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Hospitality ESG Research: A Bibliometric Review from 2010-2024

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ABSTRACT

The research presents a bibliometric analysis of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) research within the hospitality sector offering insights into its evolution, thematic trends, and future directions. Using a dataset of 4,877 articles published between 2010 and 2024, co-occurrence analysis and content examination identified three primary research clusters: Sustainability and Governance, Sustainable Destination Development and Organization Performance. The findings highlight the growing emphasis on governance frameworks, community engagement, resource management, and green organizational practices in promoting sustainable development. However, gaps persist in areas such as governance in the Global South, the integration of community-based initiatives and the application of emerging technologies in sustainability practices. This study contributes to the field by synthesizing influential research and identifying critical future directions, including the need for interdisciplinary approaches and actionable strategies to foster sustainability in the hospitality industry. By bridging theoretical insights and practical applications, it provides a roadmap for researchers and practitioners striving to align hospitality operations with global sustainability goals.

Keywords: Hospitality ESG; sustainability; governance; corporate social responsibility (CSR); development; community engagement; organisation

1. Introduction

The hospitality and tourism industry are a significant contributor to global economic activity while also playing a critical role in environmental, social and cultural systems. However, the sector faces pressing challenges including resource depletion, climate change, workforce diversity and increasing demands for ethical and transparent practices from stakeholders. As a result, research on Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) principles within the hospitality industry has grown substantially offering valuable insights into addressing these challenges while fostering sustainable development (Chan & Hawkins, 2010; Gössling & Peeters, 2015).

ESG research in hospitality encompasses various themes, including resource management, corporate social responsibility (CSR), governance frameworks, and workforce diversity. Pham et al. (2020a) investigated the influence of green human resource management practices on hotels' environmental performance while Alarcón & Cole (2019) emphasized the importance of gender equity in achieving sustainability goals. Studies have highlighted the role of CSR in enhancing customer loyalty and improving organizational performance (Otoo & Kim, 2020). Resource conservation practices, such as effective water management, have also been shown to significantly improve operational efficiency and environmental sustainability (Gössling, 2015). These studies demonstrate the potential of ESG practices to address global sustainability challenges while strengthening organizational resilience and competitiveness.

Our study employs bibliometric analysis to examine the evolution of hospitality ESG research from 2010 to 2024. A dataset of 4,877 articles retrieved from the WoS was analyzed to identify key research themes, trends, and influential studies within the field. Co-occurrence analysis of index keywords and content analysis of highly cited articles were used to uncover dominant clusters of knowledge and emerging directions in the research landscape. This review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of ESG practices in hospitality by offering insights into their implications for sustainable development and future research opportunities.

2. Defining Hospitality ESG

Hospitality ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) research explores sustainable and ethical practices within the hospitality and tourism sector. It examines how businesses address environmental challenges, such as resource conservation and carbon emissions (Gössling, 2015); social dimensions, including workforce diversity, employee engagement and community well-being (Aboramadan & Karatepe, 2021); and governance issues, such as transparency, stakeholder accountability, and corporate ethics (Chan & Hawkins, 2010; S. H. Kim et al., 2017). By integrating these elements into operational and strategic frameworks, ESG research provides actionable insights for aligning hospitality industry practices with sustainability goals and long-term societal well-being.

3. Method

3.1 Data collection

The data for this study was obtained from the Web of Science (WoS) database, widely recognized for its comprehensive and high-quality academic resources. A systematic search query was formulated to capture a wide range of studies at the intersection of sustainability and the hospitality industry. The query incorporated keywords, synonyms, and Boolean operators to ensure both inclusivity and precision:

(TS=("sustainab" OR "green practice" OR "eco-friend*" OR "environmental practice" OR "climate change" OR "carbon footprint" OR "renewable" OR "water conservation" OR "workforce diversity" OR "waste management" OR "biodiversity" OR "social responsib*" OR "corporate social responsib*" OR "CSR" OR "social equity" OR "social justice" OR "diversity and inclusion" OR "D&I" OR "ethical pract*" OR "business ethics" OR "governance" OR "ESG" OR "corporate governance" OR "transpare*" OR "stakeholder engagement") AND PY=(2010-2024) AND TS=("hospitality" OR "hotel*" OR "restaurant*" OR "touris*" OR "lodging" OR "accommodation*" OR "food service*" OR "leisure" OR "travel" OR "resort*" OR "hospitality management" OR "hospitality industry") AND TS=("Research" OR "Studies" OR "Finding" OR "Analysis") AND WC=("Business" OR "Management" OR "Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism"))*

This query was structured to encompass four main elements. The first component targeted sustainability concepts, including terms such as “green practice,” “environmental practice,” “CSR,” “governance,” and “stakeholder engagement.” The second component focused on the hospitality and tourism sectors, employing terms like “hospitality management,” “hotel,” and “restaurant.” The third element ensured the inclusion of research-oriented literature by incorporating terms such as “research,” “studies,” and “analysis.” Finally, the search was restricted to journals classified under “Business,” “Management,” and “Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism” categories, ensuring disciplinary relevance.

This search yielded a dataset of 4,877 articles published between 2010 and 2024. These articles were selected for their relevance to the study's objectives and included metadata such as titles, abstracts, keywords, authors, author affiliations, citations, and references.

The dataset was refined using EndNote to remove duplicates and irrelevant entries, ensuring accuracy and reliability. This curated collection of articles served as the foundation for subsequent bibliometric analysis using VOSviewer and Excel. The systematic nature of the data collection process ensured a robust and comprehensive examination of sustainability research within the hospitality industry.

3.2 Data Analysis

The primary method adopted in this study is bibliometric analysis, an effective approach for reviewing broad research areas with extensive datasets, such as highly cited articles analyzed here (Donthu et al., 2021). The bibliometric dataset includes titles, abstracts, author keywords, citations and cited references. VOSviewer software, supported by Excel and EndNote, was used to conduct the analysis. The study began by performing co-authorship and citation analyses to examine the dataset's structural characteristics. Co-occurrence analysis of index keywords (extracted from titles, abstracts, and author keywords) was then employed to identify thematic clusters and their temporal evolution trends. Finally, a content analysis of highly influential articles was conducted to delineate subthemes within each cluster, ensuring that bibliometric findings were supported by detailed qualitative synthesis, as recommended by (Zupic & Čater, 2015).

4. Bibliometric Analysis Results

The bibliometric analysis conducted in this study provides a quantitative overview of research trends and themes in the selected field. By analyzing articles using tools such as VOSviewer, EndNote, and Excel, the study identified key clusters of research themes and their temporal evolution. The analysis focuses on co-occurrence of keywords, citation patterns, and the overall structure of the research landscape. These findings offer insights into the dominant and emerging areas of interest, contributing to a deeper understanding of the field's development and future directions.

3.3 Highly productive journals

A total of 4877 articles on Hospitality ESG research were published in 264 journals. The top 20 journals comprise 65% of all publications (as shown in **Error! Reference source not found.**).

Table 1 Top 20 journals ranked by the number of publications

#	Sources (Total Sources 264)	N ↓	%	Citations
1	Journal Of Sustainable Tourism	824	16.93	33247
2	Current Issues in Tourism	313	6.43	7199
3	International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	290	5.96	10746
4	Tourism Management	282	5.79	23212
5	International Journal of Hospitality Management	212	4.35	11835
6	Tourism Management Perspectives	160	3.29	5239
7	Journal Of Hospitality and Tourism Management	158	3.25	4258
8	Tourism Geographies	143	2.94	4775
9	Tourism Review	142	2.92	1972
10	Annals Of Tourism Research	132	2.71	9078
11	Journal Of Travel Research	127	2.61	4393
12	Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research	121	2.49	1944
13	Journal Of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism- Research Planning and Management	118	2.42	1342
14	Tourism Economics	107	2.20	1939
15	International Journal of Tourism Research	104	2.14	1650
16	Journal Of Destination Marketing & Management	100	2.05	2714
17	Journal Of Travel & Tourism Marketing	72	1.48	2353
18	Journal Of Hospitality & Tourism Research	70	1.44	1299
19	Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism	66	1.36	1280
20	Journal Of Hospitality Marketing & Management	53	1.09	1813

4.2 Highly productive authors, institutions, and countries

Error! Reference source not found., Table 3 and Table 4 present the top 20 authors, top 10 institutions, and top 10 countries/regions, respectively, based on the number of publications.

Table 2 Top 20 authors ranked by the number of publications

#	Author	Documents↓	Citations↓↓	Total Link Strength
1	Han, Heesup	67	3826	69
2	Hall, C. Michael	47	2946	98
3	Font, Xavier	35	2126	19
4	Becken, Susanne	32	1494	62
5	Gossling, Stefan	28	2680	88
6	Lee, Seoki	26	2188	24
7	Scott, Daniel	26	2018	79
8	Filimonau, Viachaslau	22	766	6
9	Horng, Jeou-Shyan	22	800	45
10	Nunkoo, Robin	22	1839	70
11	Koseoglu, Mehmet Ali	21	709	26
12	Mattila, Anna S.	21	767	19
13	Kim, Seongseop (Sam)	20	265	22
14	Boley, B. Bynum	19	1147	15
15	Dolnicar, Sara	19	890	16
16	Law, Rob	19	877	14
17	Agyeiwaah, Elizabeth	17	421	11
18	Dhir, Amandeep	17	1040	28
19	Dwyer, Larry	17	1010	9
20	Liu, Chih-Hsing	17	668	44

Notes: Data in tables 3-5 were generated by co-authorship analysis with VOSviewer and the counting method is fractional counting. The total link strength in s 3-5 represents the strength of the co-authorship links of a given item with other items. The number of citations is based on the WoS database

Table 3 Top 10 institutions ranked by the number of publications

#	Organization	Documents↓	Citations	Total Link Strength
1	Hong Kong Polytech University	202	7285	245
2	Griffith University	180	7353	291
3	University of Surrey	130	4546	274
4	University of Johannesburg	119	4671	363
5	University of Queensland	106	4242	162
6	Kyung Hee University	95	2258	218
7	Sejong University	86	3557	108
8	Sun Yat Sen University	84	2094	99
9	University of Waterloo	77	5064	180
10	University of Cent Florida	73	2412	95

Table 4 Top 10 countries/regions ranked by the number of publications

#	Country	Documents	Citations↓	Total Link Strength
1	Usa	978	36894	903
2	China	926	25149	766
3	Australia	678	29460	659
4	England	658	23182	832
5	Spain	402	11897	271
6	South Korea	285	9984	384
7	Italy	265	7582	265
8	Canada	223	10672	259
9	New Zealand	221	8550	419
10	Taiwan	185	7231	79

4.3 Highly cited articles and authors

Table 5 shows the top 10 most highly cited articles, focusing on the outcomes of online sustainability, innovation, and CSR. shows the top 10 most highly cited authors.

Table 5 Top 10 most cited articles based on citation analysis

#	Document	Focus	Citations↓	Links
1	(Hjalager, 2010)	Innovation Research	852	12
2	(Buckley, 2012)	Sustainable tourism	599	74
3	(Ramkissoon et al., 2013)	Structural equation modelling	579	30
4	(Cheng, 2016)	Sharing Economy	571	7
5	(Lee, 2013)	Sustainable tourism	569	41
6	(Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020)	Covid 19	526	22
7	(Juvan & Dolnicar, 2014)	Sustainable tourism	458	68
8	(Inoue & Lee, 2011)	CSR	455	66
9	(Jiang & Wen, 2020)	Covid-19	453	18
10	(Kang et al., 2012)	Green initiatives	440	85

Table 6 Top 10 most cited authors based on citation analysis

#	Author	Documents	Citations↓	Total Link Strength
1	Han, Heesup	67	3826	1041
2	Hall, C. Michael	47	2946	967
3	Font, Xavier	35	2126	653
4	Becken, Susanne	32	1494	437
5	Gossling, Stefan	28	2680	859
6	Lee, Seoki	26	2188	602
7	Scott, Daniel	26	2018	813

#	Author	Documents	Citations↓	Total Link Strength
8	Filimonau, Viachaslau	22	766	257
9	Hong, Jeou-Shyan	22	800	311
10	Nunkoo, Robin	22	1839	538

4.4 Highly co-cited references

Table 7 Top 10 most co-cited references from the co-citation analysis

#	Cited Reference	Focus	Citations↓	Total Link Strength
1	(Fornell & Larcker, 1981)	Method: Validity and reliability	526	525.00
2	(Hair, 2009)	Data Analysis	453	448.00
3	(Podsakoff et al., 2003)	Method Biases	319	319.00
4	(Anderson & Gerbing, 1988)	Method: Structural equation modeling	237	237.00
5	(Ajzen, 1991)	Behavior (TPB)	226	223.00
6	(Henseler et al., 2015)	Structural equation modelling	189	189.00
7	(Clarke & Braun, 2014)	Thematic analysis	182	170.00
8	(Bagozzi & Yi, 1988)	Structural equation modelling	157	157.00
9	(BUTLER, 1980)	Resource management	144	143.00
10	(Lenzen et al., 2018)	Carbon footprint	138	135.00

Table 8 Top 10 most co-cited authors from the co-citation analysis

#	Author	Citations↓	Total Link Strength
1	Hall, Cm	1395	1283.75
2	Han, H	1249	1144.75
3	Gössling, S	1172	1097.46
4	Scott, D	922	796.38
5	Bramwell, B	768	734.25
6	Becken, S	705	657.37
7	Nunkoo, R	657	598.62
8	Fornell, C	585	583.94
9	Dolnicar, S	583	545.04
10	Hair, Jf	550	534.67

Note: Web of Science data includes only the first author of a cited document. Other authors are not considered in a co-citation analysis of cited authors.

Table 9 Top 10 most co-cited journals from the co-citation analysis

#	Source	Citations↓	Total Link Strength
1	Tourism Management	18236	15990.44
2	Annals of Tourism Research	12593	10853.81
3	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	12277	10884.07

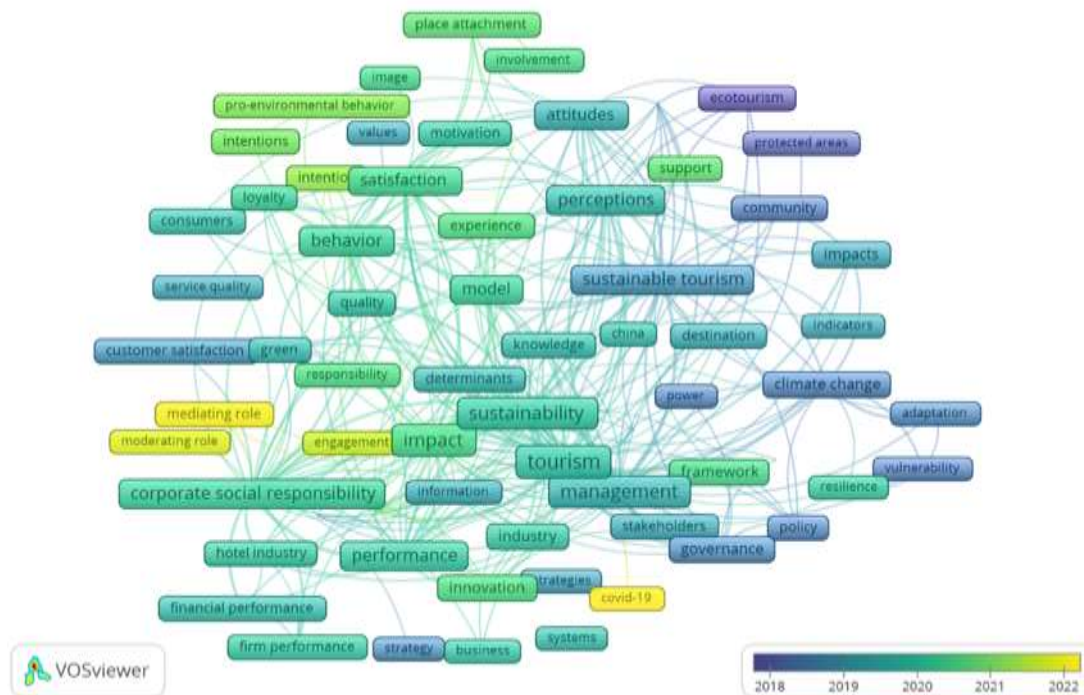
4.5 Co-occurrence analysis: Identifying research themes and trends

Cluster #1
Sustainable ventures through government policy

Cluster #2
Sustainable destination development

Cluster #3
Organizational performance

Figure 1 Overlay visualization of index keywords (illustrating the evolution of hot topics)



The issue of overtourism exemplifies the failures of growth-driven governance models, where unregulated visitor numbers overwhelm destination capacities. Milano et al. (2019) examined overtourism through the lens of degrowth, a paradigm that prioritizes equity and environmental stewardship over economic expansion. In their ethnographic study of Barcelona, they highlighted how social movements have challenged the commodification of urban spaces for tourism and advocated for alternative governance models that emphasize sustainable, diversified economies. Degrowth, as a governance approach, aligns with sustainable tourism principles by encouraging reduced resource consumption and greater community involvement (Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). However, integrating degrowth into governance frameworks requires a fundamental shift in policy priorities, moving away from short-term economic gains toward long-term sustainability (Fletcher et al., 2019). These studies underscore the importance of participatory governance models that empower local communities and diversify decision-making processes to mitigate the adverse effects of overtourism.

Climate change represents one of the most significant challenges to sustainable tourism, necessitating robust governance mechanisms to foster adaptation and resilience. Scott et al. (2016) emphasized the inadequacy of current governance frameworks in addressing tourism's travel phase, which accounts for a substantial portion of its environmental impact. They argued for cross-sectoral collaborations that integrate tourism governance with broader climate mitigation efforts. Similarly, Kaján & Saarinen (2013) highlighted the potential of community-based adaptation strategies, which leverage local knowledge and practices to address specific vulnerabilities. However, they noted that such approaches remain underexplored in tourism research, particularly in governance frameworks. Effective governance mechanisms must prioritize inclusivity, ensuring that adaptation strategies are equitable and context sensitive. The integration of global and local perspectives is essential for addressing the systemic vulnerabilities of the tourism sector to climate change.

5.2 Cluster #2: Sustainable destination development

Sustainable destination development integrates environmental, social and economic dimensions to enhance long-term resilience and equity within tourism destinations. Governance emerges as a cornerstone of this process, influencing sustainable practices and stakeholder engagement. Jang et al. (2017) highlight the significant role of leadership in advancing environmental sustainability within the restaurant industry, demonstrating how managerial values and stakeholder engagement enhance both financial and non-financial performance. Similarly, Aboramadan & Karatepe (2021) reveal that green human resource management (GHRM) strengthens employees' perceptions of green organizational support, which subsequently improves job performance and organizational citizenship behaviors. These findings underscore the importance of organizational leadership and employee participation in embedding sustainability within destination operations.

Community engagement is equally critical to sustainable destination development. Su et al. (2019) employ the sustainable livelihood framework to examine tourism's impact on rural livelihoods in China. Their findings demonstrate that multi-activity strategies, leveraging synergies between tourism and other income sources, enhance livelihood sustainability. However, disparities in income and resource access often exclude less-resourced residents from benefiting equitably. Research further emphasizes the role of responsible tourism in fostering perceived destination sustainability, which positively influences the quality of life for local residents (Mathew & Sreejesh, 2017). Together, these studies highlight the necessity of inclusive governance structures that ensure equitable benefit-sharing and community participation.

Gender equality represents another pivotal dimension of sustainable destination development. Alarcón & Cole (2019) examine the intersection of tourism and SDG 5, emphasizing that achieving gender equality is essential for tourism's broader contributions to sustainable development goals. By exploring links with other SDGs, such as clean water (SDG 6) and decent work (SDG 8), they illustrate how gender-sensitive approaches strengthen sustainability outcomes. This perspective underscores the dual imperative of addressing equity and leveraging gender equality as a driver for sustainable tourism practices.

Environmental sustainability in destinations is heavily influenced by resource management practices. Studies examine the water management in tourism, introducing performance indicators that address direct and indirect water use (Gössling, 2015). His case study of resort hotels in Rhodes identifies opportunities for water conservation and cost savings, emphasizing the need for holistic resource management. Similarly, Jurado et al. (2012) develop a methodology for assessing carrying capacity in coastal destinations, offering practical tools to guide sustainable growth.

Marketing and stakeholder engagement further enhance destination sustainability. Font & McCabe (2017) explore sustainability marketing, focusing on strategies that align market segmentation with sustainable product development to influence tourist behavior. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives promote tourists' citizenship behaviors for the environment demonstrating reciprocal benefits where CSR fosters both employee engagement and customer participation in sustainability efforts (Tuan, 2018). These findings suggest that sustainability-oriented business practices amplify both operational performance and stakeholder collaboration.

Despite advancements in sustainable practices, challenges remain in addressing the vulnerabilities and systemic risks faced by destinations. The Destination Sustainability Framework (DSF) is proposed to assess destination resilience, highlighting the interconnected dimensions of vulnerability exposure, sensitivity, and adaptiveness (Calgaro et al., 2014). Their work underscores the importance of dynamic feedback loops that balance environmental and social systems within tourism ecosystems. However, achieving resilience requires governance structures that bridge local and global priorities while accommodating the unique contexts of individual destinations.

5.3 Cluster #3: Organization performance

Organizational performance in the hospitality sector is shaped by a range of interconnected factors including employee engagement, customer satisfaction and corporate social responsibility (CSR). Research has shown that employees' perceptions of CSR positively influence their quality of work life, affective commitment and organizational citizenship behavior, which collectively enhance job performance (H. L. Kim et al., 2017). Similarly, CSR performance, particularly in the domains of stakeholder engagement and environmental sustainability, has been identified as a key factor in strengthening brand preference, with perceived brand quality serving as a mediating variable (Liu et al., 2014).

The role of green human resource management (GHRM) in promoting environmental and organizational outcomes has also been extensively studied. Practices such as employee training and involvement have been found to significantly improve organizational citizenship behavior for the environment (OCBE) and enhance environmental performance (Pham et al., 2020b). However, performance management, as an isolated factor, has limited impact unless mediated by employee commitment (Pham et al., 2020a). Attitudes toward environmental management systems (EMS) further demonstrate the importance of internal organizational dynamics. While EMS implementation can promote both positive and negative employee reactions, its success depends heavily on effective communication of organizational motivations and employee involvement (Chan & Hawkins, 2010).

Customer behavior is another critical dimension of organizational performance, particularly in the context of sustainability. Customers' intentions to pay for green hotels are significantly influenced by their environmental concerns, perceived effectiveness, and awareness of the benefits associated with sustainable practices (Y. Kim & Han, 2010). Additionally, customer loyalty is strongly linked to trust, satisfaction and the perceived overall green image of the organization. These factors are particularly significant in fostering loyalty within environmentally conscious hospitality settings (Martínez-Martínez et al., 2015). The relationship between customer motivation and satisfaction is further exemplified in culinary tourism, where positive experiences have been found to enhance both satisfaction and long-term loyalty (Aggeiwaah, 2020).

Sustainable organizational performance is also closely tied to community engagement and place attachment. Residents' environmental knowledge and attitudes toward ecotourism are critical in determining their willingness to participate in tourism management, thereby linking community involvement to destination sustainability (Zhang & Lei, 2012). Positive resident attitudes toward sustainable tourism have been shown to facilitate greater engagement in tourism initiatives, as evidenced by the development of the Sustainable Tourism Attitude Scale (Yu et al., 2011). Furthermore, the relationship between tourism-related social capital and other forms of capital, such as cultural and financial capital, underscores the broader role of community involvement in enhancing organizational and destination-level performance (McGehee et al., 2010).

The emergence of peer-to-peer sharing platforms has also introduced new dimensions to organizational performance in the hospitality industry. Trust and loyalty have been identified as critical factors in maintaining competitive advantage for such platforms once a sufficient level of liquidity has been reached. The dynamics of service providers, users, and regulators play a pivotal role in shaping these ecosystems and influencing their long-term performance (Wirtz et al., 2019). This evolution highlights the necessity of innovative business models that align with changing stakeholder expectations.

Taken together, these studies underscore the multifaceted nature of organizational performance in hospitality. Employee engagement, customer behavior, community involvement, and innovative business practices collectively contribute to shaping sustainable and high-performing organizations. By aligning these elements, the hospitality industry can continue to adapt and thrive in an increasingly competitive and sustainability-focused landscape.

6. Discussion and future directions

The findings from this bibliometric analysis illustrate the evolution and breadth of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) research within the hospitality sector over the past decade. By examining three thematic clusters Sustainability and Governance, Sustainable Destination Development, and Organization Performance we gain valuable insights into how the sector has approached sustainability challenges. These themes not only reflect the current state of research but also offer a foundation for identifying gaps and opportunities for future studies.

6.1 Synthesis of Key Findings

The first cluster, **Sustainability and Governance**, highlights how governance frameworks can help advance sustainability in hospitality. Research in this area emphasizes the need for collaborative approaches that involve governments, businesses, and local communities. However, the findings also reveal that governance mechanisms in tourism often lack inclusivity and fail to fully address regional disparities, especially in the Global South (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2023). Governance research predominantly focuses on developed regions, which underscores the necessity of exploring how governance strategies can better support underrepresented areas facing unique sustainability challenges.

In the second cluster, **Sustainable Destination Development**, the role of community engagement and resource management emerges as a focal point. Effective management of destinations relies on balancing the economic benefits of tourism with resource conservation and equitable benefit-sharing among local residents. For example, studies have highlighted innovative approaches to managing water resources and determining the carrying capacity of destinations. However, fewer studies focus on community-driven models that empower residents to actively participate in the planning and development of tourism. Encouraging such participation, especially in rural and ecotourism contexts, remains critical for achieving sustainability goals.

The third cluster, **Organization Performance**, demonstrates how internal organizational practices contribute to both sustainability and operational success. Green human resource management (GHRM) strategies, for instance, play a key role in promoting pro-environmental employee behaviors and

improving organizational citizenship behavior for the environment (OCBE). Similarly, corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices enhance customer loyalty and strengthen employee engagement while contributing to improved organizational performance. These findings highlight the interconnectedness of employee engagement, consumer satisfaction, and sustainability practices in driving long-term business success.

6.2 Implications for the Hospitality Industry

The insights from this analysis hold several practical implications for the hospitality industry. First, integrating governance and sustainability frameworks into operational strategies is crucial. Businesses must adopt governance models that align environmental and social objectives with stakeholder expectations, ensuring that sustainability efforts address the needs of local communities, employees, and customers alike. Additionally, embedding CSR and GHSM practices into daily operations can foster a culture of environmental stewardship and strengthen organizational commitment to sustainability.

Second, the emphasis on sustainable destination development underscores the importance of community involvement. Policymakers and destination management organizations (DMOs) must prioritize equitable benefit-sharing in tourism destinations, particularly in rural and ecotourism contexts where communities are often directly impacted by tourism activities. Leveraging technology, such as big data analytics and digital monitoring tools, can improve transparency and support informed decision-making in destination management.

Lastly, the hospitality industry has the power to influence consumer behavior through sustainability-driven marketing and service innovations. Promoting green certifications, eco-friendly accommodations, and educational campaigns can enhance customer loyalty while contributing to broader environmental goals. Engaging customers in sustainability initiatives creates a positive feedback loop, fostering an increased commitment to sustainable tourism practices.

6.3 Future Research Directions

While progress has been made, there are several areas where future research can contribute to advancing ESG practices in hospitality:

- 1. Governance in Underrepresented Regions**

Much of the existing research focuses on developed regions, leaving a gap in understanding governance challenges in the Global South. Future studies should examine how governance mechanisms can be tailored to address the unique needs and contexts of these regions, particularly those experiencing rapid tourism growth.

- 2. CSR and Community Synergy**

The intersection of CSR and community engagement remains underexplored. Research could investigate how businesses can align their CSR initiatives with local sustainability goals to create shared value for both organizations and communities.

- 3. Technological Innovations**

Emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, and big data, present opportunities for advancing sustainability practices. Studies could explore how these technologies can enhance resource efficiency, governance frameworks, and consumer engagement in hospitality settings.

- 4. Consumer Behavior and Green Practices**

While consumer attitudes toward green hotels and sustainable tourism have been studied, there is a need for longitudinal research to assess the long-term impact of sustainability initiatives on consumer loyalty and behavior. Understanding cultural and psychological factors influencing these behaviors could provide valuable insights.

- 5. Interconnection of Clusters**

Although this analysis highlights three distinct clusters, their interconnections require further investigation. Future studies could explore how governance frameworks, destination management, and organizational practices interact to create comprehensive sustainability strategies in the hospitality sector.

- 6. Diversity and Inclusion in Sustainability**

Workforce diversity and inclusion remain underexplored in ESG research. Studies should examine how diverse teams contribute to innovation and sustainability efforts, as well as strategies for fostering inclusive work environments that align with ESG principles.

- 7. Impact of Global Crises**

Global crises, such as pandemics and climate change, significantly impact the hospitality industry. Research could focus on how businesses and destinations build resilience through adaptive governance and sustainability practices in the face of these challenges.

7. Conclusions

The hospitality industry is uniquely positioned to address global sustainability challenges while creating value for stakeholders. By adopting governance frameworks that integrate environmental and social objectives, engaging communities in destination development, and leveraging innovative organizational practices, businesses can achieve both sustainability and competitiveness.

The findings underscore the interconnected nature of ESG practices, where collaboration among stakeholders including businesses, policymakers, and local communities is essential for achieving sustainable outcomes. Innovative approaches such as green human resource management, corporate social responsibility, and sustainable marketing demonstrate how internal and external strategies can drive organizational success and resilience. However, the analysis also reveals gaps in governance for the Global South, the integration of community-driven initiatives, and the role of emerging technologies in enhancing sustainability practices.

Appendix A1 The results of co-occurrence analysis of index keywords

Cluster	label	Occurrences	Link	Total link strength	Avg. pub. year
1	tourism	1006	79	3224	2019.85
1	governance	729	79	2653	2019.50
1	sustainable tourism	646	79	1919	2018.89
1	perceptions	428	79	1777	2019.64
1	climate change	387	77	1126	2018.56
1	management	355	72	1131	2018.68
1	framework	246	78	915	2020.38
1	impacts	223	72	811	2019.18
1	conservation	218	77	852	2018.83
1	sustainable development	200	79	670	2019.15
1	ecotourism	181	68	583	2017.73
1	community	166	71	639	2018.45
1	policy	165	63	477	2018.57
1	impact	159	72	567	2019.38
1	China	140	75	422	2019.71
1	demand	117	54	298	2019.79
1	tourism development	117	68	359	2019.39
1	stakeholders	116	70	498	2019.30
1	participation	114	70	458	2019.60
1	power	113	64	380	2018.54
1	rural tourism	113	71	413	2019.26
1	support	109	72	466	2020.67
1	indicators	105	59	330	2019.21
1	resilience	105	66	404	2020.02
1	adaptation	103	53	402	2018.60
1	protected areas	90	58	307	2018.19
1	vulnerability	87	50	354	2018.46
1	collaboration	79	62	326	2019.15
2	sustainability	806	79	2724	2019.94

Cluster	label	Occurrences	Link	Total link strength	Avg. pub. year
2	destination	650	79	2397	2020.39
2	corporate social responsibility	590	77	2247	2020.10
2	performance	472	78	1710	2019.98
2	hospitality	341	79	1351	2020.82
2	industry	233	78	884	2019.94
2	innovation	231	74	798	2020.47
2	hotel industry	187	69	749	2019.98
2	determinants	169	79	622	2019.54
2	hotels	138	68	584	2018.80
2	trust	136	74	604	2020.10
2	green	135	74	568	2019.56
2	financial	126	63	525	2019.70
2	firm	126	56	456	2019.95
2	covid-19	123	66	359	2022.29
2	perspective	116	76	465	2020.58
2	information	112	70	409	2019.29
2	mediating role	112	66	474	2021.88
2	strategies	95	68	318	2019.06
2	moderating role	94	64	386	2021.68
2	business	90	68	344	2019.88
2	responsibility	90	67	399	2020.48
2	systems	86	64	296	2019.71
2	strategy	85	60	331	2018.72
2	engagement	82	69	329	2021.54
2	commitment	79	69	338	2018.94
3	performance	467	78	1837	2020.14
3	model	396	79	1458	2020.12
3	satisfaction	384	79	1681	2020.29
3	attitudes	364	78	1488	2019.45
3	consumption	176	72	612	2019.69
3	experience	176	75	639	2020.51
3	quality	173	78	634	2019.91
3	travel	148	68	433	2019.84
3	antecedents	141	70	639	2020.55
3	knowledge	141	74	524	2019.67
3	loyalty	138	71	692	2020.16
3	place attachment	130	68	626	2020.65

Cluster	label	Occurrences	Link	Total link strength	Avg. pub. year
3	intentions	128	65	546	2020.89
3	identity	126	72	468	2019.29
3	experiences	118	70	400	2021.14
3	intention	112	69	507	2021.15
3	consumers	109	63	463	2019.75
3	motivation	109	69	452	2019.92
3	customer satisfaction	105	62	459	2018.90
3	social media	103	72	375	2021.22
3	pro-environmental behavior	102	67	422	2021.03
3	values	95	66	364	2019.23
3	image	93	63	390	2020.37
3	service quality	82	65	353	2019.24
3	involvement	80	66	368	2020.41
3	destination image	78	66	366	2019.64

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