

Analyzing review studies of the recent development in hospitality

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to analyze review research in hospitality, identifying the structure and most recent developments in current hospitality review studies while providing exploratory insights for future research in this research area.

Design/methodology/approach – Using bibliometric analysis, content analysis and a quantitative systematic literature review, this study provides a comprehensive review and critical analysis of 128 review studies published in leading hospitality journals (*International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *International Journal of Hospitality Management* and *Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management*).

Findings – This paper presents a comprehensive and in-depth discussion based on the title, journal source, author contribution, year of publication, sample size, selected period, database selection, methodology, data collection methods, themes, regional selection, keywords, abstracts and results of the hospitality review studies analyzed. The findings provide new insights to advance the theoretical and practical implications of review studies in hospitality.

Research limitations/implications – This research provides critical insights for both hospitality review studies and academic and industry hospitality personnel.

Originality/value – As a pioneering study in research on review studies, the results of this paper focus not only on a systematic overview and assessment of recent hospitality review works but also on the future agenda of hospitality and review studies.

Keywords Review studies, Hospitality, Future agenda, Mixed methods

Paper type Literature review

1. Introduction

Review studies focus on the impact of contemporary issues on a particular topic by analyzing prior knowledge about and identifying research gaps in the topic and providing essential directions for future research (Chon and Zoltan, 2019). These studies contribute insights into the issues of most interest to academic researchers and industry practitioners. An analysis of review studies thus helps map current trends in the hospitality literature and provides an overview of the discipline by examining past and present research (Kim *et al.*, 2018). In addition, an evaluation of review studies facilitates a clear comprehension



of current research and how review studies are conducted. In contrast, an analysis of research findings facilitates the exploration of directions for future review studies.

To date, only a few prior studies have reported reviews of review studies. As such, presenting findings of this type of research is still new. [Kim *et al.* \(2018\)](#) comprehensively categorized 171 review publications in top journals in hospitality and tourism before July 2016 and examined the impact of those studies. The study by [Pahlevan-Sharif *et al.* \(2019\)](#) reviewed the entire range of systematic reviews available in 34 tourism journals as of 2017 with multiple dimensions, portraying the limitations of systematic reviews. [Hu *et al.* \(2023\)](#) compared tourism review studies in two primary English and Chinese databases. Previous studies have provided substantial and valuable outputs for the discipline. Review papers published in major hospitality and tourism journals have been examined by these studies. However, no prior attempt has been made on recent review studies published in top-ranked hospitality journals. Moreover, related works in hospitality and tourism have adopted only a single method, lacking a broader perspective and more solid findings than a mixed research approach can provide.

As such, this research would make a novel attempt to fill the above gaps. In terms of research perspective, this study focuses on review studies published in leading hospitality journals over the past three and a half years to deliver the most up-to-date and insightful insights. Publications in a discipline's leading journals can provide both managerial and theoretical knowledge, potentially promoting synergies between theoretical and intellectual development in academia ([Law *et al.*, 2012](#)). In addition, hospitality and tourism evolve rapidly and involve a wide variety of content. Thus, this study's focus on the most recent years of research helps ensure that readers will have useful information about the latest research findings and industry practices. Methodologically, this study develops a systematic, objective and comprehensive review of the structure and content of hospitality review studies by adopting a novel and comprehensive empirical approach. The mixture of these three research methods (bibliometric analysis, content analysis and a quantitative systematic literature review) can complement each other to advance research that is more thorough, unbiased and accountable than other review research methods, helping to identify critical issues and state-of-the-art research in the field of study ([Kraus *et al.*, 2022](#)). This, in turn, contributes to the scientific rigor of research and the quality of future research ([Cheng *et al.*, 2016](#); [Rasoolimanesh *et al.*, 2021](#)). The main contribution of this three-method critical review method is that it establishes a research structure, theoretical basis and thematic distribution for hospitality review studies while identifying gaps and opportunities for future research. In the thematic content analysis, this study analyzes the current hospitality research phenomenon from multiple themes based on the major research perspectives and paradigms of hospitality, with an increase in the conceptualization of this study.

In summary, this study aims to achieve the following two main research objectives by providing critical values to the academic and industry communities ([Lim *et al.*, 2022](#)):

- to identify the research structures used in current review studies and state-of-the-art trends in hospitality; and
- to contribute exploratory insights for future research in review studies and hospitality.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. In the next section, this paper provides an overview of review studies and their impacts and methods. In the section after that, the paper provides a detailed explanation of the methodology, including journal selection process, data collection and analysis. In the following sections, the paper presents findings

on various dimensions of hospitality review studies and provides a critical analysis and discussion.

2. Literature review

2.1 *What are review studies?*

The major purpose of review studies is to identify and synthesize relevant literature to address a research question and to present an updated understanding of the topic (Palmatier *et al.*, 2018). Weed (2006) considered a review study a method of mapping intellectual territory. Review studies provide an overview of a given discipline and clarify its research trends. Scholars have published different types of review studies, such as critical/narrative reviews (Johns and Pine, 2002), qualitative thematic reviews (Stepchenkova and Mills, 2010), systematic quantitative reviews (Crawford-Welch and McCleary, 1992), meta-analysis reviews (Crouch, 1995) and mixed method reviews (Saydam *et al.*, 2022).

2.2 *The impact and use of review studies*

Review studies can increase scholars' understanding of overarching trends, hot topics and previously researched issues in hospitality by focusing on the discipline. Cheng *et al.* (2011) argued that the primary objective of review research was to examine changes and provide a better insight into the evolution of a discipline for scholars, thus increasing their understanding of the discipline's development and their awareness of research trends. Law (2019) reviews the evaluation of hotel websites and fills the research gap that limited studies have tracked the changes in the evolution of related studies. Leung *et al.* (2013) evaluate social media to explore what researchers have previously done regarding the use of social media and provide an agenda for future research on social media in tourism and hospitality. Similarly, this current study identifies research gaps and possible future research directions. It also contributes to the field's future development by providing an overview of historical knowledge (Dwivedi *et al.*, 2011).

2.3 *Methods for review studies*

When they conducted review studies, scholars evaluated articles from different perspectives, including the journals and rankings, the number of published articles, who published on the topic, the cooperation relationship of authors and national and regional analysis. Scholars have applied both qualitative and quantitative methods to review research. In general, research methods can be divided into the following seven categories:

- (1) bibliometric analyses (Okumus *et al.*, 2018);
- (2) systematic reviews (Hwang and Wang, 2021);
- (3) content analyses (Law *et al.*, 2022);
- (4) meta-analyses (Gui *et al.*, 2021);
- (5) narrative methods (Law *et al.*, 2014);
- (6) thematic methods (Cantalops and Salvi, 2014); and
- (7) mixed (or hybrid) method combining qualitative and quantitative analyses (Duarte *et al.*, 2020; Chen *et al.*, 2021; Saydam *et al.*, 2022).

Bibliometric analysis has been defined as applying mathematical and statistical methods to books and other means of communication (Estabrooks *et al.*, 2004). Bibliometric analysis is often used to depict the development and dynamics of a field of study in terms of its knowledge structure, content picture, evolution and the topics addressed in its literature

(Chen, 2006; Fauzi, 2023). There are various bibliometric analysis methods, and the most widely used of which are co-citation analysis, bibliographic coupling, coauthor analysis and co-word analysis (Zupic and Čater, 2015). Bibliometric analysis helps scholars gain a one-stop overview, identify knowledge gaps, derive novel ideas for investigation and position their intended contributions to the field. It has the potential to advance theory and practice (Donthu *et al.*, 2021). Mukherjee *et al.* (2022) also suggest that researchers can use bibliometric studies to develop and present their potential contributions, while reviewers (e.g. editors and reviewers) can rely on effective deciphering and assessing the framing, positioning and contributions of bibliometric studies. Grant and Booth (2009) indicate that *systematic reviews* can be used to classify the literature by identifying research gaps supporting future investigations. The results are usually presented in graphical and tabular form. This method includes comprehensive searches for related studies, which are then evaluated and summarized according to a predefined framework (Kim *et al.*, 2018). *Content analysis* is a research technique that draws replicable and valid inferences from text (or other meaningful material) and applies them to a particular context (Ford, 2004). A content analysis process model consists of the following four steps: material collection, descriptive analysis, category selection and material evaluation (Seuring and Gold, 2012). A *meta-analysis review* is a quantitative method that integrates the results of empirical studies and provides an aggregate summary of findings in a research domain (Rosenthal and DiMatteo, 2001). A *narrative review* is particularly useful in tracing the roots of concepts and the transformation of these concepts through the emergence of new knowledge (Dewantara *et al.*, 2022). According to Clarke and Braun (2013), *thematic analysis* is the process of detecting patterns and developing themes through extensive reading on a subject. A *mixed (or hybrid) method review* combines quantitative and qualitative research methods or results and usually includes both a systematic literature review and a bibliometric literature review.

2.4 Hospitality review themes

Scholars from management and marketing have reviewed hospitality research from different perspectives and paradigms, including administration/strategy, operations, marketing, human resource management, finance and economics (Chon *et al.*, 1989; Crawford-Welch and McCleary, 1992; Sharma *et al.*, 2023). These research perspectives and paradigms can be divided into three main themes – hospitality marketing, hospitality management and hospitality services – which are vital components of hospitality-related research.

In the theme of hospitality marketing, marketing management, marketing environment and marketing function have become the research perspective for marketing in hospitality. Specifically, scholars divided hospitality marketing into e-marketing, consumer/traveler behavior, planning, festivals/events/exhibitions, website management/social media/technology adoption and finance/economic/law/accounting (Bowen and Sparks, 1998; Yoo *et al.*, 2011; Line and Runyan, 2012; Nunkoo *et al.*, 2013; Wang, 2015; Aksoy *et al.*, 2022). Hospitality management is also a vital theme. Nunkoo *et al.* (2013) review hospitality studies not only from marketing but also from the management perspective. Human resources are the most mentioned in management topics. Ryan (2015) divides hospitality management into internet and financial issues. Harrington *et al.* (2014) identify hospitality management strategy research objects, including corporate and business strategies, organizational/firm structure/core competencies and strategy implementation. Scholars summarize the hospitality workforce, training and skills from knowledge management systems (Davidson *et al.*, 2011). In hospitality services, service quality, service failure and recovery, as well as

service innovation are the most frequently mentioned (Koc, 2019; Shin and Perdue, 2022; Veloso and Gomez-Suarez, 2023).

To strengthen the conceptualization, combined with the above summary of major research perspectives and paradigms, this study analyzes the current research phenomenon in hospitality from the themes of hospitality marketing, hospitality management and hospitality services. Because this research is a review of review studies, the review studies' theme is also proposed as one of the main themes. Based on these four research themes, this study is expected to provide a relevant analysis of the current research phenomenon and point out future research directions, contributing exploratory insights to future research directions.

3. Methodology

3.1 Journals selection

Research published in leading hospitality and tourism journals is commonly considered certified knowledge (Ramos-Rodriguez and Ruiz-Navarro, 2004; Koseoglu *et al.*, 2016). Top-ranked journals tend to set the research trends in a discipline and reflect the rigor of research projects on various topics within that discipline (So *et al.*, 2019). This study selected the leading journals in hospitality indexed by the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) for 2021 in the category "hospitality, leisure, sport & tourism" of Quartile 1: the *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* (IJCHM), the *International Journal of Hospitality Management* (IJHM) and the *Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management* (JHMM) (Koseoglu *et al.*, 2016; Wong *et al.*, 2021b).

3.2 Data collection and data cleaning

The data collection process involved two phases. The first phase was to perform a keyword search in Web of Science and Scopus, which are considered the two main databases for bibliometrics and literature reviews (Palumbo *et al.*, 2021). In addition, the keyword search covered publications from the three target journals described above. The search terms were "review," or "meta-analysis," or "mapping," or "path," or "visualization," or "bibliometric," or "scientometrics," or "informetrics" (Koseoglu *et al.*, 2016; Kim *et al.*, 2018). The journal sources were "International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management," or "International Journal of Hospitality Management," or "Journal of Hospitality Marketing Management." As a result, the study retrieved 408 publications. The search was limited to the period from October 2019 to March 2023, reflecting the view that articles from the past three and a half years best reflect the current research status and trends in the field. To maximize objectivity, the two authors examined the publications separately, excluding those that were either duplicates or not review articles. Ultimately, the study retained 123 relevant publications for further analysis.

In the second phase, the researchers manually searched all volumes of the target journals over the previous three and a half years. This step was taken to ensure the study's comprehensiveness and rigor by supplementing the sample with any review research overlooked during the previous phase. Five additional review studies were added during this process. Finally, the study obtained a sample of 128 review articles for coding and in-depth analysis. This is a manageable and useful number of articles that need to be reviewed (Law *et al.*, 2022).

3.3 Data analysis

Following Cheng *et al.* (2016) and Mody *et al.* (2021), the study used three complementary research methods – quantitative systematic literature review, bibliometric analysis and content analysis – to identify the research structure, theoretical basis and thematic distribution of the review articles in hospitality, identify research gaps and clarify future

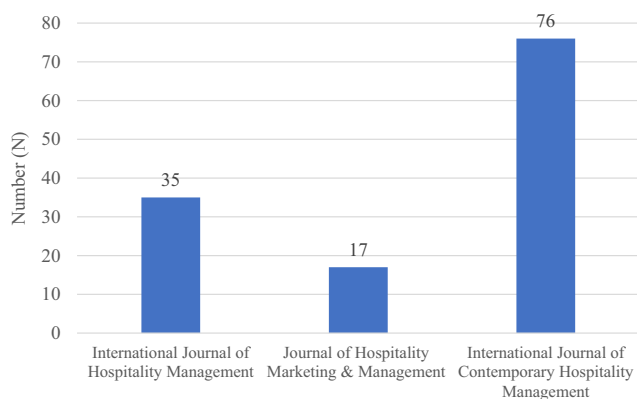
research agendas. The mixture of these research methods can advance research in a manner that is more holistic, objective and responsible than other review research methods, thereby enhancing the scientific rigor of our research (Cheng *et al.*, 2016). Some scholars also used a mixed (or hybrid) research approach for review articles. For example, Kumar *et al.* (2023) used bibliometric analysis to reveal the most influential articles on the topic based on their publications, citations and importance in the knowledge network. They revealed the knowledge structure of the topic, which is supported by four main topic clusters focusing on supply chain, health care, secure transactions, and finance and accounting through content analysis. She *et al.* (2022) also applied three research methods (systematic reviews analyses, meta-analyses and bibliometric–content analysis) to review young adults' financial well-being. This study used a mixture of research methods to analyze the title, journal source, author contribution, year of publication, sample size, sample period, database selection, methodology, data collection method, topic, region selection, keywords, abstract and results of the reviewed articles to explore thematic opportunities for future research and provide future researchers with information on the structure of the reviewed studies.

4. Results

4.1 Systematic literature review results

4.1.1 *Distribution of journals and years.* Figure 1 presents 128 review articles published in the hospitality literature. Most of the articles were published in IJCHM (59.4%). There was a clear imbalance in the number of review articles in IJCHM, IJHM and JHMM. According to the journals' aims and scope, IJCHM focuses on an annual review of trends, critical reviews and theoretical papers. In contrast, IJHM and JHMM do not explicitly indicate that review topics are within their scope. Therefore, when submitting a hospitality review study, it would be good to be attentive to the target journal's objectives and topic scope.

4.1.2 *Data collection methods and research methodology.* Figure 2 shows the adopted data collection methods and indicates that keyword searching (number = 118, percentage = 69%) was the most common data collection method. Scholars usually use keyword search methods to collect data from Web of Science, EBSCO, Science Direct and Google Scholar. This study found that the second common method for scholars was the specific journal review, meaning that researchers preferred to analyze specific top hospitality and tourism journals (e.g. SSCI-indexed journals). Less often, researchers collected data through manual



Source: Authors' own creation

Figure 1.
Number of
publications
(November
2019–March 2023)

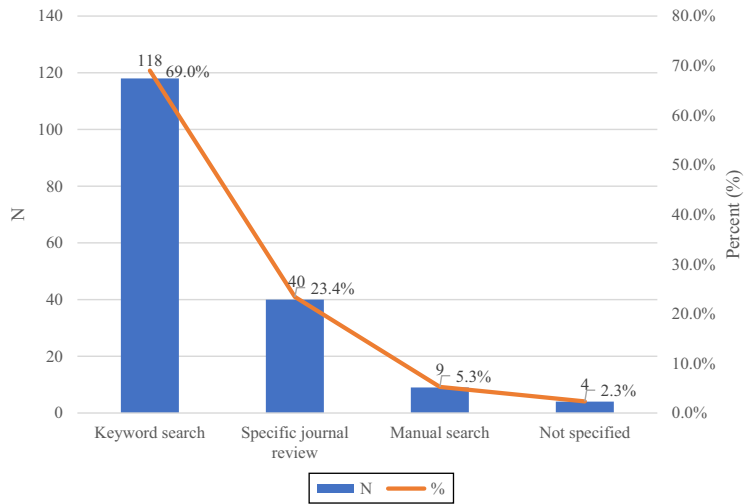


Figure 2.
Data collection
methods

Source: Authors' own creation

searches; in this study, manual searching methods included the snowball methodology and manually cross-checking reference lists. Three (2.3%) articles did not specify which data collection methods they used.

Figure 3 identifies seven research methods and the data that scholars used. The mixed methods mentioned most frequently were quantitative and qualitative analyses, such as bibliometric and thematic analyses. In general, systematic reviews were more popular than reviews using other methods; the second most popular method was bibliometric analysis;

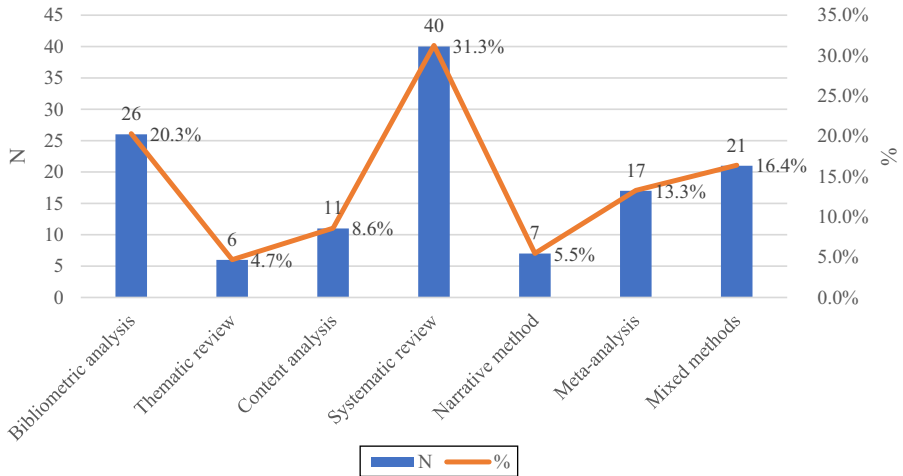


Figure 3.
Research methods

Source: Authors' own creation

the third most popular was mixed methods; meta-analysis and content analysis were nearly tied for the fourth and fifth places; similarly, thematic review and the narrative method were nearly tied for the sixth and seventh places.

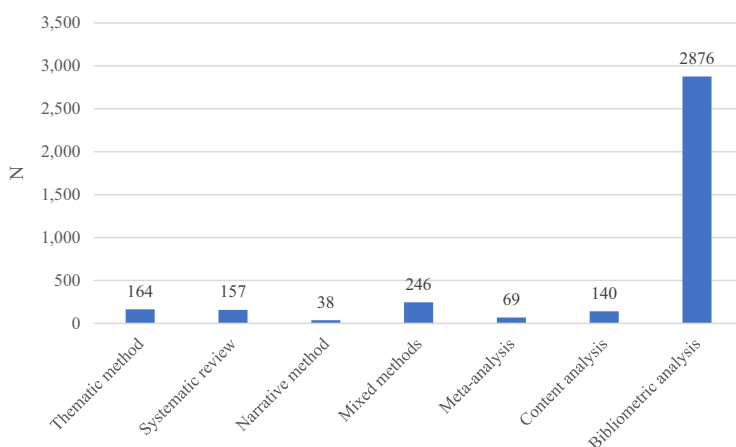
Figure 4 shows the seven review methods' average sample size (number of articles in which each method was used). The average sample size of the bibliometric reviews was the largest ($N = 2,876$) because a bibliometric review is a quantitative method used to explore and analyze vast amounts of scientific data. The average sample size of the mixed methods reviews was the second largest ($N = 246$). The average sample size of the thematic reviews was 164. Compared to the above methods, the thematic review and narrative methods analyzed the average number as a minimum because these are qualitative methods, focusing on examining themes within topics by identifying, analyzing and reporting themes.

4.1.3 Database selection. In hospitality and tourism, scholars tended to use the Web of Science, EBSCO, Science Direct and Google Scholar to search and collect the publications they reviewed (Figure 5). Other databases, such as Springer, Journal Storage, PsycINFO, China National Knowledge Infrastructure and Wiley, were also used.

4.1.4 Distribution of periods and regions. Most of the sampled articles covered specific time span and research regions. Overall, Figure 6 shows that 44 articles reviewed 10–19 years of research, 23 articles reviewed 20–29 years and 22 articles did not specify the time span of their reviews. The longest review period covered the 1906–2019 time span. As for the research region, 98.4% ($N = 126$) of the articles used the entire world as their research region. Only two (1.6%) articles covered research in specific regions (one for the Americas, South Africa and India, and one for European countries).

4.2 Results of bibliometric analysis and content analysis

4.2.1 Knowledge base analysis. Figure 7 presents a visualization of the co-citation cluster network of current review studies in the hospitality field. Overall, 10,530 references were cited in 128 review articles. As shown by the nine clusters and their labels, “technology-based service,” “sharing economy,” “knowledge structure,” “crisis/risk management,” “job performance,” “leadership,” “peer-to-peer accommodation,” “tourist behavior” and “food service” formed the knowledge base of cutting-edge hospitality review research. Relative



Source: Authors' own creation

Figure 4.
Seven review
methods' average
sample size

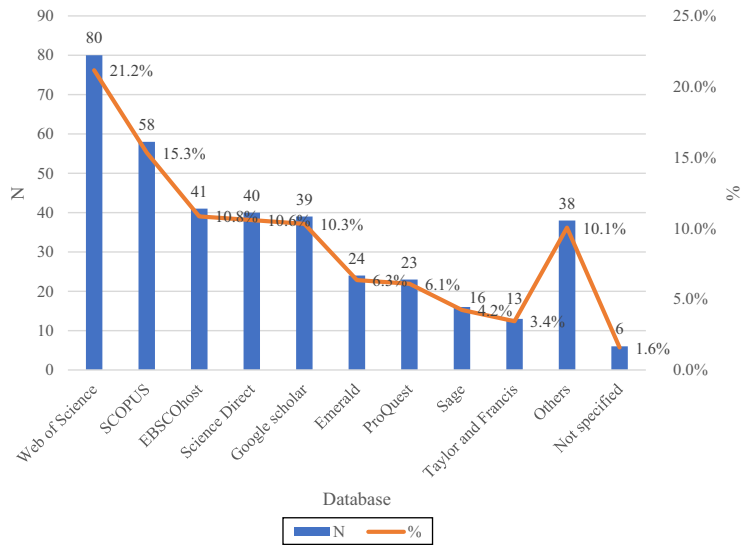


Figure 5.
Database selection
and sample size

Source: Authors' own creation

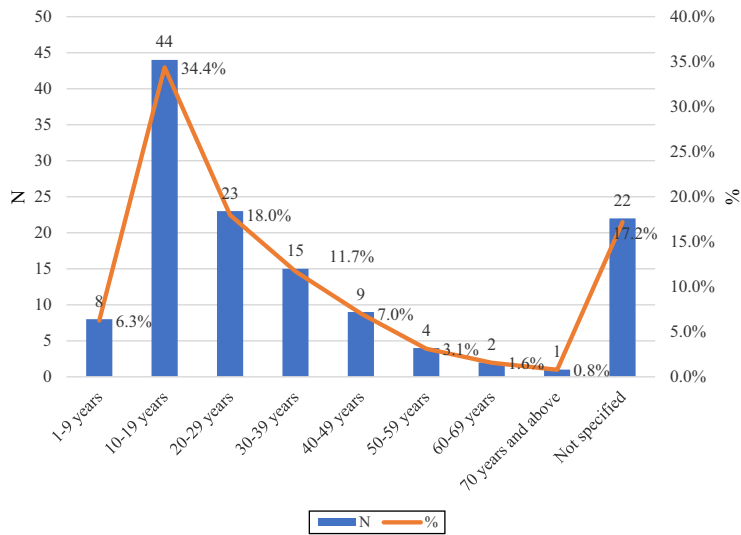
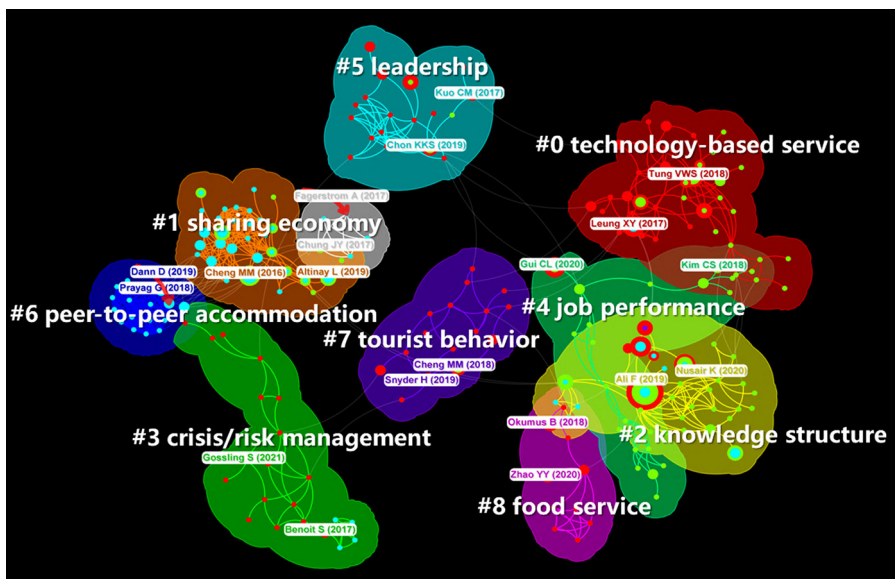


Figure 6.
Distribution of the
review time span

Source: Authors' own creation

dispersion of clusters in the co-citation network indicates the independent academic streams that have collectively influenced hospitality review research in recent years covering a variety of domains, including science and technology, economics, human resources, marketing and public health, in addition to academic research on hospitality/tourism. In



Source: Authors' own creation

Figure 7. Knowledge base mapping for hospitality review studies

other words, integrating multidisciplinary perspectives provides an essential foundation for research in hospitality.

Of the 10,530 references, the references with the largest citation impact are shown in Table 1. These publications provide an invaluable knowledge foundation for hospitality review research. The most cited publication analyzed trends in research themes and information related to their contributors published by IJCHM over a period of 30 years (Ali *et al.*, 2019). The second most co-cited publication assessed the progress of bibliometric research in tourism (Koseoglu *et al.*, 2016). The two review studies that tied for third place in terms of co-citation frequency examined social media and transformational leadership in hospitality. Notably, of the eight most co-cited publications, two were from Khaldoun Nusair (Nusair *et al.*, 2019; Nusair, 2020) and five from IJCHM.

4.2.2 Thematic content analysis. The visual keyword co-occurrence analysis revealed popular keywords [Figure 8(A)] and keyword co-occurrence subnetwork clustering [Figure 8(B)] in hospitality review studies. Interpreting the visual knowledge mapping of co-words helps readers understand the state-of-the-art thematic distribution of hospitality review studies (Chen *et al.*, 2022). The larger the node and its corresponding label associated with the keyword in Figure 8(A), the more frequently the keyword appeared, that is, the more often it was a trending keyword in hospitality review research.

Combining the popular keywords in Figure 8(A) with the cluster analysis results in Figure 8(B), the hospitality review studies of the last three and a half years mainly covered 15 research topics. The following thematic division results were obtained by incorporating these trending topics into the main themes, namely, hospitality marketing, hospitality management, hospitality services and review studies. Within the theme of hospitality marketing, the main current research directions include sharing economy, value co-creation and tourist behavior. In the theme of hospitality management, proenvironmental behavior, advanced technology, job performance, leadership, work-family enrichment, crisis

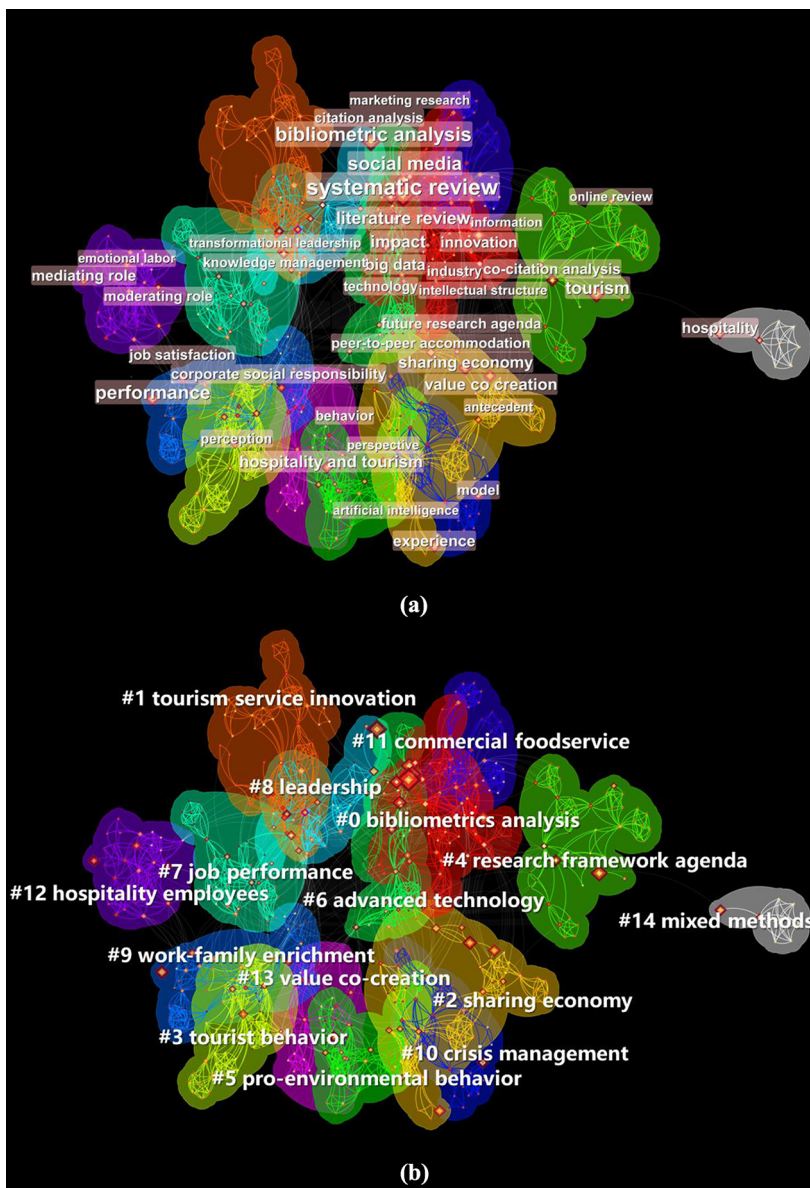
Ranking	Title	First author	Publication year	Journal	Count
1	30 years of contemporary hospitality management: uncovering the bibliometrics and topical trends	Ali, F.	2019	<i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>	18
2	Bibliometric studies in tourism	Koseoglu, M.A.	2016	<i>Annals of Tourism Research</i>	13
3	Bibliometrics of social media research: a co-citation and co-word analysis	Leung, X.Y.	2017	<i>International Journal of Hospitality Management</i>	11
3	A meta-analysis of transformational leadership in hospitality research	Gui, C.L.	2020	<i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>	11
4	Exploring customer experiences with robotics in hospitality	Tung, V.W.S.	2018	<i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>	10
4	A bibliometric analysis of social media in hospitality and tourism research	Nusair, K.	2019	<i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>	10
4	Developing a comprehensive life cycle framework for social media research in hospitality and tourism	Nusair, K.	2020	<i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>	10
5	Sharing economy: a review and agenda for future research	Cheng, M.M.	2016	<i>International Journal of Hospitality Management</i>	9

Source: Authors' own creation

Table 1.
Top references in
terms of co-citation
counts

management and hospitality employees are covered. The theme of hospitality services covers tourism/hospitality service innovation and commercial foodservice. Bibliometric analysis, research framework agenda and mixed methods are separately categorized as the review studies theme.

The analysis of hospitality review topics in recent years reveals that most research has been conducted in *hospitality management*. At the same time, the research identified the main research subjects of hospitality management research themes as suppliers, mainly focusing on hospitality human resource management and hospitality management strategies. Specifically, the performance, work–family enrichment and emotional labor of hospitality employees (Miao *et al.*, 2021; Abubakar *et al.*, 2022; Liu *et al.*, 2022), as well as the leadership style of hospitality management and its managerial effectiveness (Bavik, 2020; Elkhwesky *et al.*, 2022), are the current mainstream in hospitality human resource management. Hospitality management strategies are trending with times, with technological developments including big data, artificial intelligence and service robots driving the active adoption of advanced technologies in hospitality (Mariani and Baggio, 2022; Shin, 2022; Kong *et al.*, 2023); sustainable tourism and corporate social responsibility research are critical components of proenvironmental behavior strategies (Rhou and Singal, 2020; Molina-Collado *et al.*, 2022); and discussions of tourism-related risks and crises arising



Notes: (a) Top keywords in terms of co-occurrence counts; (b) keyword co-occurrence clustering map

Source: Authors' own creation

Figure 8.
Thematic mapping
for hospitality review
studies

from COVID-19 have contributed to the formation and development of thematic trends in crisis management (Ritchie and Jiang, 2021; Park *et al.*, 2022; Huang and Wang, 2023).

The research on the theme of *hospitality marketing* has focused on the standpoint of consumers/tourists. To be specific, the study of user intention and behavior has been the emphasis of tourism and hospitality. In addition, there has been a proliferation of studies on tourist behavior, a branch of tourist behavior research that has been formed in recent years as uncivilized consumer behavior has received increasing attention. It has also drawn the attention of tourists (Lin and Roberts, 2020; Wang *et al.*, 2022). Moreover, with the development and prevalence of peer-to-peer accommodation platforms, research related to sharing economy and value co-creation has become one of the current research trends (Belarmino and Koh, 2020; Carvalho and Alves, 2023; Song *et al.*, 2023). From the theme of *hospitality services*, the main research direction is, as usual, innovation in tourism/hospitality services and management (Fatima and Elbanna, 2020; Kravariti *et al.*, 2022). In addition, online food delivery, food service innovation, food waste and food service ethics constitute the main research directions in commercial food service (Kaur *et al.*, 2021; Gonzalez *et al.*, 2022; Sharma *et al.*, 2022; Shroff *et al.*, 2022).

The *Review studies theme* involved analyzing various aspects such as research theme trends, research methods and a future research agenda (Mulet-Forteza *et al.*, 2019; Wong *et al.*, 2021a). The co-word analysis also identified “systematic review,” “bibliometric analysis” and “mixed methods” as the three most common methods for review studies. This result is consistent with the findings of the methodological analysis in the section on systematic review results.

5. Discussion

5.1 Implications and future research suggestions

Hospitality review studies have provided many valuable contributions to academia and industry, but some improvements could, and probably should, be achieved. In this section, we combine an interpretation of the results with suggestions for future research, thereby providing insights that have implications (Figure 9).

Regarding *data collection methods*, scholars typically use keywords to collect studies from databases efficiently. It is also a current trend in hospitality review research to review the literature in leading journals, which are considered forward-looking and representative of the discipline (So *et al.*, 2019). However, the content reviewed by academic researchers is secondary, mainly data. Given the practical implications of hospitality research, it would be worthwhile to understand and incorporate relevant views and opinions from both the industry and relevant stakeholders. Therefore, scholars are encouraged to combine their analysis with primary data from the industry and relevant stakeholders when conducting review studies, for example, by consulting experts, practitioners and regulators using the Delphi method, thereby enhancing the credibility of their research findings (Cheng *et al.*, 2016). Accordingly, it is recommended that governments (i.e. policymakers) and hospitality suppliers should consider using both primary data from the industry and secondary data from academia in the data collection phase before formulating hospitality-related policies or strategies. This is to improve the dimensionality and connotation of the data.

Regarding *research methods*, quantitative research methods (e.g. quantitative systematic literature reviews and bibliometric analyses) are more commonly used than qualitative research methods (e.g. thematic reviews, content analyses and the narrative method). Nevertheless, mixed methods, which combine qualitative and quantitative research methods to provide a review with both breadth and depth, are becoming more prevalent. This suggests a consensus in favor of research that is more scientific and rigorous than in the past. However, there is still room for improvement in hospitality review studies in the areas

Method	Content	Future agenda of hospitality and review studies	
Systematic literature review	<p><i>Findings of Systematic literature review</i></p> <p>1. Journal (N)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IJHM (35) JHMM (17) IJCHM (76) <p>3. Research methods (%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematic review (31.3%) Bibliometric analysis (20.3%) Mixed method (16.4%) Meta analysis (13.3%) Content analysis (8.6%) Narrative method (5.5%) Thematic review (4.7%) <p>5. Distribution of the review time span (%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-9 years (6.3%) 10-19 years (34.4%) 20-29 years (18.0%) 30-39 years (11.7%) 40-49 years (7.0%) 50-59 years (3.1%) 60-69 years (1.6%) 70 years and above (0.8%) 	<p>2. Data collection methods (%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keywords search (69.0%) Specific journal review (23.4%) Manual search (5.3%) Not Specified (2.3%) <p>4. Database selection and sample size (%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Web of science (21.2%) Scopus (15.3%) EBSCOhost (10.8%) Science direct (10.6%) Google scholar (10.3%) Emerald (6.3%) ProQuest (6.1%) Sage (4.2%) Taylor and Francis (3.4%) <p>6. Distribution of the review region (%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> America, South Africa, India (0.8%) European countries (0.8%) World (98.4%) 	<p>Future agenda of hospitality and review studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggested that future review studies/policymakers/hospitality suppliers combine first-hand data from the market with second-hand data from academia. Suggested improvements in innovative study design and sophisticated data analysis techniques for hospitality review studies. Suggested reviewing publications from the hospitality and tourism discipline alongside studies from other interdisciplinary domains and provide more constructive insights through the use of comparative analysis. Suggested that future review studies conducted by scholars establish links between the subject areas of hospitality and tourism and other mainstream disciplines in author collaboration networks (i.e., collaborating with a wide range of people from academia, industry, and government from different disciplines). Suggested initiating more research on hospitality marketing and hospitality services from the consumer's perspective. Suggested increasing research on policy makers, including their role and efforts in hospitality and how they interact with other stakeholders. Suggested that scholars focus on both the industry and disciplinary attributes of hospitality and tourism and the hot topics and trends in the external environment when choosing their research directions. Suggested that hospitality suppliers embrace change with an open mind and adapt quickly and effectively to the ever-changing market through a variety of means. Suggested that future review studies build on the review of ongoing studies by increasing their critical discussions and recommendations for future research.
	Bibliometric analysis & Content analysis	<p><i>Findings of knowledge base analysis</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technology-based service Sharing economy Knowledge structure Crisis/risk management Job performance Leadership Peer-to-peer accommodation Tourist behavior Food service <p><i>Findings of thematic content analysis</i></p> <p>Theme #1: Hospitality management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospitality employees Job performance Work-family enrichment Leadership Advanced technology Pro-environmental behavior Crisis management <p>Theme #3: Hospitality services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism/hospitality service innovation Commercial foodservice 	

Source: Authors' own creation

Figure 9. Research structures used in current review studies and recent developments in hospitality, and suggestions for future research in review studies

of innovative research design and sophisticated data analysis techniques. For instance, meta-analysis synthesizes the results of independent studies through an objective statistical and systematic analysis of relevant empirical findings on a particular research question. Structural equation modeling based on meta-analysis has higher statistical power than empirical testing of individual samples, allowing more accurate estimates of effect sizes and reducing measurement and sampling bias (Zhao *et al.*, 2020). However, the use of meta-analysis in hospitality review studies remains limited, and scholars are advised to enhance the flexible use of this research method in future studies.

The *knowledge base* of hospitality review research is drawn from academic streams across multiple disciplines, meaning that interdisciplinary crossover has become normalized in hospitality research, with the most prevalent integration taking place between hospitality and the disciplines of science and technology, economics, human resources, marketing and public health. By analyzing the convergence between different fields, scholars and practitioners can gain a better and more comprehensive understanding of the research topic and help identify gaps in theoretical and methodological research (Lelo de Larrea *et al.*, 2021). It is recommended that future review studies review publications from the hospitality and tourism discipline alongside studies from other interdisciplinary domains and provide more constructive insights through the use of comparative analysis. Furthermore, considering the multidisciplinary nature of hospitality, establishing links between the

subject areas of hospitality and tourism and other mainstream disciplines (e.g. technology, strategic management and marketing) in author collaboration networks is advised to enrich the perspective of interdisciplinary research. Networking with authors from other disciplines refers to collaborating with a wide range of people from academia, industry and government from different disciplines, thus enabling the most direct expansion of research and inclusion of multiple stakeholder standpoints. Notably, although professionals in a particular research area are often considered sufficiently learned and experienced to complete review studies in their area of expertise, there is scope for exploring whether academics can produce review-type studies as their area of expertise.

The *thematic distribution* of hospitality review studies reveals the main current research trends in the subject area of hospitality. These trends can enlighten both researchers and practitioners, i.e. theoretical implications and practical implications. First, the results of the thematic content analysis showed that research content is consistent with the attributes of the service-oriented industry and those of hospitality and tourism management is enduring – namely, the service, consumer behavior and human resource management aspects of hospitality and tourism (Abubakar *et al.*, 2022; Kravariti *et al.*, 2022; Wang *et al.*, 2022). However, the current thematic distribution also reveals that there are fewer research perspectives on hospitality marketing and hospitality services than hospitality management, implying that scholars have conducted more research from the supplier’s standpoint than from the consumer’s standpoint. Therefore, considering that consumer support is one of the foundations which hospitality depends, it is recommended that future research could include more research on hospitality marketing and hospitality services from the consumer’s standpoint. Second, government plays an essential role in leading and promoting hospitality by providing policy and financial support (Law *et al.*, 2022). Yet research findings indicate a lack of current perspectives on policymakers. It is therefore recommended that academia increase research on policymakers, including their role and efforts in hospitality and how they interact with other stakeholders.

Third, the service-oriented nature of hospitality and tourism implies that its formation and development are highly susceptible to external environmental influences, which has given rise to relevant research themes. For example, technological advances have led to discussions of advanced technology (Sanchez-Perez *et al.*, 2021; Doborjeh *et al.*, 2022), the sharing economy/value co-creation, trends in proenvironmental behavior in the context of global environmentalization (Sharma *et al.*, 2020; Bui and Filimonau, 2021; Majeed and Kim, 2023) and thinking about crisis management in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (Liu-Lastres, 2022; Park *et al.*, 2022). Thus, this study advocates that scholars should focus on both the industry and disciplinary attributes of hospitality and tourism, and the hot topics and trends in the external environment when choosing their research directions.

In addition, hospitality suppliers are advised to embrace change with an open mind and adapt quickly and effectively to the ever-changing market through a variety of means, including the development of relevant plans and cross-border cooperation. Fourth, this study also found that the hospitality review studies that were reviewed contained relatively little coverage and analysis of future research agendas on the topics they reviewed. Accordingly, we encourage researchers to build on this review of ongoing studies by increasing their critical discussions and recommendations for future research.

5.2 Conclusions and limitations

Hospitality and tourism are evolving rapidly, and the content involved in academia and industry is ever-changing. The major contribution of this study is a valuable, manageable and practical review of review studies from three leading hospitality journals (IJCHM, IJHM

and *JHMM*) over the past three and a half years, investigating the research structure and state-of-the-art trends in hospitality review research, while contributing exploratory insights for future research in hospitality and review studies. The study used a triple approach – bibliometric analysis, content analysis and a quantitative systematic literature review – to conduct a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of various related factors. In the thematic content analysis, the current trending research topics were grouped into four main research themes in response to the holistic research paradigms and perspectives of hospitality and to increase the conceptualization of related works.

Compared with previous review studies in hospitality, this review paper stands out for the uniqueness of its research perspective, the novelty of its research methodology and the comprehensiveness of its review scope. A major limitation is that the study focused only on literature reviews published in three leading journals in hospitality. For an additional layer of insight into the research topic, future researchers could expand the range of journal sources and time horizon reviewed.

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