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A bibliometric analysis of reputation management in the hospitality industry: Trends and future directions

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ABSTRACT

This research examines papers on reputation management in the hospitality industry using bibliometric techniques. The study obtained information from the Web of Science (WoS) database, renowned for its interdisciplinary citation coverage. The search strategy involved using keywords such as "reputation management," "hospitality," "leisure," and "tourism" to narrow down articles published between 2000 and 2023, a period marked by the increasing influence of digitalization in the hospitality industry. We compiled a dataset comprising 1,859 peer-reviewed articles selected for bibliometric analysis using the Bibliometrix R package and its interactive Biblioshiny tool, for data manipulation and presentation purposes. The findings highlighted the influence of media and online reviews on developing strategies for managing reputation, with "word of mouth" and "customer satisfaction" standing out as pivotal concepts. China and the United States stand out as the nations, with Hong Kong Polytechnic University recognized as a top institution in this field of study. The research indicates a rising trend in studies since 2010, aligning with the evolution of the hospitality industry and the surge in platform usage. These discoveries provide insights for both academia and industry professionals, laying the groundwork for strategic directions and further research in managing hospitality reputation. This research underscores the importance of devising innovative strategies to bridge research gaps and explore emerging areas of interest.

KEYWORDS

Reputation management, hospitality, bibliometric analysis, trends, future directions

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INTRODUCTION

Reputation management is of prime importance for the sustainable success of businesses in the modern-day environment. However, despite its growing importance, there is a lack of a comprehensive overview that maps the evolution and structure of academic research on this subject within the hospitality industry. Reputation management plays a crucial role in the rapidly evolving digital landscape, particularly in highly competitive sectors such as hospitality, where guest satisfaction and loyalty are paramount (Morrone et al., 2021; Yao et al., 2024; Yaşarsoy et al., 2022). Guest trust and a strong, positive reputation have a significant influence on a hotel or restaurant's market positioning and long-term success (Keh & Xie, 2009; Stravinskienė et al., 2021). As guest feedback becomes increasingly visible through digital platforms and social media, hospitality firms are pressed to pursue strategic approaches to reputation management. Despite the growing volume of literature, a systematic and quantitative assessment of how the field has evolved over time—its trends, key contributors, and emerging themes—remains limited. This gap constitutes the core problem addressed by this study.

Accordingly, this study aims to fill this gap by conducting a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of academic research on reputation management in the hospitality industry. This study aims to present a bibliometric analysis of academic research on reputation management in the hospitality field, providing an overview of the literature on this subject. The primary objective is to identify the intellectual structure, thematic evolution, and key research patterns that have shaped the field between 2000 and 2023. The leading themes, dominant methods, and other recent trends emerging in the development of reputation management are envisaged. Several spots in the literature are identified, along with suggestions for future study. This study is based on an extensive review of academic literature, focusing on publications from the Web of Science database between 2000 and 2023.

The scope of this study is limited to the distribution of research on reputation management in the hospitality industry by year, the most cited publications, prominent authors, countries, and journals. In this context, strategic insights and recommendations are provided to benefit both academic and industry professionals. Structurally, the study begins by reviewing the existing literature on reputation management in the hospitality industry, followed by an explanation of the bibliometric analysis methods. The findings are presented, and future trends and research suggestions are discussed in light of the results.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Concept for Reputation Management

Reputation management has become a crucial concept within the strategic management processes of businesses. Particularly in the service sector, reputation is a critical factor for businesses seeking to gain a competitive advantage and ensure sustainability in the eyes of guests, stakeholders, and society at large. Today, reputation is often described not as an isolated evaluation of an individual's or an organization's past actions or future behaviors but rather as a perception shaped by what others think (Adeosun & Ganiyu, 2013). Moreover, reputation has been regarded as a tool that facilitates trust among organizations, enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of online services and communities (Hendrikx et al., 2015). Therefore, reputation management refers to the active process of managing and enhancing this perception.

The disciplines inform the theoretical foundations of corporate reputation management and strategic management. Reputation management is often explained through various theories, including social capital, the resource-based view, and stakeholder theory. Social capital refers to the networks of relationships through which businesses build trust, loyalty, and opportunities for collaboration (Kay & Hagan, 2003). According to social capital theory (Bourdieu, 1986), a business's reputation is closely tied to its ability to foster a positive image within social and institutional networks (Ferrer et al., 2013; Lin, 2017). In this framework, reputation serves as a form of social capital, essential for building trust, cultivating strong relationships with guests, and encouraging collaborations. This perspective highlights the importance for businesses to enhance their social networks and develop strategies that foster positive engagement with stakeholders.

According to the resource-based view (Wernerfelt, 1984), a company's ability to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage depends on its resources being valuable, rare, hard to imitate, and non-substitutable (Kristandl & Bontis, 2007). In this light, reputation is regarded as one of the most vital intangible assets a business can have (Ortakarpuz & Doğanalp, 2024). A well-maintained reputation generates value that is challenging for competitors to duplicate, providing the business with a lasting competitive edge. The resource-based view emphasizes that reputation is a strategic resource that should be actively managed to strengthen the business's market position (Sohn & Lariscy, 2012). Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory advocates a philosophy that prioritizes the interests and evolving needs of employees, guests, suppliers, and shareholders alike (Ertuğrul, 2008). It argues that businesses are responsible not only for their shareholders but also to all stakeholders. In this context, reputation management involves establishing healthy, sustainable, and trust-based relationships with all stakeholders (Wierzbinski & Potocki, 2013). According to stakeholder theory, a business's reputation is the sum of the perceptions held by its stakeholders (Helm, 2007). Consequently, a successful reputation management strategy requires a deep understanding of stakeholder expectations and the execution of strategic actions that meet these expectations.

While the literature recognizes various dimensions of reputation, one of the most commonly used scales is the Reputation Quotient (RQ). Developed by Harris Interactive and C. J. Fombrun, this scale assesses an organization's reputation across six key dimensions: emotional appeal, products and services, financial performance, vision and leadership, workplace environment, and social responsibility. The scale measures whether organizations are perceived as beloved, trusted, and responsible toward society (Oktar & Çarıkçı, 2012). These dimensions shape the perceptions of various stakeholder groups and define the core elements that constitute a business's overall reputation. Therefore, businesses must effectively manage these reputation dimensions to achieve their strategic goals.

In recent years, digitalization has ushered in a new era of reputation management. Social media, online platforms, and digital networks can instantly impact a business's reputation (Koçyiğit, 2017; Süllü, 2019a; Yağmur, 2019). The integration of reputation management with digitalization involves managing guest feedback, monitoring online reviews, and promptly addressing and mitigating negative perceptions. Coombs and Holladay's (2012) Situational Crisis Communication Theory provides a valuable framework for managing the impact of crises on reputation in digital platforms (Coombs, 2017; Jamal & Abu Bakar, 2017).

Reputation management also plays a significant role in the context of sustainability and social responsibility (Sayılı & Ugurlu, 2007; Süllü, 2019b). A business's capacity to fulfill its environmental, social, and ethical responsibilities has a direct influence on its reputation. Today, businesses are expected not only to explain their financial performance but also to account for the value they provide to all stakeholders, society, and the environment. The sustainability approach evaluates not only a business's financial success but also its contributions to society and the environment, with these contributions directly impacting reputation (Altınay, 2016). In this context, reputation management is closely linked to sustainability, requiring businesses to address their social responsibility policies strategically for long-term success.

Reputation is a critical strategic resource not only for businesses to gain a competitive advantage but also to build social trust and develop healthy relationships with stakeholders. Based on these theoretical foundations, businesses should approach reputation not merely as a perception to be managed but as an integral part of a holistic strategy. Reputation in the hospitality industry is a ubiquitous concept that transcends boundaries, encompassing diverse themes ranging from guest satisfaction to environmentally sustainable practices (Satar & Güneş, 2017; Yusof et al., 2017). The reputation is the direct path to guest trust; through it, word-of-mouth spreads positive experiences, which will create long-term loyal customers (Jalilvand et al., 2017). Therefore, hospitality businesses need to place reputation management not from the perspective of short-term gains or crisis management but as a holistic strategy with service quality, social responsibility, and environmental sensitivity as its core foundation.

Reputation Management in the Hospitality Industry

The hospitality industry, which is directly based on guest experience, places a critical emphasis on reputation. Guests' perceptions of a business, shaped by factors such as service quality, hospitality, cleanliness, safety, and overall satisfaction, play a decisive role in the long-term success of such businesses (Mmutle & Shonhe, 2017). Reputation management is the process by which a business controls its external perception and seeks to enhance it positively (Perez-Aranda et al., 2019). In the hospitality industry, several factors influence this process, including direct communication with guests, maintaining consistent service quality, and managing online reviews. A strong reputation is essential for gaining a competitive edge and fostering guest loyalty. It plays a crucial role in attracting new guests, retaining existing ones, and safeguarding the business during challenging times (Akgöz & Solmaz, 2010). A positive reputation can significantly improve financial performance (Korkmazer & Saydan, 2018). Guests tend to trust businesses with a solid reputation, which leads to increased revenue through repeat visits and positive reviews (Kim et al., 2004).

The rise of digital technology and social media has made reputation management more complex in the hospitality industry (Morrone et al., 2021). Online hotel review platforms, social media interactions, and user feedback have become essential elements that impact businesses' reputations in real-time (Baka, 2016). The rapid sharing of guest experiences on digital platforms compels businesses to adjust their reputation management strategies to keep up with these changes. As a result, managing online reputation has become a crucial part of digital marketing efforts.

Effective reputation management in the hospitality industry relies on several key factors, including consistent service quality, customer satisfaction, open communication, and social responsibility (Benavides-Velasco et al., 2014; Kim & Kim, 2016). Service quality is the most significant factor influencing guests' perceptions of the business. Clear and consistent communication fosters customer trust and helps protect the business's reputation during times of crisis. Additionally, engaging in social responsibility initiatives and adopting environmentally friendly practices are important strategies that enhance reputation.

Reputation management is also closely linked to crisis management. In the hospitality industry, adverse service quality incidents can quickly harm a business's reputation (Mmutle & Shonhe, 2017). Therefore, crisis management strategies are essential to minimize potential reputational damage. Establishing prompt and effective communication during a crisis, understanding guest concerns, and taking solution-oriented actions play critical roles in protecting reputation (Griffin, 2014). Furthermore, the appropriate post-crisis period allows the business to rebuild its reputation (Ulmer et al., 2007).

In recent years, sustainability and social responsibility have become important aspects of reputation management in the hospitality industry. Factors such as environmental sensitivity (Gabarda-Mallorquí et al., 2018), social justice (Morgan & Huertas, 2011), and contributions to local communities (Alvarado-Herrera et al., 2020) directly shape businesses' reputations. Businesses that adopt environmentally friendly practices gain a positive reputation both in the eyes of guests and within the industry. Sustainability has become an integral part of reputation management, responding to modern consumer demands (Jones et al., 2015).

Reputation management in the hospitality industry is a complex and multifaceted process that shapes guest perceptions. Elements such as digitization, crisis management, sustainability, and guest satisfaction must be addressed through an integrated approach to form the foundation of an effective reputation management strategy. To create and maintain a strong brand that stands out above others in the industry, businesses must realize that service quality will only take them so far. There is no substitute for strategic initiatives that enhance the guest experience. The more businesses commit to the three areas of brand standards mentioned above, the better their ability to stand out and the greater success they will enjoy.

METHOD

Source of Data

This work presents a bibliometric study of academic publications related to reputation management in the hospitality industry. The study relied on the Web of Science to collect most of its data, as it is recognized as one of the most important scientific citation indexes worldwide (Wang et al., 2017). Well accepted are WoS among other databases, as it covers a broad spectrum of disciplines that permits, in many cases, a cross-relational analysis of research trends and developments in reputation management in hospitality. At the outset, the inclusion criteria indeed specified four key search terms, namely, "reputation management," "hospitality," "leisure," and "tourism"; these were searched for in the titles, abstracts, and keywords of articles. The period for data collection spanned from 2000 to 2023, capturing the growth in the importance of reputation management in academic discussions and the heightened impact of digitalization on the industry. The decision to begin data collection from the year 2000 is rooted in the observable onset of digital transformation in the hospitality and tourism sectors around that time. Starting in the early 2000s, the growing influence of online customer reviews, social media engagement, and electronic word-of-mouth began to shape the discourse on reputation management. Furthermore, a noticeable increase in academic attention to these developments emerged after 2000. Therefore, setting 2000 as the initial year for analysis allows for a more comprehensive reflection of both industry practices and evolving scholarly interest in reputation management.

An attempt to review theme-based academic journals identified relevant journals concerning the articles. The articles were indeed peer-reviewed, fully available in text format, and were selected according to the defined criteria for inclusion. Additionally, the selectivity of the analysis allowed only English peer-reviewed, complete-text articles to be included. Of these, 1,859 unique articles were picked from the WoS database for further analysis. The retrieved bibliographic details contained information such as the author's name, article title, year of publication, journal name, country, institution, citation number, and keywords. The collected data were cleaned and processed in large quantities to ensure data coherence and consistency. Duplicate entries and irrelevant papers were deleted, alongside correcting data inconsistencies, as recommended in the Still-Act (Buttrey & Whitaker, 2017). That is to say, it is vital for bibliometric analysis.

Data Analysis

For purposes of this study, a quantitative-oriented bibliometric analysis of the literature on reputation management in the hospitality industry was performed. Bibliometric analysis is the use of quantitative analysis and statistics in the systematic examination of the scope and growth of a certain area of literature (Guleria & Kaur, 2021). The Bibliometrix R package and its graphical interface application, Biblioshiny, for data analysis and visualization. Biblioshiny is a web-based application designed for easy use by non-programmers, eliminating intimidation when performing detailed bibliometric analyses of citations on academic materials (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017).

The analytical process was divided into two major sections: descriptive analysis and bibliometric mapping. The descriptive analysis provided a general overview of the research output regarding reputation management, with a particular emphasis on the hospitality industry. Research output characteristics, including annual publication output, the names of the most prolific authors, the most productive journals, and the countries with the most active researchers, were examined to reveal trends in research output as well as the leading players in this field. Citation analysis was also conducted to identify highly cited works that served as the basis for pinpointing core studies in reputation management within the hospitality sector. This phase also yielded critical information, such as how attention shifted over time, who the original authors in this area were, and which authors produced significant works in this field. These findings offer insight into the field's evolution over time.

In the second phase, bibliometric techniques were employed to investigate the intellectual structure of the domain and its thematic areas. The Bibliometrix R package, combined with

Biblioshiny, further enabled the generation of maps and network views that reveal underlying research patterns within the field. Coauthorship analysis assessed the collaboration among authors and institutions, revealing research networks and knowledge dissemination hubs. Such network analysis helped to create a picture of academic leadership and how key players within it exerted influence (Kim & Jung, 2016). Additionally, it demonstrated the level of international collaborative research and the regions in which such collaborations took place (Baker-Doyle & Yoon, 2011).

To capture the research topics and new directions that emerge, co-occurrence analysis focused on identifying word clusters that were used most frequently. The keyword analysis provided valuable insights into the interrelated research topics and identified areas that require further research (Kadirhanogullari & Köse, 2024). Most such analyses are crucial in detecting research trends and establishing the core knowledge structure of the discipline. A conceptual network map was created to group and plot the relationships among central themes and concepts related to reputation management research. Its different areas, such as “customer behavior”, “digital communication”, and “the role of social media in reputation”, were identified by clusters illustrating various streams of research.

Trend analysis focused on the temporal analysis of publication and citation patterns, aiming to study shifts in scholarly attention (Akhavan et al., 2016). Such an evolution was employed to trace specific thematic developments in detail over time. The content examined also included word frequencies and distribution over time, specifically the words “word-of-mouth,” “online reviews,” and “COVID-19,” to determine how industry changes and international events had shaped research agendas. This analysis is crucial for exploring new terrains and developing responses to current issues. A citation context analysis was conducted to identify seminal authors, publications, and theories that have shaped the research agenda over the years. This analysis highlighted periods of aggressive citation impacts, indicating changes in the research focus.

This paper provides an extensive survey of the existing literature, outlining the principal research areas, active authors, and prospects of reputation management research in the hospitality industry. The systematic nature and sound methods of analysis in this study safeguard the validity and reliability of the results, which are quite helpful for scholars and practitioners seeking to identify ways of developing the field of reputation management studies.

FINDINGS

Descriptive Analysis

The annual publication output provides a longitudinal perspective on the growth of academic interest in reputation management within the hospitality industry. Although the number of publications remained relatively modest in the early 2000s, a noticeable increase occurred after 2010. This upward trend aligns with the digital transformation of the industry, the rise of online review platforms, and the growing relevance of e-reputation in strategic management discussions. The consistent growth in publication volume over the last decade reflects an expanding scholarly engagement with the complexities of managing organizational reputation in a digitally driven service environment.

In Figure 1, attention is paid to the research output of notable contributors in hospitality, tourism, and management studies. Out of all, Law is the most proficient, with a record of 50 publications, which is quite impressive in the realms of hospitality technology and customer experience management, among others. Following him in this rank are Li and Zhang, whose outputs are 34 and 28 publications, respectively. They are recognized for excellence in areas such as service, customer satisfaction, and destination management, which are core precepts of the discipline, both theoretically and empirically. Other notable contributors, such as Yang and Liang, have bridged the gap between hospitality management and related social science concepts by exploring issues beyond management, including consumer understanding and organizational performance. In addition, several authors, including Kim, Liu, and Schuckert, introduce geographic diversity, thereby advancing research in the fields of hospitality and tourism.

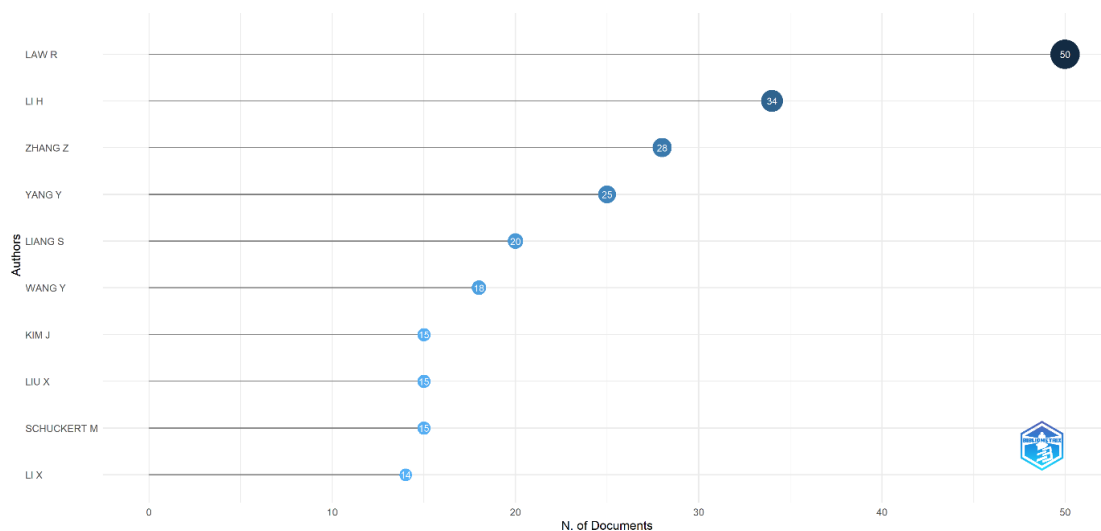


Figure 1. Most Relevant Authors (Source: Own research)

This analysis was conducted to identify the key contributors shaping the scholarly landscape of reputation management in the hospitality industry. Understanding who the most active authors are helps reveal dominant research perspectives and provides direction for future collaboration opportunities. The results indicate a strong academic presence from scholars such as Law, Li, and Zhang, whose works have laid the important theoretical and empirical foundations.

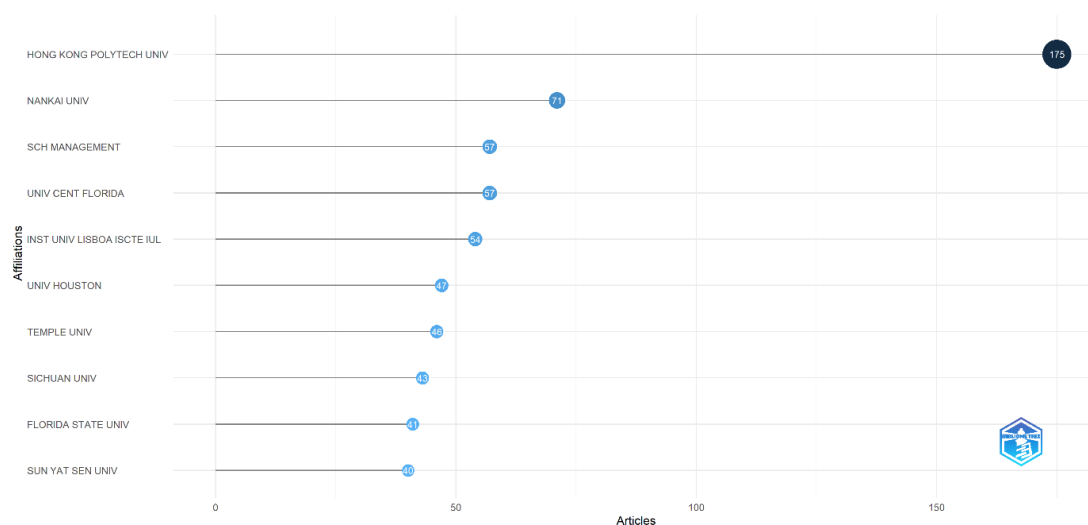


Figure 2. Most Relevant Affiliations (Source: Own research)

Figure 2 illustrates the top academic institutions contributing to the research output in hospitality and tourism management. The top position is occupied by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, with 175 papers, which indicates a significant commitment and structure in this area. Nankai University and the School of Management follow with 71 and 57 papers, respectively, indicating their significant contributions to hospitality management research, particularly in China. Furthermore, both the University of Central Florida and the University of Houston are notable institutions that reflect the well-established inclination of the US towards tourism studies. Also of great interest is ISCTE-IUL and the University of Lisbon, where the increase in hospitality research in Europe can be appreciated, with efforts from Portugal in this regard, tilting towards more academic input.

This analysis highlights the institutional distribution of research productivity. Identifying leading universities allows us to assess where institutional knowledge clusters are formed and where future academic partnerships may be developed. The results reveal Hong Kong Polytechnic

University as the most productive institution, signaling its significant role in hospitality reputation research.

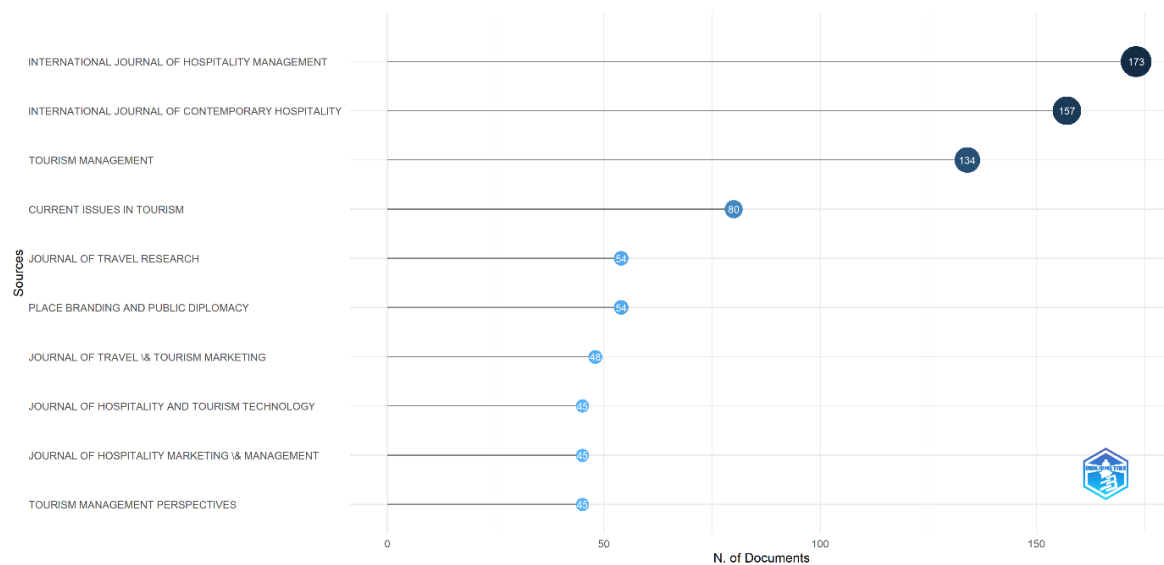


Figure 3. Most Relevant Sources (Source: Own research)

Figure 3 highlights the top academic journals publishing research on hospitality and reputation management. Leading the list are the International Journal of Hospitality Management and the International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management with 173 and 157 articles, respectively, emphasizing their critical role in shaping hospitality management research and theory. Tourism Management, with 134 articles, bridges the gap between hospitality management and broader tourism studies, contributing to a multidisciplinary understanding of reputation management, customer experience, and service quality. Other notable journals, such as Current Issues in Tourism (80 articles) and the Journal of Travel Research (54 articles), focus on emerging trends and challenges affecting corporate reputation and customer management. Additionally, journals such as Place Branding and Public Diplomacy and the Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management reflect specialized interests in destination image, place branding, and strategic marketing, highlighting the growing emphasis on linking reputation management with broader marketing strategies in the hospitality sector.

This analysis aims to identify the most influential academic journals in publishing research on reputation management in hospitality. This information helps scholars identify the most suitable outlets for disseminating their work. The results indicate the dominance of the International Journal of Hospitality Management and the International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, reflecting their significant role in shaping the discourse.

As shown in Figure 4, the countries most frequently cited in studies on hospitality and tourism are presented, indicating their academic contributions. China leads the ranking with 12,179 citations, followed closely by the United States with 11,483 citations, and topics in the discipline explain these statistics. The United Kingdom, Australia, and Spain are also among the most published, indicating that they support the research. The fact that China ranks first among authors indicates that hospitality and tourism-based studies are gaining popularity as a field of study, driven by the rapid growth of the country's tourism market and the increasing academic focus on the subject. The high citation index attributed to the U.S. contributes to the country's well-developed research apparatus. Other European countries, such as the UK and Spain, also participate actively in this study. This image illustrates the gradual improvement of regional research centers and networks, showcasing variations in productivity and research presence.

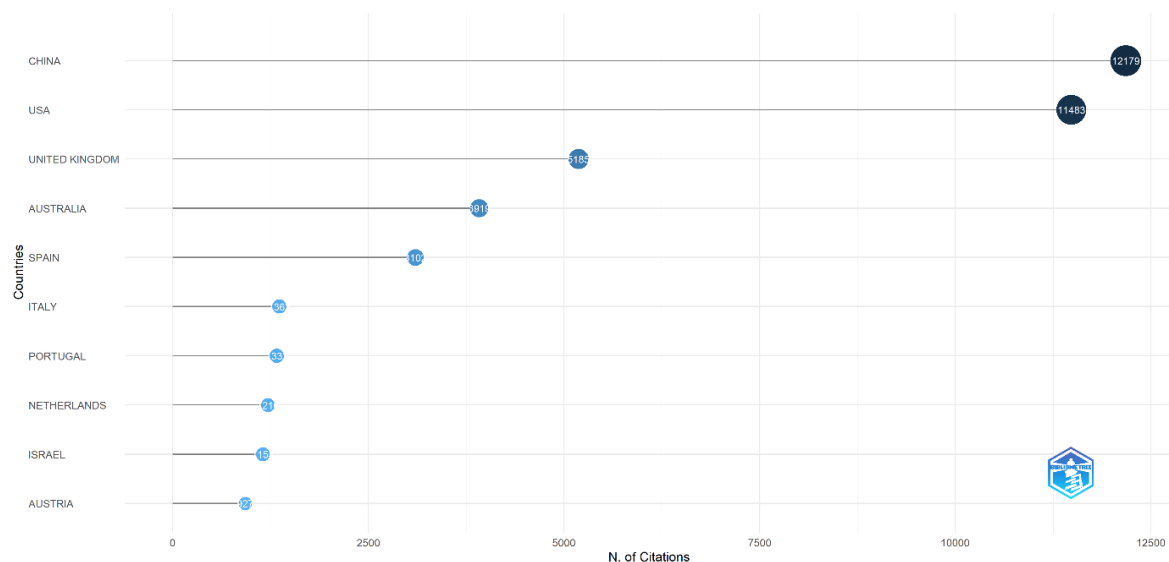


Figure 4. Most Cited Countries (Source: Own research)

The purpose of this analysis is to understand the geographical distribution and influence of research output. Highly cited countries often reflect strong institutional support, research funding, or active collaboration networks. The results show that China and the United States have emerged as global leaders, suggesting a regional dominance that may shape future research agendas.

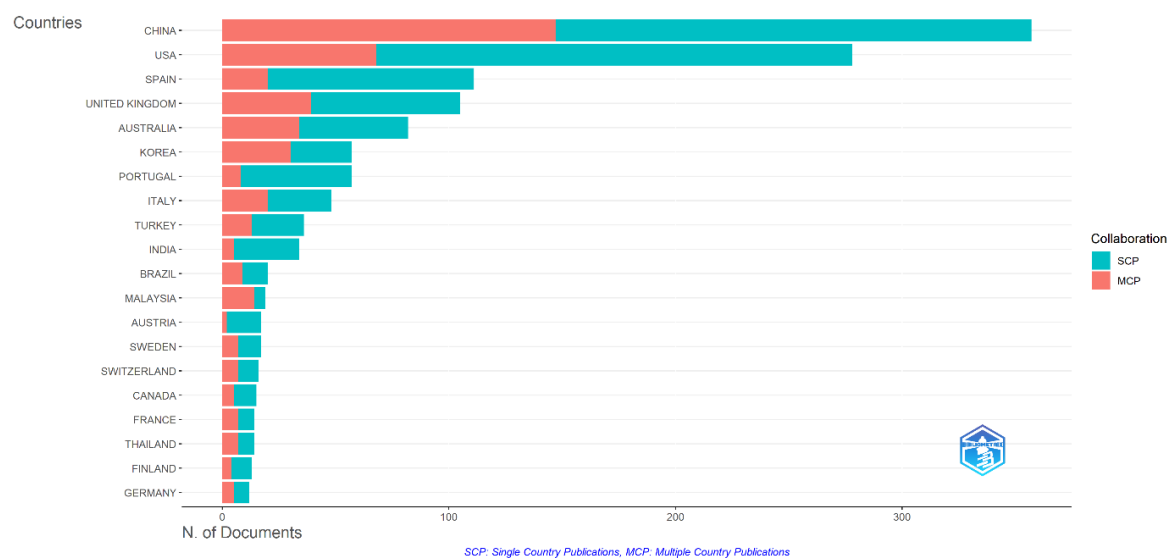


Figure 5. Corresponding Author Countries (Source: Own research)

The 'Distribution and Collaboration Patterns among Corresponding Authors' of hospitality and tourism research by country perspective is presented in Figure 5. It also presents Single Country Publications (SCP) in turquoise and Multiple Country Publications (MCP) in Red. In terms of volume and international collaboration in publications, China and the United States remain the top countries, as evident by the high percentage of MCPs, which suggests their extensive overseas connections in conducting research. While Spain, the UK, and Australia incorporate a fair share of SCPs and MCPs, this narrows the possibility of performing qualitative research without the need for external partnerships. In contrast, there are examples of countries such as Korea and Portugal, which are geographically-restrained and smaller in their academic outputs, that are also heavily reliant on multi-country research publications in order to enhance their international presence. A relatively higher percentage of publications in the form of Single Country Papers (SCPs) in Turkey

and India could indicate that these countries are pursuing more domestically focused research, possibly due to high levels of state funding or the implementation of national strategies. The picture illustrates, however, that there is a growing importance of multi-country publications in addressing issues in hospitality and tourism, with an increasing number of international collaborations being undertaken.

This analysis was conducted to examine patterns of international collaboration in research on hospitality reputation. The distinction between Single Country Publications (SCP) and Multiple Country Publications (MCP) helps reveal how knowledge exchange occurs globally. The results demonstrate that countries like China and the U.S. lead both in volume and international collaborations, which reinforces their influence in the field.

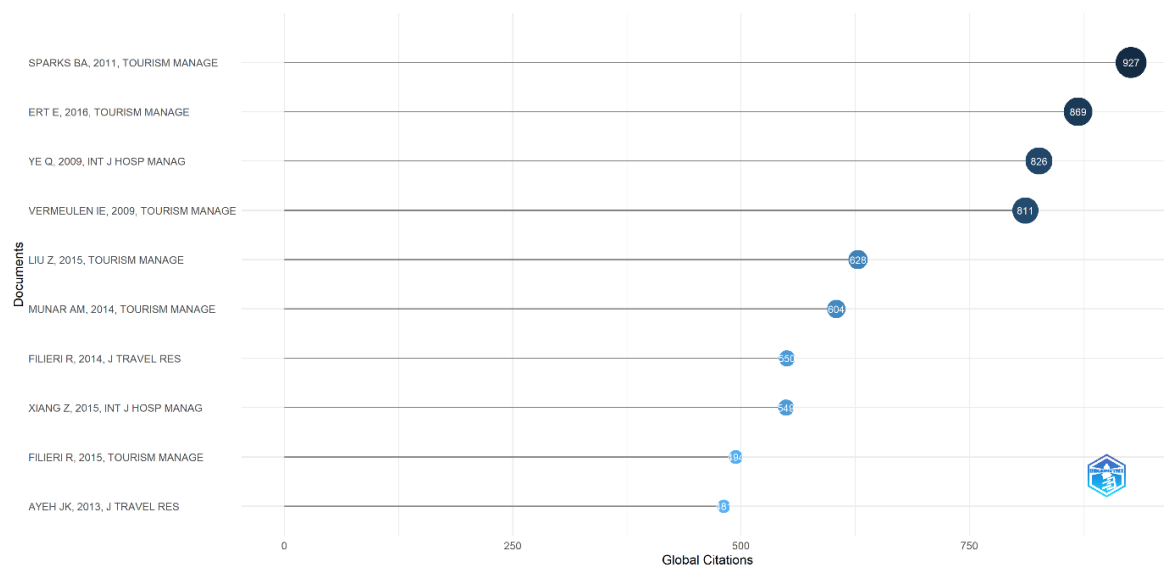


Figure 6. Most Cited Papers (Source: Own research)

In hospitality and tourism-related literature, the most influential articles are represented in Figure 6. Several key studies that have contributed to the area to some extent have been presented. The first entry on the list is Sparks (2011), which has 927 citations, making it a beneficial article for studying customer behavior and service quality. The second one is Ert (2016), with 869 citations, which investigates the role of social media in shaping consumer trust. Three studies are then introduced; Ye et al. (2009) attracted 826 citations, whereas Vermeulen and Seegers (2009) attracted 811 citations due to their study, which focused on online reviews, composition, and management of the economy's reputation regarding hospitality. These studies emphasize the significance of eWOM marketing in attracting and engaging consumers. Other relevant articles, for instance, those authored by Liu and Park (2015) and Munar and Jacobsen (2014), emphasize the importance of the internet and social networks in the development of strategies and behaviours in the hospitality industry. Filieri et al. (2015) have a significant influence on the field of research regarding online users and their consumption patterns, as evidenced by two of their works appearing among the top 10 articles. As mentioned earlier, the works in Figure 6 that have received the highest citations address relevant issues such as customer behavior, service quality, social media, and digitalization, which have significantly impacted scholarship and practice, particularly in the fields of hospitality and tourism management.

This analysis identifies foundational studies that have shaped the intellectual core of the field. Recognizing the most cited works helps researchers understand the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of reputation management in hospitality. The findings highlight the critical importance of digital trust, customer behavior, and online reviews as leading research concerns.

Bibliometric Mapping

Co-authorship analysis provides insights into the structure of collaborative networks and the distribution of scholarly influence in the field. Although no visual representation is included in this study, preliminary analysis showed that co-authorship patterns are concentrated among a few prolific authors and institutions, particularly those from China and the United States. These countries not only produce the highest volume of research but also engage in frequent international collaborations, contributing to the dissemination of knowledge across borders. Key institutions, such as the Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the University of Central Florida, demonstrate strong connectivity with other global research centers, acting as knowledge hubs. However, the analysis also indicates a gap in collaboration among emerging regions, suggesting potential for future network development. Strengthening collaborative ties between developing and developed research communities could enhance innovation and increase research visibility in underrepresented regions. Such findings underline the importance of collaborative research in expanding the intellectual boundaries of reputation management in hospitality, promoting interdisciplinary integration, and fostering cross-national scholarly exchange.



Figure 7. Word Cloud of Author Keyword (Source: Own research)

Figure 7 displays a word cloud that highlights key terms identified in the literature on reputation management within the hospitality industry. Prominent terms such as 'word-of-mouth,' 'satisfaction,' 'impact,' and 'hospitality' highlight their significance in this area. Word-of-mouth is essential in shaping how consumers perceive businesses and affects their online reputation. At the same time, satisfaction serves as a vital measure of service quality and a key indicator of favorable results. The term 'impact' illustrates the effect of reputation on organizational performance. Additionally, the inclusion of 'social media' and 'online criticism' points to the growing reliance on digital platforms for reputation management in the hospitality industry.

This keyword co-occurrence analysis aims to uncover the major thematic areas emphasized in the literature. Identifying frequently used keywords reveals the core interests and evolving trends within the field. The prominence of terms such as 'word-of-mouth' and 'satisfaction' highlights their central role in reputation strategies.

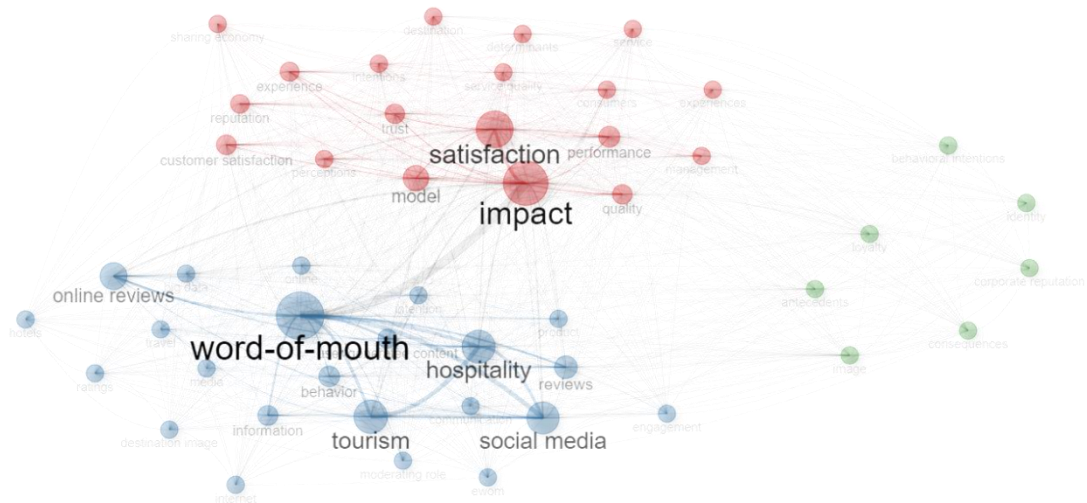


Figure 8. Conceptual Network Visualization (Source: Own research)

In Figure 8, the main aspects of the network, which are divided into the red cluster (Satisfaction and Performance), the blue cluster (Social Media and Endorsement), and the green cluster (Behavioral Intentions and Corporate Reputation), are illustrated. Regarding the red cluster, it addresses issues such as satisfaction, impact, and performance, where service quality, customer satisfaction, and organizational performance are interconnected. The blue cluster, on the other hand, encompasses the communication aspects, including word-of-mouth, social media, and online reviews, as well as their respective roles in shaping a company's image as perceived by consumers themselves. The green cluster features subjects such as behavioral intentions, loyalty, and corporate reputation, which deal with one aspect: customer loyalty and reputation management post-purchase. The clusters are connected through varying degrees of connections, some illustrating existing research areas while others strengthen developing ones, thereby enhancing the understanding of both existing and potential theoretical frameworks.

This analysis maps the relationships between major research themes in reputation management. By examining keyword clusters, the analysis uncovers how different topics are interconnected and which areas are receiving focused academic attention. The three main clusters represent performance, digital communication, and behavioral reputation—core constructs in understanding hospitality brand management.

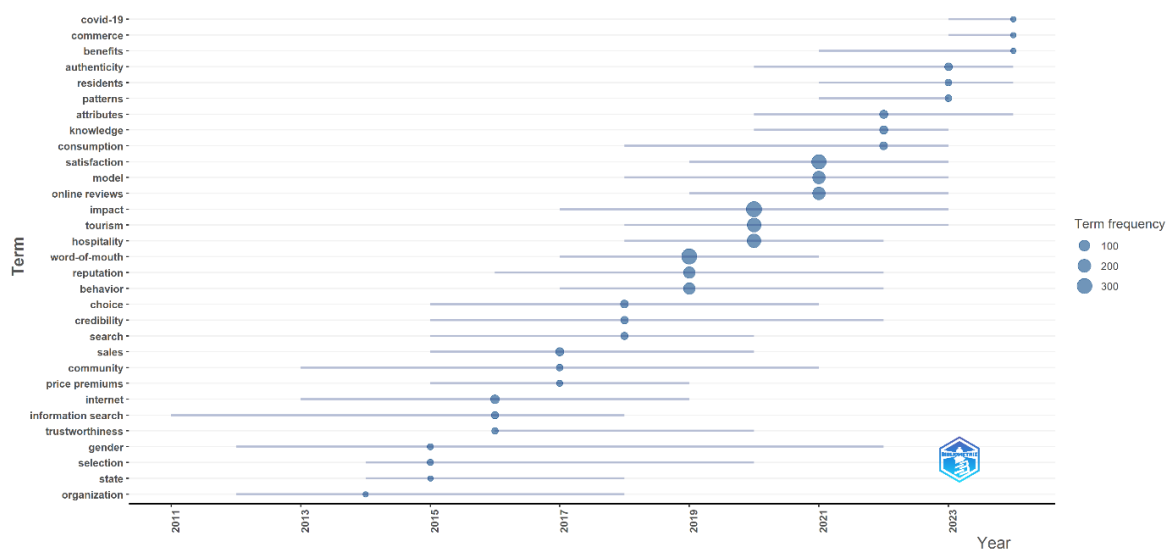


Figure 9. Trend Topics (Source: Own research)

Several popular topics in hospitality and tourism have been researched over the last decade, as shown in Figure 9. The size of each circle denotes how often a subject has been researched, while the horizontal bars illustrate the period in which studies on that particular subject have been conducted. Recently, salient areas such as 'COVID-19,' 'commerce,' and 'benefits' have emerged, reflecting the impact of the pandemic on the determinants of actions, economic activities, and the services offered, respectively. This demonstrates that the researchers understood the threats posed by the pandemic very well and quickly. Older subjects, such as 'word of mouth,' 'reputation and behavior,' started to become popular around the year 2014, thanks to the emergence of social media and online reviews, which in turn transformed the relationship that consumers had with hospitality brands. Additionally, the impact of viral marketing through digital word of mouth has been the focus of studies, along with managing the reputation of target consumers to influence their trust and purchasing behavior. The surge in topics such as 'trustworthiness,' 'gender,' and 'community' around 2016 indicates a growing awareness and concern about ethical and socio-cultural issues within hospitality, particularly regarding inclusivity and engagement aspects. At the same time, enduring themes, for example, 'tourism,' 'satisfaction,' and 'impact' remained important through the decade, highlighting their persistent importance in the discipline. This pattern of information also reveals the multifaceted and evolutionary nature of research on hospitality and tourism, which adapts to societal, technological, and industrial changes, and provides insights into potential areas for future research.

This analysis tracks the evolution of research focus over time. Understanding trend topics helps reveal how the field has adapted to external influences such as technology, pandemics, or social issues. The data confirm that while enduring topics like satisfaction and service quality remain central, newer issues such as COVID-19, sustainability, and community engagement are gaining ground.

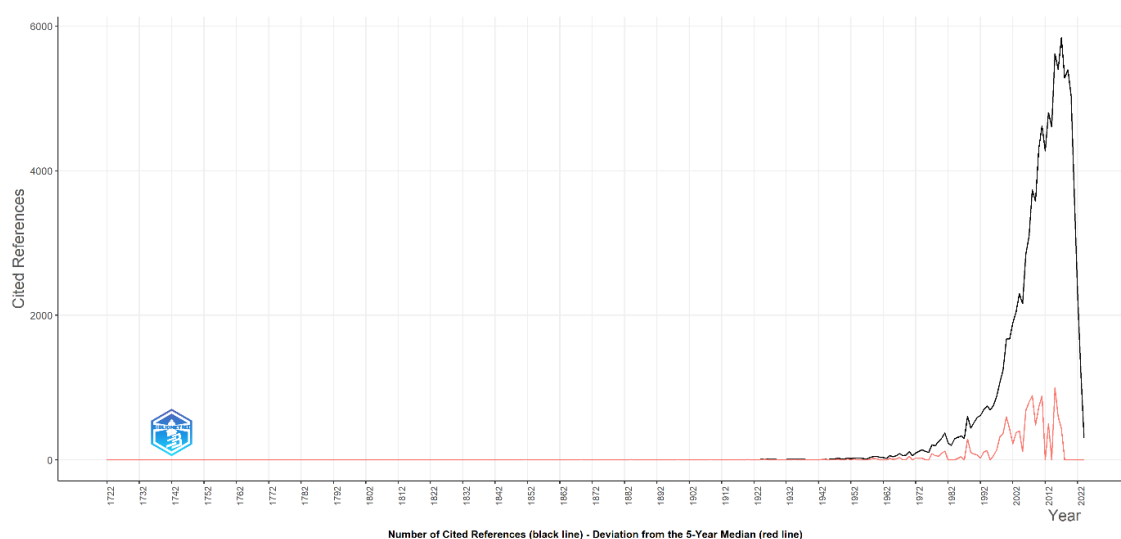


Figure 10. Reference Publication Year Analysis (Source: Own research)

Figure 10 illustrates the historical timeline of citations of reference sources, providing further insight into the trends in hospitality and reputation management studies over the years. The RPYA indicates that the terms experienced a gradual increase in citations during the early parts of the 20th century, followed by a notable concentration of references in the 21st century, which coincided with an increase in academic engagement. This rapid expansion, which began in 2000, is most likely due to the effects of technology, particularly the rise of the internet and globalization, as well as innovations such as social networking and e-WOM, which have transformed the practice of managing reputations. The upsurge in citations around this period is indicative of the need for existing principles and studies that seek to explain these developments. The red line, which represents deviations from the 5-year average, indicates specific time frames

with high citation indexes, such as after significant scientific developments or shifts in perspective. Over the past twenty years, the rise in the number of citations highlights how the discipline has expanded and developed, as new, encompassing theoretical designs and methods have been incorporated to address digital challenges.

This analysis was conducted to examine historical citation patterns and intellectual development in the field. The distribution of citations over time reveals the growing interest and diversification of research topics since 2000. The rise in citations reflects the influence of digital transformation and the relevance of earlier foundational theories.

Citation context analysis was conducted to identify foundational studies, influential authors, and dominant theoretical approaches within the field of study. As previously discussed in the descriptive section, works by Sparks (2011), Ert (2016), and Ye et al. (2009) emerged as pivotal, particularly in relation to digital trust, online reviews, and consumer behavior. These studies not only received high citation counts but also shaped conceptual discussions around reputation management in the digital hospitality landscape. Their widespread adoption reflects their pivotal role in shaping the theoretical foundation of the discipline and informing subsequent research directions.

DISCUSSION

The bibliometric analysis of 1,859 articles revealed a significant growth in the field of reputation management within the hospitality industry, particularly after 2010. This trend aligns with the rapid digital transformation of the industry, suggesting that the proliferation of online review platforms and social media significantly influenced both academic and practical attention to reputation management. These findings confirm earlier assertions by Morrone et al. (2021) and Baka (2016) that digital technologies have revolutionized consumer engagement and brand perception.

The dominance of countries like China and the United States in terms of publication output and citation impact highlights the regional concentration of academic leadership in this area. This observation is consistent with Liu and Park (2015), who emphasized the role of advanced digital infrastructure in facilitating research innovation. However, the relative underrepresentation of developing regions suggests a gap that should be addressed through international collaborations.

Another notable finding was the prominence of topics such as “word-of-mouth,” “online reviews,” and “customer satisfaction” in keyword analyses. These results reaffirm the enduring importance of consumer feedback mechanisms as core components of reputation management strategies, as also noted by Sparks and Browning (2011). Additionally, the emergence of recent topics such as “COVID-19” and “sustainability” suggests an evolving research agenda that is responsive to global disruptions and ethical concerns.

In summary, the findings demonstrate that research in hospitality reputation management is becoming increasingly data-driven, interdisciplinary, and oriented toward digital and sustainable practices. Future studies should explore these emerging themes through qualitative inquiries or mixed-method approaches to provide a richer understanding of the complexities involved.

From an academic standpoint, the findings of this study make significant contributions to the literature in several meaningful ways. First, by mapping the intellectual structure of reputation management research in the hospitality sector, this study provides a comprehensive overview of dominant themes, influential scholars, and existing knowledge gaps. This serves as a valuable reference point for future empirical research and theoretical development. Second, the identification of emerging topics, such as sustainability and digital trust, expands the academic discourse to contemporary and future-oriented issues. Third, the study introduces a systematic approach through bibliometric mapping that can be replicated in other service industries, thereby enhancing methodological rigor in tourism and hospitality research. In this regard, the study not only enriches the existing literature but also guides both new and experienced scholars in navigating this growing academic domain.

CONCLUSION

In this work, the authors conducted a bibliometric review to trace the studies that have explored reputation management in the hotel industry, presenting a functional evolution of key concepts, trends, including digitalization, word-of-mouth, customer satisfaction, and online reviews. The review highlights a significant scholarly focus in this field over the past decade, particularly since 2010, coinciding with an academic shift toward business ethics and the digital revolution in business management. This shift has underscored the increasing significance of Web 2.0 and Web 3.0 interfaces in operational and ethical management practices. Findings indicate that, with the advent of smart technologies and interconnected networks, reputation management has evolved into a complex activity, encompassing elements such as service quality, customer service, and social media engagement, and has even raised concerns about its legitimacy in some scholarly discussions. More importantly, the findings emphasized the role of digital technology, particularly the concept of e-word of mouth, which has changed the position of consumers and impacted business performance. The content analysis also revealed that China and the United States are the leading countries in terms of sophistication and volume of research work in this field, with the Hong Kong Polytechnic University being the most notable institution in this regard. On the one hand, this suggests the transnational nature of research on reputation and management in the hospitality industry. On the other hand, it highlights the need for more research efforts from the majority of under-researched world regions. These findings are consistent with previous bibliometric studies conducted by Koseoglu et al. (2016) and Xu & Li (2018), which also identified a concentration of research efforts in East Asia and North America and underlined the growing influence of digital reviews and online reputation in hospitality marketing. Moreover, in alignment with Park et al. (2022), the dominance of topics such as customer satisfaction, trust, and online review management was similarly highlighted, supporting the thematic clusters found in this study. These parallels validate the reliability of the conceptual structure uncovered in our analysis. Furthermore, prior research by Sun et al. (2020) highlighted the emergence of web-based customer engagement and its strategic implications, which align with our study's conclusion regarding the growing importance of digital interaction in shaping corporate reputation. This study validates the need for hospitality businesses to adopt all-inclusive approaches to managing reputation, encompassing all relevant digital platforms. It asserts the importance of the academic sphere in providing both principles and practices for realistically managing reputation in the increasingly complex sector.

This study is specifically aimed at and directed toward personnel engaged in hospitality management, highlighting the strategic importance of digital interaction in protecting a company's goodwill. The results have shown the importance of online customer reviews, consumer satisfaction, and positive word of mouth. Therefore, businesses should promote their activities on the Internet and also manage what people say about them. Effective mechanisms for addressing negative reviews and enhancing the customer experience should be implemented within the organization to maintain or improve the brand's status. Additionally, the impact of global crises, such as COVID-19, on international reputation management suggests that businesses must formulate flexible strategies that can withstand the effects of external factors. Practical implications also include respecting social codes and promoting sustainable development in a company's image management. As consumers become increasingly aware of environmental and social issues, companies that take these aspects seriously will enhance their image and cultivate loyal customers.

Conceptually, the present research contributes to the body of knowledge on managing one's reputation in the virtual social world. It advocates for an investigation into the complex interactions between digital space, consumer behavior, and firms' market standing in the years to come. The bibliometric analysis indicates that, although progress is commendable, there is a notable lack of knowledge on the impact of different cultural environments on reputation management strategies, particularly in the context of countries in the East. Furthermore, the research highlights the need for more sophisticated theories to explain the evolving dynamics of reputation systems. The dominance of studies based in the US and China currently illustrates the importance of conducting reputation management research across different regions of the world

to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how various societies and economies approach reputation management.

The findings may enhance our understanding of the intricacies of the hospitality industry's reputation management practices, but the research also has its limitations. First, the methodology relies solely on data from the Web of Science, which, although extensive, may overlook some studies from other databases and languages. There should be an effort to expand the databases covered in undertakings of this nature, in order to provide a more detailed coverage of the topic. This study addresses particularly relevant issues, including the impact of COVID-19 on the hospitality sector, as well as several other important topics. It would be beneficial to extend this research into longitudinal study designs that examine consumer behavior and businesses' reputation trends in the context of global disruptions over an extended period. Moreover, further exploration is warranted on the ways businesses from various regions across the globe are responding with modifications to their reputation management in the age of technology and the presence of external threats. The last point the researcher makes is that a multidisciplinary approach, incorporating marketing, psychology, and technology, will be required to enhance both theoretical and practical knowledge in the discipline, given the rapid pace of change within it. These perspectives should be incorporated in future studies, as also noted by Zhang et al. (2021), who emphasized the value of interdisciplinary approaches in enhancing adaptive reputation strategies in the hospitality industry.

Overall, this research advances the academic understanding of reputation management in hospitality by providing a systematic bibliometric foundation, identifying critical research clusters, and proposing new pathways for theory-driven inquiry.

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