



REVIEW ARTICLE

Section: *Literature, Linguistics & Criticism***Employee brand citizenship in Saudi Green Hotel narratives: A narratological reading of credibility and pride**Ahmed S. Ajina^{1*}, Hebatallah A. M. Ahmed², Bassam Samir Al-Romeedy³, Mahmoud Elsayed Emam³ & Abdelrahman A. A. Abdelghani²¹Marketing Department, College of Business Administration, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia²Applied College, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Al-Kharj, Saudi Arabia³Tourism Studies Department, Faculty of Tourism and Hotels, University of Sadat City, Egypt*Correspondence: a.ajina@psau.edu.sa**ABSTRACT**

Employee brand citizenship is usually examined as behaviour that supports a brand beyond narrowly prescribed duties. This article considers how such citizenship becomes intelligible through stories. Combining literary narratology with organizational identity and environmental citizenship scholarship, it examines five publicly available texts associated with the St. Regis Red Sea Resort, Six Senses Southern Dunes, and Red Sea Global. Two texts present employee experiences; three provide institutional and environmental frames. Close reading attends to narrative voice, focalization, temporal organization, characterization, recognition, and closure. The analysis identifies an interpretive tension between employees represented as authors of professional achievement and employees positioned within corporate narratives of national and environmental transformation. Credibility emerges as a claim requiring an identifiable speaker, a bounded account of action, and appropriate evidence. Pride becomes legible through recognition, belonging, and anticipated achievement, although published testimony cannot establish employees' private feelings. The article proposes narrative conditions under which brand citizenship can be represented responsibly, including visible discretion, acknowledged support, ecological specificity, and room for disagreement. Its contribution is methodological and conceptual: narratology reveals how organizational communication assigns agency and moral value, while preventing attractive stories from being mistaken for evidence of employee motivation, causal mediation, or verified sustainability performance. By situating employee narratives within Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 agenda, the article speaks to national research priorities on sustainable tourism, decent work, and environmental accountability.

KEYWORDS: narratology, employee brand citizenship, brand credibility, organizational pride, SDGs, Saudi hospitality, green hotels, organizational narratives

Research Journal in Advanced Humanities

Volume 7, Issue 4, 2026

ISSN: 2708-5945 (Print)

ISSN: 2708-5953 (Online)

ARTICLE HISTORY

Submitted: 28 June 2026

Accepted: 23 August 2026

Published: 13 September 2026

HOW TO CITE

Ajina, A. S., Ahmed, H. A. M., Al-Romeedy, B. S., Emam, M. E., & Abdelghani, A. A. A. (2026). Employee brand citizenship in Saudi Green Hotel narratives: A narratological reading of credibility and pride. *Research Journal in Advanced Humanities*, 7(4). <https://doi.org/10.58256/myvrpe41>



Published in Nairobi, Kenya by Royallite Global, an imprint of Royallite Publishers Limited

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Introduction

A hotel's account of its employees tells readers what kinds of work deserve admiration. An attentive gesture can become evidence of exceptional service; a career change can become a story of belonging; an environmental promise can give ordinary employment the significance of a shared mission. These transformations occur through choices about narration. Someone selects a beginning, identifies a difficulty, gives particular people speaking roles, and decides where the account should end. Before employee brand citizenship becomes a measurable variable, it may already have acquired a recognizable shape in the stories through which an organization presents itself. The issue matters for hotels that make environmental responsibility part of their brand identity. Their employees occupy a demanding position. They deliver hospitality, interpret environmental commitments for guests, and encounter the practical limits of those commitments in everyday work. A story that praises an employee's devotion may invite readers to connect excellent service with responsible tourism. Yet the connection requires examination. An act that pleases a guest is not necessarily environmentally beneficial. An employee who supports conservation may sometimes question a service convention that the brand otherwise celebrates. A literary approach can make these tensions visible without reducing the employee to either a loyal ambassador or a passive instrument.

This article examines a deliberately narrow Saudi setting: published narratives connected with two resorts within The Red Sea destination and the developer's vocational training communication. The geographical phrase in the title identifies where these representations are situated. It does not imply that the selected texts represent all Saudi hotels, all Saudi employees, or every understanding of environmental responsibility. Likewise, "green hotel" identifies sustainability positioning within the materials examined. It is not an independent certification finding. This bounded use is essential because the article studies representations rather than auditing buildings, employment conditions, or ecological outcomes.

Research on internal brand management provides an established vocabulary for linking employee commitment with brand supporting conduct (Burmah & Zeplin, 2005). Organizational scholarship also recognizes that identities are worked out through narratives and competing accounts of membership (Brown, 2006; Humphreys & Brown, 2002). These traditions can productively meet. The question is not simply whether employees repeat a corporate message, but how a text makes their actions count as credible, admirable, and representative of the brand. That question directs attention to the form of the account as well as its positive vocabulary.

The article therefore asks three questions. How do selected hotel and destination texts distribute narrative authority between employees and institutions? Through which narrative arrangements do credibility and pride become associated with desirable employee conduct? What remains unproven, or becomes difficult to express, when these accounts are read as evidence of brand citizenship? Together, the questions shift analysis from an assumed psychological pathway to the textual conditions under which such a pathway appears plausible. The central argument is that credibility and pride operate here as narrative relations. Credibility concerns the relationship between an assertion, the person or institution making it, and the grounds offered for believing it. Pride concerns the relationship between a represented achievement, a valued community, and an audience that recognizes the achievement. Neither relation is equivalent to a measured psychological mediator. A convincing sequence on a webpage cannot establish that credibility caused pride or that pride subsequently produced discretionary behaviour.

The contribution is a narratological reading grounded in nonfiction texts. It brings concepts from literary criticism into the analysis itself through attention to voice, focalization, plot, and closure. It also preserves a distinction sometimes lost in interdisciplinary borrowing: reading an employee profile narratologically does not turn the employee into a fictional person. The published representation is the object of interpretation. The living person exceeds it.

Narratology as a critical approach to hotel communication

Narrative form and nonfiction

Narratology studies how accounts organize events, perspectives, and meanings. Its relevance extends beyond novels because factual communication also selects and arranges experience. Genette's (1990) discussion of fictional and factual narrative provides a foundation for approaching that relationship without assuming that

the two categories are interchangeable. A factual account makes claims about a world outside the text. Its arrangement remains open to literary analysis, but its factual commitments remain consequential. In hotel communication, an achievement attributed to an employee is therefore both a narrated event and a claim that can, in principle, be checked.

Bruner (1991) understands narrative as a way of constructing intelligible versions of reality. For the present inquiry, the useful implication is that chronology alone does not explain an experience. An account must make events matter to someone. Starting with uncertainty and ending with recognition, for example, encourages readers to understand intervening work as development. Starting with an organizational ambition and ending with a successful employee encourages a different allocation of credit. These are interpretive possibilities, not descriptions of an inevitable narrative formula.

Plot names the consequential relationship that an account establishes between events. A promotion following training can be narrated as the reward for effort, the result of institutional support, or an opportunity produced by changing circumstances. Several explanations may be compatible with the same sequence. Close reading asks which explanation the account privileges and which remains available at its edges. This matters for brand citizenship because a text can make additional effort appear freely chosen even when it supplies little information about the conditions under which that effort occurred.

The distinction between events and their telling also protects against an elementary methodological mistake. A sequence that feels complete to a reader is not necessarily a complete history. The endpoint may be selected because it serves a recruitment purpose. The difficult middle may be compressed because a short profile cannot include everything. Neither choice proves deception. Both choices shape what the reader can reasonably conclude.

Voice and focalization

Voice concerns the position from which an account is told; focalization concerns the perspective through which information and experience become available. Bal's (1981) work on focalization makes the distinction useful for analysing whose perception organizes a scene. In an employee interview, first person speech may provide access to a represented recollection while the interviewer determines the questions and the institutional website supplies the surrounding frame. The account can contain an employee's voice without being controlled entirely by that employee.

A corporate profile consequently has several distinguishable sources of authority. A named employee can warrant a claim about a remembered encounter. An editor can explain a career chronology. A company can state an environmental target. These sources may appear together on one page, but they do not have identical access to knowledge. The analysis should follow these changes rather than allowing the apparent intimacy of personal testimony to authenticate every accompanying institutional assertion.

Focalization also identifies the boundaries of the scene. A guest encounter presented through an employee's recollection can communicate attentiveness and satisfaction while leaving colleagues' contributions outside the frame. That absence should generate a question, not an invented accusation. Perhaps colleagues were involved; perhaps they were not. The text does not settle the matter. A careful critic marks the limit of visibility and explains why a different viewpoint could alter the meaning of the achievement.

Rhetorical narratology further asks how an account positions its audience to judge. Phelan's (2017) distinctions among reliable, unreliable, and deficient narration caution against treating every limitation as intentional deceit. Applied here, the lesson is methodological restraint. Promotional framing warrants scrutiny, but it does not automatically make an employee unreliable. Conversely, a sincere speaker may communicate a corporate claim whose environmental validity exceeds personal knowledge. The analysis must distinguish testimony, interpretation, and institutional assurance.

Characterization and organizational identity

Characterization concerns how a text attributes dispositions, competencies, and moral qualities to the people it represents. Hotel narratives may characterize an employee through a specific action, an evaluative adjective, a career trajectory, or another person's approval. These forms carry different evidential weight. A described action gives readers something to interpret. An adjective supplies the preferred interpretation immediately. An award

or compliment introduces an additional judging voice, although that voice may remain inside the organization's own circle.

Organizational storytelling scholarship helps explain why these distinctions matter beyond textual technique. Boje (1991) examines storytelling as situated organizational activity rather than merely a collection of polished narratives. Gabriel (1991) considers the transformations through which organizational facts acquire story form. Read together, these approaches encourage attention to how a public profile relates to a larger, unavailable field of everyday accounts. The published version is one occasion of telling, with a particular audience and purpose. It should not be mistaken for the totality of workplace experience.

Identity is likewise relational. Somers (1994) connects narrative identity with relationships and wider configurations of meaning. An employee's achievement can therefore be situated within professional, family, national, and organizational affiliations simultaneously. These affiliations need not produce a single, stable allegiance. A person may take pride in professional competence while questioning an employer's decision. Treating that combination as inconsistency would impose a narrower identity than the narrative evidence requires.

Closure and the right to remain unfinished

Closure is the point at which an account presents its central difficulty as sufficiently resolved. It may occur through a promotion, a grateful guest, a public ceremony, or a promise of future opportunity. Closure gives a short text coherence, but it can also settle a moral question prematurely. If recognition completes the account, readers may be encouraged to assume that the conditions producing the difficulty have also been resolved.

An interpretive approach should therefore ask what would become visible if the story continued. Would the employee describe continuing support, a revised aspiration, fatigue, or disagreement? These are open possibilities rather than findings. Keeping them open allows the text to be read critically without dismissing its expressed satisfaction. The employee can be proud at one moment and uncertain at another. Narratology is particularly useful when it makes room for this temporal complexity.

Brand citizenship credibility and pride

Distinguishing the objects of commitment

Burmann and Zeplin (2005) position brand citizenship within internal brand management, connecting employees' commitment with conduct that supports the brand. Their later empirical work with Riley examines conditions associated with successful internal brand management (Burmann et al., 2009). These studies establish why employee conduct matters to a brand, but they do not authorize a reader to classify every favourable anecdote as citizenship. For this article, such classification requires attention to the represented action, its beneficiary, and whatever evidence the text supplies about discretion.

Brand citizenship also needs to be distinguished from citizenship directed toward the environment. Boiral (2009) examines how discretionary employee contributions can support corporate greening. Boiral and Paillé (2012) develop and validate a measure of organizational citizenship behaviour for the environment. The distinction is productive because brand benefit and environmental benefit can overlap without being identical. Helping a guest understand a conservation practice might support both. Encouraging unnecessary consumption to create an impressive service experience might support one while complicating the other.

The analysis consequently treats citizenship as an attribution requiring explanation. Who calls an action exemplary? What interest does it serve? Was the action within ordinary duties, undertaken voluntarily, or enabled by resources supplied by others? A short public text may leave these questions unanswered. In that situation, "represented initiative" is more defensible than a confident behavioural classification. This vocabulary preserves the value of the account while keeping the inference proportionate to the evidence.

Research on green human resource management in hotels provides an additional reminder that environmental behaviour has an organizational setting (Kim et al., 2019). Training, expectations, and operational arrangements belong in the explanation. A narrative that concentrates entirely on personal enthusiasm can make these supporting conditions disappear. Narratological attention to secondary actors and omitted circumstances therefore complements management research by asking how the distribution of support is represented, not merely whether enthusiasm is celebrated.

Credibility as a narrated warrant

Erdem and Swait (2004) examine brand credibility in relation to consumer consideration and choice, with trustworthiness and expertise central to the construct. Their consumer context should not be silently converted into an employee model. Here it supplies a conceptual distinction: a speaker may appear sincere yet lack the expertise needed to substantiate a broad environmental claim. Conversely, technical competence does not automatically settle questions about the completeness of the account.

Narrative credibility, as used in this article, describes the grounds a text offers for accepting its account. Those grounds may include identified participants, an intelligible chronology, specific actions, acknowledged limitations, and evidence appropriate to the assertion. These features do not guarantee truth. They make the account more open to examination. A vivid scene can make a person's experience understandable while remaining insufficient to establish an organization's overall environmental performance.

The distinction also separates emotional plausibility from verification. Readers may find a career narrative moving because its difficulties and achievements resemble experiences they recognize. Escalas (2004) investigates how narrative processing can build consumer connections to brands. That work supports taking narrative involvement seriously, but connection should not be treated as proof. In the present framework, an emotionally persuasive account becomes analytically stronger when its claims remain bounded by what its speaker can reasonably know.

Pride as recognition and positioning

Gouthier and Rhein (2011) distinguish emotional organizational pride associated with particular events from a more enduring attitude toward the organization. This distinction helps prevent a moment of reported satisfaction from standing for permanent commitment. Tracy and Robins (2007), meanwhile, distinguish facets of pride associated with different patterns of self evaluation. Their psychological categories should not be assigned to named employees on the basis of a promotional paragraph. They instead remind the reader that pride is not a simple quantity whose presence settles its meaning.

A narratological reading examines how pride is made visible. An achievement may be followed by appreciation from a guest, a colleague, a family member, or an executive. Each audience locates the achievement within a different community of value. Organizational identification scholarship helps explain why these affiliations matter (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Dutton et al., 1994). The article's specific contribution is to ask how their relationship is arranged in the text: whose approval arrives last, whose evaluation is quoted, and which belonging is made to appear most consequential.

Pride can therefore be read as a form of positioning without being reduced to a performance. An employee's public statement may be sincere and strategically useful to an institution at the same time. Brown's (2015) discussion of identity work supports attending to changing self understandings rather than presuming a finished identity. The question becomes how the published account accommodates that unfinished person, including aspirations that may extend beyond the current employer.

Materials and interpretive procedure

The article uses a purposively selected corpus of five public English language webpages. Selection required a direct connection to the St. Regis Red Sea Resort, Six Senses Southern Dunes, or the training arrangements framing employment at The Red Sea. The corpus combines two texts presenting named employee experiences with three institutional texts that frame careers, place, and environmental responsibility. The materials were consulted on 12 September 2026. The source register supplies the URLs and publication information needed to locate them; an undated page is identified as such.

The employee materials are an EHL interview feature by Khanijo (2024) and a Marriott career profile of Keith T. (Marriott International, n.d.). The framing materials are a Red Sea Global graduation announcement (2023), a Six Senses resort announcement located in its 2021 press release archive, and a Six Senses opening announcement dated 2 November 2023. The three framing texts are not treated as substitutes for frontline testimony. Their role is to establish the institutional stories alongside which employee accounts become readable. The corpus is small by design and is neither a systematic sample nor a basis for claims about narrative frequency. Its value lies in the contrast among genres: an interview feature, an employer profile, a graduation announcement,

a prospective resort narrative, and an opening announcement. The analysis concerns the main article content and published question and answer sequences. Navigation menus, current corporate boilerplate, unrelated recommendations, and booking interfaces are excluded. This boundary matters because older webpages can carry subsequently updated material; the study examines accessible versions rather than reconstructing unchanged historical originals.

The unit of analysis is the published passage, rather than the employee as person.

The reading procedure follows the relationship between what is represented and how it is organized. Each text is examined for its speaking positions, the perspective offered on events, the beginning and endpoint of its central sequence, and the grounds used to attribute credibility or pride. Particular attention is given to verbs assigning agency, changes between individual and collective reference, retrospective accounts of achievement, and future oriented promises. The readings then ask whether a different explanation remains compatible with the same textual evidence.

This procedure draws on narrative inquiry's attention to configuration and on scholarship addressing the diversity of organizational narratives (Polkinghorne, 1995; Rhodes & Brown, 2005). It does not claim independent coding, intercoder agreement, participant validation, or statistical analysis. Short quotations identify wording that matters to the interpretation; paraphrases situate those words without reproducing the profiles extensively. Interpretive claims are presented as readings, with competing explanations and evidential limits made explicit.

Public availability makes the texts accessible for analysis, but it does not grant access to employees' private experience. No original interviews, surveys, or workplace observations were conducted. Names are retained only as already published, and no conclusions are drawn about individual sincerity, mental states, working hours actually performed, or unreported grievances. Corporate environmental statements are analysed as statements, not independently verified outcomes. These limits are integral to the method because its object is the public construction of meaning.

Close readings of the selected texts

Professional initiation and the limits of exceptional service

Khanijo's (2024) interview presents Haneen Ali Alqadi and Reem Alyami, butlers at the St. Regis Red Sea Resort. Haneen's movement from apprehension toward professional confidence gives training the role of an enabling passage. Reem's account of preparing a rainbow themed candy surprise for a child turns attention into a compact scene of initiative and guest recognition. Its environmental significance, however, is unstated. The setting alone cannot make the gesture evidence of green citizenship. A separate response describes being "available 24/7," allowing the celebratory account to disclose tension between service commitment and personal time. This wording is a published self description, not an independently established schedule. The interview thus supports a reading of professional pride while leaving the voluntariness and ecological value of exceptional service unresolved. Its question and answer form gives the employees distinct voices, although the institutional frame still organizes their presentation.

Career return and the audience of pride

Marriott International's (n.d.) profile follows Keith T., Director of Restaurants at the St. Regis Red Sea Resort, through earlier work in Ireland and a return to Marriott. The return gives professional movement a circular structure: experience gained elsewhere becomes compatible with renewed organizational belonging. In a recalled episode involving support for another hotel's opening, favourable comments from senior colleagues precede an explicit statement of pride in his team. Recognition is therefore staged within a professional hierarchy. A later answer connects his work with environmental responsibility and broader development ambitions. The sequence makes those commitments part of the same valued affiliation, but it does not demonstrate that environmental credibility produced the earlier pride. The profile's mixture of editorial narration and first person answers also matters. Individual testimony carries experiential authority; project ambitions require evidence beyond that testimony. The account can establish how pride is publicly articulated without establishing its causes.

Graduation as collective beginning

Red Sea Global's (2023) graduation announcement links vocational completion with anticipated employment and resort openings. Its executive designation "Tourism Generation" places graduates within a collective beginning. Training is narrated as preparation for participation in a larger national and organizational future, while the ceremony provides a visible point of accomplishment. The chief executive's voice supplies the overarching interpretation; graduates are principally represented as the people whose development makes that interpretation tangible. This arrangement does not make their achievement less meaningful. It does, however, distinguish institutional recognition from employees' own accounts of belonging. The text's future orientation is equally significant. An employment opportunity can support a credible account of transition, but it cannot establish later discretionary conduct or enduring pride. Reading the announcement as a framing narrative preserves that distinction while revealing how a cohort becomes a protagonist in a development story.

Heritage and the corporate claim to continuation

The Six Senses (2021) announcement places the planned resort after an account of ancient trade and regional change. Its phrase "write the next chapter" makes development a continuation of an already meaningful history. The brand assumes an authorial position within that sequence, while environmental care helps characterize the proposed intervention as appropriate to place. This is an interpretation of the announcement's historical arrangement, not a verification of every historical assertion it makes. A statement of pride from the developer's chief executive further positions the partnership as an achievement deserving recognition. That managerial pride cannot stand for the feelings of future hotel employees. The narrative's importance to the present inquiry lies in the roles it makes available: employees can subsequently be imagined as participants in a story whose historical meaning and desired direction have already been supplied by institutional speakers.

An opening announcement and operational specificity

The Six Senses (2023) opening announcement places sustainability alongside hospitality experiences and heritage. Its references to solar electricity, water bottling, and Earth Lab workshops give environmental claims identifiable operational objects. This specificity creates questions that can be checked more clearly than a general expression of ecological virtue. The statement that the resort is aiming for LEED Platinum must nevertheless remain an aspiration in this reading; the wording does not report an awarded certification. Much of the page describes facilities and activities rather than recounting employee experience. It therefore functions chiefly as environmental framing and a prospective script for guest participation. Staff labour may be necessary to deliver the activities, but the text supplies limited access to employees' perspectives. The absence supports a question about narrative visibility, not an inference that employees lack environmental commitment or operational influence.

Discussion

From a chain of variables to relations within a story

The readings suggest a way to connect narratology with employee brand citizenship without treating literary terminology as decoration. In a conventional mediation argument, credibility and pride would be separately measured constructs located within a proposed causal relationship. A narratological reading asks how the relationship becomes imaginable in the first place. It examines the textual movement from an institutional claim to an employee's account, from an action to recognition, and from recognition to a statement of belonging. These movements can establish an argument for the reader without establishing a causal process in the workplace. This difference is especially consequential when a public account places several positive commitments together. Professional success, support from colleagues, environmental ambition, and organizational affiliation may all appear within a coherent self presentation. Their proximity creates an opportunity for association. It does not reveal which commitment preceded another, whether one was necessary for another, or whether their relationship persists outside the occasion of telling. The present contribution is therefore an account of narrative organization, not a substitute measurement model.

Three relations clarify the proposed approach. The relation of authorization concerns whose knowledge supports a claim. The relation of recognition concerns who confers value on an achievement. The relation of

attribution concerns whether the resulting value is assigned to the employee, the team, the organization, or a wider community. Their conjunction can make brand citizenship appear self evident. Separating them lets the researcher ask whether the text has actually shown discretionary contribution or has encouraged the reader to supply it.

Agency and the distribution of narrative credit

An employee can occupy the grammatical centre of a story while having limited narrative authority. First person speech gives a represented individual a voice, but questions, introductions, and editorial conclusions can still determine which experiences become salient. Conversely, institutional framing can supply useful context without erasing agency. The analytical task is to describe the arrangement rather than assume that either independence or domination follows automatically from the presence of a corporate platform.

Humphreys and Brown (2002) examine identification narratives in relation to hegemony and resistance, while Alvesson and Willmott (2002) explain how identity regulation can operate as organizational control. Their work sharpens the question of what kind of employee a celebratory narrative invites its audience to become. If admirable membership is repeatedly associated with unlimited enthusiasm, a reader may encounter a narrow model of acceptable belonging. The issue is the normative invitation made by the account, not a diagnosis of the featured employee's experience.

Narrative credit should also remain divisible. An employee's initiative may depend on training, staffing, access to supplies, or the quiet assistance of colleagues. Acknowledging these conditions need not diminish the employee's achievement. It can explain why the action was possible and whether others could repeat it. The proposed reading therefore favours accounts in which personal agency and organizational support remain visible together. Such accounts offer a fuller basis for interpreting citizenship than a heroic individual portrait alone.

This reasoning also makes disagreement relevant. A worker who questions a wasteful routine may be supporting the organization's environmental commitments while resisting an established interpretation of service. The example is hypothetical, but the conceptual issue is real: the beneficiary and moral purpose of an action cannot be inferred from its conformity with a familiar brand script. Boje's (1995) analysis of competing organizational stories provides a useful basis for remaining attentive to alternatives that an official account may not foreground.

Credibility requires an appropriate scale of evidence

An individual story has a scale. It may concern a single encounter, a remembered transition, or one team's achievement. Environmental promises can have a different scale, encompassing a property, a destination, or a future development period. When these scales meet within one account, the reader needs a clear boundary between what the employee witnessed and what the institution asserts. Without that boundary, personal credibility can be borrowed to support claims whose verification belongs elsewhere.

The article proposes that responsible narrative credibility depends on matching the scale of the evidence to the scale of the claim. A described conservation activity may substantiate that the activity was offered or experienced. It does not, by itself, establish net environmental benefit. A development target can communicate intention while leaving its eventual achievement open. A technical result requires a stated scope and a source able to support it. These are principles for interpreting and writing accounts, not findings that any selected organization has failed an environmental audit.

Temporal precision is part of the same requirement. Future tense identifies a commitment whose fulfilment remains ahead; retrospective narration identifies an asserted occurrence; an ongoing description suggests continuity that may require repeated observation. These distinctions can be lost when a webpage is read as a single atmosphere of confidence. Narratology restores them by treating tense and sequence as consequential features of meaning. Credibility becomes easier to assess when aspiration, occurrence, and continuing performance remain distinguishable.

Pride can accommodate ambivalence

Pride becomes more informative when its object is specified. Satisfaction in solving a problem differs from

admiration for a team, attachment to an employer, or participation in a national project. A narrative may connect these objects, but analysis should retain their differences. Otherwise, the language of pride becomes an all purpose explanation that tells the reader little about what the employee values or what conditions sustain that valuation.

Ambivalence need not cancel pride. Someone may appreciate a professional opportunity while wanting a different schedule, recognize an environmental improvement while questioning another practice, or value colleagues while considering a future elsewhere. These possibilities follow from treating identity as an ongoing relationship rather than a completed state. They also suggest a more demanding standard for credible employee communication: a person should remain recognizable as someone capable of qualification and change.

Rupp et al. (2006) connect employee responses to corporate social responsibility with organizational justice. Their framework supports considering how employees are treated alongside the organization's outward commitments. In narrative terms, the relevant question is whether the account makes working conditions part of the moral world it depicts. An environmental story that praises care for place can also explain the support available to the people doing that caring. This is a proposed extension of the interpretive framework, not evidence about conditions at the selected properties.

The broader implication is that pride should not function as an obligation to tell a satisfying story. A person's account may be tentative, brief, or unresolved. Bamberg and Georgakopoulou's (2008) work on small stories directs attention to forms of identity work beyond polished autobiographical narratives. Although the present corpus contains edited public texts rather than naturally occurring interaction, that scholarship helps identify what future research should seek: ordinary accounts that do not arrive already shaped as exemplary careers.

Environmental action and the shape of a successful ending

The environmental dimension becomes clearest when analysis asks what kind of ending would count as success. Consider a hypothetical account in which a restaurant employee proposes reducing avoidable buffet waste. A service oriented version might end when guests accept the change. A managerial version might end with reduced purchasing costs. An environmental version would need information about the waste actually avoided and the scope of the comparison. All three could describe the same initiative, yet each would allocate value differently. This illustration is analytical; it is not an incident reported in the corpus.

Such a comparison provides a practical test for green hotel narratives. If ecological consequences can be removed without changing the story's logic, environmental responsibility may be functioning mainly as setting or reputation. If the consequences determine the problem, the action, and the grounds for evaluating the outcome, ecology has a more substantial narrative role. This test does not measure environmental performance. It helps distinguish an environmental plot from a conventional success story situated within a hotel marketed as sustainable.

Audience and alternative readings

Narrative form invites interpretation without determining reception. A prospective recruit, an experienced hotel worker, and a local resident may read the same profile with different questions. One may notice career opportunity, another the resources needed to reproduce an achievement, and another the representation of place. The present analysis identifies invitations contained in the texts; it cannot establish how actual audiences respond. Reception research would be needed to examine those responses directly.

This qualification also applies to the critic. Choosing to foreground labour or ecological accountability brings some features into view and leaves others less developed. Interpretive responsibility requires stating that choice and preserving plausible counterreadings. A concise profile may omit operational detail because its purpose is biographical, not because the detail is deliberately concealed. An institutional announcement may use collective language to recognize collaboration, not to appropriate individual achievement. Critical reading becomes stronger when it can explain why its preferred interpretation is useful while acknowledging what the same evidence does not decide.

The resulting approach treats narrative as a place where meanings are negotiated. It neither accepts promotional coherence as sufficient explanation nor assumes that coherence must hide a contrary reality. Its

value lies in identifying the questions that a particular arrangement makes easy to answer and those it leaves open.

A situated contribution to hospitality and literary criticism

The article offers hospitality research a method for examining the public evidence through which desirable employee identities are presented. Its contribution to literary criticism is an application of formal analysis to economically consequential nonfiction. The method does more than identify favourable words. It traces who has the authority to speak, which events acquire causal significance, and how an endpoint encourages moral judgment. These questions preserve a clear connection to narratology throughout the analysis.

The Saudi setting makes the relationship among professional opportunity, institutional development, and place especially relevant within the selected materials. It does not license a cultural explanation of every statement. Nationality, language, occupational status, and organizational role require separate attention rather than being collapsed into a single national character. Reading situated texts carefully means allowing context to inform interpretation while refusing to make the context explain more than the evidence permits.

Practical implications and future research

For hotel communication teams, the framework suggests writing employee profiles around identifiable experiences and allowing employees to explain what those experiences mean. Questions about resources, collaboration, and unresolved difficulties can produce more informative accounts than prompts that require praise. Editorial care remains necessary, but the finished text should distinguish employee recollection from organizational claims inserted around it. Employees should have a meaningful opportunity to review how their words and achievements are represented.

For managers, the practical implication is to make the conditions supporting citizenship visible. Environmental initiative requires more than an appealing account of commitment. People need relevant knowledge, operational resources, and room to identify problems. A profile can acknowledge these conditions and give credit to teams as well as prominent individuals. It can also distinguish action required by a role from action presented as discretionary, avoiding a narrative standard in which endless additional effort becomes the ordinary measure of belonging.

Future research could extend the present analysis through interviews conducted independently of promotional production. Employees could discuss a published profile, explain what they would retain or revise, and describe episodes that did not enter the account. Such a design would examine the relationship between public representation and subsequent reflection without assuming in advance that either version is more authentic. Participants should also be able to decline discussion of personal matters or workplace tensions. A comparative project could examine Arabic and English versions where both exist, recording changes in agency, affiliation, and environmental specificity. The present article makes no claims about translation because it analyses English texts only. A broader corpus should also include different hotel categories, departments, employment positions, and regions. Longitudinal collection would help distinguish changes in employees' own accounts from changes in corporate framing or website updates.

Behavioural research would require additional evidence. Researchers interested in mediation should specify whose credibility is being evaluated, separate pride's possible objects, and measure relevant conduct over time. They should test competing explanations and avoid selecting only employees already featured as success stories. Combining that work with narratological analysis could explain both how a relationship is represented and whether a corresponding relationship is observed. The methods would address connected questions while retaining their different standards of evidence.

Conclusion

Employee brand citizenship is partly made legible through stories that connect action with value. Reading Saudi hotel communication through narratology reveals how that connection depends on voice, perspective, temporal arrangement, and recognition. The selected texts provide different positions from which employees can appear as professionals, team members, and participants in an environmental or institutional future. Their formal differences matter because an employee recollection, an executive announcement, and an operational

description authorize different kinds of conclusion.

The article's central claim is that credibility requires accountable attribution, while pride requires attention to the achievement and community toward which it is directed. Neither can be inferred reliably from a generally positive narrative atmosphere. Nor can a public sequence of achievement and belonging establish psychological mediation. Keeping these distinctions visible makes the connection between literary criticism and hospitality research more precise.

A responsible account of brand citizenship should leave employees with more than a role in a completed success story. It should recognize their contribution, the support that made it possible, and their capacity to interpret the experience differently over time. It should also make environmental claims specific enough to examine. Narratology contributes by showing where a story grants that space and where the reader must keep a question open. The outcome is a more careful understanding of how hospitality brands narrate their people and what those narratives can reasonably ask their audiences to believe.

Finally, by situating employee narratives within Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 agenda, the article speaks to national research priorities on sustainable tourism, decent work, and environmental accountability.

Funding: The authors extend their appreciation to Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University for funding this research work through the project number (Project number: PSAU/2026/02/46486).

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Primary text source register

The five public webpages below constitute the primary corpus. All were consulted on 12 September 2026. The 2021 date follows the Six Senses press release archive; the Marriott profile carries no visible publication date. These webpages are listed separately from the DOI-bearing journal literature.

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