greater detail in Chapter Two (see Table 2.1). These collaborations are relevant to the present study because they influence how customers perceive a hotel's prestige, exclusivity, quality and overall desirability.

Branding theory provides a basis for understanding this potential influence. Prestigious partnerships strengthen customer-based brand equity by transferring associations of quality, status and exclusivity from the partner brand to the hotel (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993). Hospitality research, however, continues to identify perceived service quality, employee performance and value as key drivers of satisfaction and loyalty (Keshavarz et al., 2019; Özcan, Pehlivan and Erkasap, 2024). Collaborations are therefore most effective when they reinforce a strong hotel experience rather than attempt to compensate for operational weaknesses.

The expansion of luxury brands into hospitality further illustrates the convergence of the two sectors. Bulgari Hotels & Resorts, Armani Hotels and LVMH's Cheval Blanc translate established luxury identities into complete hospitality concepts (Bulgari Hotels & Resorts, n.d.; Armani Hotels, n.d.; LVMH, n.d.). Although these are brand-owned concepts rather than external collaborations, they demonstrate the increasing strategic importance of experiential luxury and provide wider context for examining how luxury branding shapes customer perception in hospitality.

1.3 Problem Statement

Luxury brand collaborations are increasingly visible in five-star hotels, yet limited empirical research has examined how customers interpret them in the UK context. Existing studies generally address co-branding, service quality, customer experience and luxury branding independently, providing only partial understanding of their combined effect in hospitality settings (Keshavarz et al., 2019; Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne, 2021; Rather et al., 2024).

A recognised luxury partner enhances prestige and symbolic value when the collaboration appears credible and consistent with the hotel's identity. Poor strategic fit, excessive promotion or weak integration reduce authenticity and weaken customer response (Beverland, 2005; Park, Milberg and Lawson, 1991; Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary, 2023). Likewise, branded amenities or exclusive experiences are unlikely to offset inconsistent service or poor facilities. Their influence is therefore expected to depend on awareness, authenticity, fit and perceived service quality (Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne, 2021; Keshavarz et al., 2019; Özcan, Pehlivan and Erkasap, 2024).

This creates an academic and managerial need for clearer evidence. Hotels invest in high-profile partnerships to strengthen positioning and justify premium prices; however, visibility alone does not guarantee improvements in satisfaction, recommendation or revisit intentions. This study therefore examines when and how collaborations create value for customers who have stayed in, visited or used services within UK five-star hotels.

1.4 Research Aim, Objectives and Research Questions

Research Aim

The aim of this study is to investigate how luxury brand collaborations influence customer perceptions of UK five-star hotels, particularly in relation to prestige, exclusivity, authenticity, the overall guest experience and behavioural intentions.

Research Objectives

1. To examine customer awareness of the main forms of luxury brand collaboration visible in UK five-star hotels.
2. To evaluate the influence of luxury brand collaborations on perceived prestige, exclusivity, authenticity and the overall guest experience.
3. To assess the influence of luxury brand collaborations on recommendation intentions and willingness to revisit.

4. To determine how customer awareness, brand fit, authenticity and service integration influence the perceived value of luxury brand collaborations.
5. To provide evidence-based recommendations for the effective design and implementation of luxury brand collaborations in UK five-star hotels.

Research Questions

- RQ1. Which forms of luxury brand collaboration are customers most aware of in UK five-star hotels?
- RQ2. How do luxury brand collaborations influence perceptions of prestige, exclusivity, authenticity and the overall guest experience?
- RQ3. To what extent do luxury brand collaborations influence recommendation intentions and willingness to revisit?
- RQ4. To what extent do customer awareness, brand fit, authenticity and service integration influence the perceived value of luxury brand collaborations?
- RQ5. What recommendations could improve the effectiveness of luxury brand collaborations in UK five-star hotels?

1.5 Significance of the Research

This study contributes to luxury hospitality research by integrating customer-based brand equity, signalling, co-branding, authenticity and service quality. Previous research has examined these areas individually, but less attention has been given to how they interact within luxury hotel collaborations (Keller, 1993; Keshavarz et al., 2019; Jain et al., 2023).

The study also has practical value. Its findings provide hotel managers with evidence about which collaborations customers notice, which appear credible and how partnerships enhance differentiation without becoming superficial or overly promotional (Beverland, 2005; Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne, 2021; Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary, 2023).

1.6 Scope and Rationale of the Study

The research focuses on UK five-star hotels, with particular attention to London because of its concentration of internationally recognised properties and competitive luxury market. It examines collaborations with external brands in fashion, beauty, wellness, gastronomy, fragrance and lifestyle (Savills, 2024; Jain et al., 2023; Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne, 2021).

The target population comprises adults aged 18 or over who have stayed in a UK five-star hotel or used one of its customer-facing services, including restaurants, bars, spas, wellness facilities, afternoon tea, events or accommodation. This broad definition is appropriate because collaborations can influence perceptions across the full customer journey, not only during overnight stays (Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantonello, 2009; Giglio et al., 2020; Petrescu, Gironda and O’Leary, 2024). Although the study addresses the UK sector, data collection included a strong London representation; therefore, the findings do not fully represent customer perceptions across all UK regions.

The study does not examine financial performance, supplier management or implementation costs. It focuses on customer perceptions of prestige, exclusivity, authenticity, the overall guest experience and behavioural intentions. This scope directly addresses the limited evidence on how customers interpret luxury collaborations in UK five-star hospitality (Keller, 1993; Beverland, 2005; Keshavarz et al., 2019; Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary, 2023).

1.7 Limitations of the Study

This study is limited by the use of convenience sampling, a relatively small sample and a strong representation of respondents with experience of London five-star hotels. The findings are therefore indicative and may not represent all customers of five-star hotels across the UK. Further limitations are discussed in Chapters Three and Five.

1.8 Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation is organised into five chapters, each addressing a different stage of the research process. Chapter One introduces the research background, problem statement, aim, objectives, research questions, significance and scope of the study. Chapter Two critically reviews the relevant literature and develops the conceptual framework. Chapter Three explains and justifies the research methodology, including the survey design, sampling approach, data collection, data analysis, ethical considerations and limitations. Chapter Four presents and discusses the research findings. Chapter Five answers the research questions, summarises the conclusions and provides recommendations for practice and future research.

1.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced the research into the influence of luxury brand collaborations on customer perceptions of UK five-star hotels. It established that collaborations in fashion, beauty, wellness, gastronomy and lifestyle can strengthen hotel prestige, exclusivity and differentiation. However, their effectiveness is expected to depend on customer awareness, brand fit, authenticity, service integration and the quality of the wider guest experience.

The chapter identified a gap in existing research because luxury branding, co-branding, service quality and customer experience have often been examined separately. It therefore presented the research aim, five objectives and five research questions developed to investigate how collaborations influence customer perceptions, recommendation intentions and willingness to revisit. The chapter also explained the significance, scope, rationale and limitations of the study. Chapter Two critically reviews the relevant literature and develops the conceptual framework used to guide the empirical research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to critically evaluate the academic literature relating to luxury brand collaborations and their influence on customer perception within five-star hotels. The chapter brings together perspectives from luxury branding, hospitality management and consumer behaviour to examine how collaborations may contribute to perceived prestige, exclusivity and competitive differentiation. This interdisciplinary approach reflects the complexity of luxury hospitality, where customer evaluations are shaped not only by service quality but also by symbolic meanings, brand associations and experiential value.

Although luxury brand collaborations have become increasingly prominent within industry practice, academic research remains fragmented. Branding scholars generally argue that collaborations strengthen customer-based brand equity through the transfer of favourable brand associations (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993), whereas hospitality researchers consistently identify service quality, authenticity and personalised experiences as the principal determinants of customer satisfaction and loyalty (Keshavarz et al., 2019; Özcan, Pehlivan and Erkasap, 2024). These perspectives can be considered complementary rather than contradictory. Luxury collaborations are most effective when they reinforce an already exceptional hospitality experience instead of attempting to compensate for operational weaknesses.

The chapter begins by defining luxury brand collaborations and examining their strategic role within contemporary hospitality. It then critically evaluates key theories relating to customer perception, symbolic value, customer-based brand equity, signalling theory, co-branding, authenticity, service quality and customer loyalty. The discussion considers areas of agreement and disagreement in the literature, together with the opportunities and limitations associated with luxury collaborations. The chapter concludes by identifying the principal research gap and presenting the conceptual framework that underpins the empirical investigation.

2.2 Defining Luxury Brand Collaborations in Five-Star Hotels

Luxury brand collaborations are strategic partnerships between hotels and external brands with recognised luxury, premium or aspirational positioning. Unlike conventional supplier relationships, they are deliberately integrated into the guest experience through branded amenities,

spa treatments, designer suites, dining concepts, retail spaces and lifestyle events. Their purpose is to enhance functional quality while also communicating prestige, craftsmanship, exclusivity and authenticity (Keller, 1993; Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne, 2021; Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary, 2023).

A supplier relationship becomes a strategic collaboration when the partner brand is actively incorporated into the hotel's value proposition. However, the presence of a prestigious brand does not guarantee positive customer perception. Its effectiveness depends on several interrelated factors, including customer awareness, strategic fit and authenticity (Park, Milberg and Lawson, 1991; Beverland, 2005).

2.2.1 Strategic Role of Luxury Brand Collaborations in Five-Star Hotels

Luxury brand collaborations have developed beyond promotional partnerships to become strategic tools for strengthening hotel identity, positioning and experiential differentiation. By combining tangible service elements with symbolic attributes such as prestige, craftsmanship and exclusivity, they form part of wider competitive strategies within luxury hospitality (Pine and Gilmore, 1998; Schmitt, 1999; Kapferer and Bastien, 2012). Recent industry analysis similarly describes the growing convergence of luxury brands and hospitality as being driven by experiential luxury, authenticity and personalised lifestyle experiences (Deloitte, 2025).

From a branding perspective, collaborations transfer favourable associations between compatible brands. Aaker (1991) links brand equity to awareness, perceived quality, loyalty and symbolic meaning, while Keller (1993) argues that brand knowledge influences customer responses. Recognised partner brands therefore strengthen expectations of prestige and quality before the hotel experience begins (Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne, 2021).

However, branding theory explains only part of the process. Hotel experiences are shaped by service delivery, employee interaction and the physical environment. Service quality, personalisation and emotional engagement therefore remain central to customer satisfaction and loyalty (Keshavarz et al., 2019; Rather et al., 2024; Özcan, Pehlivan and Erkasap, 2024).

This study therefore considers customer perception in relation to symbolic branding, strategic fit, authenticity and the wider guest experience.

2.2.2 Contemporary Luxury Brand Collaborations within UK Five-Star Hotels

Luxury brand collaborations are increasingly visible within UK five-star hotels across sectors such as fashion, beauty, wellness, gastronomy, fragrance and lifestyle. They appear through designer suites, branded spa treatments, exclusive dining concepts, curated retail and cultural experiences. These partnerships enhance both functional quality and symbolic value by strengthening perceptions of prestige, exclusivity and refinement (Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne, 2021; Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary, 2023). Examples of these collaborations are presented in Table 2.1 and include partnerships at The Savoy, Raffles London at The OWO, Rosewood London, The Peninsula London and Claridge's. London provides a particularly relevant context because of its concentration of internationally recognised luxury hotels and its highly competitive hospitality market (Savills, 2024; Jain et al., 2023). Properties such as The Savoy, Claridge's, The Peninsula London, Rosewood London, Corinthia London and Raffles London at The OWO use customer-facing partnerships to enrich the guest experience and reinforce their market positioning. The specific sources supporting these examples are provided within Table 2.1.

However, visibility alone does not guarantee effectiveness. Positive brand associations are more likely to transfer when customers recognise the partner and perceive a credible relationship between the collaborating brands (Keller, 1993; Park, Milberg and Lawson, 1991; Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne, 2021). A prestigious partnership has limited influence when customers do not notice it or consider it inconsistent with the hotel's identity.

Authenticity and service integration are equally important. Collaborations are more likely to strengthen customer perception when they enhance the actual guest experience rather than operate as decorative or promotional additions. Poorly matched or overly commercial partnerships instead weaken perceptions of credibility and exclusivity (Beverland, 2005; Keshavarz et al., 2019; Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary, 2023).

Table 2.1 presents selected customer-facing luxury brand collaborations in London five-star hotels and critically evaluates their relevance to customer perception.

Table 2.1: Selected Luxury Brand Collaborations in London Five-Star Hotels

Collaboration form	UK/London example	Benefit	Limitation
Fashion, design and branded suites	The Savoy, London: the Royal Suite by Gucci connected the hotel with Gucci Decor and Christie's objects, creating a visible fashion-led suite experience (Gucci, n.d.).	Strengthens design identity, cultural status and symbolic value.	Its influence is limited to customers who recognise or experience the suite.
Wellness and spa partnership	Raffles London at The OWO: the Guerlain Spa combines Guerlain Paris treatment expertise with Pillar Wellbeing in a 27,000 sq. ft. wellness environment (Raffles London at The OWO, n.d.; Guerlain, n.d.).	Creates strong functional and image fit by enhancing the spa offer.	The brand name has limited value unless supported by treatment quality and staff expertise.
Skincare and expert wellness partners	Corinthia London: Biome by Corinthia London identifies expert partners including Wildsmith, Augustinus Bader and AMP (Corinthia London, n.d.).	Integrates specialist brands into a broader wellness proposition.	Customers do not recognise the value unless the hotel communicates the partners' expertise clearly.
Art, culture and afternoon tea	Rosewood London: the Mirror Room has used Art Afternoon Tea collaborations, including The John Booth Collection and Monet-inspired experiences (Rosewood London, 2024; Rosewood London, 2026).	Creates aesthetic, cultural and digital value.	Highly photographable experiences risk being valued more for social-media appeal than for service substance.
Food and beverage / luxury drinks	The Peninsula London: The Macallan Red Collection Experience positioned the hotel as the first venue in Europe to offer all seven released editions as a tasting flight (The Peninsula London, 2024).	Communicates rarity, connoisseurship and premium taste.	Its value depends on customer knowledge of whisky and scarcity, and therefore does not influence all guests equally.
Skincare and wellness treatments	Claridge's, London: Claridge's Spa lists resident brands including Augustinus Bader and MZ Skin, alongside visiting wellness masters (Claridge's, n.d.a).	Connects partner brands directly with service expertise.	When similar skincare brands are used widely across hotels, the collaboration becomes less distinctive.
Fragrance and lifestyle rooftop experience	The Berkeley, London: Capri in the City at The Berkeley Rooftop Bar is a summer experience created in collaboration with Acqua di Parma (Maybourne, 2026).	Combines fragrance, Italian lifestyle cues, cocktails and atmosphere.	Seasonal visibility attracts attention but does not necessarily generate long-term loyalty.
Jewellery and heritage retail collaboration	Claridge's, London: Claridge's x Annoushka presents an exclusive collection of 18ct gold charms inspired by signature hotel symbols (Claridge's, n.d.b).	Translates hotel heritage into collectible luxury meaning.	It strengthens brand mythology without directly improving the core stay experience.

Source: Author's compilation based on the sources cited within the table.

The examples in Table 2.1 demonstrate that collaborations differ in their function and likely influence. The Savoy and Gucci partnership is primarily symbolic and design-led, whereas Raffles London and Guerlain or Claridge's and Augustinus Bader are more directly connected to service delivery. Rosewood London's art afternoon tea illustrates aesthetic and digital value, while The Peninsula London and The Macallan demonstrate how rarity reinforces perceptions of exclusivity.

The examples also reveal important limitations. Some collaborations appeal mainly to niche customer groups, while others depend on customers recognising the partner brand. In addition, highly visible collaborations enhance hotel image without necessarily improving the core guest experience. These differences suggest that luxury collaborations cannot be evaluated using a single measure of success and may influence customer perception in different ways (Hagtvedt and Patrick, 2008; Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne, 2021; Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary, 2023).

These limitations suggest that the effectiveness of luxury brand collaborations depends on multiple interrelated factors rather than the presence of a prestigious partner alone. This supports the need for further empirical research into how such collaborations influence customer perceptions within the UK luxury hotel sector.

2.2.3 Luxury Brand Extension into Hospitality

The expansion of luxury brands into hospitality reflects a broader shift from product-based luxury towards immersive and experiential consumption. Unlike collaborations between hotels and external partners, brand-owned hotels place the luxury brand itself at the centre of the hospitality concept. The brand identity is therefore communicated through design, service, gastronomy, wellness and personalised interaction (Pine and Gilmore, 1998; Kapferer and Bastien, 2012).

Bulgari Hotels & Resorts, Armani Hotels and LVMH's Cheval Blanc illustrate this model by translating established luxury values into complete hospitality environments (Bulgari Hotels & Resorts, n.d.; Armani Hotels, n.d.; LVMH, n.d.). These properties allow customers to experience the brand's identity, lifestyle and symbolic meaning beyond its traditional product categories. In this sense, hospitality becomes a form of brand extension that can strengthen customer-based brand equity through tangible and memorable experiences (Keller, 1993; Pine and Gilmore, 1998).

Although these hotels differ from the external collaborations examined in this dissertation, they provide useful context for understanding the growing relationship between luxury branding and hospitality. They also reinforce the wider argument that prestige alone is insufficient. The strength of a luxury hospitality concept depends on whether the symbolic promise of the parent brand is supported by authentic service quality, operational consistency and a coherent guest experience.

2.2.4 Luxury Strategy, Rarity and Controlled Exclusivity

Luxury differs from premium positioning not only through superior quality but through symbolic, emotional and social value created by rarity, craftsmanship and controlled access (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012; Vigneron and Johnson, 2004). In hospitality, these principles are expressed through privacy, personalised service, bespoke experiences and selective customer engagement.

Luxury management also differs from conventional business logic because growth, accessibility and high-volume sales are not always the main priorities. While many businesses seek to maximise availability, luxury brands often protect desirability through selectivity, controlled distribution and symbolic distance from the mass market (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012; Phau and Prendergast, 2000). Cialdini's (2009) scarcity principle further suggests that restricted availability can increase perceived desirability, reinforcing the importance of controlled access within luxury positioning. In luxury hospitality, collaborations should therefore reinforce exclusivity, authenticity and the perceived uniqueness of the guest experience rather than simply increase visibility or short-term sales.

Vigneron and Johnson (2004) identify conspicuousness, uniqueness, quality, hedonism and self-identity as central dimensions of luxury consumption. Customers therefore evaluate luxury hotels through both functional performance and symbolic meanings related to status and exclusivity. However, exclusivity alone is insufficient. Luxury credibility also depends on authenticity and consistency between brand claims and the customer experience (Beverland, 2005).

Together, these perspectives suggest that luxury collaborations derive value not simply from prestige but from their ability to preserve rarity, symbolic meaning and the distinctive character expected within luxury hospitality (Pine and Gilmore, 1998; Tsiotsou, 2022).

2.3 Luxury Hospitality, Customer Perception and Symbolic Value

Luxury hospitality is both a service context and a form of symbolic consumption. Guests choose five-star hotels not only for comfort and convenience, but also for status, emotional reward, identity expression and memorable experiences. Vigneron and Johnson (2004) identify conspicuousness, uniqueness, perceived quality, hedonism and self-identity as key dimensions of luxury perception, suggesting that customers evaluate luxury through both social meaning and personal experience.

In this dissertation, customer perception refers primarily to evaluations of prestige, exclusivity, authenticity, desirability and the overall guest experience, together with recommendation and revisit intentions. Perceived quality and service quality are used as supporting theoretical concepts rather than independently measured variables. Holbrook (1999) conceptualises consumer value as multidimensional, including excellence, status, esteem and aesthetics, while Berthon et al. (2009) distinguish between material, individual and social dimensions of luxury. These perspectives indicate that hotel collaborations may contribute to functional value, personal pleasure and symbolic meaning at the same time.

Symbolic value also helps explain why relatively small touchpoints can shape wider hotel evaluations. A recognised skincare brand, chef collaboration or art-led experience signals a broader luxury lifestyle. Hagtvedt and Patrick (2008) support this through the art infusion effect, whereby associations with art can positively influence consumer evaluations.

However, symbolic value does not automatically mean that the hotel experience has improved. A collaboration can strengthen prestige and visual appeal while offering limited practical value. Much of the existing research also focuses on products and luxury brands rather than UK five-star hotels. This creates a need to examine whether customers perceive hotel collaborations as meaningful enhancements or mainly as attractive branding cues.

2.4 Customer-Based Brand Equity and Signalling Theory

Customer-Based Brand Equity provides a key framework for explaining how luxury collaborations influence customer perception. Keller (1993) defines CBBE as the effect of brand knowledge on

customer responses, arguing that strong, favourable and distinctive associations can improve perceived quality, preference and behavioural intentions. In luxury hospitality, a recognised partner brand therefore transfers associations of exclusivity, craftsmanship and status to the hotel.

Aaker (1991) similarly links brand equity to awareness, perceived quality, loyalty and favourable brand associations. This suggests that collaborations reinforce hotel positioning when customers recognise the partner and perceive its reputation as compatible with the hotel's identity. Hospitality research supports this argument, as Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne (2021) found that branded amenities can positively influence customer-based brand equity by strengthening perceptions of quality and brand image.

Signalling Theory offers a related explanation. Spence (1973) argues that observable cues help reduce uncertainty when quality cannot be assessed in advance. Luxury collaborations therefore act as pre-arrival signals of prestige, reliability and expected quality, particularly when customers have limited prior experience of the hotel.

However, CBBE and Signalling Theory mainly explain how expectations are created rather than whether they are fulfilled. Positive associations and quality signals must still be supported by the actual hotel experience. Research in luxury hospitality shows that perceived value, service performance and satisfaction remain important influences on loyalty (Keshavarz et al., 2019; Özcan, Pehlivan and Erkasap, 2024). These theories therefore suggest that collaborations shape initial expectations, while the wider hotel experience determines whether those expectations are confirmed or challenged.

2.5 Co-Branding, Brand Fit and Strategic Collaboration

Co-branding occurs when two recognised brands are deliberately associated to create mutual value. In luxury hospitality, this may involve partnerships in wellness, fashion, gastronomy, beauty or lifestyle. When strategically coherent, such collaborations strengthen aspirational value, willingness to pay and competitive positioning (Whalen and Sisson, 2022; Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary, 2023).

Their effectiveness depends largely on perceived brand fit. Customers evaluate whether the partner is compatible with the hotel's identity, service offer and market positioning (Park, Milberg and Lawson, 1991; Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary, 2023). A wellness brand fits naturally with a spa-focused hotel, while a fashion partnership suits a property associated with design, heritage or glamour.

Brand fit can be functional or image-based. Functional fit exists when the partner improves a practical aspect of the guest experience, whereas image fit occurs when it reinforces the hotel's personality, heritage or target market. For example, a skincare partnership may provide direct functional value in a room or spa, while a fashion collaboration may contribute more strongly to symbolic positioning.

Co-branding can therefore create mutual reinforcement: the partner brand lends prestige to the hotel, while the hotel provides an experiential setting for the partner. However, this value is strongest when functional fit, image fit and service integration operate together (Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne, 2021; Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary, 2023).

2.6 Authenticity, Credibility and the Risk of Superficial Collaboration

Authenticity strengthens luxury credibility through heritage, quality commitment and coherent brand narratives (Beverland, 2005). In hospitality, customers are more likely to respond positively when a collaboration appears credible and consistent with the hotel's identity.

However, over-commercialisation weakens luxury perception when prestigious names are used mainly as decoration. Collaborations can enhance symbolic value, but they appear superficial when the relationship between the hotel and partner brand is unclear or overly promotional (Beverland, 2005; Petrescu, Girona and O'Leary, 2024).

Authenticity also depends on execution. A spa partnership requires treatment quality and staff expertise, while beverage, fashion or lifestyle collaborations must be supported by knowledgeable service and consistent delivery. Credibility therefore emerges from the alignment between the collaboration's symbolic promise and the actual guest experience (Keshavarz et al., 2019; Özcan, Pehlivan and Erkasap, 2024).

In this study, authenticity is assessed through customer perceptions of credibility, coherence and meaningful integration into the hotel experience.

2.7 Service Quality, Perceived Value and Guest Experience

Service quality remains a major driver of satisfaction, perceived value and loyalty in luxury hospitality (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1988; Keshavarz et al., 2019). Luxury collaborations enhance prestige and exclusivity, but do not replace the need for reliable, responsive and personalised service.

The SERVQUAL model explains service evaluation through reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1988). Luxury hospitality also extends beyond functional performance by incorporating emotional engagement, personalisation and memorable experiences (Pine and Gilmore, 1998; Schmitt, 1999).

Recent research similarly identifies perceived value, trust, emotional attachment and memorable experiences as important influences on satisfaction and loyalty (Keshavarz et al., 2019; Rather et al., 2024). Customers therefore evaluate luxury hotels holistically, combining service performance with symbolic and emotional benefits. Industry evidence also emphasises that exceptional luxury-hotel experiences depend on a culture of service excellence and employees who understand guest preferences, reinforcing the importance of operational delivery alongside branding (McKinsey & Company, 2024).

Luxury collaborations raise expectations before arrival, but these expectations must be confirmed through consistent service delivery (Keller, 1993; Spence, 1973). Perceived value therefore emerges from the interaction between branding and experience, with collaborations contributing most effectively when they reinforce an already strong hospitality offer.

2.8 Digital Visibility, Reviews and Pre-Arrival Perception

Customer perception begins before arrival, as guests use hotel websites, booking platforms, social media and online reviews to evaluate potential experiences. Digital visibility therefore allows luxury collaborations to shape expectations before customers encounter the hotel directly.

Consumer-generated visual content can reveal how symbolic and aesthetic cues influence luxury hotel interpretation (Giglio et al., 2020). Recognised partner brands also act as heuristics that help customers make rapid judgements about quality, prestige and desirability (Petrescu, Girona and O’Leary, 2024). A visible skincare brand, designer suite or beverage partnership therefore strengthens expectations of refinement and differentiation.

However, digital visibility is double-edged. It can extend the value of a collaboration beyond the physical hotel, but it also raises expectations and exposes the partnership to public evaluation. If the online image is stronger than the actual experience, reviews weaken credibility rather than reinforce it (Giglio et al., 2020; Petrescu, Girona and O’Leary, 2024). Highly visual collaborations, such as art-led afternoon teas or rooftop lifestyle experiences, may generate attention and online sharing, but visibility does not automatically lead to satisfaction or loyalty. Their influence ultimately depends on whether the physical experience confirms the expectations created online.

2.9 Loyalty Intentions and Competitive Differentiation

The managerial importance of luxury brand collaborations depends partly on whether they influence loyalty and competitive differentiation. Loyalty intention includes the likelihood of revisiting, recommending or selecting a hotel over competitors. Brand experience, emotional engagement and relationship quality support these intentions when collaborations make the hotel experience more distinctive and memorable (Rather et al., 2024).

However, luxury hotel customers are not homogeneous. Different guests place different levels of value on privacy, staff recognition, design, branded amenities, wellness and culinary experiences (Mele, Dubosson and Schegg, 2025). Collaborations therefore appeal strongly to some customer segments while having limited relevance to others.

Competitive differentiation is also not guaranteed. Collaborations may help hotels stand out, but their value weakens when similar partnerships become common across the sector. Sustainable differentiation is more likely when the collaboration fits the hotel’s identity, creates meaningful value and is difficult for competitors to imitate (Keller, 1993; Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary, 2023; Whalen and Sisson, 2022).

A customer may therefore appreciate a collaboration without becoming loyal to the hotel. Loyalty is more likely when the partnership supports a wider positive experience involving service quality, trust, emotional engagement and perceived value.

2.10 Forms of Luxury Brand Collaboration Currently Visible in UK Five-Star Hotels

The literature and examples reviewed in Section 2.2.2 indicate that luxury brand collaborations in UK five-star hotels take several customer-facing forms. These include fashion and designer suites, spa and wellness partnerships, skincare treatments, art and cultural experiences, luxury food and beverage concepts, fragrance-led lifestyle events and jewellery or retail collaborations (Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne, 2021; Jain et al., 2023).

Although these forms share the broad aim of strengthening prestige, symbolic value and competitive differentiation, their influence may vary according to customer awareness, partner recognition and perceived brand fit (Keller, 1993; Park, Milberg and Lawson, 1991; Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary, 2023). Their effectiveness also depends on whether the collaboration is perceived as authentic and meaningfully integrated into the wider guest experience rather than functioning primarily as a promotional addition (Beverland, 2005; Keshavarz et al., 2019). Consequently, different collaboration forms may not be equally visible or valuable to customers. This variation provides the basis for examining which forms of luxury brand collaboration are most visible and recognised by customers, as addressed by the first research question.

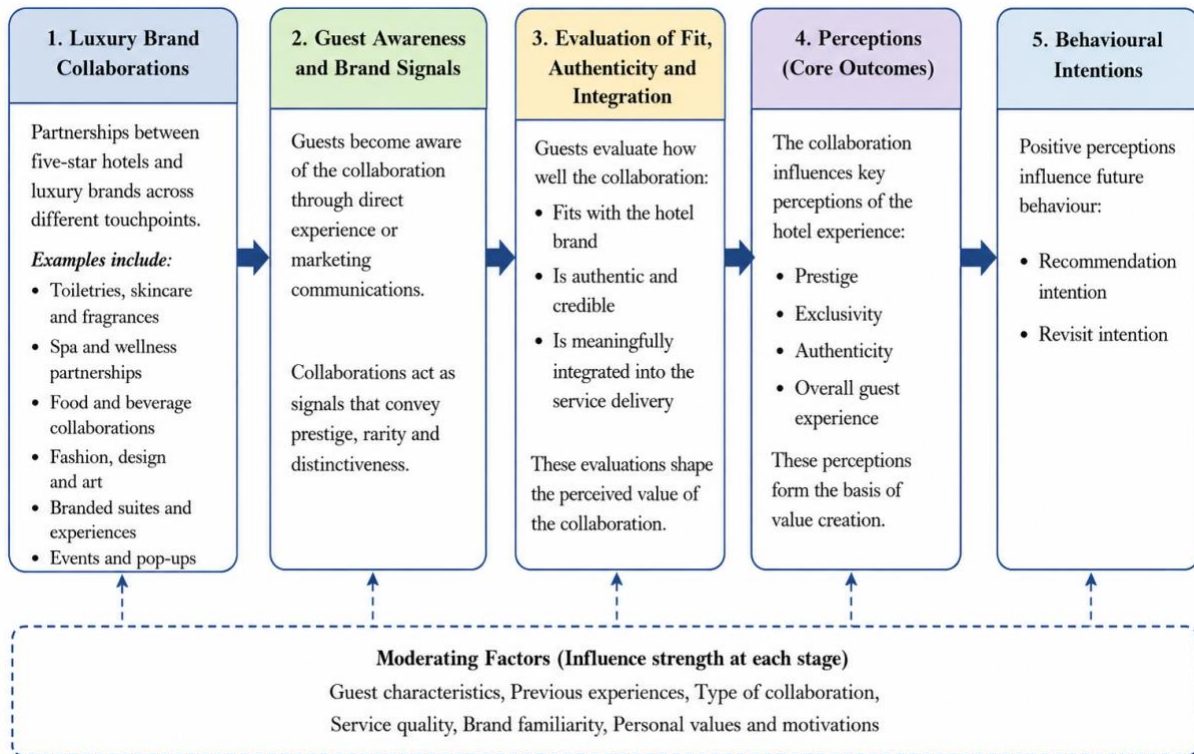
2.11 Conceptual Framework and Research Gaps

The literature reviewed throughout this chapter indicates that customer perception of luxury brand collaborations cannot be explained by a single theoretical perspective. While branding theories emphasise the importance of partner prestige, brand equity and symbolic associations (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993), luxury management literature argues that rarity, exclusivity and controlled access are equally important in preserving desirability (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012; Vigneron and Johnson, 2004). Similarly, co-branding research highlights the role of perceived brand fit, whereas studies of authenticity and service quality suggest that prestigious partnerships alone are

insufficient to generate positive customer evaluations if the collaboration is not perceived as credible or supported by the guest experience (Beverland, 2005; Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne, 2021; Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary, 2023).

These differing perspectives suggest that customer perception is shaped by multiple interrelated factors rather than by a single determinant. Consequently, the conceptual framework developed for this study synthesises these complementary theoretical perspectives into a unified model. The framework brings together customer awareness, partner prestige, brand fit, authenticity, service integration and the resulting effects on customer perception and behavioural intentions. Figure 2.1 illustrates the proposed relationship between these factors.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework: Luxury Brand Collaborations in UK Five-Star Hotels



Source: Author's own compilation based on the literature reviewed.

As shown in Figure 2.1, customer awareness represents the starting point because a collaboration cannot influence perceptions if customers are unaware of its existence. However, awareness alone is unlikely to generate positive evaluations. The literature suggests that initial expectations created by partner prestige and rarity are subsequently evaluated through perceptions of brand fit, authenticity and meaningful integration into the guest experience. However, scholars differ

regarding the relative importance of these factors and the extent to which each contributes to customer perception. Consequently, the framework does not assume that any single variable determines customer perception. Instead, it proposes that these constructs operate collectively to influence perceived prestige, exclusivity and the overall guest experience, which may subsequently affect recommendation and revisit intentions. This integrated perspective addresses a limitation within the existing literature, where individual theories often explain only one aspect of luxury brand collaborations rather than the wider customer evaluation process.

The principal research gap arises from the separation between branding and hospitality research. Luxury branding studies generally emphasise brand equity, symbolic value and association transfer, whereas hospitality studies focus more strongly on service quality, customer experience and loyalty (Keshavarz et al., 2019; Jain et al., 2023; Rather et al., 2024). Relatively little research integrates these perspectives to explain how customers interpret luxury brand collaborations within UK five-star hotels.

A further gap concerns the extent to which different forms of luxury brand collaboration are recognised and valued by customers. Branded amenities, spa partnerships, designer suites, dining concepts and lifestyle events may not influence customer perception equally. The questionnaire therefore examines customer awareness, brand fit, authenticity, service integration, perceived prestige, exclusivity, the overall guest experience and behavioural intentions. This integrated framework guides the questionnaire design and provides the theoretical basis for the methodology presented in Chapter Three. An overview of the principal literature themes and their relevance to the study is provided in Appendix A.

Overall, the conceptual framework provides the theoretical foundation for the empirical investigation undertaken in this dissertation. The following chapter explains the research methodology adopted to examine these proposed relationships within the context of UK five-star hotels.

2.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter critically reviewed literature on luxury brand collaborations and customer perception in luxury hospitality. It established that collaborations strengthen prestige, exclusivity and differentiation through symbolic value, brand equity, signalling, rarity and co-branding.

However, their effectiveness depends on customer awareness, strategic fit, authenticity and service integration. Collaborations enhance customer perception when they are credible, selective and meaningfully incorporated into the guest experience, but have limited or negative effects when they appear superficial, over-promoted or unsupported by service quality.

The chapter identified a gap in research integrating branding and hospitality perspectives within UK five-star hotels. The resulting conceptual framework therefore combines symbolic branding with experiential service delivery to guide the empirical investigation.

The design enabled the systematic measurement of customer awareness, perceived brand fit, authenticity, service integration, prestige, exclusivity, the overall guest experience and behavioural intentions. However, numerical measurement simplifies complex luxury experiences and cannot fully capture the subjective meanings attached to brands, status and hospitality consumption (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004; Berthon et al., 2009). The methodology was therefore appropriate for identifying patterns and associations within the sample, but it was not intended to produce universally generalisable or causal conclusions.

3.2 Research Philosophy

The study adopted a positivist research philosophy because it sought to identify observable patterns in customer perceptions through structured numerical data. Positivism assumes that social phenomena can be investigated through systematic measurement, standardised instruments and statistical analysis (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019; Ryan, 2018).

This philosophy was appropriate because the study measured and compared predefined constructs rather than exploring customer experiences through completely open-ended enquiry. These constructs included awareness, brand fit, authenticity, service integration, prestige, exclusivity, the overall guest experience and behavioural intentions, all of which were identified in the literature and incorporated into the conceptual framework (Keller, 1993; Beverland, 2005; Vigneron and Johnson, 2004; Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne, 2021).

The application of positivism was reflected in the use of a structured online questionnaire containing standardised multiple-choice and Likert-scale questions. All participants responded to the same questions, allowing their perceptions to be converted into comparable numerical data and analysed through frequencies, percentages, mean scores and selected exploratory associations. This allowed patterns to be identified across the sample and comparisons to be made between customer awareness, perceived collaboration value and behavioural intentions.

Positivism was suitable for the study because the research questions required measurable evidence about customer perceptions and the collaboration forms most recognised by respondents. These questions required measurable and comparable responses rather than detailed individual narratives. However, positivism simplifies subjective concepts such as luxury, authenticity and exclusivity

because participants interpret them according to personal experiences and expectations (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004; Berthon et al., 2009). An interpretivist approach could have provided deeper insight into these meanings, but it would have offered less standardised evidence and would not have aligned as closely with the quantitative objectives of this study.

3.3 Approach to Theory Development

The study adopted a deductive approach, moving from established theory to empirical measurement (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). The questionnaire was derived from the principal concepts identified in the literature on customer-based brand equity, signalling theory, co-branding, authenticity, luxury value and the guest experience (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993; Spence, 1973; Beverland, 2005; Vigneron and Johnson, 2004). Service-quality literature provided additional theoretical context for interpreting how collaborations relate to the wider hospitality experience.

For example, questions concerning branded amenities, customer perceptions and signalling were informed by Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne (2021), while items relating to strategic fit and the compatibility of collaboration partners drew on Park, Milberg and Lawson (1991) and Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary (2023). This helped maintain consistency between the literature review, conceptual framework and questionnaire, as the variables measured were drawn from the literature. The principal limitation of deduction was that reliance on pre-selected constructs restricted participants' ability to express unexpected interpretations or identify factors not anticipated in the literature. This limitation was partly addressed through practical questions concerning collaboration types, perceived success factors and levels of awareness, which introduced some flexibility within the structured design.

3.4 Methodological Choice and Research Strategy

The study used a mono-method quantitative survey strategy based on a structured questionnaire. A quantitative approach was appropriate because the research aimed to measure and compare customer perceptions of luxury brand collaborations across a group of participants. The study examined predefined variables, including awareness, brand fit, authenticity, service integration, prestige, exclusivity, the overall guest experience and behavioural intentions. These variables were

translated into standardised questionnaire items and analysed numerically using frequencies, percentages, mean scores and selected Spearman correlations (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019).

The quantitative method also aligned directly with the research questions. The study sought to identify which forms of luxury brand collaboration were most widely recognised, the extent to which respondents believed collaborations influenced hotel perceptions, and whether they affected recommendation and revisit intentions. These questions required comparable responses from multiple participants rather than detailed accounts of individual experiences. A survey enabled the same questions and response scales to be presented consistently to all respondents, supporting systematic comparison across the sample (Ponto, 2015).

A mono-method design was selected because the study relied on one principal source of primary data: numerical responses collected through the questionnaire. Using one quantitative method was manageable within the available timeframe and remained consistent with the positivist and deductive design of the study and the analysis presented in Chapter Four.

Qualitative interviews were considered because they could have provided deeper explanations of how customers interpret concepts such as authenticity, prestige and exclusivity. However, qualitative data would have been less standardised and would have made it more difficult to compare the relative visibility and perceived influence of different collaboration forms across a wider group of respondents (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Interviews would also have required more extensive recruitment, transcription and thematic analysis. Mixed methods could have combined numerical breadth with qualitative depth, but this would have increased the complexity of data collection and analysis beyond the practical scope of the project.

For these reasons, the quantitative survey was considered the most appropriate method for the study and the resources available. Nevertheless, its reliance on closed and structured questions identified broad patterns but did not fully explain the personal meanings or reasons underlying respondents' answers (Ponto, 2015). This limitation was acknowledged throughout the interpretation of the findings.

3.5 Time Horizon

The study adopted a cross-sectional time horizon because data were collected during one defined period rather than across multiple stages. This approach was appropriate for capturing current customer perceptions of luxury brand collaborations within the timeframe of an undergraduate dissertation (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). However, a cross-sectional design provides only a snapshot and cannot show how awareness or attitudes change after repeated visits or prolonged exposure to a collaboration. A longitudinal design would have been more suitable for examining such changes, but it was impractical within the scope of the present project. The findings therefore reflect the market trends, recent hotel experiences and visible collaborations present during the data-collection period.

3.6 Population, Sampling Frame and Access

The target population comprised adults aged 18 or over who had stayed in, visited or used customer-facing services in a five-star hotel in the UK. Relevant experiences included accommodation, restaurants, bars, spas, wellness facilities, afternoon tea and events. Including both overnight guests and non-resident visitors was appropriate because luxury brand collaborations are encountered across different areas of the hotel experience rather than only through accommodation.

The study used non-probability convenience sampling. Convenience sampling involves recruiting participants who are readily accessible and willing to take part rather than selecting them randomly from the entire target population (Andrade, 2021; Stratton, 2021). Participants were recruited through social media, online networks, university contacts, hospitality contacts and relevant personal and professional contacts.

This sampling method was appropriate because no complete sampling frame of UK five-star hotel customers and visitors was available, while direct access to hotel guest databases would have been impractical and ethically difficult. Convenience sampling therefore provided a feasible way to reach eligible adults within the limited timeframe and resources available for an undergraduate dissertation. Screening questions confirmed participants' consent, adult eligibility and relevant

experience of staying in, visiting or using services in UK five-star hotels before they proceeded with the questionnaire.

The study aimed to recruit an appropriate number of eligible respondents within the approved research period. A total of 83 responses were received. Two respondents reported that they had never stayed in, visited or used services in a UK five-star hotel and were excluded from the main analysis. The final analytical sample therefore consisted of 81 eligible respondents. Although the achieved sample was below the initial target, it was sufficient for the planned descriptive analysis and proportionate to the scale of an undergraduate dissertation.

Convenience sampling introduced self-selection and coverage bias because participants did not have an equal probability of being selected (Andrade, 2021; Stratton, 2021). Individuals who were active online, interested in luxury hospitality or connected to the researcher's networks were likely to be overrepresented. Consequently, the findings cannot be considered statistically representative of all UK five-star hotel customers and visitors; instead, they provide indicative evidence of patterns among the respondents reached.

3.7 Questionnaire Design and Operationalisation

Primary data were collected through a structured 19-question self-completion questionnaire created in Google Forms. It included eligibility screening, brief non-identifying background questions, multiple-choice items and five-point Likert-scale statements ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. Likert scales enabled attitudes and perceptions to be measured consistently and compared numerically across respondents (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019).

The questionnaire was aligned with the research objectives, research questions and conceptual framework. It measured awareness of collaboration types, perceived brand fit, authenticity, service integration, prestige, exclusivity, competitive differentiation, the overall guest experience and behavioural intentions, including recommendation and willingness to revisit. This alignment ensured that each research question was connected to one or more observable questionnaire measures.

Abstract concepts were translated into measurable items. Awareness was examined through respondents' prior awareness, the collaboration types they had noticed and the locations or communication channels through which they encountered them. Brand fit and authenticity were assessed through statements concerning compatibility, credibility and meaningful integration. Prestige, exclusivity, differentiation and overall guest-experience improvement represented perceptual outcomes, while recommendation, revisit and hotel-choice intentions represented behavioural outcomes.

Neutral wording and 'not sure' or 'not applicable' options were used where appropriate to reduce forced or leading responses. A brief definition of luxury brand collaboration was also provided so that respondents interpreted the central concept consistently. The questionnaire took approximately five to seven minutes to complete. Although closed questions simplify complex perceptions, they provided the standardisation required for this quantitative study. The complete questionnaire used for the research is provided in Appendix B.

3.8 Pilot Testing

Before full distribution, the questionnaire was pilot tested with a small number of eligible adults who had stayed in, visited or used customer-facing services in a UK five-star hotel. The pilot assessed the clarity, wording, sequence, technical functioning and completion time of the questionnaire (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019).

Pilot participants were asked to identify unclear, repetitive or ambiguous questions and unsuitable response options. Particular attention was given to concepts such as brand fit, authenticity, exclusivity and service integration because respondents interpret these terms according to their experiences and expectations.

Revisions focused on improving clarity and usability without changing the approved research purpose, population or data-collection method. Pilot testing strengthened face and content validity, although a small pilot could not establish statistical reliability or identify every potential measurement problem. The pilot was therefore used mainly to improve the questionnaire before distribution and could not demonstrate that all potential measurement problems had been removed.

3.9 Data Collection Procedure

Primary data were collected through the structured online questionnaire created in Google Forms. The survey link was distributed to approximately 150 potential participants through social media, online networks, university contacts, hospitality contacts and relevant personal and professional networks. A total of 83 responses were received. Two responses did not meet the eligibility criterion because the respondents had not stayed in, visited or used services in a UK five-star hotel. These responses were excluded, leaving 81 valid responses for analysis. The invitation explained that participation was voluntary and that only adults aged 18 or over with relevant UK five-star hotel experience should complete the questionnaire. This approach provided a practical means of reaching eligible participants within the study timeframe. Online questionnaires also supported efficient data collection, participant anonymity and the straightforward organisation and export of responses for analysis (Evans and Mathur, 2018).

Potential participants accessed the survey through the online link. The first page provided the participant information statement, eligibility criteria, research purpose, voluntary nature of participation, data-handling arrangements and researcher contact details. Participants were required to provide electronic consent before accessing the questionnaire. Google Forms was configured not to collect names or email addresses.

Participants could withdraw before submission by closing the form. Because responses were anonymous and could not be linked to individuals, withdrawal after submission was not possible. This limitation was explained clearly before consent, in accordance with the principles of informed and voluntary participation (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019).

Responses that failed the eligibility criteria, appeared to be duplicates, were obviously incomplete or contained substantial missing data were excluded from the final analysis. The exclusion criteria were applied consistently and reported transparently in Chapter Four. In practice, two ineligible responses were excluded because the respondents had no qualifying UK five-star hotel experience.

3.10 Data Analysis

Anonymous responses were exported from Google Forms into Microsoft Excel and analysed using descriptive and exploratory statistics. Frequencies and percentages showed the distribution of categorical responses and awareness of different collaboration types, while mean scores summarised the general direction of five-point Likert-scale responses (Kaur, Stoltzfus and Yellapu, 2018).

The analysis was organised around the five research questions. Frequencies and percentages were used for categorical and multiple-response items, while mean scores summarised the direction of Likert-scale responses. Selected Spearman rank-order correlations explored associations between ordinal variables relating to awareness, authenticity, brand fit, meaningful integration, overall guest-experience improvement, recommendation and revisit intention. Table 3.1 shows how each research question and objective was linked to the questionnaire items and analytical technique used.

Spearman's rank-order correlation was used selectively to explore associations between ordinal variables, including relationships between guest-experience improvement, authenticity, integration, recommendation and revisit intention. Spearman's rank-order correlation measures the strength and direction of the association between two ranked or ordinal variables (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). It was appropriate for this study because the questionnaire responses were ordinal and the analysis did not assume normally distributed interval data. These tests were exploratory and identified associations rather than causal effects. Mean scores were interpreted cautiously because Likert-scale responses are ordinal and the distance between response categories cannot automatically be assumed to be equal. Means were therefore considered alongside frequencies and percentages. The analysis did not claim causation or statistical representativeness, and all findings were interpreted as indicative patterns within the convenience sample.

Table 3.1: Alignment of Research Questions, Measures and Analysis

Research question and objective	Questionnaire questions and main measures	Analysis used
RQ1 / Objective 1: Examine customer awareness of the main collaboration forms	Q4 awareness; Q5 collaboration types noticed; Q6 locations and communication channels; Q7 importance when evaluating a hotel	Frequencies, percentages and mean score
RQ2 / Objective 2: Evaluate influence on prestige, exclusivity, authenticity and the overall guest experience	Q8 prestige; Q9 exclusivity; Q11 overall guest experience; Q12 authenticity and credibility; Q13 meaningful integration; Q17 competitive differentiation	Frequencies, percentages and mean scores
RQ3 / Objective 3: Assess influence on hotel choice, recommendation and willingness to revisit	Q14 hotel choice; Q15 recommendation intention; Q16 revisit intention	Frequencies, percentages, mean scores and selected Spearman correlations
RQ4 / Objective 4: Determine how awareness, brand fit, authenticity and service integration influence perceived value	Q4 awareness; Q10 brand fit; Q11 guest-experience improvement; Q12 authenticity and credibility; Q13 meaningful integration; Q19 most important success factor	Item-level comparison, descriptive patterns and selected Spearman correlations
RQ5 / Objective 5: Provide evidence-based recommendations for effective collaboration design and implementation	Q18 collaboration type with strongest positive influence; Q19 most important success factor; synthesis of Q4-Q17	Evidence-based synthesis of strongest and weakest findings

Source: Developed by the author based on the research questions, questionnaire measures and analysis used.

3.11 Reliability, Validity and Bias Control

Reliability was supported through standardised wording, consistent response scales and identical online administration for all participants (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). Response patterns were reviewed across related items, but formal internal-consistency statistics were not reported because most constructs were represented by individual questionnaire items rather than multi-item scales. This decision avoided presenting a reliability coefficient that would not have been methodologically appropriate for the questionnaire structure.

Content validity was strengthened by deriving questionnaire items from the literature review, research questions and conceptual framework. Construct validity was supported by clearly defining each variable and linking it to relevant questionnaire items, while face validity was assessed through the pilot test (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). The direct alignment between constructs, questions and analysis also improved transparency in how the research objectives were operationalised.

Nevertheless, self-reported perceptions are susceptible to recall error, social-desirability bias and differences in the interpretation of luxury-related terminology. Anonymous participation, neutral wording and 'not sure' options reduced these risks but could not eliminate them. The absence of identifying information also reduced pressure on respondents to provide socially desirable answers.

Self-selection and coverage bias were possible because participants were recruited online through the researcher's networks. Common-method bias was also possible because explanatory and outcome variables were measured through the same questionnaire at the same point in time (Podsakoff et al., 2003). These limitations were acknowledged when interpreting the findings, and the analysis avoided causal or population-wide claims.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

The study followed the ethical procedures approved by the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. Participation was voluntary, electronic informed consent was required, and only adults meeting the eligibility criteria were included. No names, signatures, email addresses or special-category personal data were intentionally collected. Participants could withdraw at any point before submitting the questionnaire. The approved ethics documentation is provided in Appendix C.

The research was considered low risk because it examined opinions about hotels and luxury brands rather than sensitive personal matters. Findings were reported only in aggregated form so that individual participants and hotels could not be identified. The questionnaire avoided collecting demographic details that were unnecessary for answering the research questions.

Responses remained within the secure Google Forms account during data collection. The exported anonymous dataset was stored in a password-protected UWTSD OneDrive folder accessible only to the researcher. Data were not stored on personal computers, USB devices or other portable storage. The supervisor could review anonymised summaries or selected anonymous data where necessary. All files will be retained and securely deleted in accordance with the approved ethics documentation and University requirements.

3.13 Methodological Limitations

Several limitations affect the strength and generalisability of the findings. Convenience sampling and online recruitment are likely to overrepresent participants with particular demographic, professional or luxury-hospitality interests because individuals did not have an equal probability of selection (Andrade, 2021; Stratton, 2021). The cross-sectional design also captured perceptions at only one point in time and could not establish whether collaborations caused changes in customer perception or whether customers who already viewed a hotel positively were more receptive to them (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019).

Although perceived service quality was important within the theoretical literature, it was not measured through a separate questionnaire item. The empirical findings therefore relate more directly to the overall guest experience and meaningful integration. References to service quality are used to interpret the findings rather than to claim that the construct was measured independently.

Self-reported responses were susceptible to recall error, personal interpretation, limited awareness and differences between stated intentions and actual booking or revisit behaviour (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Participants also based their answers on different hotels, brands and collaboration experiences rather than evaluating one identical partnership. This increased the study's relevance to real-world hospitality settings but reduced control and direct comparability between respondents.

Closed questions supported standardised measurement and comparison but could not fully explain why respondents held particular views (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Ponto, 2015). The findings were therefore interpreted as indicative patterns within the sample rather than representative

conclusions about all UK five-star hotel customers. Future research could address these limitations through qualitative interviews, hotel-specific case studies, probability sampling or longitudinal research designs.

3.14 Chapter Summary

This chapter critically justified the methodological design used to investigate customer perceptions of luxury brand collaborations in UK five-star hotels. A positivist philosophy, deductive approach and mono-method quantitative design provided a coherent basis for measuring the constructs identified in the conceptual framework. The cross-sectional online survey, convenience sample and use of descriptive statistics and selected exploratory correlations were proportionate to the research objectives and undergraduate scope.

A total of 83 responses were received, of which 81 met the eligibility criteria. The chapter also acknowledged limitations associated with convenience sampling, self-selection, cross-sectional data, closed questions and the simplification of complex luxury experiences. The findings must therefore be interpreted as indicative patterns within the sample rather than universally generalisable conclusions. The following chapter presents and analyses the empirical findings in relation to the research questions and conceptual framework.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and critically discusses the findings from the online questionnaire on how luxury brand collaborations influence customer perceptions of five-star hotels in the UK. Rather than treating the research objectives as separate checklist items, the analysis connects each objective to the relevant evidence and explains how the findings answer the research questions developed in Chapter One. Frequencies and percentages are used for categorical and multiple-response questions, mean scores summarise the five-point Likert-scale statements, and Spearman's rank-order correlations are used selectively to explore relationships between ordinal variables. These correlations indicate associations rather than causal effects, which is appropriate given the cross-sectional design and convenience sample described in Chapter Three.

A total of 83 responses were recorded. All respondents provided consent; however, two indicated that they had never stayed in, visited or used services in a UK five-star hotel and were excluded in accordance with the eligibility criteria. The valid analytical sample therefore consisted of 81 respondents. The chapter first establishes the profile of the sample before examining awareness and visibility, perceived effects on hotel evaluation, behavioural intentions, and the conditions under which collaborations were considered valuable. The discussion then integrates these findings with the literature reviewed in Chapter Two and identifies the evidence that informs the recommendations developed in Chapter Five. The Google Forms summary of questionnaire responses is provided in Appendix D.

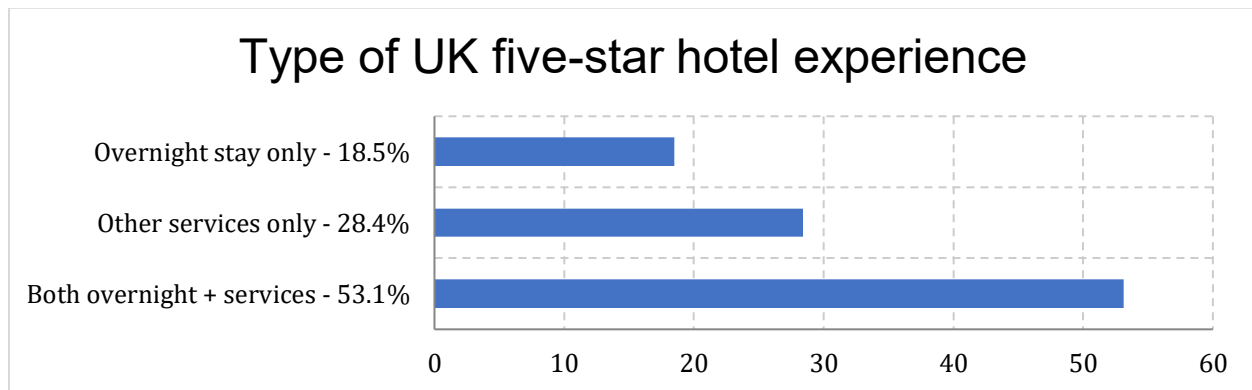
4.2 Respondent Profile and Eligibility

Questions 2 and 3 of the questionnaire established respondents' eligibility and experience profile. Among the 81 eligible respondents, 43 (53.1%) had both stayed overnight and used other five-star hotel services, 23 (28.4%) had used restaurant, bar, spa or event services without an overnight stay, and 15 (18.5%) had stayed overnight only. This distribution supports the broad scope adopted by the study, because luxury collaborations are encountered across accommodation, food and beverage, wellness and event settings rather than only during a hotel stay. It also reflects the argument that customer perception develops across multiple touchpoints within the wider guest

journey (Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantonello, 2009; Giglio et al., 2020; Petrescu, Girona and O’Leary, 2024).

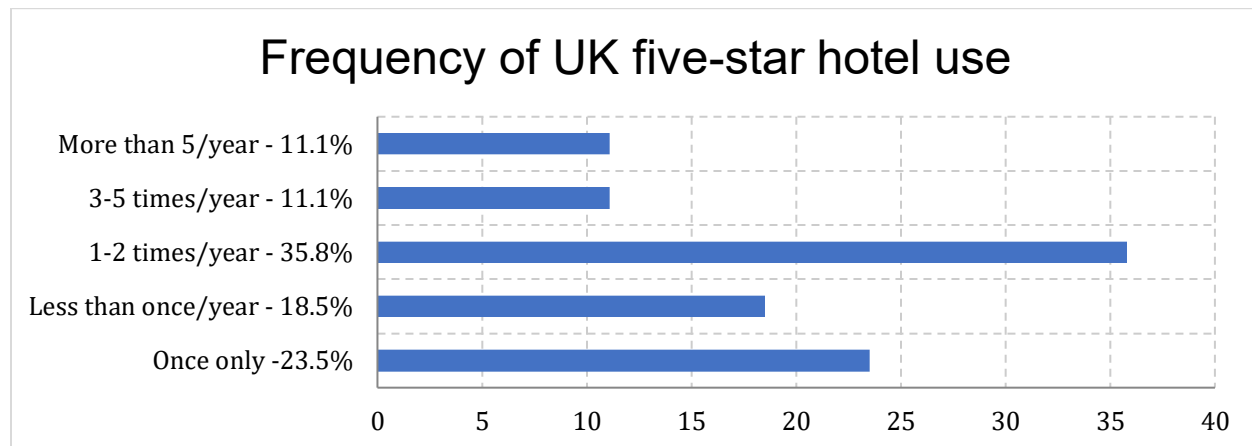
Question 3 measured how frequently respondents used UK five-star hotels. The largest group used them one or two times per year (29 respondents; 35.8%). Nineteen respondents (23.5%) had used a five-star hotel only once, 15 (18.5%) did so less than once per year, nine (11.1%) used them three to five times per year, and nine (11.1%) did so more than five times per year. The sample therefore included both occasional and relatively experienced luxury-hotel customers. This diversity is useful because prior research indicates that luxury customers are not homogeneous and place different levels of value on design, wellness, privacy, service and branded amenities (Mele, Dubosson and Schegg, 2025). Nevertheless, the concentration of occasional users indicates that the results partly reflect expectations and visible brand signals rather than repeated experience of the same hotel. Figure 4.1 summarises this profile and provides the context needed to interpret the objective-based findings that follow.

Figure 4.1(a): Respondents’ Type of UK Five-Star Hotel Experience



Source: Author’s analysis of questionnaire data (2026). Valid sample: n = 81.

Figure 4.1(b): Respondents' Frequency of UK Five-Star Hotel Experience



Source: Author's analysis of questionnaire data (2026). Valid sample: n = 81.

4.3 Customer Awareness and Visibility of Luxury Brand Collaborations

To address the first research objective, Questions 4-7 of the questionnaire examined respondents' general awareness, the collaboration forms they had noticed, the locations and communication channels through which they encountered them, and the importance they placed on collaborations when evaluating a five-star hotel. This approach allowed awareness to be understood through four related dimensions: general familiarity, visibility of specific collaboration formats, exposure across physical and digital touchpoints, and perceived importance.

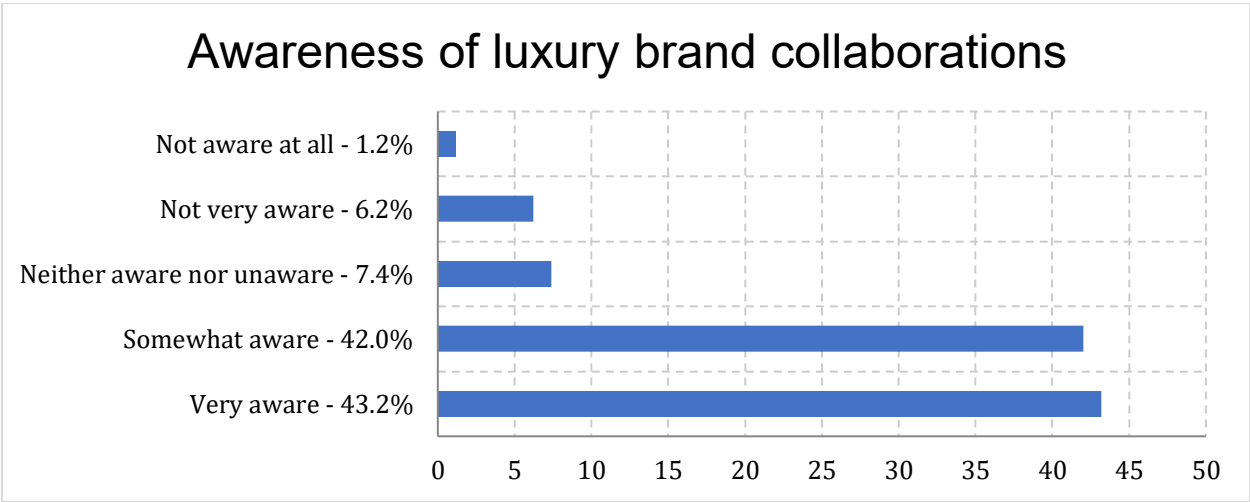
4.3.1 General Awareness

Question 4 of the questionnaire showed a high level of general awareness among respondents. Thirty-five respondents (43.2%) described themselves as very aware and 34 (42.0%) as somewhat aware. Together, 85.2% of the valid sample reported at least some awareness. Only six respondents (7.4%) were neutral, five (6.2%) were not very aware and one (1.2%) was not aware at all. The mean awareness score was 4.20 out of 5, indicating that luxury collaborations were generally recognised by the sample. Figure 4.2 presents the distribution of these responses.

This finding supports Aaker's (1991) view that awareness is an important component of brand equity and Keller's (1993) argument that brand knowledge shapes customer responses. It also supports the literature reviewed in Chapter Two, which suggests that recognised partner brands can transfer favourable associations of quality, prestige and status to a hotel (Kim, Baloglu and

Henthorne, 2021). However, the result should not be interpreted as evidence that every collaboration is equally visible. General awareness was high, but the multiple-response findings show substantial variation between collaboration types, indicating that customers notice practical and frequently encountered partnerships more readily than limited-access formats.

Figure 4.2: Respondents’ Awareness of Luxury Brand Collaborations in Hotels



Source: Author’s analysis of questionnaire data (2026). Valid sample: n = 81.

4.3.2 Collaboration Types Noticed

Question 5 of the questionnaire asked respondents which collaboration types they had noticed. Table 4.1 and Figure 4.3 show that branded toiletries, skincare and fragrance were the most commonly recognised category, selected by 66 respondents (81.5%). Spa and wellness partnerships followed closely at 64 respondents (79.0%), while fashion, design and art collaborations were identified by 62 respondents (76.5%). Food and beverage partnerships were noticed by 58 respondents (71.6%). By contrast, branded suites or rooms were selected by 36 respondents (44.4%), and retail pop-ups or events by only 20 respondents (24.7%). One respondent reported not noticing any collaboration type. Because participants could select more than one response, the percentages exceed 100%.

Table 4.1: Types of Luxury Brand Collaboration Noticed by Respondents

Collaboration type noticed	Frequency	Percentage of valid sample
Branded toiletries/skincare/fragrance	66	81.5%
Spa/wellness partnerships	64	79.0%
Fashion/design/art collaborations	62	76.5%
Food and beverage partnerships	58	71.6%
Branded suites or rooms	36	44.4%
Retail pop-ups or events	20	24.7%
None noticed	1	1.2%

Source: Author's analysis of questionnaire data (2026).

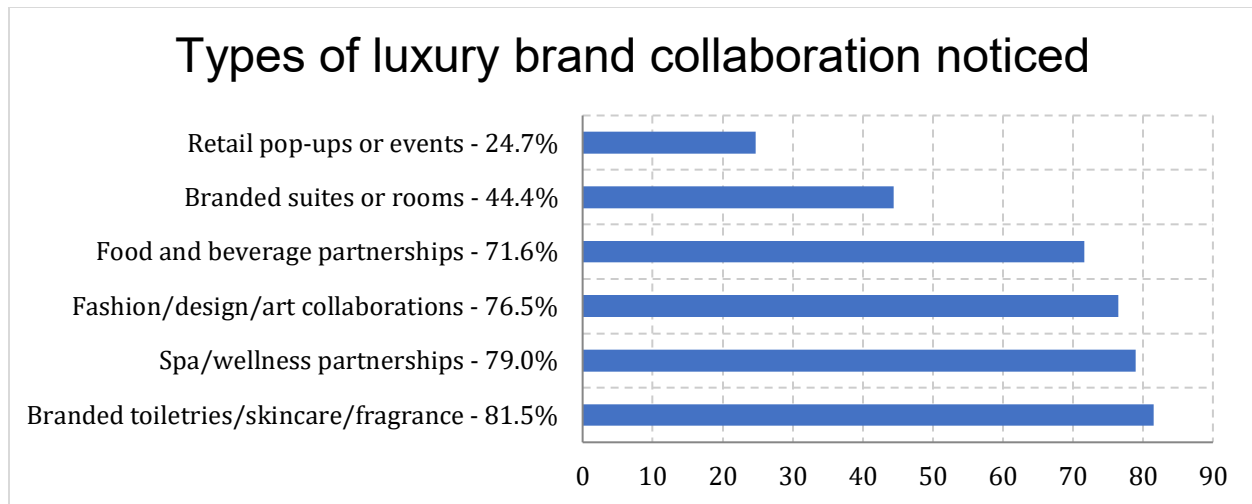
The dominance of toiletries, skincare and wellness partnerships is consistent with Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne's (2021) conclusion that branded amenities can influence customer-based brand equity because they combine recognised branding with direct use during the guest experience. These partnerships also possess clear functional fit: skincare and wellness brands can improve a tangible part of the room or spa experience. This supports the distinction in Chapter Two between functional fit and image fit (Park, Milberg and Lawson, 1991; Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary, 2023).

However, fashion, design and art collaborations were also widely noticed and were later selected as the collaboration type most likely to influence perception positively. This suggests that visibility and influence are related but not identical. Branded amenities are encountered more frequently, while design- or art-led collaborations create stronger symbolic or aesthetic effects. This is consistent with Hagtvedt and Patrick's (2008) art-infusion perspective and with Vigneron and Johnson's (2004) argument that luxury value includes uniqueness, hedonism and identity expression, not only functional quality.

The lower recognition of branded suites and retail pop-ups is also understandable. Such experiences are available to smaller groups of customers, often operate seasonally and usually require a specific purchase or booking. The result therefore supports the limitation identified in

Chapter Two: highly exclusive collaborations can communicate rarity, but their influence remains restricted to customers who recognise or directly experience them. In this respect, controlled exclusivity protects luxury desirability while simultaneously reducing mass awareness (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012).

Figure 4.3: Types of Luxury Brand Collaboration Noticed by Respondents



Source: Author's analysis of questionnaire data (2026). Valid sample: n = 81.

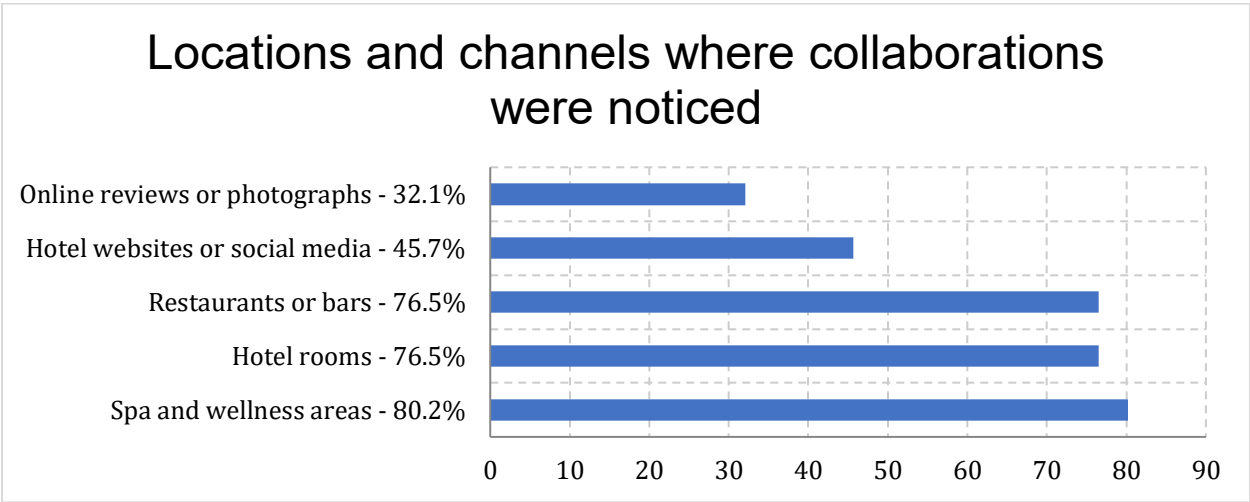
4.3.3 Locations and Communication Channels

Question 6 of the questionnaire examined where respondents had noticed collaborations. Figure 4.4 shows that they were most frequently recognised in spa and wellness areas (65 respondents; 80.2%), hotel rooms (62; 76.5%) and restaurants or bars (62; 76.5%). Digital channels were less dominant: 37 respondents (45.7%) noticed collaborations on hotel websites or social media and 26 (32.1%) through online reviews or photographs. One respondent stated that they did not usually notice collaborations.

These results indicate that physical service environments remain the principal source of awareness. This broadly supports Pine and Gilmore's (1998) and Schmitt's (1999) emphasis on experiential consumption: collaborations appear most visible when embedded in tangible moments such as using an amenity, receiving a spa treatment or consuming a branded food and beverage experience. Digital visibility nevertheless remains significant, as nearly half of respondents had noticed collaborations through hotel-controlled online content. Giglio et al. (2020) and Petrescu, Gironda and O'Leary (2024) argue that online images and recognised brands can shape pre-arrival

expectations. The present findings support that view, but also qualify it by showing that direct physical exposure was more common than review-based exposure.

Figure 4.4: Locations and Channels Where Respondents Noticed Luxury Collaborations



Source: Author’s analysis of questionnaire data (2026). Valid sample: n = 81.

Question 7 further showed that luxury brand collaborations were considered at least moderately important by most respondents when evaluating a five-star hotel, although their importance varied across the sample. Taken together, these findings address Research Objective 1 by showing that awareness of luxury brand collaborations was generally high, although it varied across collaboration formats. Respondents were most familiar with partnerships embedded directly within the hotel experience, particularly branded toiletries, spa and wellness partnerships, and fashion, design and art collaborations. Physical hotel environments were more influential sources of awareness than online reviews or photographs, indicating that direct experiential exposure remains central to collaboration visibility.

4.4 Influence on Customer Perceptions and the Guest Experience

The second research objective examined how luxury brand collaborations influence perceptions of prestige, exclusivity, authenticity and the overall guest experience. Table 4.2 and Figure 4.5 bring these dimensions together and also include brand fit, meaningful integration and competitive differentiation, as these factors help explain when collaborations are evaluated positively. All mean scores were above the neutral midpoint of 3.00. The highest scores were recorded for brand

fit and meaningful integration, both at 4.23, followed by exclusivity at 4.21, authenticity and credibility at 4.17, prestige at 4.16, competitive differentiation at 4.12 and improvement of the overall guest experience at 3.84. These results address Research Objective 2 while also providing evidence relevant to Objective 4.

Table 4.2: Mean Scores for Customer Perceptions of Luxury Brand Collaborations

Survey statement (abbreviated)	Mean	Agree or strongly agree
Collaborations make a hotel more prestigious	4.16	86.4%
Collaborations make a hotel feel more exclusive	4.21	91.4%
Partner brand should fit the hotel identity	4.23	91.4%
Collaborations improve the overall guest experience	3.84	74.1%
Collaboration should feel authentic and credible	4.17	90.1%
Collaboration should be meaningfully integrated	4.23	95.1%
Collaborations help hotels stand out	4.12	85.2%

Source: Author's analysis of questionnaire data (2026).

The high prestige and exclusivity scores support customer-based brand equity and signalling theory. Keller (1993) argues that strong and favourable associations can improve evaluations, while Spence (1973) explains how visible signals reduce uncertainty about unobservable quality. In the present study, 86.4% agreed or strongly agreed that collaborations make a hotel appear more prestigious and 91.4% agreed that they make it feel more exclusive. The findings therefore indicate that luxury partners can act as symbolic cues which reinforce status and distinctiveness. They are also consistent with Vigneron and Johnson's (2004) view that luxury consumption involves conspicuousness, uniqueness and perceived quality.

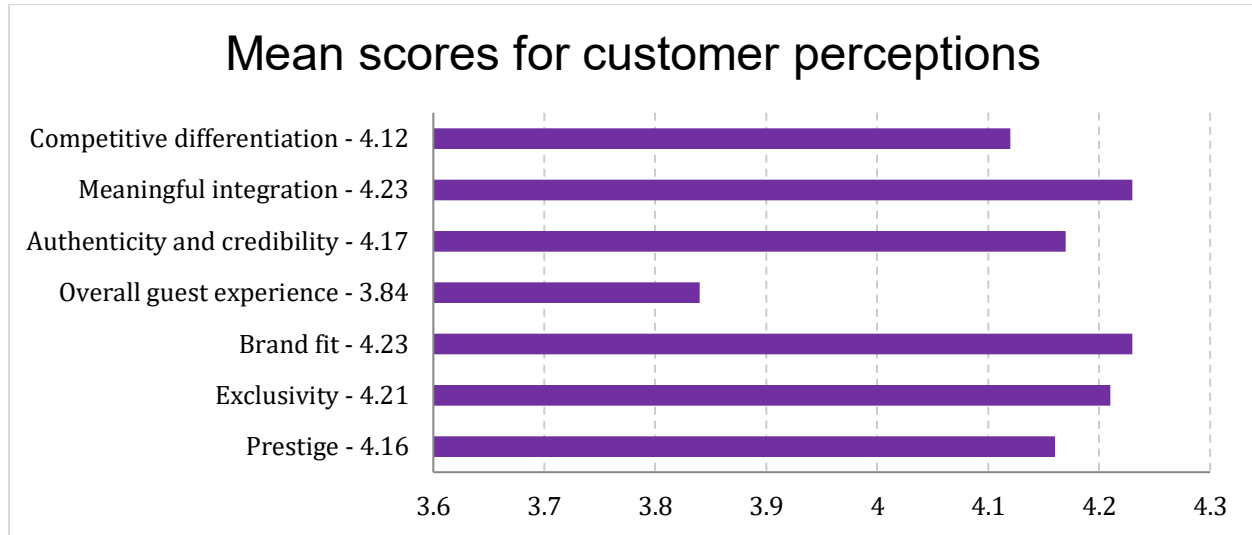
Nevertheless, the lower mean for improvement of the overall guest experience is analytically important. Although 74.1% responded positively, 22.2% were neutral and 3.7% disagreed. Thus, collaborations were evaluated more strongly as signals of prestige and exclusivity than as direct

improvements to the experience. This qualifies the branding literature by showing that favourable symbolic associations do not automatically translate into experiential value. The result supports Keshavarz et al. (2019) and Özcan, Pehlivan and Erkasap (2024), who emphasise that service performance, trust and perceived value remain central to satisfaction. It also supports the argument developed in Chapter Two that collaborations should reinforce, rather than attempt to replace, reliable and personalised service. Therefore, the results suggest that collaborations positively influenced the overall guest experience, but less strongly than they influenced symbolic perceptions of prestige and exclusivity.

Prestige, exclusivity, authenticity and the overall guest experience directly address Research Objective 2, while brand fit and meaningful integration help explain the conditions under which these positive perceptions arise. Brand fit and integration received the joint-highest mean scores. Most respondents agreed that a collaboration is more convincing when the partner fits the hotel's identity, while 95.1% agreed that collaborations are more valuable when they are meaningfully integrated into the guest experience. These findings indicate that customers do not judge partnerships solely by the prestige of the partner brand. Instead, credibility depends on whether the collaboration appears appropriate, coherent and capable of improving the actual hospitality offer.

Authenticity was similarly important, with 90.1% agreeing or strongly agreeing that a collaboration influences them positively when it feels authentic and credible. This aligns with Beverland's (2005) view that authenticity is created through coherent narratives and commitment to quality. It also supports the warning that collaborations appear superficial when prestigious names are used mainly as decoration or promotion. In practical terms, the results suggest that customers expect the symbolic promise of a luxury brand to be confirmed through knowledgeable staff, service delivery, design quality and consistent execution. Figure 4.5 visually compares the mean scores across these dimensions.

Figure 4.5: Mean Scores for Customer Perceptions of Luxury Brand Collaborations



Source: Author's analysis of questionnaire data (2026). Valid sample: $n = 81$

Overall, the findings answer Research Objective 2 by demonstrating that luxury brand collaborations positively influenced respondents' perceptions of prestige, exclusivity, authenticity and the overall guest experience. However, the comparatively lower score for guest-experience improvement indicates that collaborations were more effective as symbolic signals of luxury than as direct enhancements to the hospitality experience. The high scores for brand fit and meaningful integration further suggest that positive customer perceptions depend on the collaboration being credible, coherent and embedded within the wider guest experience.

4.4.1 Exploratory Associations with the Guest Experience

The exploratory analysis further clarifies the conditions under which collaborations improved the guest experience. Spearman correlations showed that awareness had a moderate positive association with perceived improvement of the overall experience ($r_s = .541$, $p < .001$). Authenticity had the strongest association ($r_s = .568$, $p < .001$), followed by brand fit ($r_s = .437$, $p < .001$) and meaningful integration ($r_s = .404$, $p < .001$).

The association between authenticity and the overall experience was stronger than the associations involving fit or integration. This suggests that respondents were particularly sensitive to whether a partnership appeared genuine rather than commercially imposed. The correlations should not be interpreted as proof that authenticity caused an improved experience because the variables were

self-reported in the same questionnaire and collected at one point in time. Even so, the pattern supports the conceptual framework developed in Chapter Two, in which awareness creates the opportunity for influence, while fit, authenticity and integration determine whether the collaboration is interpreted as meaningful.

Table 4.3: Factors Associated with Overall Guest Experience Improvement

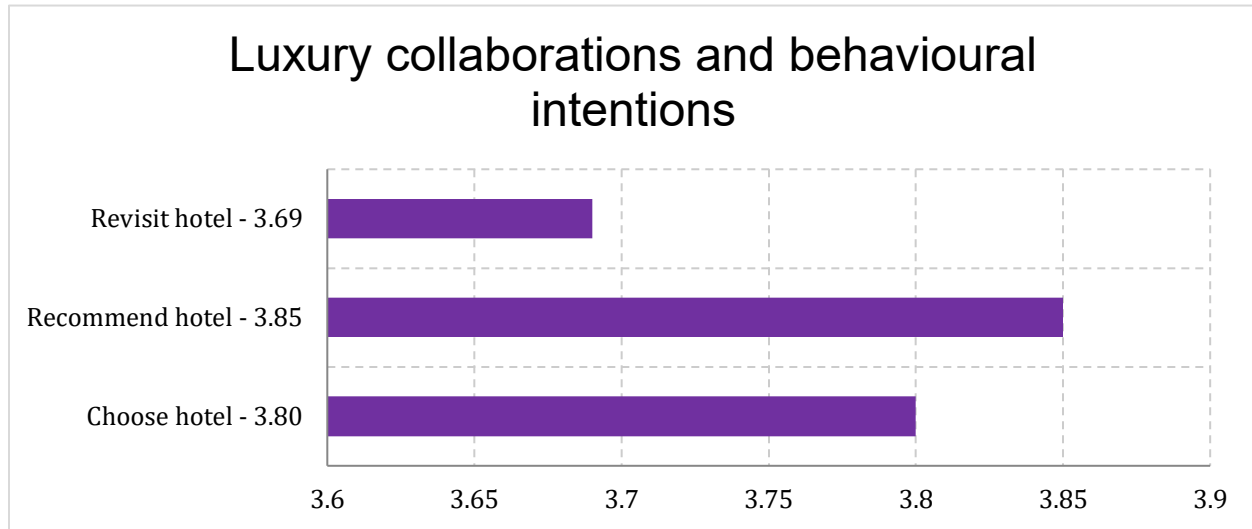
Relationship	Spearman rs	p-value	Interpretation
Awareness - overall guest experience	.541	< .001	Moderate positive
Brand fit - overall guest experience	.437	< .001	Moderate positive
Authenticity - overall guest experience	.568	< .001	Moderate positive
Integration - overall guest experience	.404	< .001	Moderate positive

Source: Author's analysis of questionnaire data (2026).

4.5 Influence on Choice, Recommendation and Revisit Intentions

The third research objective considered whether luxury collaborations influence behavioural intentions. Question 14 of the questionnaire measured hotel choice, Question 15 measured recommendation intention and Question 16 measured willingness to revisit. Figure 4.6 compares these outcomes. The mean score for choosing a hotel offering a collaboration with a liked luxury brand was 3.80. Fifty-four respondents (66.7%) agreed or strongly agreed, 22 (27.2%) were neutral and five (6.2%) disagreed. Recommendation intention recorded a slightly higher mean of 3.85, with 61 respondents (75.3%) agreeing or strongly agreeing. Revisit intention was weaker, with a mean of 3.69: 53 respondents (65.4%) agreed or strongly agreed, 21 (25.9%) were neutral and seven (8.6%) disagreed.

Figure 4.6: Luxury Collaborations and Behavioural Intentions



Source: Author's analysis of questionnaire data (2026). Valid sample: $n = 81$

The results indicate that collaborations can support behavioural intentions, but their effect is less pronounced than their influence on prestige, exclusivity and differentiation. This distinction is important. Rather et al. (2024) argue that memorable brand experiences and emotional engagement can strengthen loyalty, while Keller (1993) suggests that positive associations may improve preference. The present findings broadly support these claims, particularly for recommendation. However, the weaker revisit score suggests that symbolic attraction does not automatically produce repeat behaviour. This is consistent with the view that loyalty depends on a wider combination of service quality, trust, value and emotional attachment (Keshavarz et al., 2019; Rather et al., 2024).

The higher recommendation score indicates that respondents were more willing to endorse an attractive or distinctive hotel than commit to returning. This difference reflects the greater financial and practical commitment associated with a repeat visit. The results also show that customers can appreciate the image created by a collaboration without considering it a sufficient reason to select the same property again. This supports the argument in Chapter Two that appreciation of a partnership does not automatically create hotel loyalty.

4.5.1 Associations with Recommendation and Revisit Intentions

Exploratory correlations provide further insight into how the behavioural findings answer the third objective. Perceived improvement of the overall guest experience was moderately associated with

recommendation intention ($r_s = .479$, $p < .001$) and revisit intention ($r_s = .536$, $p < .001$). Prestige was associated with recommendation intention, but more weakly ($r_s = .341$, $p = .002$). Meaningful integration showed smaller positive associations with recommendation ($r_s = .237$, $p = .033$) and revisit intention ($r_s = .233$, $p = .037$). Competitive differentiation was moderately associated with recommendation ($r_s = .437$, $p < .001$).

Table 4.4: Exploratory Associations with Recommendation and Revisit Intentions

Relationship	Spearman r_s	p-value
Overall guest experience - recommendation	.479	< .001
Overall guest experience - revisit	.536	< .001
Prestige - recommendation	.341	.002
Integration - recommendation	.237	.033
Integration - revisit	.233	.037
Differentiation - recommendation	.437	< .001

Source: Author's analysis of questionnaire data (2026).

The stronger relationship between overall guest experience and revisit intention, compared with the relationship between prestige and recommendation, reinforces the hospitality literature. Symbolic prestige attracts attention and encourages positive word of mouth, but return behaviour is more closely connected to whether the collaboration contributes to the experience as a whole. The findings therefore answer the third research objective by showing that luxury collaborations had a positive but moderate influence on behavioural intentions. Their strongest effect was on recommendation, while repeat visits depended more heavily on the wider quality, value and memorability of the guest experience.

4.6 Factors Influencing the Perceived Success and Value of Collaborations

The fourth research objective explored the conditions under which luxury brand collaborations are perceived as valuable. The analysis drew on Question 4 of the questionnaire (awareness), Question

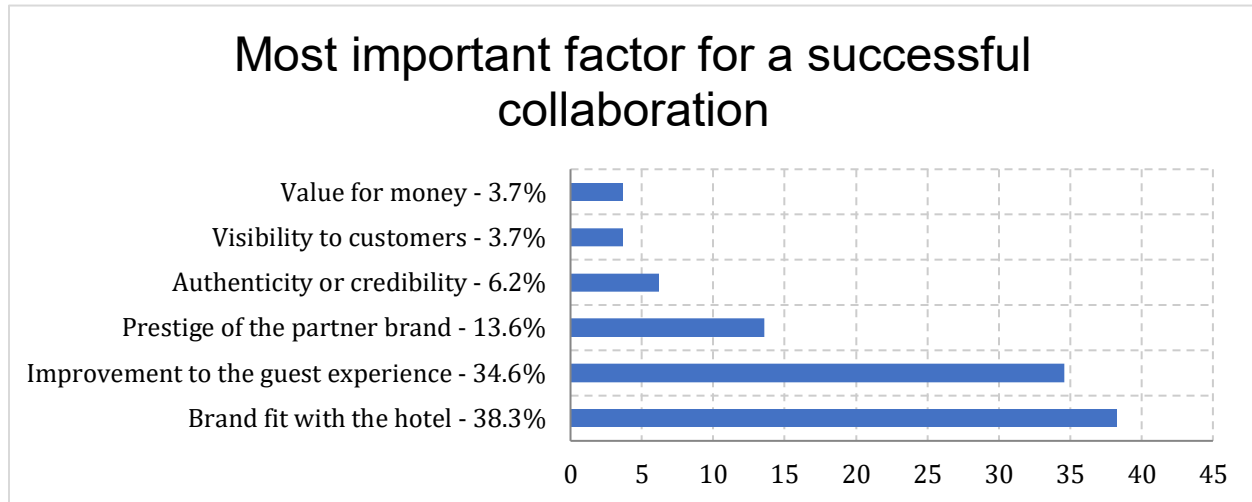
10 (brand fit), Question 11 (overall guest-experience improvement), Question 12 (authenticity and credibility), Question 13 (meaningful integration), Question 14 (hotel choice) and Question 19 (the most important success factor). Because the questionnaire did not contain a separate single-item measure explicitly labelled 'perceived value', these closely related indicators were used to examine the conditions supporting value without claiming that perceived value was measured as an independent construct.

Question 19 of the questionnaire asked respondents to select the single most important factor for a successful collaboration. Thirty-one respondents (38.3%) chose brand fit with the hotel and 28 (34.6%) selected improvement to the guest experience. Together, these two factors represented 72.8% of responses. Prestige of the partner brand was selected by 11 respondents (13.6%), authenticity or credibility by five (6.2%), visibility by three (3.7%) and value for money by three (3.7%).

This is one of the clearest findings of the study. While the prestige of the partner was relevant, respondents placed substantially greater importance on strategic coherence and practical experiential improvement. The finding strongly supports Park, Milberg and Lawson (1991) and Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary (2023), who argue that perceived fit is central to co-branding evaluation. It also supports the service and experience literature, which positions value as a holistic judgement rather than a simple consequence of attaching a famous name to a service (Holbrook, 1999; Keshavarz et al., 2019).

The relatively low selection of visibility does not mean that communication is unimportant. Awareness was high and was positively associated with the overall experience. However, the results suggest that visibility is an entry condition rather than the principal source of value. A collaboration must first be noticed, but once recognised it is judged according to fit, credibility and its contribution to the experience. This interpretation is consistent with Keller (1993): brand knowledge affects customer response, but the content and favourability of the associations remain decisive. Figure 4.7 summarises the factors respondents considered most important.

Figure 4.7: Most Important Factor for a Successful Luxury Hotel Collaboration



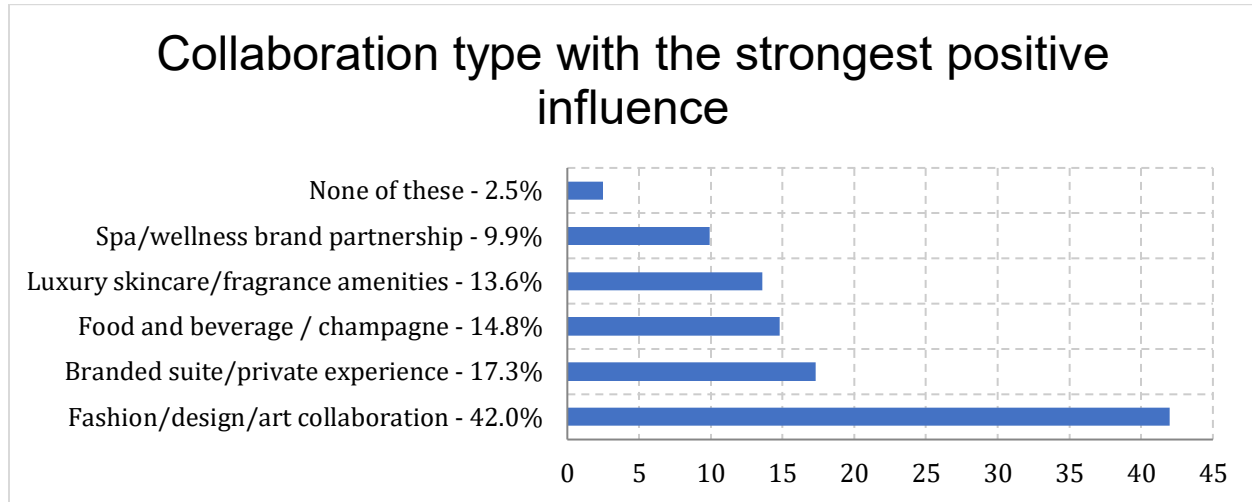
Source: Author's analysis of questionnaire data (2026). Valid sample: n = 81

These findings answer the fourth research objective by demonstrating that perceived value was driven primarily by strategic coherence and experiential contribution. Brand fit and improvement to the guest experience together accounted for 72.8% of responses, while partner prestige, visibility and value for money were less influential. Customers therefore appeared to value collaborations that felt appropriate, credible and useful more than partnerships based mainly on brand fame or promotional visibility.

4.6.1 Collaboration Types with the Strongest Positive Influence

Question 18 of the questionnaire asked which collaboration type would most positively influence respondents' perceptions and therefore contributes to the fifth research objective by informing practical recommendations. Fashion, design and art collaborations were selected by 34 respondents (42.0%), followed by branded suites or private experiences (14; 17.3%), food and beverage or champagne partnerships (12; 14.8%), luxury skincare or fragrance amenities (11; 13.6%), and spa or wellness partnerships (eight; 9.9%). Only two respondents (2.5%) stated that none of the listed collaboration types would influence them. Figure 4.8 presents this distribution.

Figure 4.8: Collaboration Type with the Strongest Positive Influence



Source: Author's analysis of questionnaire data (2026). Valid sample: n = 81

This ranking differs from the awareness results. Toiletries, skincare and spa partnerships were most frequently noticed, yet fashion, design and art collaborations were most influential. The contrast suggests that frequently encountered collaborations become familiar and functional, whereas rarer design-led experiences can create stronger novelty and symbolic differentiation. This supports Hagtvedt and Patrick's (2008) art-infusion effect and the experiential view of luxury developed by Pine and Gilmore (1998). It also aligns with Kapferer and Bastien's (2012) emphasis on rarity and controlled exclusivity.

However, the finding does not imply that fashion or art partnerships are universally superior. Their strongest influence occurs at the level of image, attention and symbolic value, while skincare and wellness partnerships contribute more directly to functional quality. The evidence therefore supports the development of recommendations that distinguish between different strategic purposes: design and art can strengthen distinctiveness and symbolic prestige, whereas wellness, amenities and food-and-beverage partnerships can provide more direct service relevance and experiential value.

4.7 Discussion of Findings and Implications

Taken together, the findings address the first four research objectives and provide the evidence required to develop the recommendations associated with the fifth. Luxury brand collaborations

were viewed positively, but respondents did not treat prestige as sufficient by itself. The data support the proposition that collaborations can transfer status and exclusivity to five-star hotels, as predicted by customer-based brand equity and signalling theory (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993; Spence, 1973). At the same time, the lower score for direct guest-experience improvement and the dominance of fit and experiential improvement as success factors show that symbolic value must be supported by credible delivery.

The findings therefore reconcile two strands of literature that initially appear to compete. Branding research emphasises recognition, association transfer and differentiation, whereas hospitality research emphasises service quality, trust and memorable experiences. The present study suggests that both are necessary. Awareness allows the collaboration to function as a signal; brand fit makes the signal coherent; authenticity makes it credible; and service integration determines whether customers experience real value. This sequence closely supports the conceptual framework developed in Chapter Two.

The results also have practical implications for UK five-star hotels. First, managers should prioritise partner compatibility over partner fame. A less globally prominent brand with strong functional and image fit creates more value than a famous partner whose relationship with the hotel appears artificial. Second, collaborations should be integrated into service design, employee knowledge and guest communication. A branded spa or dining concept requires staff who can explain the partner's expertise and deliver the promised standard. Third, communication should make the collaboration visible without making it appear excessively promotional. Digital channels can create pre-arrival interest, but the physical experience must confirm the online promise.

Fourth, hotels should define the intended outcome before selecting a collaboration format. Fashion, art and design partnerships are particularly useful for generating visual distinctiveness and symbolic prestige, while wellness, skincare and food-and-beverage partnerships provide more direct functional and experiential value. Finally, success should be evaluated through multiple measures, including awareness, guest-experience improvement, recommendation, revisit intention and qualitative feedback, rather than through online visibility alone.

4.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter analysed 81 eligible questionnaire responses and connected the empirical findings directly to the research objectives. In relation to the first objective, awareness of luxury hotel collaborations was high, with 85.2% of respondents describing themselves as somewhat or very aware. Branded toiletries and skincare, spa and wellness partnerships, and fashion, design and art collaborations were the most frequently noticed forms. Physical hotel settings were more important sources of exposure than digital reviews, although websites and social media remained relevant.

The findings relating to the second and third objectives showed that collaborations strengthened prestige, exclusivity and competitive differentiation, but their direct influence on the overall guest experience and behavioural intentions was more moderate. Respondents rated brand fit, authenticity and meaningful integration more highly than symbolic prestige alone. Recommendation intention was stronger than revisit intention, while exploratory correlations showed that improvement to the overall guest experience was more closely associated with willingness to revisit than prestige.

In relation to the fourth objective, brand fit and improvement to the guest experience emerged as the most important conditions for perceived value. Fashion, design and art collaborations were considered the most influential format, providing evidence for the recommendations required by the fifth objective. Overall, the findings support an integrated explanation in which awareness and prestige attract attention, while fit, authenticity, service integration and experiential improvement determine whether a collaboration becomes meaningful and supports recommendation or return intentions. Chapter Five will draw these findings together, answer the research questions and present evidence-based recommendations for hotel practice and future research.

Chapter 5: Conclusions, Limitations and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the study by drawing together the empirical evidence and answering the five research questions. It first presents conclusions corresponding to each research objective, before stating the overall conclusion to the research problem and summarising the principal outcomes. The chapter then explains the study's original contribution, acknowledges its methodological limitations and develops recommendations for UK five-star hotels and future research. No new primary data are introduced; the conclusions and recommendations are derived from the findings reported in Chapter Four and interpreted in relation to the literature reviewed in Chapter Two.

5.2 Conclusions on Each Research Question and Objective

5.2.1 Research Question 1: Customer Awareness of Collaboration Forms

RQ1 asked which forms of luxury brand collaboration customers are most aware of in UK five-star hotels. Awareness was high within the sample: 85.2% of respondents described themselves as somewhat or very aware, with a mean awareness score of 4.20. The most frequently noticed formats were branded toiletries, skincare and fragrance (81.5%), spa and wellness partnerships (79.0%), fashion, design and art collaborations (76.5%), and food and beverage partnerships (71.6%). Branded suites or rooms and retail pop-ups or events were substantially less visible, at 44.4% and 24.7% respectively.

The findings show that awareness is strongest when a collaboration is encountered through a practical and repeated touchpoint. Spa and wellness areas, hotel rooms, restaurants and bars were more important sources of exposure than online reviews or photographs. This indicates that digital communication can create pre-arrival interest, but direct physical experience remains the principal route through which customers recognise and understand a partnership. The conclusion for Objective 1 is therefore that awareness is generally strong but uneven: frequently used, service-embedded collaborations achieve the widest recognition, while limited-access or seasonal concepts preserve exclusivity at the cost of reach.

5.2.2 Research Question 2: Influence on Customer Perception and the Guest Experience

RQ2 examined how collaborations influence prestige, exclusivity, authenticity and the overall guest experience. Respondents evaluated collaborations positively across all measured dimensions. Exclusivity recorded a mean of 4.21 and prestige 4.16, while 91.4% agreed that collaborations make hotels feel more exclusive and 86.4% agreed that they make hotels appear more prestigious. These results confirm that a recognised luxury partner can act as a symbolic signal that strengthens status, distinction and customer-based brand equity (Keller, 1993; Spence, 1973).

However, improvement to the overall guest experience received a lower mean of 3.84. Although 74.1% responded positively, collaborations were more convincing as signals of luxury than as direct improvements to hospitality delivery. Brand fit and meaningful integration both achieved the highest mean of 4.23, while authenticity recorded 4.17. Authenticity also had the strongest exploratory association with improvement to the overall experience ($r_s = .568$, $p < .001$), ahead of awareness, brand fit and integration. The conclusion for Objective 2 is that collaborations strengthen prestige and exclusivity, but experiential value is conditional. Customers respond most positively when the partnership is credible, appropriate to the hotel and visibly expressed through service, design and staff delivery rather than used as a decorative name.

5.2.3 Research Question 3: Influence on Recommendation and Revisit Intentions

RQ3 considered whether collaborations influence recommendation and willingness to revisit. Recommendation intention achieved a mean of 3.85, hotel-choice intention 3.80 and revisit intention 3.69. Therefore, collaborations produced a positive but moderate behavioural response. Respondents were more willing to recommend a distinctive hotel than to commit to returning to it.

The correlation analysis clarifies this difference. Improvement to the overall guest experience was associated with both recommendation ($r_s = .479$, $p < .001$) and revisit intention ($r_s = .536$, $p < .001$), whereas prestige had a weaker association with recommendation ($r_s = .341$, $p = .002$). This supports the conclusion that symbolic attraction can stimulate attention and positive word of mouth, but repeat behaviour depends more strongly on whether the partnership contributes to a memorable, valuable and consistently delivered experience. Objective 3 was therefore achieved:

collaborations can support behavioural intentions, but they are not a substitute for service quality, trust, emotional attachment and the broader hotel experience (Keshavarz et al., 2019; Rather et al., 2024).

5.2.4 Research Question 4: Conditions Determining Perceived Value

RQ4 investigated how awareness, brand fit, authenticity and service integration influence perceived value. The clearest result was that 38.3% of respondents selected brand fit as the single most important success factor and 34.6% selected improvement to the guest experience. Together, these factors accounted for 72.8% of responses. Partner prestige was selected by only 13.6%, while visibility and value for money each received 3.7%.

The evidence indicates a sequence rather than a single determinant. Awareness is the entry condition because an unnoticed collaboration cannot influence perception. Fit then makes the partnership understandable, authenticity makes it believable, and meaningful integration converts the brand association into experienced value. Visibility is therefore necessary but insufficient. The conclusion for Objective 4 is that customers value strategic coherence and experiential contribution more than fame alone. A highly prestigious partner can attract attention, but a less famous partner with stronger functional and image fit may create greater customer value.

5.2.5 Research Question 5: Recommendations for Improving Effectiveness

RQ5 asked what could improve the effectiveness of luxury brand collaborations in UK five-star hotels. The findings require hotels to move away from selecting partners mainly for publicity and towards designing collaborations as complete guest-experience systems. Fashion, design and art were identified as the format with the strongest positive influence (42.0%), while more functional partnerships in wellness, skincare and food and beverage remained highly visible. This means that no single collaboration format is universally superior. The appropriate format depends on whether the strategic objective is symbolic distinctiveness, direct service enhancement, customer acquisition, recommendation or repeat visitation. The detailed recommendations arising from this conclusion are presented in Section 5.7.

5.3 Overall Conclusion on the Research Problem

The research problem concerned the limited understanding of how luxury brand collaborations influence customer perception within UK five-star hotels and the conditions under which they create meaningful value. The study concludes that these collaborations are effective, but not automatically. Their principal strength is the transfer of prestige, exclusivity, rarity and symbolic meaning from the partner brand to the hotel. Their principal weakness is that this symbolic effect can remain superficial when the partnership is disconnected from service delivery.

The findings suggest that the influence of luxury collaborations can be understood in two broad stages. First, awareness and partner prestige generate attention, expectations and differentiation. Second, brand fit, authenticity, staff execution and meaningful integration determine whether those expectations become a positive guest experience. The second stage appears more closely connected with revisit intention. In practical terms, a recognised partner may initially attract attention, but the guest experience appears more important for encouraging a return visit.

This conclusion supports the conceptual framework developed in Chapter Two while refining it through the empirical evidence. The study confirms that branding and hospitality perspectives should not be treated separately. Customer-based brand equity explains how collaborations attract attention and shape expectations, while service and experience theories explain whether the promise is fulfilled. Sustainable value is created when the symbolic and operational dimensions reinforce one another.

5.4 Summary of Research Findings and Outcomes

The study produced five principal outcomes. First, customer awareness was high, particularly for collaborations embedded in rooms, spas, restaurants and bars. Second, collaborations strengthened perceived prestige, exclusivity and differentiation more strongly than they improved the overall experience. Third, recommendation intention was stronger than revisit intention, demonstrating that image effects do not automatically become loyalty. Fourth, brand fit and experiential improvement were more important than partner fame, visibility or value for money. Fifth, fashion, design and art collaborations were selected as the collaboration type most likely to influence customer perception positively, while wellness, amenities and food-and-beverage partnerships provided more direct functional relevance.

Taken together, the findings suggest that the effectiveness of a collaboration does not depend only on how expensive, famous or visible it is. Strategic fit, credibility and the way the collaboration is delivered across the guest experience appear to be more important. This outcome provides a clear basis for managerial decision-making and for the contribution outlined below.

5.5 Original Contribution of the Research

The study contributes to the field by integrating branding and hospitality explanations within one customer-perception process. Previous research often considers association transfer, co-branding, authenticity, service quality and loyalty separately. The findings indicate how these elements may be connected. Awareness provides an opportunity for customers to notice the collaboration, while prestige and rarity contribute to its symbolic appeal. Brand fit and authenticity influence whether the partnership is considered credible, and meaningful integration into the guest experience appears to be more closely associated with recommendation and revisit intentions.

A practical contribution is the distinction between visibility and influence. Branded toiletries and wellness partnerships were the most noticed formats, while fashion, design and art collaborations were identified as the format most likely to influence perception positively. This demonstrates that frequency of exposure should not be treated as equivalent to strategic impact. The research also contributes UK-focused evidence from customers who had stayed in hotels and those who had used restaurants, bars, spas or events, recognising that luxury hotel perception is formed across the entire property rather than through accommodation alone.

Based on these findings, the study proposes a managerial Fit-Authenticity-Experience framework. The framework suggests considering three areas before a collaboration is introduced: whether the partnership fits the hotel and its target customers, whether it has a credible basis and clear expertise, and whether it provides a meaningful improvement to at least one part of the guest experience. If one of these areas is weak, the collaboration may require further development before implementation. This framework is not presented as a statistically validated universal model, but as an evidence-based decision tool derived from the study's conceptual framework and empirical results.

5.6 Limitations of the Research

Several limitations affect the interpretation of the findings. The study achieved 81 eligible responses rather than the target of approximately 101. Although this was adequate for the descriptive and exploratory analysis undertaken, it limits statistical precision. Convenience sampling and online recruitment also created self-selection and coverage bias because respondents were drawn from accessible university, hospitality, social and personal networks rather than selected randomly. The findings are therefore indicative of the sample and cannot be generalised statistically to all UK five-star hotel customers.

The sample included a strong London representation, reflecting the concentration of luxury hotels and collaborations in the capital. Customer expectations and collaboration practices in other UK regions may differ. The cross-sectional design captured perceptions at one point in time and cannot establish causality or show how attitudes change following repeated exposure. All principal variables were self-reported in the same questionnaire, creating possible recall, social-desirability and common-method bias.

Participants evaluated different hotels, brands and collaboration experiences rather than one controlled partnership. This increased real-world relevance but reduced comparability. The closed-question format enabled numerical comparison but could not fully explain why respondents considered a collaboration authentic, inappropriate or memorable. Perceived service quality was not analysed as a separate empirical construct because its comprehensive assessment would require a dedicated and validated multi-item measurement scale. General questions relating to the wider guest experience may not have captured the complexity of service quality consistently across respondents and different hotel experiences. Consequently, conclusions relating to service quality were interpreted through the guest-experience and service-integration measures and should therefore be treated with caution. Finally, behavioural intentions do not necessarily predict actual bookings, recommendations or repeat visits.

5.7 Recommendations and Areas for Future Research

5.7.1 Strategic Recommendations for UK Five-Star Hotels

One of the main recommendations is for hotels to consider collaborations in relation to the guest outcomes they are intended to achieve rather than treating them only as separate marketing activities. Recent industry analysis also identifies experiential luxury, authenticity and personalised lifestyle experiences as central to the convergence of luxury brands and hospitality (Deloitte, 2025). Hotels should therefore begin with the desired customer outcome and only then select the partner.

Table 5.1: Strategic Recommendations and Managerial Actions for UK Five-Star Hotels

Recommendation	Managerial action
1. Apply a three-gate selection process	Approve a partner only when it passes the Fit, Authenticity and Experience gates. Fit should cover target customer, hotel identity and service category. Authenticity should identify a credible shared story and genuine expertise. Experience should specify the exact touchpoint that will become better for the guest.
2. Build a two-layer collaboration portfolio	Combine high-reach functional partnerships, such as amenities, wellness or food and beverage, with a smaller number of rare image-building collaborations in art, fashion, design or private experiences. The first layer provides repeated usefulness; the second creates novelty, cultural relevance and controlled exclusivity.
3. Design the collaboration around a signature ritual	Convert the partnership into one memorable, repeatable service moment: a personalised welcome, consultation, tableside presentation, treatment ritual, private viewing or departure gift. The ritual should involve trained employees and make the partner's expertise visible without becoming a sales pitch.
4. Personalise without destroying rarity	Use preference data and pre-arrival communication to offer the most relevant collaboration to each guest rather than promoting every partnership to everyone. Luxury hotels should use technology to

Recommendation	Managerial action
	support staff anticipation while protecting privacy and preserving human interaction (McKinsey & Company, 2024).
5. Create an authenticity contract	Before launch, the hotel and partner should document each brand's contribution, quality standards, employee training, sourcing, service recovery responsibilities and exit conditions. This prevents a collaboration from becoming logo placement and protects credibility when operational problems arise.
6. Measure an experience-to-loyalty funnel	Evaluate awareness, participation, guest-experience improvement, recommendation, revisit intention and actual repeat behaviour separately. Add short qualitative questions and compare participants with non-participants. Online reach should be treated as an input, not proof of success.
7. Pilot, learn and stop weak concepts	Test the collaboration on a limited floor, service period or customer segment. Use guest feedback, staff observations and behavioural data to refine it before scaling. Consider discontinuing or revising the partnership if it generates attention but does not produce the intended improvement in guest experience or customer behaviour.

Source: Author's own compilation based on the study findings.

The signature-ritual recommendation is particularly important because the findings showed that authenticity and overall guest-experience improvement were more closely connected to meaningful outcomes than prestige alone. Research on luxury hotels similarly indicates that positive service experiences support engagement through emotional attachment, satisfaction, trust and commitment (Rather et al., 2024). McKinsey & Company (2024) also argues that exceptional luxury-hotel experiences depend on a culture of service excellence and employees who understand guest preferences. The collaboration should therefore also be reflected in service delivery and employee interaction rather than being managed only as a marketing activity.

Hotels should also separate acquisition metrics from loyalty metrics. Fashion, design and art may be effective for attention, press coverage and recommendation, whereas wellness, dining,

amenities and personalised services may contribute more directly to usage and return. Hotels could identify a primary objective for each partnership and use a limited number of relevant measures to evaluate its performance. This avoids declaring a collaboration successful because it generated social-media attention when its actual purpose was to improve satisfaction or repeat visits.

5.7.2 Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should test the proposed Fit-Authenticity-Experience framework using larger probability-based samples across different UK regions. A hotel-specific experimental design could compare customer responses before and after exposure to the same collaboration, improving control and supporting stronger causal conclusions. Longitudinal research could measure whether initial excitement is maintained and whether stated revisit intentions become actual repeat behaviour.

Qualitative interviews or focus groups would provide deeper explanations of what makes a partnership feel authentic, commercial, distinctive or personally relevant. Mixed-method studies could combine these explanations with structural equation modelling using validated multi-item scales for service quality, authenticity, brand fit, perceived value, emotional attachment and loyalty. Further research should also compare resident guests with restaurant, bar, spa and event customers, and examine whether collaboration preferences vary by travel purpose, prior luxury-brand knowledge, age, culture and frequency of five-star hotel use.

Finally, researchers should compare collaboration portfolios rather than individual campaigns. This would reveal whether a combination of accessible functional benefits and rare symbolic experiences creates stronger long-term brand equity than either approach alone. Actual operational and commercial data, including participation, incremental spending, complaints and repeat bookings, would strengthen the link between customer perception and managerial performance.

5.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter concluded that luxury brand collaborations positively influence customer perceptions of UK five-star hotels, particularly prestige, exclusivity and differentiation. However, prestige alone is insufficient. Awareness attracts attention, while brand fit, authenticity, meaningful integration and real improvement to the guest experience determine whether the collaboration creates value and supports recommendation or revisit intentions. The study therefore recommends

that hotels select partnerships through Fit, Authenticity and Experience gates, combine functional and symbolic collaborations within a balanced portfolio, translate each partnership into a signature service ritual, and measure success across the complete experience-to-loyalty funnel. These conclusions answer the research questions and fulfil the overall aim of investigating how luxury brand collaborations influence customer perceptions in UK five-star hotels.

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Appendix A: Literature Themes Matrix

Table A1: Literature Themes Matrix

Theme	Key academic support	Relevance to this study
Service quality and value	Keshavarz et al. (2019); Özcan, Pehlivan and Erkasap (2024)	Collaborations should reinforce core service quality and perceived value.
Customer-based brand equity	Aaker (1991); Keller (1993); Kim, Baloglu and Henthorne (2021)	External brands may strengthen perceived quality, brand associations and loyalty intentions.
Luxury strategy, rarity and scarcity	Phau and Prendergast (2000); Cialdini (2009); Berthon et al. (2009); Kapferer and Bastien (2012)	Luxury collaborations may strengthen exclusivity when they feel selective, rare, symbolically meaningful and coherently integrated into the hotel experience.
Luxury value and symbolic meaning	Holbrook (1999); Vigneron and Johnson (2004); Tsiotsou (2022)	Collaborations may influence luxury status, exclusive appeal, aesthetics and status perceptions.
Co-branding and brand fit	Park, Milberg and Lawson (1991); Whalen and Sisson (2022); Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary (2023)	Partnerships are more persuasive when the hotel and partner brand feel coherent.
Authenticity and credibility	Beverland (2005); Quamina, Xue and Chawdhary (2023)	Collaborations are more positively perceived when they appear credible, coherent with the hotel identity and meaningfully integrated into the guest experience.
Digital visibility	Giglio et al. (2020); Petrescu, Girona and O'Leary (2024)	Customers may notice and judge collaborations before arrival through online cues.
Experience and engagement	Pine and Gilmore (1998); Rather et al. (2024); Mele, Dubosson and Schegg (2025)	Collaborations may create memorable touchpoints that support engagement and loyalty.

Source: Author's compilation based on the literature reviewed.

Appendix B: Questionnaire

Participant Information Statement

Dear Participant,

You are invited to take part in an academic research study titled “The Influence of Luxury Brand Collaborations on Customer Perception in Five-Star Hotels in the UK.”

The purpose of this research is to investigate how collaborations between five-star hotels and luxury brands influence customer perceptions of prestige, exclusivity, authenticity and the overall guest experience. The study also examines whether these collaborations affect customers’ willingness to recommend or revisit a hotel.

You may participate if you are aged 18 or over and have stayed in, visited or used customer-facing services in a five-star hotel in the UK. These services may include accommodation, restaurants, bars, spas, wellness facilities, afternoon tea or events.

Participation is entirely voluntary. The questionnaire contains approximately 19 questions and should take around 5-7 minutes to complete. You may stop participating at any time before submitting the questionnaire by closing the form. However, because responses are anonymous, it will not be possible to withdraw your answers after submission.

No names, email addresses or other directly identifying information were collected. Your responses will remain confidential and will be used solely for academic research. The findings will be presented only in aggregated form, so individual participants will not be identifiable.

The data will be stored securely and handled in accordance with the University of Wales Trinity Saint David’s research ethics requirements. By selecting “Yes, I consent” below, you confirm that you have read and understood this information, are aged 18 or over and voluntarily agree to participate.

For further information about the study, please contact:

Researcher: Manuel Fioranzato

Student ID: 2311107

Email: 2311107@student.uwtsd.ac.uk

Supervisor: Lakshani Nissanga Mendis

University: University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Thank you for taking the time to participate.

1. Do you consent to take part in this anonymous academic questionnaire?

- Yes, I consent
- No, I do not consent

(Respondents who do not consent will be directed to the end of the questionnaire.)

2. Have you ever stayed in, visited or used services in a five-star hotel in the UK?

- Yes, stayed overnight
- Yes, used restaurant/bar/spa/event services
- Yes, both
- No

(Respondents who select “No” will be directed to the end of the questionnaire.)

3. How often do you stay in, visit or use services in five-star hotels in the UK?

- Once only
- Less than once a year
- 1-2 times a year
- 3-5 times a year
- More than 5 times a year

4. Before this survey, were you aware that hotels sometimes collaborate with luxury brands?

- Very aware
- Somewhat aware

- Neither aware nor unaware
- Not very aware
- Not aware at all

5. Which types of luxury collaboration have you noticed in hotels? Select all that apply.

- Branded toiletries/skincare/fragrance
- Spa/wellness partnerships
- Food and beverage partnerships
- Fashion/design/art collaborations
- Branded suites or rooms
- Retail pop-ups or events
- I have not noticed any

6. Where have you noticed luxury brand collaborations in five-star hotels? Select all that apply.

- In the hotel room
- In the spa/wellness area
- In restaurants/bars
- On hotel websites/social media
- In online reviews/photos
- I do not usually notice them

7. How important are luxury brand collaborations when evaluating a five-star hotel?

- Very important
- Important
- Moderately important
- Slightly important
- Not important

8. Luxury brand collaborations make a five-star hotel appear more prestigious.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree

- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

9. Luxury brand collaborations make a five-star hotel feel more exclusive.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

10. A collaboration is more convincing when the partner brand fits the hotel's identity.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

11. Luxury brand collaborations improve my perception of the overall guest experience in a five-star hotel.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

12. A luxury brand collaboration positively influences me when it feels authentic and credible.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

13. Luxury brand collaborations are more valuable when they are meaningfully integrated into the guest experience.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

14. I would be more likely to choose a hotel if it offered a collaboration with a luxury brand I like.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

15. Luxury brand collaborations would make me more likely to recommend a five-star hotel.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

16. Luxury brand collaborations would make me more likely to revisit a five-star hotel.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

17. Luxury brand collaborations help five-star hotels stand out from competitors.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

18. Which collaboration type would most positively influence your perception of a five-star hotel?

- Luxury skincare/fragrance amenities
- Spa/wellness brand partnership
- Food and beverage/champagne partnership
- Fashion/design/art collaboration
- Branded suite/private experience
- None of these would influence me

19. What is the most important factor for a successful hotel luxury collaboration?

- Brand fit with the hotel
- Prestige of the partner brand
- Visibility to customers
- Improvement to the guest experience
- Authenticity/credibility
- Value for money

Appendix C: Ethics Approval Form

ETHICS FORM – UNDERGRADUATE AND TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE COURSES ONLY

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically.

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of **research activity**: "creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications". As such this covers activities undertaken by members of staff, postgraduate research students, and both taught postgraduate and undergraduate students working on dissertations/projects.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the "principal researcher".

This form must be completed and approved prior to undertaking any research activity.

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

1	Full Name:	Manuel Fioranzato
2	Student Number:	2311107
3	Email address:	2311107@student.uwtsd.ac.uk
4	Programme of Study:	BA (Hons) Business Management
5	Supervisor:	Lakshani Nissanga Mendis

SECTION B: Internal and External Ethical Guidance Materials

	Please list the core ethical guidance documents that have been referred to during the completion of this form (including any discipline-specific codes of research ethics, location-specific codes of research ethics, and also any specific ethical guidance relating to the proposed methodology). Please tick to confirm that your research proposal adheres to these codes and guidelines. You may add rows to this table if needed.	
1	UWTSd Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice	☒
2	UWTSd Research Data Management Policy	☒
3		☐
4		☐

SECTION C: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	The Influence of Luxury Brand Collaborations on Customer Perception in 5-Star Hotels in the UK		
2	Proposed start date:	01/06/2026	Proposed end date:	15/08/2026
Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words in each section) Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the three points below: <i>Purpose of Research Activity</i> <i>Proposed Research Question</i>				

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	• <i>Aims of Research Activity</i> • <i>Objectives of Research Activity</i> Demonstrate, briefly, how Existing Research has informed the proposed activity and explain • <i>What the research activity will add to the body of knowledge</i> • <i>How it addresses an area of importance.</i>
3	Purpose of Research Activity The purpose of this study is to investigate how luxury brand collaborations influence customer perception in UK five-star hotels. Specifically, the study will examine whether customers perceive such collaborations as improving hotel prestige, exclusivity, loyalty intentions and competitive differentiation. The issue being analysed is whether these partnerships create real value in the minds of customers or whether they operate only as superficial branding devices. The study also considers whether perceived value depends on the quality, relevance and visibility of the collaboration. (this box should expand as you type)
4	Research Question 1. What forms of luxury brand collaboration are currently visible in UK five-star hotels? 2. How do customers perceive the influence of luxury brand collaborations on hotel prestige and exclusivity? 3. To what extent do luxury brand collaborations influence customer loyalty intentions and perceptions of competitive advantage? 4. What recommendations can be made to improve the strategic use of luxury brand collaborations in the UK luxury hotel sector? (this box should expand as you type)
5	Aims of Research Activity Aim: To investigate the influence of luxury brand collaborations on customer perception in five-star hotels in the UK.
6	Objectives of Research Activity 1. To identify forms of luxury brand collaboration visible in UK five-star hotels. 2. To examine how customers perceive the influence of these collaborations on prestige and exclusivity. 3. To assess whether luxury brand collaborations influence loyalty intentions and perceptions of competitive advantage. 4. To provide recommendations for the more effective strategic use of luxury brand partnerships in UK five-star hotels.
	Proposed data collection methods (maximum 600 words) Provide a brief summary of all the methods that may be used in the research activity to collect data, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be needed. You do not need to justify the methods here but should instead describe how you intend to collect the data necessary for you to complete your project.
7	This study will use a structured self-completion online questionnaire as the sole primary data collection method. The questionnaire will be created using Google Forms and distributed through an online survey link to adults aged 18 or over who have experience staying in, or using services in, five-star hotels in the UK. The link may be shared through relevant online channels and personal/professional networks, and participants will take part voluntarily. The questionnaire will contain mainly closed questions, brief screening questions, broad non-identifying background/context questions where appropriate, and short Likert-scale/rating-scale items designed to gather views on luxury brand collaborations, hotel prestige, exclusivity, loyalty intentions and competitive differentiation. A small number of optional open-ended questions may be included to allow participants to add brief comments. The exported anonymous dataset will be analysed using descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages and mean scores, and simple comparisons where appropriate. Before completing the questionnaire, participants will see an online participant information statement and consent statement explaining the purpose of the study, that participation is voluntary, that they may skip any question, and that they may stop at any time before submitting their response. Participants will confirm consent electronically before proceeding to the questionnaire. No interviews, focus groups, audio recordings or video recordings will be used. Google Forms settings will be configured so that email addresses are not collected and responses are anonymous. Questionnaire responses will be stored in the associated secure Google account during data collection. Anonymous

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	response data may be exported for analysis and stored securely in a password-protected personal folder on the UWTSD OneDrive, with access restricted to the researcher only. Data will not be transferred to or stored on a personal computer, laptop, USB drive, memory stick, portable disk-drive or other personal device.
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SECTION D: Scope of Research Activity

	Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
1	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☒	☐
2	Use of interviews?	☐	☒
3	Use of focus groups?	☐	☒
4	Use of participant diaries?	☐	☒
5	Use of video or audio recording?	☐	☒
6	Use of computer-generated log files?	☐	☒
7	Participant observation with their knowledge?	☐	☒
8	Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	☒
9	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	☒
10	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	☒
11	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	☒
12	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	☒
13	Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	☒
14	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	☒
15	Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	☒
16	Procedures that may have a negative impact on the environment?	☐	☒
17	Other primary data collection methods. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) below.	☐	☒
	Details of any other primary data collection method:		

If you have ticked NO to every question then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and you may skip section E and continue to section F.

If YES to any question, then no research activity should be undertaken until full ethical approval has been obtained.

SECTION E: Intended Participants

	Who are the intended participants:	YES	NO
1	Students or staff at the University?	☐	☒
2	Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?	☒	☐
3	Vulnerable adults?	☐	☒

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4	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)	☐	☒
5	Prisoners?	☐	☒
6	Young offenders?	☐	☒
7	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?	☐	☒
8	People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	☒
9	Others. Please indicate the participants below, and specifically any group who may be unable to give consent.	☐	☒
	Details of any other participant groups:		

	Participant numbers and source Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?	
10	How many participants are expected?	70
11	Who will the participants be?	The target population is adults aged 18 or over who have experience staying in, or using services in, five-star hotels in the UK.
12	How will you identify the participants?	Convenience sampling will be used to recruit adult participants who have experience staying in, or using services in, five-star hotels in the UK. Participants will be identified through online recruitment, such as sharing the Google Forms questionnaire link through appropriate social media, online networks and relevant contacts. The invitation will explain that participation is voluntary and that only adults aged 18 or over with experience of staying in, or using services in, five-star hotels in the UK should complete the questionnaire.

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
13	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	☒	☐	☐
14	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☒	☐	☐
15	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☒	☐	☐
16	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	☒	☐	☐
17	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☐	☐	☒
18	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☒	☐	☐
19	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☒	☐	☐
20	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☒	☐	☐
21	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☒	☐	☐
22	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
24	Will participants be paid?	☐	☒	☐

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25	Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?	☐	☒	☐
26	Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?	☐	☒	☐
27	Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?	☐	☒	☐
28	If YES to any question, please provide full details			

SECTION F: Anticipated Risks

	Outline any anticipated risks that may adversely affect any of the participants, the researchers and/or the University, and the steps that will be taken to address them.	
1	Risks to participants For example: sector-specific health & safety, emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information. If you have identified in section D that there are no participants, then enter N/A and go skip to question 3.	
	This study involves minimal risk. Possible risks to participants include minor inconvenience, survey fatigue, or slight discomfort when answering opinion-based questions about hotel experiences and brand perceptions. There is also a small confidentiality/data protection risk linked to the use of an online questionnaire platform and secure cloud storage, although the questionnaire will not ask for names, email addresses or other direct identifiers.	Participation is entirely voluntary. Participants will read the online information statement and give consent before starting the questionnaire. They may decline to participate, skip any question, or withdraw by closing the questionnaire before submitting their response. The questionnaire will avoid sensitive or intrusive topics. Google Forms settings will be used to prevent the collection of email addresses, and results will be reported in anonymous summary form only.
2	If research activity may include sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) or issues likely to disclose information requiring further action (e.g. criminal activity), give details of the procedures to deal with these issues, including any support/advice (e.g. helpline numbers) to be offered to participants. Note that where applicable, consent procedures should make it clear that if something potentially or actually illegal is discovered in the course of a project, it may need to be disclosed to the proper authorities	
	This research does not involve sensitive, illegal, embarrassing or upsetting topics. No additional support procedures are considered necessary. If any participant becomes uncomfortable, they will be reminded that participation is voluntary and that they may stop immediately without giving a reason.	
3	Risks to the investigator For example: personal health & safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest	
	This study involves minimal risk to the investigator. Possible risks include low response rates, errors in questionnaire design or data export, accidental loss of electronic files, and time pressure during data collection and analysis.	These risks will be reduced by using a clear research timetable, piloting the online questionnaire before use, checking the Google Forms settings before distribution, keeping accurate records, exporting data carefully, storing electronic files only in approved secure cloud storage, and checking entries during analysis. The researcher will not transfer or store the dataset on a personal computer, laptop, USB drive, memory stick, portable disk-drive or other personal device. The researcher will also follow supervisor guidance and University ethical procedures throughout the project.
4	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection	
	Risks to the University are low but may include reputational damage or data protection concerns if the study is carried out improperly or if participant information is mishandled.	These risks will be mitigated by following the approved research design, obtaining informed consent, protecting participant confidentiality, storing materials securely in Google Forms and UWTSD OneDrive and avoiding personal device storage, reporting findings honestly, and ensuring that no individual participant or hotel is identifiable in the final dissertation unless explicit permission is given.
5	Environmental risks For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems	

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No environmental risks are anticipated because the study does not involve hazardous materials, intrusive procedures, or activities likely to damage the environment.	No specific mitigation measures are required beyond normal responsible use of online systems and secure deletion of electronic files when no longer required.
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SECTION G: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

If you have identified in section D that there are no participants, then enter skip this section and continue to section H.

1	Feedback What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when? A short debrief statement will be displayed at the end of the online questionnaire. Participants will also be given the researcher's student email address so they can request further information about the study if needed.
2	Informed consent Describe the arrangements to inform potential participants, before providing consent, of what is involved in participating. Describe the arrangements for participants to provide full consent before data collection begins. If gaining consent in this way is inappropriate, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded in accordance with prevailing data protection legislation. Before taking part, each participant will see an online information statement explaining the purpose of the study, what participation involves, that participation is voluntary, and how the anonymous data will be used and stored. Participants will be asked to confirm consent electronically, for example by ticking an online consent box, before they can proceed to the questionnaire. No handwritten or signed paper consent forms will be collected.
3	Confidentiality / Anonymity Set out how anonymity of participants and confidentiality will be ensured in any outputs. If anonymity is not being offered, explain why this is the case. Questionnaire responses will be anonymous and will not ask for names, contact details, email addresses or other direct identifiers. Google Forms will be set so that email addresses are not collected. In all written outputs, findings will be presented in summary form only and no individual participant or hotel will be identifiable.

SECTION H: Data Protection and Storage

	Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 "GDPR" and the Data Protection Act 2018 "DPA")?	YES	NO
1	"Personal data" means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject'). An identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person. Any video or audio recordings of participants is considered to be personal data.	☐	☒
	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
2	No personal data will be intentionally collected. The online questionnaire will not request names, signatures, email addresses, contact details or other direct identifiers. Google Forms settings will be configured so that email addresses are not collected. Responses will be analysed anonymously and reported only in summary form.		
	Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?	YES	NO
3	"Special category data" means sensitive personal data consisting of information as to the data subjects' – (a) racial or ethnic origin, (b) political opinions, (c) religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature, (d) membership of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992), (e) physical or mental health or condition, (f) sexual life, (g) genetics, (h) biometric data (as used for ID purposes),	☐	☒

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	If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:
4	No special category data will be collected.

	Will data from the research activity (collected data, drafts of the thesis, or materials for publication) be stored in any of the following ways?	YES	NO
5	Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?	☐	☒
6	University computers?	☐	☒
7	Private company computers?	☐	☒
8	Home or other personal computers?	☐	☒
9	Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?	☐	☒
10	"Cloud" storage or websites?	☒	☐
11	Other – specify:	☐	☒
12	For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure the security of the data collected, data confidentiality, including details of backup procedures, password protection, encryption, anonymisation and pseudonymisation: Questionnaire responses will be collected through Google Forms and stored in the associated secure Google account during data collection. The form will be configured not to collect email addresses. Anonymous response data may be exported for analysis and stored securely in a password-protected personal folder on the UWTSD OneDrive, with access restricted to the researcher only. Data will not be transferred to or stored on a personal computer, laptop, USB drive, memory stick, portable disk-drive or other personal device. No paper questionnaires or handwritten consent forms will be used. Electronic files will be kept securely, backed up only in secure password-protected storage where necessary, and deleted securely in line with University requirements after the project is completed.		

	Data Protection		
	Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	YES	NO
13	Electronic transfer of data in any form?	☒	☐
14	Sharing of data with others at the University outside of the immediate research team?	☐	☒
15	Sharing of data with other organisations?	☐	☒
16	Export of data outside the UK or importing of data from outside the UK?	☐	☒
17	Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?	☐	☒
18	Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?	☐	☒
19	If YES to any question, please provide full details, explaining how this will be conducted in accordance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act (2018) (and/or any international equivalent): Electronic transfer of anonymous questionnaire response data will occur when responses are submitted through Google Forms and, if required, when the researcher exports/downloads the anonymous dataset for analysis and stores it in a password-protected personal folder on the UWTSD OneDrive. The questionnaire will not collect names, email addresses or direct identifiers. Access to the Google Form and UWTSD OneDrive folder will be password-protected and restricted to the researcher. Data will not be transferred to or stored on a personal computer, laptop, USB drive, memory stick, portable disk-drive or other personal device. No raw identifiable data will be shared outside the immediate research team, no data will be published in a way that identifies individuals, and files will be securely deleted in line with University requirements after completion of the project.		
20	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		

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	The principal researcher will have access to the anonymous raw questionnaire dataset. The supervisor may view anonymised summaries, dissertation extracts, or selected anonymous data only where necessary for academic supervision. No signed paper consent forms will be collected.	
21	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:	
	The principal researcher will act as the main custodian of the anonymous research data.	
22	Give details of data storage arrangements, including security measures in place to protect the data, where data will be stored, how long for, and in what form.	
	Anonymous questionnaire responses will be stored electronically through Google Forms during data collection and, if exported for analysis, stored in a password-protected personal folder on the UWTSD OneDrive. No paper consent forms or paper questionnaires will be stored. The anonymous raw dataset will not be stored on a personal computer, laptop, USB drive, memory stick, portable disk-drive or other personal device.	
	Access will be restricted to the researcher, with supervisor access limited to anonymised summaries or selected anonymous data where necessary for academic supervision. Data will be retained until the project has been completed in line with University requirements and then securely deleted.	
22	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwt.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	☒
23	Confirm that you are aware that you need to keep all data until after your research has completed or the end of your funding	☒

SECTION I: Use of AI tools

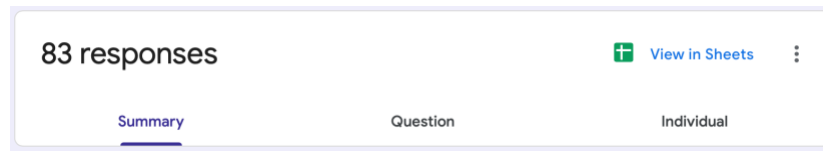
Use of generative AI and other AI-based tools		YES	NO	N/A
There are a number of ethical issues relating to the use of generative AI and other AI-based tools, including data security, output bias, and output errors. In general, you should assume that any generative AI or other AI-based tool that you pay to use is more secure and accurate than one which is free to use.				
Will the research use AI tools to do any of the following:				
1	Capture data?	☐	☒	☐
2	Generate and/or edit text?	☐	☒	☐
3	Generate graphics?	☐	☒	☐
4	Generate video?	☐	☒	☐
5	Generate sound/music?	☐	☒	☐
6	Generate code?	☐	☒	☐
7	Generate synthetic data?	☐	☒	☐
8	Analyse data?	☐	☒	☐
9	Analyse personal or sensitive data?	☐	☒	☐
10	Classify data?	☐	☒	☐
11	Do you intend to use the free version of any AI tools?	☐	☒	☐
Not applicable. No AI tools will be used to collect, analyse, classify or generate research data for this study.				

SECTION J: Declaration

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	The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants. In submitting this application, I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice which is published on the website: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/		
1	Signature of applicant:		Date: 25/04/2026
2	Supervisor:	Dr Lakshani Mendis	Date: 25/04/2026
3	Signature:	<i>Lakshani</i>	

Appendix D: Google Forms Summary of Questionnaire Responses



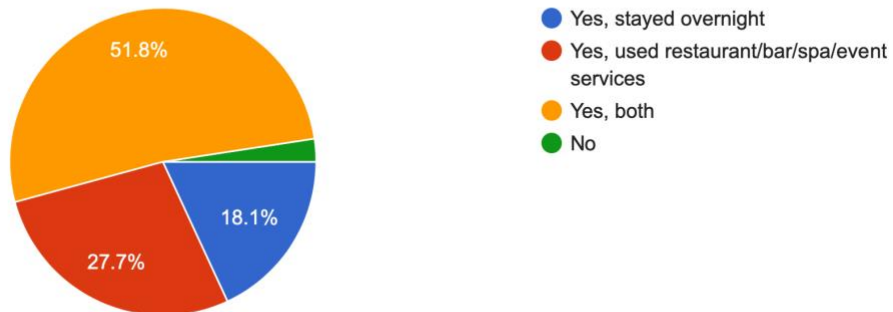
Do you consent to take part in this anonymous academic questionnaire?

83 responses



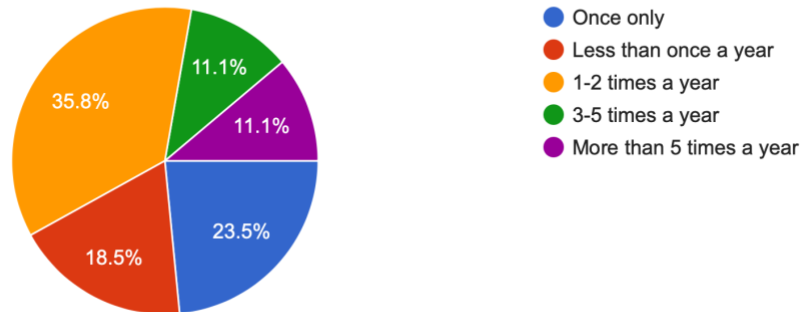
Have you ever stayed in, visited or used services in a five-star hotel in the UK?

83 responses



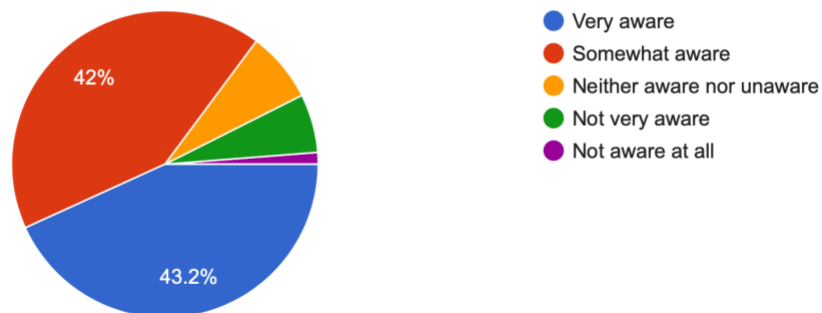
How often do you stay in, visit or use services in five-star hotels in the UK?

81 responses



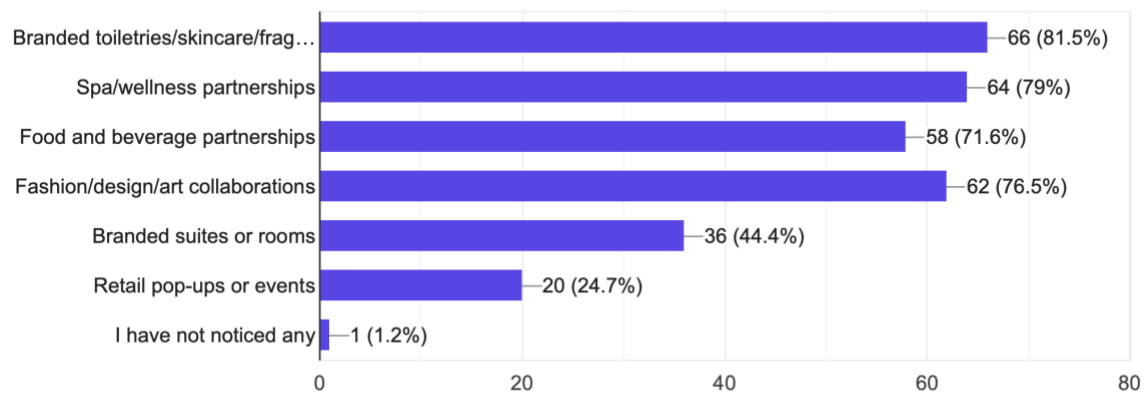
Before this survey, were you aware that hotels sometimes collaborate with luxury brands?

81 responses



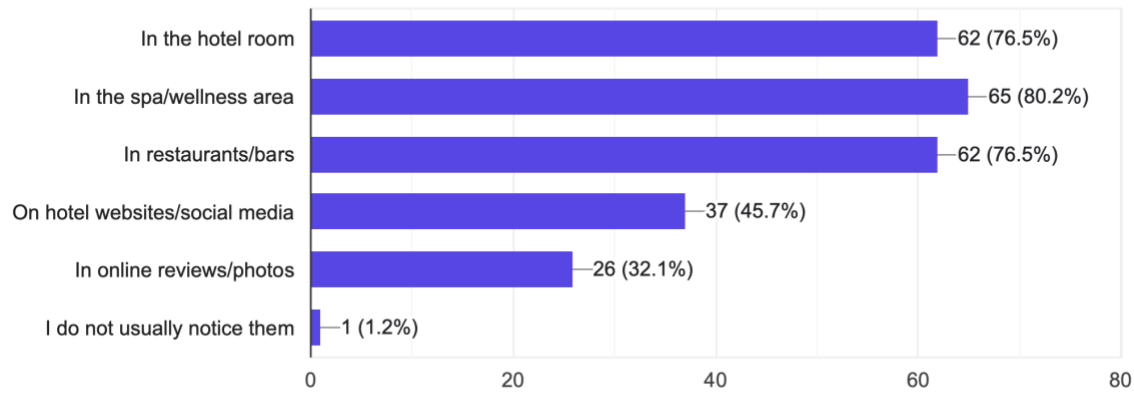
Which types of luxury collaboration have you noticed in hotels? Select all that apply.

81 responses



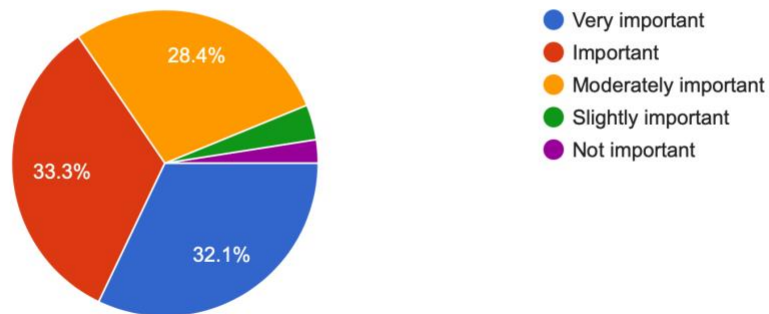
Where have you noticed luxury brand collaborations in five-star hotels? Select all that apply.

81 responses



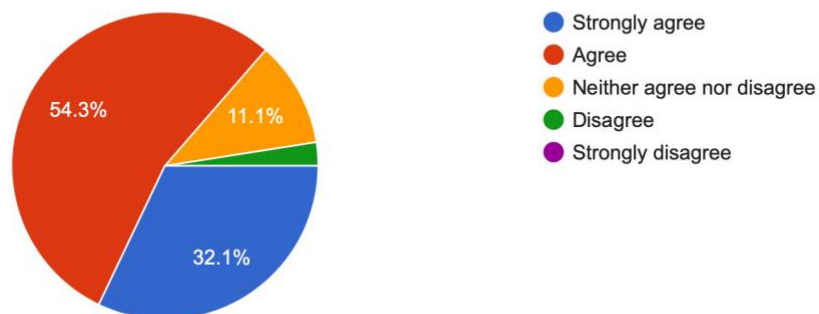
How important are luxury brand collaborations when evaluating a five-star hotel?

81 responses



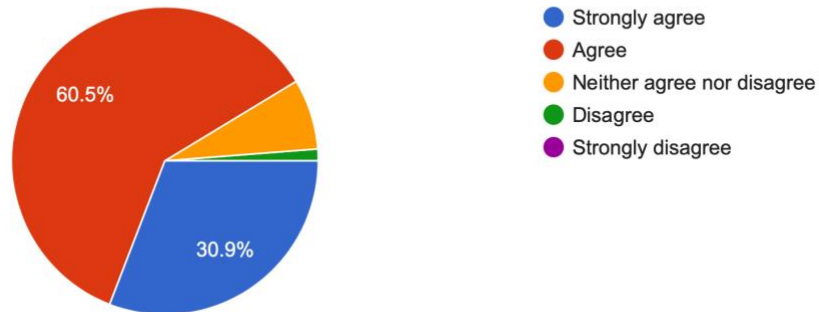
Luxury brand collaborations make a five-star hotel appear more prestigious.

81 responses



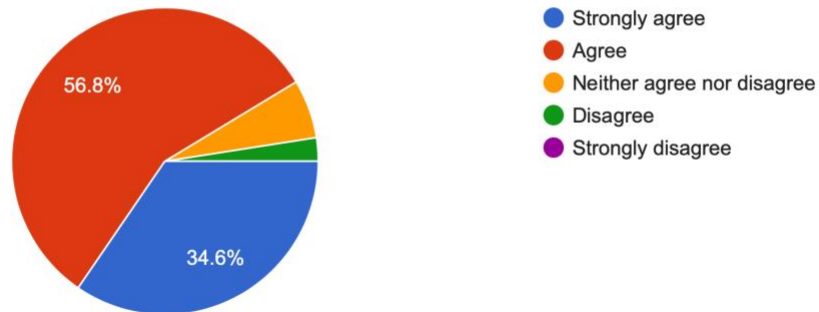
Luxury brand collaborations make a five-star hotel feel more exclusive.

81 responses



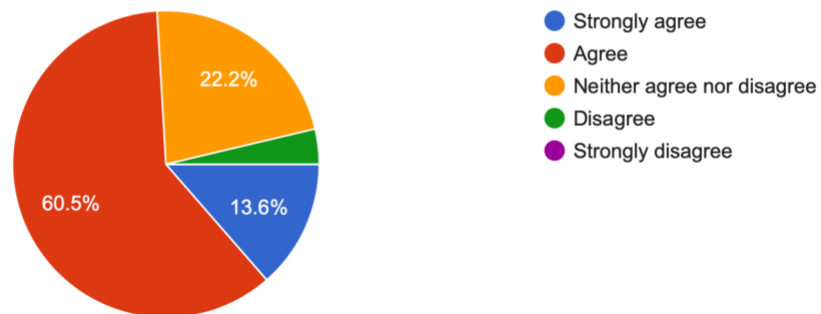
A collaboration is more convincing when the partner brand fits the hotel's identity.

81 responses



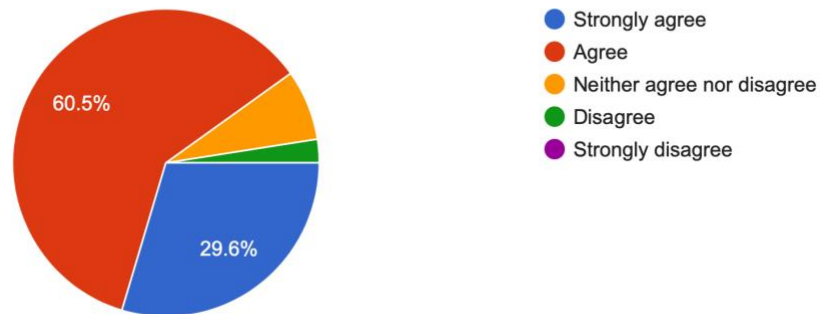
Luxury brand collaborations improve my perception of the overall guest experience in a five-star hotel.

81 responses



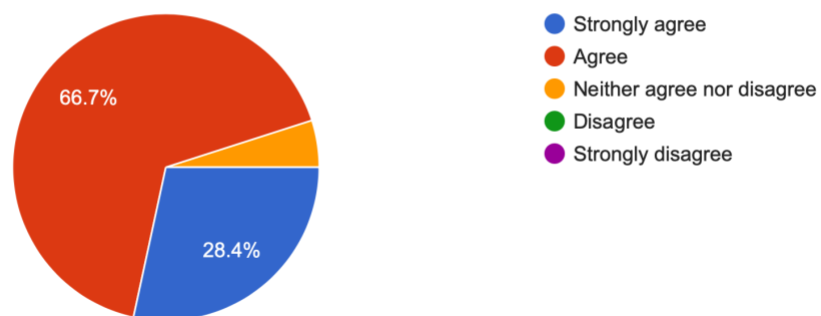
A luxury brand collaboration positively influences me when it feels authentic and credible.

81 responses



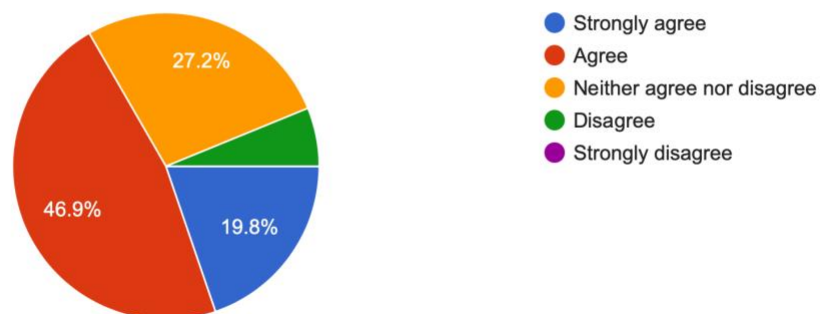
Luxury brand collaborations are more valuable when they are meaningfully integrated into the guest experience.

81 responses



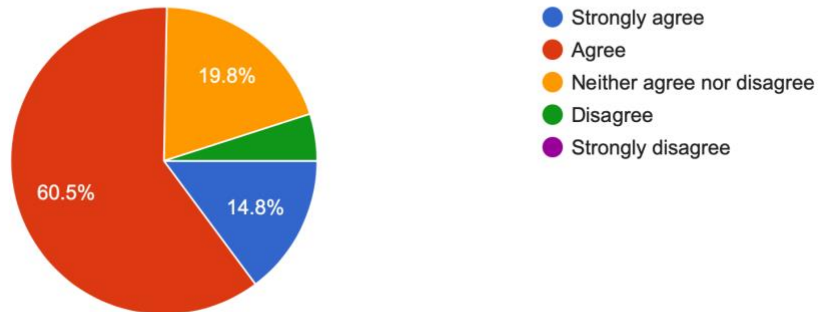
I would be more likely to choose a hotel if it offered a collaboration with a luxury brand I like.

81 responses



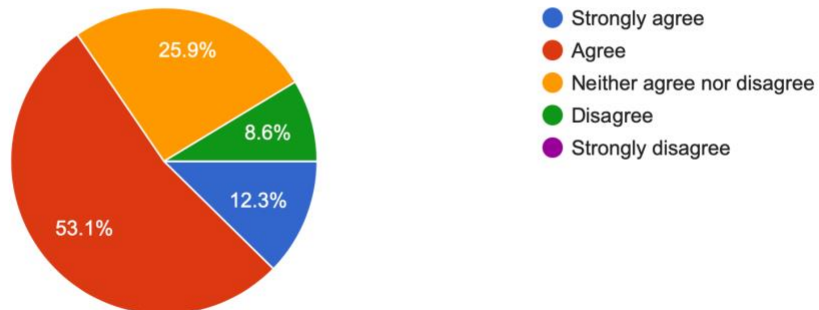
Luxury brand collaborations would make me more likely to recommend a five-star hotel.

81 responses



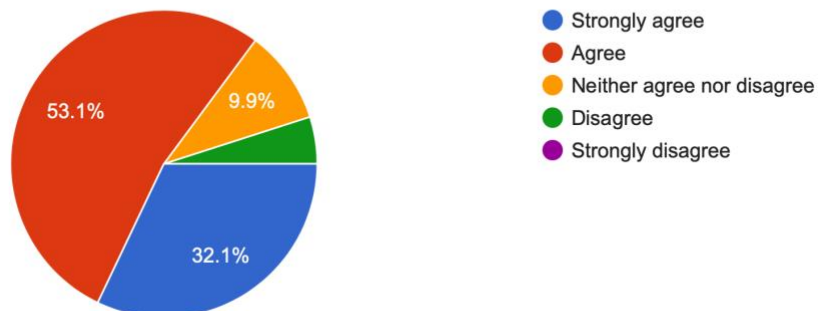
Luxury brand collaborations would make me more likely to revisit a five-star hotel.

81 responses



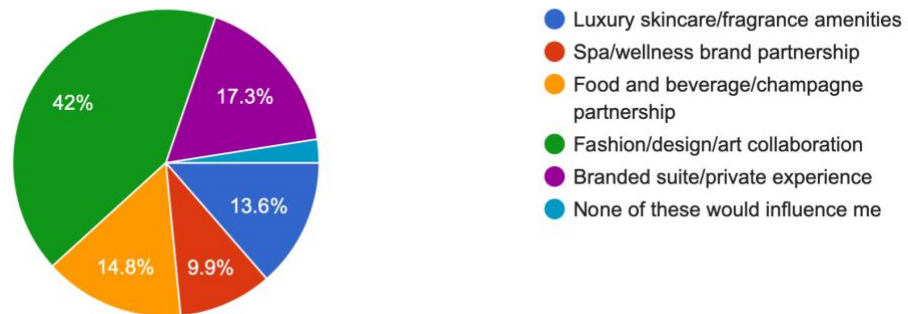
Luxury brand collaborations help five-star hotels stand out from competitors.

81 responses



Which collaboration type would most positively influence your perception of a five-star hotel?

81 responses



What is the most important factor for a successful hotel luxury collaboration?

81 responses

